



Pugwash Meeting on Preparations for the NPT Review Conference

**Vienna, Austria
27-28 February 2015**

REPORT

On 27-28 February 2015 Pugwash convened a consultation on the upcoming NPT Review Conference. The meeting was hosted by the Mission of the League of Arab States in Vienna and participants were drawn largely from the Vienna-based diplomatic community engaged with multilateral nuclear weapons politics. The main item under examination was the outlook for the upcoming Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The present report is a summary of the main topics discussed, prepared by the rapporteur.¹

Key Points

- All sides demonstrated significant goodwill in coming to the table to discuss the NPT Review Conference, thus reinforcing the importance of the NPT.
- The need for dialogue on NPT-related issues is urgent, despite other challenges in the international arena. There is a long history of international nuclear weapons dialogue continuing in times of tension, quite often playing a vital role. Today this role is equally important.
- The NPT processes face significant challenges in terms of credibility, with unfilled outcomes of prior Review Conferences counterbalancing (or some might say outweighing) those positive steps that have been made in some areas.
- The lack of concrete progress on the Middle East WMD Free Zone remains a sticking point, and committed creativity of the diplomatic community is needed to move this forward.
- It is unclear what will happen at the Review Conference in New York. Several ideas were discussed in the course of our meeting which were encouraging. However, they were tempered by a sense of weariness and the enormity of some of the other challenges on the diplomatic agenda.

¹ The rapporteur for this report was Roberta Mulas, GEM Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctoral Candidate at Warwick & LUISS. Please note that the views presented here represent a range of opinions expressed in the meeting, and they do not necessarily reflect the personal views of the rapporteur, nor of the Pugwash Conferences as an organization. The meeting was held according to traditional Pugwash/Chatham House rules to enable an open exchange of perspectives and exploration of creative possibilities for ways forward. Thus, the substance of the discussions can be reported out, but no item discussed can be attributed to any one individual. There was no attempt to seek consensus, and in fact the sharing of diverse views was encouraged.

The NPT Review Conference

Participants discussed the prospects for the NPT Review Conference which will take place in New York in April and May 2015. All agreed that the treaty is important; however, some raised concerns about the “credibility and efficiency” of the review process. Some believe the 2015 NPT Review Conference should not be treated as ‘business as usual’ because it risks feeding into the frustration over lack of progress in fulfilling the treaty’s obligations. Polarisation between concerns about proliferation and about lack of disarmament should be overcome in the spirit of seeing progress wherever it is made and favouring steps that are beneficial for both. Moreover, participants were reminded of the general non-proliferation and disarmament progresses that are not given enough credit in the NPT context, including the continuing negotiations on the Iran nuclear program to the increased membership of the CTBT and Syrian chemical weapons disarmament.

The discussion reinforced the importance of reaching consensual documents on ways forward in multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation policies in the NPT context. However, the challenge remains implementing such commitments and some emphasised the need to monitor the implementation of all pillars. It was noted, for example, that the 2010 Review Conference’s Final Document framed the implementation of Article VI as a responsibility of all, thus making nuclear disarmament a challenge and opportunity for the whole membership. In this respect there was some debate over two popular ideal ways forward: the step-by-step and the comprehensive approach. While some participants expressed doubts on the verifiability of the comprehensive route, others highlighted the sluggish character of the step-by-step approach. To overcome this contraposition, some suggested that they should not be seen as exclusive matters. Participants agreed that all ways of contributing to the momentum towards disarmament should be explored.

Some argued that what needs to be tackled is the conviction of some countries in the necessity of nuclear weapons. Several ideas were exchanged on how to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons, either in the form of a no-first-use or non-use pledge or of negative security assurances to the non-nuclear weapon states. Reflection on the details and legal format still need further elaboration. According to some participants, it could be done in the form of a decision to be taken by the Review Conference similarly to the 1995 decision on the Middle East. The issue of the basing of US nuclear weapons in Europe was discussed, with some suggesting it might be useful to think of establishing a principle that nuclear weapons should not be based on foreign soil, before other states with nuclear weapons decide to pursue the US example.

