

# Canadian Pugwash Group

Chair: Dr. Adele Buckley; Vice Chair: Prof. Walter Dorn; Treasurer: Prof. Erika Simpson;  
Secretary: Prof. Sergei Plekhanov; Directors: Prof. Peter Meincke; Dr. Theodora Carroll; Mr. Steven Staples

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March 16, 2007

The Honourable Peter MacKay  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade  
125 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G2

## **Canadian Pugwash calls on the Government of Canada to place NATO nuclear weapons policies on the agenda of the upcoming NATO meetings**

Dear Minister MacKay:

In recent times, nuclear weapons have risen to the forefront as an instrument for the pursuit of national strategic goals, and with that rise the possibility of nuclear warfare has increased commensurately. It is not exaggerating to say that human life on the planet is in danger. When we consider where Canada's foreign policy addresses our interests and commitments as a non-nuclear weapons country, we look to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Further, Canada has membership in the NATO alliance, where several members are nuclear weapons states. Canadian Pugwash Group believes it is imperative for the Canadian government to draw attention to the continued incompatibility between NATO's nuclear policy and the NPT regime. Therefore we urgently request that you apply Canada's considerable influence and resources to put a discussion of NATO's nuclear weapons policies on the agenda of upcoming NATO meetings. Further, we urge you to keep this discussion at the forefront of the agenda until the contradiction is resolved, or at the very least substantial progress is evident. It is our understanding that the NATO Nuclear Planning Group meets in early April, and the NATO Foreign Ministers meet in late April, so **immediate action is required.**

Under the NPT, Canada supports the "unequivocal undertaking" for the total elimination of nuclear weapons via a program of 13 Practical Steps<sup>1</sup>; under NATO,

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/library/treaties/non-proliferation-treaty/reviewconf/trty\\_npt\\_reviewconf-2000-13-steps.htm](http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/library/treaties/non-proliferation-treaty/reviewconf/trty_npt_reviewconf-2000-13-steps.htm)

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Past Chairs

The Honourable Douglas Roche, O.C.; M.Gen.(ret) Leonard Johnson; Dr. Wm. Epstein; Prof. John Polanyi C.C.

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Canada supports the central tenet of the Strategic Concept<sup>2</sup> - nuclear weapons are "essential." The NATO allies (including Canada) must reexamine the incoherence of their combined fealty to both the NPT and NATO nuclear policy. It is particularly incomprehensible to us that Canada remains silent on this glaring contradiction.

We suggest that the Canadian government approach its NATO allies with a view to revisiting NATO's 2000 report<sup>3</sup>, "NATO Report on Options for Confidence and Security Building measures (CSBMs), Verification, Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament." Paragraph 96 of that report states:

"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."

The above paragraph and paragraph 115 ("reinvigorate the flow of information") make it clear that the 2000 NATO document is not the last word on nuclear weapons. We are calling on Canada to re-open the NATO debate in light of the grave threat to the continued viability of the NPT. Canada cannot allow the NPT to be further weakened through NATO's contradiction of the very purpose of the NPT.

This is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, founded in Pugwash Nova Scotia in 1957, and which subsequently became a worldwide movement. The organization and its founder were awarded the

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<sup>2</sup> NATO Strategic Concept 1999: <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-065e.htm>

<sup>3</sup> 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>

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Nobel Peace Prize in 1995. It is the intention of Canadian Pugwash to make NATO nuclear policies a central part of our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary campaign. We therefore plan to seek the cooperation of other Pugwash groups in NATO countries to put the same request to their governments as we have put before you.

We are aware that the Canadian public is only faintly aware of the continued and increasing threat that nuclear weapons will be used somewhere in the world, and that nuclear warfare could follow. To increase awareness of NATO nuclear policies as a key source of instability and danger, we plan a set of regional media conferences in early April. We will forward our media releases and information handouts to your office, when they are available in final form.

Please be aware that we send this letter in a spirit of support for the work of your department on nuclear disarmament policies for Canada.

Sincerely



Dr. Adele Buckley, Chair, Canadian Pugwash Group

and the Canadian Pugwash Board of Directors:

Prof. Walter Dorn; Prof. Erika Simpson; Prof. Sergei Plekhanov; Prof. Peter Meincke; Dr. Theodora Carroll; Mr. Steven Staples

CC: Prime Minister Stephen Harper  
The Hon. Gordon O'Connor, Minister of National Defence  
Mark Gwozdecky

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