

A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE WORLD IS ACHIEVABLE*

Dr Maj Britt Theorin
Former Ambassador for Disarmament
Former Member of Swedish and European Parliaments

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Where is the world heading? Towards disaster or towards reasonable solutions?

The violence a country uses can destroy its power, the author Hannah Arendt once said. USA are moving rapidly across this road in Iraq and Iran.

But all empire states will disappear sooner or later. That is what we learned from history. Either through giving up power without using its capacity for violence like the totalitarian Sovjet under Gorbatsjev or letting the violence destroy its power.

It seems like the leader of USA does not understand that the people of the world, who abolished the last centuries empires, are not willing to bend their necks for the supremacy of USA. USA is in war in Iraq and Afghanistan and seems to be planning an urgent attack on Iran. With nuclear weapons.

In January this year prominent scientists moved the Doom's Day Clock from seven minutes to five minutes before twelve. Twelve o'clock will be the end of civilisation. One of the reasons for this was the increased threat of nuclear weapons.

They warned us of a second nuclear-weapon age. Serious threats are the 25.000 nuclear weapons in USA and Russia, of which 2000 are on alert and can be discharged within minutes. The ambitions by Iran and North-Korea to go nuclear, an increased terrorism, unsafe nuclear material in i.e. Russia and the demands to increase civil nuclear power, which can increase the risk of spread of nuclear weapons are other serious threats.

In Nuclear Posture Review president Bush changed the American nuclear-weapon doctrine in a very dangerous direction. He pointed out seven countries, towards which nuclear weapons can be used; five of those countries do not have nuclear weapons. Preventive attack, which in fact is forbidden in the UN char-

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ter, was proposed in the new nuclear weapons doctrine.

RISK OF WAR IN IRAN

A recent study by Dr Dan Plesch and Martin Butscher ("Considering a war with Iran" September 2007), using open sources, demonstrates that an attack on Iran can be massive and launched with surprise rather than merely a contingency plan needing months if not years of preparation. The study concludes that the US has made military preparations to destroy Irans weapons of mass destruction, nuclear energy, regime, armed forces, state apparatus and economic infrastructure within days if not hours of President Bush giving the order.

Any attack is likely to be on a massive multi-front but avoiding a ground invasion. Nuclear weapons are ready, but most unlikely, to be used by the US, the UK and Israel. The human, political and environmental effects would be devastating, while their military value is limited.

The US is not publishing the scale of these preparations to deter Iran, tending to make confrontation more likely. The US retains the option of avoiding war, but using its forces as part of an overall strategy of shaping Iran's actions.

In the study they also point to eight arguments currently in circulation that deny the idea of a looming war.

HOW DID WE COME TO THIS CURRENT NUCLEAR CRISIS?

For a couple of years, the nuclear energy ambitions of Iran have become an issue in world politics. What is true? Is Iran moving to become a nuclear-weapon power or is Iran developing an exclusively peaceful nuclear energy industry? Iran has for some time been encouraged to cancel parts of its nuclear industry by diplomatic pressure, lately upgraded to gunboat diplomacy. The UN Security Council has enforced political sanctions against Iran. A military intervention has been discussed. These policies are unfortunate, unfair and beside the point, says Jan Prawitz, a Swedish scientist specializing in nuclear weapons free zones.

Today, Iran is criticized on three points. One is that Iran has not complied with some of its reporting commitments to the IAEA. Some reports were incomplete, delayed or just absent. Secondly, for constructing an ultracentrifuge facility for enriching of uranium, and thirdly for constructing a nuclear reactor fuelled with natural uranium and for producing heavy water moderator for that reactor.¹

It is primarily the latter two projects that attracted suspicion, because these facilities could be rearranged for production of weapon-grade uranium and plu-

¹On Iran and the current nuclear crisis in "A Note on the proposed Zone Free of Weapons on Mass Destruction in the Middle East", London 17/9 2007, Jan Prawitz, the Swedish Institute of International Affairs, Stockholm

tonium. Even if Iran's nuclear activities today are exclusively peaceful, once these facilities are fully completed, the lead time from a future decision to make nuclear weapons until fuel for a first explosive device will be available, would be dramatically shortened.

