

CANADA, NATO AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS

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"NATO is committed to meaningful public outreach to interested individuals and groups, including discussion of the adaptations which the Alliance's force posture has undergone over the last decade in response to the changed security environment. NATO is equally committed to discussing the Alliance's policy of support for nuclear arms control and disarmament. In this regard, the Alliance will continue to broaden its engagement with interested non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and the general public and will contribute actively to discussion and debate regarding nuclear weapons and nuclear arms control and disarmament issues."

-- Para. 96, NATO Report on Options for Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs), Verification, Non-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament December 14, 2000

A. Background

1. In 1999, the Canadian government, accepting a Parliamentary Committee report urging Canada to "argue forcefully" for a re-examination of the nuclear component in the Strategic Concept, introduced a process in the 1999 NATO Summit, which resulted in Paragraph 32 of the NATO Washington communiqué'. Paragraph 32 said the Alliance, "will consider options for confidence and security-building measures, verification, non-proliferation and arms control and disarmament." Canada's then Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy confirmed that this undertaking included a review of NATO's nuclear weapons policies.

2. NATO's nuclear weapons policies are set out in the Strategic Concept. Paragraph 46 of this document states:

"To protect peace and to prevent war or any kind of coercion, the Alliance will maintain for the foreseeable future an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces based in Europe and kept up to date where necessary, although at a minimum sufficient level. Taking into account the diversity of risks with which the Alliance could be faced, it must maintain the forces necessary to ensure credible deterrence and to provide a wide range of conventional response options. But the Alliance's conventional forces cannot ensure credible deterrence. Nuclear weapons make a unique contribution in rendering the risks of aggression against the Alliance incalculable and unacceptable. Thus, they remain essential to preserve peace."

3. Subsequent paragraphs reinforce the "essential" role of nuclear weapons by stating that they are "the supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies." Nuclear forces based in Europe and committed to NATO thus "provide an essential political and military link between the European and the North American members of the Alliance." Six European 2 Non-Nuclear States (Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey) have dual-capable aircraft with crews trained to fly nuclear missions using some 150 U.S. B61 free-fall nuclear bombs. Through NATO's Nuclear Planning Group, every non-nuclear NATO member state except Iceland - including the former Warsaw Pact members Poland, the Czech

Republic and Hungary - participates in nuclear decision-making. The weapons cannot be armed without an order from the U.S., but in time of war, release of the weapons to the cooperating states could be authorized. Russia also maintains nuclear weapons threatening Europe.

B. NPT 2000 Review

4. The 187 States parties to the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) met for the Sixth Review of the NPT, April 24-May 20, 2000. The Final Document of this quinquennial review was the first in 25 years to carry a genuine consensus. Its central element was: "An unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament to which all States parties are committed under Article VI." This paragraph was obtained through negotiation between the Nuclear Weapons States (NWS) and the seven countries of the New Agenda (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden). For the first time, the NWS dropped the word "ultimate" in qualifying nuclear disarmament and agreed to de-link nuclear disarmament from general and complete disarmament. Though giving up a time period for negotiations, the N.A. obtained a clear-cut commitment from the NWS that "systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI" would include "an unequivocal undertaking, to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals."

5. The NPT Final Document listed a series of 13 "practical steps" to implement the "unequivocal undertaking." These included:

- A moratorium on nuclear test explosions pending entry into force of the CTBT;
- Obtaining a negotiated fissile ban treaty within five years;
- A subsidiary body in the Conference on Disarmament with a mandate to deal with nuclear disarmament;
- The principle of irreversibility to apply to nuclear disarmament;
- The conclusion of START III "while preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability";
- All fissile material no longer required for military purposes to be placed under IAEA or other relevant international verification;
- Reaffirmation that the ultimate objective in the disarmament process is general and complete disarmament under effective international control;
- Regular reports on progress of the 1995 Principles and Objectives, and "recalling the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996";
- Further development of verification capabilities;
- Some steps were put under a heading calling for their implementation "in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all";
- Further unilateral disarmament;

- Increased transparency by the NWS;
- Further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons;
- Concrete measures to further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems;
- A diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies;
- The engagement as soon as appropriate of all the NWS in the process leading to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons.