Other fora have been found to be potentially of assistance in developing the way forward, as they could both sustain on-going dialogue and make tangible progress. In particular attention was given to the so-called P5 process, which had its last meeting in London at the beginning of February 2015. The forum agreed as a first step to enhance transparency regarding nuclear weapons holdings by working on setting common standards for reporting and terminology. It also agreed on a document regarding medical isotopes and for the first time included

public outreach. Some underscored the value of this process, in that “it shows that even under the present difficult circumstances it is possible to find common understanding”. However, others noted the unambitious nature of this framework.

Another forum that received attention was the Humanitarian Initiative, whose third conference was held in Vienna in December 2014. Its work focused on evidencing that the risks and consequences associated with the explosion of nuclear weapons in today’s world are even graver than previously expected and that their humanitarian impact would create repercussions for the whole world. In relation to this, participants also discussed the position of the nuclear weapon states vis-à-vis the Humanitarian Initiative: if initially they had provided a common front of rejection, the 2014 conference was attended – either formally or not – by three NWS. Some participants have made the case, however, that there is nothing to be gained by dividing the P5. Although it is unclear how either forum will proceed, many participants felt that every opportunity for parties to talk should be made use of – both at governmental and track II level. As one speaker put it, “these discussions involve us all because everyone’s security is at stake.”

The WMD Free Zone in the Middle East

Another process of special relevance for the NPT and its upcoming review is the state of play of the proposed WMD Free Zone in the Middle East. Progress on the talks to establish such a zone is seen as essential for the well being of the treaty. In general, it was highlighted that it is positive that all regional states demonstrated a willingness to talk. Progress has been made by the Facilitator in understanding every state’s views, but also in laying out his own take on the issue through an undisclosed ‘orientation paper’. The challenge of ensuring participation by all states of the region – explicit in the mandate – creates the need for all states, including Israel, to attend. Several participants stressed that this can only be done through engagement. At the same time, other discussants pointed out that one single state should not be able to hold a veto power over the whole process. On the one hand the conveners have been criticised by some for timidity in supporting the initiative; on the other hand several participants insisted on the need for regional ownership of the process. Despite disagreement there was little doubt that the success of the exercise is a shared responsibility. Participants concurred that eliminating nuclear weapons regionally will contribute to security for everybody.

The well-known debate regarding what comes first, disarmament or peace, was said to be mistaken. Rather than being a matter of precedence or conditionality, disarmament and peace reinforce each other. Moreover, examples such as Syria’s recent renunciation of chemical weapons show that disarmament can happen in the absence of peace. There was also some discussion on the legal status of the decisions taken by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the NPT. While some argued that the extension decision was not connected to the one on the Middle East, for others the link was inextricable and constituted a condition for maintaining the NPT. A further element that needs further exploration is the accession of Palestine to the treaty and the resulting opportunities and

challenges both for the Review Conference and for the Middle East WMD Free Zone process.

The entry into force of the CTBT

The CTBT should enter into force as a matter of urgency. Participants debated ways “that might put the treaty in a less provisional basis”. Given the effectiveness of the infrastructure put in place by the CTBTO, not just to identify nuclear tests but also the release of radioactive material, tsunamis and others, a participant suggested that it could be officially put to use for these other purposes. Another participant pointed to the possibility of a supporting UN resolution. Some participants highlighted the interconnected nature of various diplomatic initiatives: for example the idea that the CTBT’s entry into force could be favoured by a position taken in other frameworks, such as at the NPT, or on other scales, like at a regional level in the Middle East. It was also pointed out that, for those states that are not yet members, participating even merely as an observer state is a good signal of potential will for cooperation.

Conclusion

The meeting touched upon most of the main issues facing the upcoming Review Conference. The review process poses many challenges as well as some opportunities. It is hoped that States Parties can find suitable ways to address the concerns, note those areas where progress was made, and most importantly chart a way forward that is neither full of commitments that will not be met nor devoid of any meaningful steps toward fulfilling the Treaty’s core commitments.