According to a "worst-case-analysis" assuming that Iran already decided to go nuclear, sufficient uranium for a first explosive device would be produced late in the year 2010, if nothing goes wrong. To go from there to establish itself as a military significant nuclear power, would require an expensive and time consuming effort, says Jan Prawitz.

The criticism for incomplete reporting by Iran is formally correct but still overemphasized. Incomplete reporting is not unusual among the NPT parties. Today, 31 out of 185 non-nuclear states party are delayed in concluding by many years. While formally in error, Iran's behaviour is thus not extraordinarily dramatic.

More important in comparison is that ultracentrifuge enrichment of uranium has gone on for several years in two non-nuclear-weapon states, Germany and Netherlands, and a new facility is being constructed in Brazil. The whole nuclear power industry of Canada is based on natural uranium heavy water reactors. Some 50 tons of surplus plutonium is stockpiled in Japan. But these facts have caused no raised eyebrows in the UN Security Council.

Obviously, the current Iranian nuclear crisis is a substitute for other and wider political ambitions. Preventing the proliferation of WMD is a fundamentally important objective. But to approach that problem indirectly by requiring a limitation of fuel cycle elements of non-nuclear-weapon states is beside the point. The demands by the Security Council are legally correct but unfortunate. What Iran is doing is legally correct according to the NPT as agreed after careful negotiations and compromises in 1966-68, says Jan Prawitz.

Is there not any positive sign? Yes there is. First on Iran.

Middle Powers Initiative² point to the need of intensified diplomacy in a recent statement. They say:

Firstly: Since 2003 when its history of safeguards reporting violations was revealed, Iran has met reporting requirements. As in past report of August 30 2007 Director General El Bahradei stated that: The Agency is able to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material in Iran.

Secondly: The IAEA and Iran have reached agreement on a work plan to clear up outstanding questions about Iran's past nuclear activities. If successful, all questions, including those regarding acquisition of centrifuge technology from the Khan network, will be closed by December 2007.

Thirdly: Iran has repeatedly indicated its openness to operation of limited

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enrichment facilities in Iran under heightened IAEA monitoring and with foreign participation.

Finally, The US can more credibly insist on Iranian compliance with its international obligations if they meet their own. The nuclear weapon states have, pursuant to their duties under the NPT committed themselves to a diminishing role of nuclear weapons in their security policies and made commitments to non-use of nuclear weapons against NPT non-nuclear-weapon states

Another interesting and positive sign happened in the beginning of this year.

The 4th of January this year there was a demand in the Wall Street Journal from four of the cold war's architects; Republicans Henry Kissinger and George Schultz and Democrats William Perry and Sam Nunn, where they demanded USA to take a lead in total abolition of all nuclear weapons. Their proposals were not new and something the Canberra-Commission 1996 proposed and later on the Blix-Commission; i.e. take nuclear-weapons off alert, reduce the amount of nuclear weapons drastically, abolish tactical nuclear weapons etc. I will come back to these proposals later on. What is new is that these four earlier responsible politicians in favour of nuclear weapons, now have an interest in common with opponents against nuclear weapons and civil society.

Arthur Schopenhauer, the philosopher, said that all truth passes three stages; first it is ridiculed, then strongly counteracted and suddenly accepted as obvious. Getting rid of all nuclear weapons has now through the four politicians reached the stage of "accepted as obvious". The question is if this truth has reached the American administration.

Why were these weapons ever developed?

More than 100 years ago Dr Marie Curie discovered the radioactive elements radium and polonium. A big breakthrough in the medical area. Within two decades it was possible to use the new discovery for heart diagnosis and to cure other fatal diseases. In the beginning the radioactivity saved lives. 47 years later the same knowledge was used to produce and use the first nuclear weapons destroying Hiroshima and Nagasaki and killing then and in the years to come more than 200,000 people, thus presenting a totally new way of warfare. The nuclear arms race that followed was unbelievable, the capacity could kill all human beings not only once but several times over. Marie Curie's discovery turned out to be the biggest threat against world peace and security.