C. Canada Pushes NATO Again

6. Prior to the NPT Review, practically no substantive work had been done on the NATO Paragraph 32 process, and so hostile was the leadership of NATO to any change in their policies that they had begun to call Canada the "nuclear nag." Nevertheless, four days after the NPT Review ended, Minister Axworthy went to a NATO ministerial meeting in Florence and bluntly told his colleagues that they had to stop contradicting themselves on nuclear weapons policies.

"In the NPT and in the Conference on Disarmament, we are confronted regularly with the argument that if nuclear weapons are good for NATO, then they are good for others too. The contradiction in our declaration policy undermines the credibility of our non-proliferation and disarmament efforts."

Axworthy called on NATO to make its nuclear policy "coherent" with the posture adopted at the NPT Review. He listed a number of penetrating questions NATO must explore:

- "Can we not be more transparent about how many nuclear gravity bombs we have left, and where they are located?"
- "Can NATO not unilaterally reduce the number of remaining bombs further, and call for proportional parallel action by the Russian Federation?"
- "Should we not prepare a new comprehensive public statement of the Alliance's arms control and disarmament policies that is relevant to today and tomorrow, rather than for yesterday?"

In the same speech, Axworthy directly challenged the U.S. on its National Missile Defence plans. "A new arms race could be set in motion," he said, "one that would undermine the stability that we have all come to take for granted." He urged the U.S. to take all the time needed to assess the potential impact on the international security system.

D. New Agenda 2000 U.N. Resolution

7. The New Agenda countries went to the United Nations First Committee seeking to consolidate the consensus achieved by the NPT Review. The N.A. stepped back from their original stance of calling in a direct manner for an accelerated process of negotiations. But, in doing so, they repeated the precise language previously agreed to at the NPT on the 13 Practical Steps in order to give this commitment the force of a U.N. resolution. This strategy sought at first to draw "yes" votes from the Non-Nuclear NATO States. When the New Agenda received word that these States (including Canada) favoured the

resolution, the N.A. leadership raised the stakes and made a few cosmetic changes without affecting the substance of the resolution in order to attract the NWS. The tactic worked - at least for the most part. Russia and France held to an abstention. But 18 of the 19 NATO States (including more importantly the United States and the United Kingdom) voted "yes." The vote in the General Assembly was 154 in favour, 3 opposed and 8 abstentions. It was a triumph of masterly diplomacy by the New Agenda and confirmed their States as the most important political forces in the international community working for nuclear disarmament. Canada had been uncomfortable not previously supporting the New Agenda. Now it could without countering the U.S. And Canada, by voting in favour, strengthened its own call for NATO to do a serious, not just perfunctory, review of its policies on nuclear weapons.

8. There are two other aspects of the New Agenda resolution that should be noted in assessing its skilful drafting. The N.A. resolution went beyond the 13 Practical Steps by including an operative paragraph which:

"Affirms that a nuclear-weapon-free world will ultimately require the underpinnings of a universal and multilaterally negotiated legally binding instrument or a framework encompassing a mutually reinforcing set of instruments."

Without saying so, this can be construed as a reference to a Nuclear Weapons Convention, the very idea of which ordinarily sends shivers down the NWS. The key concept here is a "negotiated legally binding instrument." What does this mean if it is not a Nuclear Weapons Convention? The fact remains that not only Canada, but also the U.S. has voted for this concept.

Also, in a preambular paragraph, the New Agenda picked up on the idea first advanced by U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan to convene an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers. Though opposed by the U.S. and other major nuclear powers, the idea survived scrutiny, and the U.N. Millennium Declaration produced a consensus declaration which agreed to keep options open to such a conference. The N.A. resolution reinforced the idea of such a global conference.

E. The NATO Review

9. On December 14, 2000, shortly after the U.N. voting, NATO released a public version of its report on the Paragraph 32 process. This 130-paragraph document* was nothing like the nuclear policy review envisaged by Canada and some of its more progressive allies. After reviewing developments in the last decade in the nuclear, chemical and biological, and conventional fields, the document reaffirms the central tenet of the Strategic Concept - nuclear weapons are "essential" (Para 72). But "essential" for what? NATO argues on the one hand that nuclear weapons must be kept up to date as a "credible deterrence" (Para 72); and on the other hand, "the role of NATO's nuclear forces in today's environment is fundamentally political" (Para 101). [** NATO Report on Options for Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs), Verification, Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament* (<http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2000/p00-121e/home.htm>)]