**Pugwash meeting on the upcoming NPT Review Conference
Hosted by the Mission of the League of Arab States in Vienna
Friday-Saturday 27-28 February 2015
Andromeda Tower, Donau-City-Strasse 6/13/2, 1220 Vienna, Austria**

AGENDA/SCHEDULE

Friday 27 February 2015 14:00-18:00

Session 1. The upcoming NPT Review Conference

- Nuclear Disarmament: status, problems and progress since 2010.
- The impact of the Ukrainian crisis on disarmament
- The humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons

Saturday 28 February 09:30-16:00 (light lunch on premises 12:30-13:30)

Session 2. The issue of WMD (and particularly nuclear weapons) in the Middle East

Session 3. Other issues to be discussed in the NPT Review Conference

Conclusions and recommendations

PARTICIPANT LIST

1.	Mr. Wael Al Assad	Ambassador, Head of Mission of League of Arab States to Austria and to International Organizations
2.	Mr. Ricardo Maschietto Ayrosa	Alternate Permanent Representative of Brazil to the IAEA
3.	Amb. Serguey Batsanov	Director, Pugwash Conferences Geneva Office; Member, Pugwash Council
4.	Grigory V. Berennidov	Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Russian MFA
5.	Mr. Jean-Christophe Bonté	Nuclear Attaché, and Alternate to the Resident Representative to IAEA, Permanent Mission of France to the UN and the International Organizations in Vienna
6.	Sandra Ionno Butcher	Executive Director, Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs
7.	Mr. David Calic	Adviser to Mr. Jaakko Laajava, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland
8.	Prof. Paolo Cotta Ramusino	Secretary General, Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs
9.	Mr. Jody Daniel	US Mission in Vienna
10.	Dr. Paolo Foradori	University of Trento, Italy
11.	Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi	Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Argentina to UNOV and UNIDO / Resident Representative to IAEA
12.	Mr. Cristian Istrate	Chair- designate of the Main Committee II (Safeguards, Verification, Nuclear- Free Zones and other regional issues) of the 2015 NPT Review Conference / Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Romania to United Nations (Vienna), UNIDO and CTBTO / Resident Representative to IAEA
13.	Ms. Laura E. Kennedy	Ambassador (Chargé d'Affaires) at US Mission to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Vienna
14.	Mr. Mitsuru Kitano	Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations (Vienna), UNIDO and CTBTO / Resident Representative to IAEA
15.	Amb. Alexander Kmentt	Disarmament, Arms Control and Nonproliferation
16.	Mr. Jaakko Laajava	Under-Secretary of State, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
17.	Ms. Beatrice Lampis	Student, Faculty of Law, University of Milano, Italy
18.	Mr. Abdul Azeez Aliyar Lebbe	Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations (Vienna), UNIDO, and CTBTO / Resident Representative to IAEA
19.	Mr. Li Genxin	Director of the Legal and External Relations Division of the PrepCom for the CTBTO
20.	Mr. Tim Liston	US Mission, Vienna
21.	Eduardo Ruiz Mazón	Alternate Representative to IAEA, Permanent Mission of Mexico in Vienna
22.	Mr. David Thomas Mclroy	Alternate Permanent Representative of the UK to United Nations, IAEA and CTBTO
23.	Mrs. Amira Mihailescu	Alternative Permanent Representative to CTBTO, Advisor of the Permanent Representative of Romania to IAEA
24.	Dr. Steve Miller	Chair, Pugwash Executive Committee; Director of the International Security Program of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, Editor-in-chief of the quarterly International Security
25.	Ms. Roberta Mulas	PhD candidate at the University of Warwick and at LUISS University; previously Research Assistant at the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF), and at the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations in New York
26.	Amb. Reza Najafi	Ambassador, Resident Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to IAEA / Permanent Representative to UNIDO

27. Counsellor Jean-Daniel Praz	Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to United Nations (Vienna), IAEA
28. Mr. Khaled Shamaa	Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations (Vienna)
29. Mr. Rolf Stalder	Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to United Nations (Vienna), IAEA
30. Mr. David Gordon Stuart	Chair-designate of the Main Committee III (Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy) of the 2015 NPT Review Conference / Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Australia to United Nations (Vienna) and CTBTO/ Resident Representative to IAEA Governor on the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
31. Ms. Claudia Vaughn	Program Coordinator, Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, Rome, Italy
32. Amb. Bozorgmehr "Reza" Ziaran	Secretary of the Commission, Preparatory Commission for CTBTO; Former Iranian Ambassador to the Netherlands