During the Second World War the world feared that Hitler should develop atomic weapons. Nuclear scientists, among them Joseph Rotblat from Poland who lost his wife in a concentration camp, gave their knowledge to the Manhattan Project in order not to let the Nazis conquer the world. When they recognised that Hitler could not produce nuclear weapons, Joseph Rotblat proposed immediately that the project should stop, because there was no use any longer any threat of such a horrible weapon. Politicians and military said no to his proposal. When you could develop such an effective weapon, you could not stop it, even if the motive for it had disappeared. Rotblat lost his promised

American citizenship and decided to devote his life to get rid of nuclear weapons. He became in fact the first nuclear weapon opponent.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS OF TODAY

Today's storage of nuclear weapons has 700 times the bursting power of what was used during last century's big wars, which killed 44 million people. There are today thousands of nuclear weapons on missiles, submarines, ships and on aircraft on alert all around the world. Ready to be used within a minute. There exist today nuclear weapons so small that they can fit in a suitcase, beyond any treaty control.

Long after the end of the Cold War around 30.000 nuclear weapons remain and since 1945 more than 8 trillion dollars have been spent on nuclear weapons.

In the shadow of the Cold War the nuclear arms race increased. The destruction capacity of nuclear weapons is enormous. Any use would lead to catastrophe. The risk that nuclear weapons will be used by mistake or through miscalculations has increased. Political instability, unsafe control and lack of management with nuclear weapons can lead to disaster.

On January 25th 1995 the world came close to accidental nuclear weapon use when the Russian military detected an unidentified ballistic missile over Norway possibly heading for Russia. Order was given to Russian ballistic missile submarines to go to battle stations. Disaster was averted by only a few minutes when the missile was reassessed as harmless. Its identity and research mission had not reached the Russian early warning system. If such an incident would occur when relations between the US and Russia might not be good, disaster might not be averted.

The New England Journal of Medicine published in April 1998 a special report which concluded that despite the end of the Cold War the risk of an accidental nuclear attack has increased. It pointed to the alarming number of US military personnel who had to be removed from involvement with nuclear weapons because of alcohol, drug abuse or psychiatric problems. The former 4 star General and Commander in Chief of the US Strategic Air Command Lee Butler with responsibility for all US Air Force and Navy nuclear deterrent forces and who literally had had his finger on the button of releasing nuclear weapons, told the same stories in the work in the Canberra Commission. He was absolutely convinced that the world needed to be free of all nuclear weapons.

WHAT TO DO? TWO EXAMPLES.

What has happened and what can be done to get rid of nuclear weapons? First of all everyone has the responsibility and possibility to work to that end. I will give you two examples how one can work in order to move forward: The story of Joseph Rotblat, Pugwash and the Canberra Commission, and the story of

getting nuclear weapons declared illegal.

Joseph Rotblat was one of the founders of Pugwash Movement, where scientists from east and west met in order to build a bridge between the two opponents after the Second World War. Joseph was convinced after several years of work that in order to reach a world free of nuclear weapons a plan has to be developed containing measures to reach this goal. All nuclear weapons must be forbidden and step by step destroyed, as should other weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical weapons and biological weapons.

And it is possible to abolish all nuclear weapons; technically, politically and economically - if the will exists. This was later confirmed in the Canberra Commission report, which was presented in 1996. The Prime Minister of Australia Paul Keating was made aware of a book written by a group of scientists and others in the Pugwash movement - I was one of them - on the initiative of Joseph Rotblat.

The book had the title "A nuclear-weapon-free-world - desirable, feasible?"

Not every one of them - nuclear scientists most of them - believed that Joseph Rotblat's goal that a nuclear-weapon-free world was feasible. Some of them were looking at Joseph as a dreamer. It was not possible to reach a nuclear-weapon-free world. The discussions became very hot and deep and Joseph argued well for his case, patient, dogged but kindly. And to the surprise of some of them we managed to agree and the book was printed. The book became the starting point.

CANBERRA COMMISSION

In December 1995 the Prime Minister of Australia Paul Keating asked a group of experts to present a realistic plan on how all nuclear weapons can be abolished. Not a dream but a realistic plan. We were sixteen men and one woman on the Commission. We had the best scientists providing us with excellent basic material and many NGO's sent us their opinions. We had a full-time working and writing secretariat at our disposal. And we had nine months to deliver our "baby": the Report.

The members had different backgrounds and experiences: two 4-star generals, General Lee Butler and General Michael Carver, former US Secretary of Defence Robert Mc Namara, former Prime Minister of France Michel Rochard, several ambassadors and scientists and of course the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize Winner Joseph Rotblat.