10. In several places, the document reinforces NATO's belief that nuclear forces are necessary. NATO points out that, while its sub-strategic nuclear forces in Europe have been reduced by 85 percent, "There is a clear rationale for a continued, though much reduced, presence of sub-strategic forces in Europe" (Para 98). Gravity bombs are "stored safely." In addition to the sub-strategic U.S. nuclear weapons, there are a "small number of U.K. Trident SSBN weapons available for a sub-strategic role. It is the "proliferant States" not NATO, whose nuclear programs are said to be diminishing security and stability (Para 102).

11. NATO holds to the NPT's Article VI (Para 104). And then, without a blush of embarrassment, "NATO members support the entire Final Document" of NPT 2000. The precise text of the key section of the NPT document, including the "unequivocal undertaking," and all 13 Practical Steps, is reproduced within the NATO document (Para 106).

12. A good part of the document (Paras 90-95) is given to confidence and security-building measures with Russia. NATO intends to pursue with Russia four specific CSBM proposals to enhance mutual trust and to promote greater openness and transparency on nuclear weapons and safety issues:

- A. Enhance and deepen dialogue on matters related to nuclear forces,
- B. Exchange information regarding the readiness status of nuclear forces,
- C. Exchange information on safety provisions and safety features of nuclear weapons,
- D. Exchange data on U.S. and Russian sub-strategic nuclear forces.

This emphasis on more transparency and data exchanges with Russia to increase the safety and security features of nuclear weapons reveals that NATO does not intend to address the dangers of nuclear weapons by eliminating them. Joint observation of nuclear accident response exercises only serves to highlight the continuing danger of launch-on-warning status. Moreover, the transparency measures indicated are, of course, dependent on the maintenance of good relations between the U.S. and Russia.

13. While the NATO document makes it clear that the Washington Communiqu' Paragraph 32 process, which launched the review, is finished, in response to strong Canadian insistence it does include specific commitments to further public and internal engagement. The December 14, 2000 Report fails to address the core nuclear policies in the Strategic Concept, yet the document does point out that one of the objectives of the Alliance's Weapons of Mass Destruction Initiative "is to ensure a more vigorous, structured debate within NATO - leading to strengthened common understanding among Allies on WMD issues..."

"In this context, a more vigorous, structured debate can very usefully draw upon a clear understanding of the objectives and ongoing activities of other international organizations involved in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. It is therefore quite important for NATO Allies to maintain and reinvigorate the flow of information with and about relevant international bodies in this field." (Para 115)

When Paragraph 115 is read with Paragraph 96 (quoted at the opening of this paper), it is seen that NATO recognizes that this document is not the last word on NATO's nuclear conduct. In fact, in saying that the Alliance will "broaden its engagement with interested non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and the general public." That opening in the NATO decision-making process should be taken by civil society and member governments to continue and accelerate efforts to bring NATO policy and intention in line with its NPT declarations.

F. The Great Contradiction

14. The contradiction between what NATO countries say in the NPT context and do in the NATO context is astounding. The very same countries that pledge an "unequivocal undertaking" to the total elimination of nuclear weapons then, in the next breath, reaffirm that nuclear weapons are "essential."

15. NATO is incoherent with the NPT. Yet NATO officials deny this. The Middle Powers Initiative (MPI) sent an international delegation to the NATO 5 countries (Norway, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium) in October, 2000 to promote a substantive, comprehensive and timely review of NATO's nuclear weapons policies. The delegation was repeatedly told that such a review was ruled out of the question. "Mission impossible!" was a repeated response. While the delegation did hear a view that nuclear deterrence would have to be addressed at some point, the overwhelming number of government interlocutors stated flatly that the report then being prepared by the Senior Political Committee for presentation to the December 2000 NATO Ministerial Meeting would not even constitute the framework for a review of the central policies. Key officials within NATO refuse to acknowledge that NATO policies on nuclear weapons are in contradiction with NATO countries' commitments under the NPT (which have the force of international law). The MPI found NATO in denial over both the incoherence and the probability that its determination to keep nuclear weapons is a primary stimulant of proliferation.