We based the case for the elimination of nuclear weapons on three major arguments:

The first one was that the destructiveness of nuclear weapons is so great that they have no military utility against a comparably equipped opponent, other than the belief that they deter that opponent from using nuclear weapons. Use

of those weapons against a non-nuclear opponent is politically and morally indefensible.

The second argument was that the indefinite deployment of the weapons carries a high risk of their ultimate use through accident or inadvertence.

And the last argument was that the possession of the weapons by some states stimulates other nations to require them, reducing security of all.

IMMEDIATE STEPS

We demanded that nuclear weapons states at the highest political level should - at once and unanimously - declare that they want to abandon all nuclear weapons, even if this is already stated in the article 6 of the NPT, which they all have signed. Such a commitment would change instantly the tenor of the debate, the thrust of war planning and the timing or indeed the necessity for modernisation programs.

This commitment must be accompanied by a series of practical, realistic and mutually reinforcing steps. As a start, without any negotiations, they can do several things which will immediately decrease the threat of nuclear weapons under which we all live. The first steps we proposed were:

- Taking nuclear weapons off alert
- Removal of warheads from delivery vehicles
- Ending deployment of non-strategic nuclear weapons
- Further reduction of United States and Russian nuclear arsenals
- Agreement among the nuclear weapon states of reciprocal no-first-use undertakings, and of a non-use undertaking by them in relation to the non-nuclear-weapon states.

To take nuclear weapons off alert will dramatically reduce the chance of an accidental or unauthorised nuclear weapons launch. All nuclear weapons must be taken off alert. This could in the first instance be adopted by the nuclear weapon states unilaterally.

Separation of nuclear warheads from their delivery vehicles is a must and they should be placed far from each other and not easily be put together again. The physical separation of warheads from vehicles would strongly reinforce the gains achieved by taking nuclear forces off alert.

The nuclear weapon states should unilaterally remove all non-strategic nuclear weapons from deployed sites to a limited number of secure storage facilities on their own territory.

A full stop for testing must be decided.

The nuclear weapon states should agree and state as soon as possible that they would not be the first to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against each other and that they would not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons in any conflict with a non-nuclear weapon state. This would lead to an important and total change in the nuclear weapon strategy of the nuclear weapon states.

All this can be done without delaying negotiations.

REINFORCING STEPS

Many other proposals are to be found in the report i.e

- action to prevent further horizontal proliferation
- developing verification arrangements for a nuclear weapon free world with an international ban on research, storing, selling and use of nuclear weapons
- cessation of the production of fissile material for nuclear explosive purpose

Effective verification is critical to the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear weapon free world. Concurrent with the central disarmament process, there will be a need for activity to build an environment, conducive to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The spread of nuclear weapon free zones world-wide can progressively codify the transition to a world free of nuclear weapons.

The Canberra Commission Report was not a wishful dream but a realistic way of eliminating all nuclear weapons. Joseph Rotblat had really come close to his faith. The issue had left the academic world and reached the political level.

Even if the Canberra Commission Report did not directly gave results, the NPT conference 2000 included in their thirteen practical steps the proposals of Canberra Commission. NPT is the most important international treaty on nuclear weapons, where nuclear weapon states commit themselves to get rid of nuclear weapons and non-nuclear-weapon states commit themselves not to achieve nuclear weapons. Every fifth year the NPT is up to control.

NPT 2000 is signed by all member States including the nuclear weapon states where they committed themselves to this action program to rid out nuclear weapons and is still valid. All signatories to the NPT should be made aware of their duty to fulfil what they promised. And we have to remind them.

Both the Canberra Commission Report, the NPT 2000 and the report "Weapons of Terror" with the subtitle "Freeing the world of Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Arms" 2006 (the Blix report) reflect Joseph Rotblats ideas and proposals of ways towards a world free of nuclear weapons. All of them are still valid and represent sound and realistic ways of ridding the world of all nuclear weapons.

ILLEGALITY

So the other example. The illegality of nuclear weapons.

At the end of our work in the Canberra Commission the International Court of Justice in the Hague (July 1996) gave their response to a request from the General Assembly for an advisory opinion on the legality of the threat of or use of nuclear weapons. I will soon tell you the answer but first the background.