16. The MPI found that NATO cohesion is proclaimed almost as an end in itself. Even those who would contemplate a review of nuclear policies stated that such a process would upset the P3 and thus break "cohesion." That 16 NNWS within NATO might be able to exert their will on the P3 for a nuclear review, also in the name of cohesion, seems not to have occurred to officials. The delegation was told that if, by chance, all 16 took the forthright stand of Canada, it would bring the Paragraph 32 process to a halt because the P3 would withdraw their cooperation. While it is undoubtedly true that the P3 dominate NATO (and campaigned to have all NATO countries oppose the New Agenda's 1998 and 1999 resolutions), it appeared to the MPI that the NATO NNWS are willing accomplices in such domination.

17. A principal reason the NATO leadership was able to squash the Canadian request for a full nuclear review is because there is so little public attention, let alone demand, given to the subject. There is a disconnection between the important work done by a small number of NGO activists and the general complacency of the public and political process. Highly-informed NGOs concede that, despite their best efforts to draw media attention to this issue, their publics are unaware of the proliferation threat, let alone the NPT-NATO contradiction. The result is that parliamentarians hear little from their constituents on these matters; consequently, they put little pressure on the decision-making systems in their own governments. NGOs therefore focus on a core number of concerned parliamentarians, mainly in Foreign Affairs Committees. Both parliamentarians and NGOs have pointed out that NATO's closed, secretive decision-making processes prevent meaningful public and Parliamentary involvement and influence. The December 14 report promises increased engagement, and it will be up to NGOs and politicians to ensure that the promise is kept.

18. Even before the 2000 NPT Review Conference, NATO was in trouble over its nuclear policy. Now, unless it is seen to move rapidly to make its posture coherent with the NPT Review final document, it will stand condemned as the primary impediment to genuine nuclear disarmament. NATO currently has no answer to the argument that because it places so much political value in its nuclear forces, it is providing a justification for proliferators. Instead it hints that it does not rule out threatening first use of nuclear weapons to deal with even non-nuclear "rogue" regimes - thereby exacerbating the problem.

19. The moment has arrived for NATO to confront its unacceptable nuclear policy. A first, minimal requirement is an explicit rejection of nuclear first use. The other essential steps are identified, and even endorsed by NATO states, in the NPT Review Conference 13 steps. Yet, NATO's continued addiction to the dogma of nuclear deterrence is fatally undermining its professed purpose, which is "to secure a just and lasting peaceful order in Europe."

20. Nuclear deterrence is about threatening the most indiscriminate violence possible, unrestrained by morality or law. It is a policy of gross irresponsibility, and the antithesis of a moral, rules-based international order. In challenging nuclear deterrence, the NPT Review final document, which recalls and builds upon the 1996 World Court Advisory Opinion, provides a new, internationally authorized legal obligation, which the Nuclear Weapons States and their allies can no longer ignore.

21. Over the decade since the end of the Cold War, the overwhelming majority of states have realized that nuclear disarmament is a security-building process, where nuclear weapons are a liability and a security problem. In the short and long term, security requires a more credible, safer alternative strategy based on defensive conventional armed force structures and mutual security arrangements. NATO's current conventional military posture (manifest in its overwhelming military superiority in spending and equipment, in its expansion to the east, and in its attacks on Yugoslavia) is understandably viewed by Russia as threatening and a disincentive to reducing its sub-strategic nuclear forces. Nuclear disarmament must necessarily be linked to policies of mutual security and reassurance, rather than to the threats and counter-threats of deterrence.

G. NATO's Responsibilities

22. In exercising its defence mandate, NATO has a responsibility to follow international law, not make its own. In its historic Advisory Opinion delivered on 8 July 1996, the International Court of Justice determined unanimously that any threat or use of nuclear weapons should comply with international humanitarian law, of which the Nuremberg Principles form a part. It also decided that, because of the uniquely destructive characteristics, the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be illegal. With one voice, it called on the international community to negotiate the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. This has serious implications for all those in NATO involved in planning and deploying nuclear forces. In particular, military professionals need to be seen to be acting within the law. Nearly five years on, NATO has still taken no position on the World Court Advisory Opinion. However, in November 1998 the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. drew in NATO when he stated: "Along with our allies we reviewed [nuclear deterrence doctrine] recently and concluded that it should remain the basis of our defense. Let me be clear: you will not make nuclear disarmament occur faster by suggesting that a fundamental basis of our national security for more than fifty years is illegitimate."

23. Though still intransigent, NATO's discomfort level is starting to show. Paragraphs 99 and 100 of the NATO document are particularly revealing, where for the first time NATO has clearly felt the need to examine accusations that its nuclear policy - and especially its sub-strategic arsenal - stimulates proliferation. Its rebuttals are weak and unconvincing, and are vitiated by paragraph 101, where it confirms that "the Alliance's nuclear weapons will be maintained at the minimum level sufficient to preserve peace and stability. This enhances the security of the Euro-Atlantic region and beyond." What sort of message does that send to India, Pakistan and others?

24. The core of NATO's Strategic Concept now needs to be addressed. The details of a non-nuclear security strategy for NATO will need to be worked out over several years. The Middle Powers Initiative has suggested that the following changes merit immediate and detailed consideration:

- A. Harmonize NATO's Strategic Concept with the 2000 NPT Review.
- B. De-alert U.S. and Russian nuclear forces.

- C. Reject nuclear deterrence doctrine.
- D. Withdraw NATO's nuclear arsenal.
- E. Negotiate a Tactical Nuclear Weapon Treaty.
- F. Establish a Central/Eastern Europe Nuclear Weapon Free Zone.

A. Harmonize NATO's Strategic Concept with the NPT Review

Changes are needed in the Strategic Concept to demonstrate that NATO is implementing the NPT Review final document. Bearing in mind that Alliance members unanimously agreed to the decisions listed in the document, the sooner NATO is seen to be addressing this the better.

B. De-alert U.S. and Russian Nuclear Forces

The overriding need for NATO to reassure Russia that it has no intention of exploiting Russia's military inferiority dictates that the U.S. should immediately de-alert its nuclear forces, and invite Russia to do likewise under mutual verification. This would implement most of the agreed steps from the NPT 2000 Review final document associated with promoting stability and security for all, taking further unilateral nuclear disarmament initiatives, increasing transparency and verification, reducing the operational status of systems, and diminishing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies.

C. Reject Nuclear Deterrence Doctrine

The key to achieving these major shifts is to acknowledge that nuclear deterrence is untenable and unlawful. This recognition may be timely inasmuch as there are growing voices within the U.S. political mainstream that question the doctrine of Mutual Assured Destruction. This US critique is prominently linked to ballistic missile defence proposals, but it does speak to the moral and legal affront of a security strategy that is based on the promise of mass destruction. The well-known and enduring shortcomings of ballistic missile defence suggest that threat elimination through arms control and strengthening the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and missile control regime offer a safer and more cost-effective route to security. The nuclear deterrence strategy in the end insists that if deterrence fails, nuclear attack and counter-attack are warranted, releasing a level of destruction and devastation so extraordinary that it would promise not just annihilation of the belligerents, but potentially of most forms of life on Earth. It has long since ceased to be a defensible notion of security.

D. Withdraw NATO's Nuclear Arsenal

In addition to the 150 U.S. B61 bombs in six European countries, paragraph 64 of the Strategic Concept states that, for the first time, "a small number of United Kingdom Trident warheads" are part of NATO's sub-strategic posture in Europe. The B61s should be repatriated to the U.S. into verifiable storage; the U.S. and U.K. nuclear arsenals should no longer be assigned to NATO; the U.K. should discard its attempt to create a sub-strategic role for its Trident force; and NATO's nuclear war plan should be withdrawn.

E. Negotiate a Tactical Nuclear Weapon Treaty

The withdrawal of NATO's tactical arsenal would constitute NATO's side of a major confidence-building process, and would be a powerful way to encourage Russia to negotiate a Tactical Nuclear Weapon Treaty, through which a plan could be pursued for their elimination. An immediate start on this could be made by formalizing, and making irreversible (through transparency and mutual verification), the 1991-92 reciprocal

unilateral withdrawal, by the NWS, of all tactical nuclear weapons from ships and aircraft. The next stage would be to establish a tactical/sub-strategic nuclear weapons register, in order to remedy the unacceptable absence of official figures, especially in Russia and the U.K. This could be achieved either as part of the START III negotiations, or through the reactivated NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council established under the 1997 NATO- Russia Founding Act. Given the renewed reliance on tactical nuclear 11 weapons in Russia, and to a lesser extent in the U.S., other states must take the initiative in devising and promoting ways to kick-start disarmament of tactical nuclear weapons. As the European NATO members have most to gain, they should lead in this, combining arms control initiatives with measures to address the genuine security concerns of Russia in relation to NATO's expansion and disproportionately large conventional forces.