For long the International Lawyers Against Nuclear Weapons had tried to get the question of illegality of nuclear weapons on the agenda. My own civil servants in the foreign ministry told me in the eighties when I was an ambassador responsible for our disarmament policy that it should be impossible to receive an answer making nuclear weapons illegal.

The International Lawyers decided to try to bring it to the General Assembly of UN and formulated a resolution as a request of an advisory opinion from the International Court. It was taken on board by some states. Almost a full war broke out in the UN. I was there and could with my own eyes see how the superpower US went into the room of the non-aligned-states and put pressure on many small countries relying on economic or other support from USA. Such a resolution was unacceptable for USA.

The first year it was not put forward, but the next year the resolution was brought to the General Assembly, even if USA in the meantime had used all its power to threaten many small countries. And to the surprise of many, the resolution was adopted by the General Assembly with a clear majority. Sweden who then had a conservative government, abstained from voting. Now began the next step for us who wanted to see a positive answer. We had to influence the International Court and our own governments.

When the International Court received the request, they turned to their member states and asked them on their opinion before the Court could give an answer. As my government had lost in the election I had to do the work in the parliament. I put forward a resolution signed by all political parties except the conservative party, demanding the Swedish government to respond to the Court that the position of Sweden was that use of or threat to use nuclear weapons was illegal. Of course the parliament adopted the resolution and in the very last minutes with help of some political pressure we managed to get the government to respond that "the parliament - not the government- had the opinion that use of nuclear weapons were illegal".

This work and many others work towards their governments gave result. The court declared in July 1996 that use of or threat of using nuclear weapons was not in accordance with international law. A very important victory for the public opinion!

The declared illegality of nuclear weapons is a result of pressure from public opinion, experts and scientist and involvement of engaged politicians and a good example of how we can work in the future.

There are many more examples of pressure from ordinary people which changed the nuclear policy, i.e. stop for deploying of medium-range-nuclear weapons in different European countries, stop for development of the neutron bombs (a bomb which should preserve all houses and properties while effectively killing all humans), stop for nuclear testing by France through a boycott of all French wines just to mention some. In Sweden our boycott of French wines led to a decrease in selling of French wines by 50% and involved even restaurant owners who through out champagne in the street in front of television cameras.

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Where is the world heading? Towards disaster or towards reasonable solutions?

Towards war in Iran or towards diplomatic solutions? Towards a new nuclear arms race or towards nuclear disarmament? Towards mass murder with nuclear weapons or towards the UN Charter's provision that peace shall be created by peaceful means. It depends on us if we are willing to take our own responsibility and act with persistence and conviction. Everyone can do something. International law, the facts and realistic programs are there; The UN Charter, Canberra Commission Report, Blix-commission Report and NPT action program in 13 steps!

With facts and determination we can change the world. I am convinced that one day Joseph Rotblat's dream and our dream - a nuclear-weapon-free world - will come true.

Thank you.

Appendix: The NPT's Thirteen practical steps for nuclear disarmament.

SUMMARY OF THE THIRTEEN PRACTICAL STEPS FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT AGREED IN 2000

1. Early entry into force of the CTBT.
2. A moratorium on nuclear tests pending the CTBTs entry into force.
3. Conclude negotiations in the CD on a verifiable fissile materials treaty within five years.
4. Establish a subsidiary body in the CD to deal with nuclear disarmament.

5. Apply the principle of irreversibility nuclear disarmament and arms control.
6. An unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.
7. Entry into force of START II; conclusions of START III; preserve the ABM treaty.
8. Completion and implementation of the Trilateral Initiative.
9. Steps by the nuclear-weapon states leading to nuclear disarmament in a way that promotes international stability, based on the principle of undiminished security for all:
 - (a) unilateral reductions;
 - (b) increased transparency;
 - (c) the further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons;
 - (d) de-alerting;
 - (e) A diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies;
 - (f) The engagement by all the nuclear-weapon states in disarmament as soon as appropriate
10. Arrangements by nuclear-weapon states to place fissile material no longer required for military purposes under IAEA supervision or other relevant international verification.
11. Reaffirmation that the ultimate objective is general and complete disarmament under effective international control.
12. Regular reports within the NPT: strengthened review process.
13. Improved verification of compliance with nuclear disarmament agreements.