F. Establish a Central/Eastern Europe Nuclear Weapon Free Zone

Linked to the foregoing should be the simultaneous initiation of negotiations to establish a nuclear weapon free zone in Central/Eastern Europe. Currently proposed by Belarus, this would be another important confidence- building measure both for Russia and the other former= members of the Warsaw Pact which are not in NATO, and which have long feared that they would be a nuclear battlefield. It would hopefully extend from Sweden and Finland through the Baltic states, Poland, Belarus, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Austria, the Balkan states, the Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece to Turkey. Although there is understandably little political will for this at present, especially among new or hopeful NATO members, the evolution of a de facto nuclear weapon free zone within European NATO would be achieved if more NATO member states emulated the Norwegian, Danish and Spanish precedents of refusing deployment of nuclear weapons on their territory in peacetime.

H. Canada's Special Role

25. Canada bears a special responsibility in the resolution of NATO's credibility gap because it was instrumental in getting the Paragraph 32 process started. But Canada hit a "brick wall." And it got very little support from the other NNWS members of NATO. Now the Minister who carried the flag of Canada's policy, Lloyd Axworthy, has departed the political scene. He insisted before leaving that the policy stayed with the Government. It is now up to Canadian disarmament advocates to assure his successor, John Manley, that he has the strong support of Canadians in continuing the fight within NATO councils, and that Canadians will not be content to see Canada return to working on the margins of the core issue.

26. Since NATO will certainly not move without the U.S., and the new U.S. Administration is about to commence a Nuclear Posture Review, it is virtually certain that NATO will do nothing until it sees the results of the Nuclear Posture Review. Meanwhile, the determination of the Bush Administration to proceed with a National Missile Defence (NMD), to the great concern of NATO allies and the outright opposition of Russia and China, has catapulted NMD to the forefront of the nuclear weapons scene. The political focus has shifted from new disarmament steps to containing irreparable damage to the nuclear disarmament regime by NMD. In this climate, it is important that the core issue of nuclear disarmament be the central response to missile defence system proposals. But the Bush Administration has so far shown that, while the number of strategic deployed 12 weapons may be reduced, nuclear deterrence will remain at the core of its military policy. In this climate, the NPT obligations are given short shrift. What is Canada to do?

27. In the first instance, Canada would be betraying its own principles if it were to pull back from energetically pressing its views on nuclear disarmament on both the U.S. and NATO. The review activity that Canada has promoted has affected the culture and attitude of NATO towards nuclear weapons. The Paragraph 32 process, as well as the NPT Review process, have deepened NATO's self-awareness. The Government of Canada especially recognizes the internal contradiction in NATO's dual position that nuclear weapons are essential and that they must be eliminated. Canada knows that the heart of NATO doctrine on nuclear weapons is demonstrably outmoded, and that the core of the Strategic Concept is not based on reality today. That is an essential starting point for moving forward in the new climate.

28. The government of Canada has characterized its challenge as one of "balancing" its nuclear disarmament goals with loyalty to NATO. At the heart of Canada's policy statement is this passage: "The Government agrees that Canada intensify its efforts to advance the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime. . The United Nations continues to be the key vehicle for pursuing Canada's global security objectives. . As an active member of NATO and a net contributor to overall Alliance Security, as a friend and neighbour of the United States and its partner in NORAD. Canada balances its Alliance obligations with its disarmament and non-proliferation goals."

29. The glaring inconsistencies in the NPT-NATO dichotomy should lead Canada to characterize its obligation, not as finding a "balance" between NATO and disarmament, but as the obligation to continue to vigorously pursue and implement its nuclear disarmament commitments within the context of NATO. Measured against the opposition by the U.S., which even protested Canada's decision to ask the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade to hold a nuclear review, Canada has demonstrated determination and even bravery. By setting an example for other Non-Nuclear NATO States to follow, Canada is demonstrating some diplomatic dexterity. It is bravery and dexterity that will be even more important in the future if we are to act in ways that are commensurate with the gravity of the problem of world security. Of course, Canada does not have the power on its own to force the U.S. or any other NWS to give up nuclear weapons. But Canada is obviously not alone and it does have international law and the NPT on its side. International law now requires a ban on nuclear weapons, and countries like Canada must be careful that loyalty to a nuclear alliance and a commitment to "balance" do not become tacit acceptance of the status quo. 13

30. The status quo -- the continued possession of nuclear weapons by the five permanent members of the Security Council while proscribing their acquisition by any other nation -- will not hold. Indeed, that status quo is already no longer the status quo given the spread of nuclear weapons to India, Pakistan, and Israel. The world must implement a total ban on nuclear weapons or witness their proliferation into several other countries. Canada, precisely because of its excellent credentials, is well placed to lead an international campaign to de-legitimize nuclear weapons. Canada cannot do this alone. It will only be effective through working with like-minded states so that a new coalition of respected middle-power states can together mount a kind of pressure on the NWS that they cannot - if they want to be regarded, as they do, as respectable nations themselves -- disregard. This means that Canada should work closely with the New Agenda countries in a common effort to implement the "unequivocal undertaking."

31. If Canada does not carry its peace-building aspirations into the field of abolishing nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, much of its effort will be lost in the hardening of attitudes between the NWS and the non-nuclear nations currently corroding international relations. The international community is moving to new and higher levels of danger posed by a 21st century breakout from the Non- Proliferation Treaty.

32. A series of Roundtables conducted across Canada in 1998 by Project Ploughshares explored ways in which Canada could give effective leadership and support to international disarmament initiatives. The 384 community leaders who attended the two-and-a-half hour sessions felt that the ambiguity of Canada projecting itself as a peacekeeper (even a peacemaker) yet supporting NATO's nuclear stance undermines the integrity of our overall foreign policy. Some participants argued that Canada should withdraw from NATO if NATO's nuclear policies are not changed. Others were uncertain. There are mixed feelings in the public about whether Canada should be in NATO at all, a doubt that is bound to grow as a result of NATO's bombing of Serbia and Kosovo. Many who have examined the dangers attached to the present nuclear weapons situation heavily favour getting nuclear weapons out of NATO and, if that cannot be done, getting Canada out of NATO. Many of the Roundtable participants felt that Canada, living under the U.S.-led nuclear umbrella, is virtually forced to support the U.S. in opposing comprehensive negotiations leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons. But others, of course, recognized that such is not the case. The strictures of the Cold War have been largely lifted and Canada, as well as other NNWS in NATO, should now see more clearly that NATO's nuclear umbrella has nothing to do with protection.

I. Future Coalitions

33. The gains in nuclear disarmament, modest as they are, would not have occurred without the push exerted by civil society. For example, the ICJ Advisory Opinion would never have come about without the work of the World Court Project. With the seeming paralysis of recent years, some have taken to saying that nuclear disarmament is off the radar screen, so let's get on with something else. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The abolition of nuclear weapons is at the centre of world politics. The gathering momentum of world figures in the military, politics, religion, women's groups and civil society have put it there. The fallacies and dangers of NWS policies are being exposed. World consciousness is growing.

34. These conditions make it ripe for a new grand coalition - of like-minded governments and the advanced wing of civil society - to be formed. Such a powerful combination can not only dent but pierce the nuclear armour. The NWS, by their actions at the NPT Review, proved they are not impervious to the organized voices of the world community. The Anti-Personnel Landmines Treaty came about as the result of the "Ottawa Process," in which like-minded governments, in this case led by Canada, and highly knowledgeable, dedicated NGOs formed a working partnership. The partnership worked because both wanted the same goal - the elimination of the pernicious evil of landmines. Such a coalition of mutual interest can work again. True, the relative weight of the armaments is different. Nuclear weapons, unlike landmines, are central to the NWS security doctrines. But the strength of the world community, working together and employing all the mechanisms to build public opinion around the world, can isolate the NWS and move them forward to take active steps to implement their "unequivocal undertaking . to total elimination."

This paper draws on the position paper, "Re-Thinking NATO's Nuclear Policy" by Rob Green, and on analyses provided by Project Ploughshares, BASIC (British American Security Information Council), PENN/Netherlands and BITS (Berlin Information-center for Transatlantic Security).

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