



The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
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29 January 2013

Dear Prime Minister,

An important meeting of parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is fast approaching. The Preparatory Committee meeting in Geneva in April-May will explore significant possibilities for nuclear disarmament and, in particular, for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. We deem it important to share with you our thoughts and aspirations for a nuclear-weapons-free world and Canada's role in achieving it, including suggestions for the upcoming meeting and beyond.

To give deep thought on this subject, this past summer some 30 members of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs from Canada and seven other countries met in Pugwash, Nova Scotia, the birthplace of this extraordinary international movement, to explore the conditions required to finally achieve a world without nuclear weapons. The conference reinforced both the feasibility and urgency of that clearly defined and globally shared objective.

The Canadian Pugwash Group (CPG) addresses this letter, informed by that discussion, to you to strongly suggest direct and concrete action by the Government of Canada, action that acknowledges and responds to the urgency of that objective and that implements the will of Parliament as it was expressed by the unanimous motions in the Senate and House of Commons, respectively on June 2 and December 7, 2010.

The Pugwash conference employed a "strategic foresight" methodology, designed to help the international disarmament community understand more clearly the governance requirements for a secure world without nuclear weapons. We explored the actions that must be taken today and in the years and decades to come if nuclear disaster is to be averted and comprehensive nuclear disarmament realized.

The conference discussion highlighted, and the CPG welcomes and affirms, the hopeful reality that there is now almost universal support for the pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons. Publics, even in countries that now possess nuclear weapons, overwhelmingly agree that those weapons should be dismantled and eliminated within a defined timeline. Support for total nuclear disarmament amongst international security experts and policy leaders has been compellingly articulated by the “gang of four” former senior security officials in the United States: George P. Shultz, William J. Perry, Henry A. Kissinger, and Sam Nunn. Already in 2007 they wrote that the world requires both “the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and practical measures toward achieving that goal.... Without the bold vision, the actions will not be perceived as fair or urgent. Without the actions, the vision will not be perceived as realistic or possible.”

It is now also clearly established that support among Governments for that vision is virtually universal. Through the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), all 193 signatory states, including the nuclear weapon states (NWS), support, as they again affirmed at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, a commitment to “the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, to which all States parties are committed under article VI of the Treaty.” The UN Security Council’s 2009 resolution also commits states “to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the goals of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons....” In its 2010 Strategic Concept, NATO repeated and affirmed the commitment to “create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons.” The entire southern hemisphere and significant elements of the northern hemisphere are now covered by formally established nuclear-weapon-free zones, as mandated by the NPT.

Not only is there broad global support for the objective of a world without nuclear weapons, governments and the community of disarmament experts also largely agree on how to achieve it. Through decades of diplomacy, with Canada’s active participation and frequent leadership, the international community has forged a deep consensus around a detailed disarmament agenda. The 2010 NPT Review Conference final document elaborated no fewer than 64 agreed actions.

No summary can do justice to that elaborate disarmament agenda, but we point to seven key elements – all based on the Principles and Objectives agreed to by NPT states in 1995, the practical steps agreed to in 2000, and the 64 specific actions agreed to in 2010:

- The need for steady progress in verifiable and irreversible reductions to existing arsenals, leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons;
- Entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty;
- Negotiation of a fissile materials treaty;
- NWS acceptance of legally binding negative security assurances (commitments not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states);
- Commitments to non-use and to reducing the risks that existing arsenals will be used, by de-alerting all weapons systems and by diminishing the role of nuclear weapons in national security strategies;
- Greater transparency within the NWS regarding existing arsenals, and regular reports by all NPT states to document progress made toward full implementation of the Treaty; and

- A commitment to universality (extending the legal obligation to disarm to states not now within the NPT – notably through a non-discriminatory nuclear weapons convention).

The international community has also elaborated a basic approach to non-proliferation. Concerns about the further spread of nuclear weapons to other states have been joined by heightened concerns about the spread of nuclear materials and weapons to non-state groups. All states with peaceful nuclear facilities are already obligated to enter into safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) “with a view to preventing diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons...,” but there is broad agreement that additional measures are needed:

- All states should be required to adopt the IAEA Additional Protocol to permit enhanced inspections;
- Efforts to establish multilateral controls over the nuclear fuel cycle must be intensified;
- Inspections and accountability for nuclear materials must be introduced earlier in the fuel cycle process;
- All states with nuclear weapons should place all excess fissile materials under IAEA safeguards; and
- Measures to ensure the security of nuclear materials and facilities and to address threats of acquisition of such materials by non-state actors need sustained attention.

The question that we and conference participants had to face is the same question that Governments must now face with much greater urgency – namely, why is there not greater progress on an agenda that is so widely supported and understood to be essential for global security? Why is political support for the disarmament agenda not effectively translated into the political will needed to implement it?

The consultation identified a number of key obstacles to disarmament.

One is simply fear of the unknown. While the publics and governments of states with nuclear weapons support disarmament in principle, fear of an unknown future produces hesitation and reluctance. Even while acknowledging that the world would be safer without nuclear weapons and that, globally, nuclear disarmament would ultimately yield savings of some \$100 billion per year, uncertainty about future security and power relations induces hesitation.

For example, while there are clear pressures to end the stationing of nuclear weapons in Western Europe, counter pressures persist. Indeed, at least two conflicting perceptions of insecurity are at issue within the Euro-Atlantic region – the insecurity that Russia professes in the face of NATO’s overwhelming conventional superiority, and the insecurity that former Warsaw Pact states profess in the face of what they see as a still ambitious and threatening Russia. Meanwhile, the US “modernization” or “life extension program” for the B61 bomb deployed in Europe adds to Russia’s threat perceptions and conflicts with commitments made in the NPT context to progressively reduce the role for nuclear weapons in security policies.

As it has been since the 1980s, ballistic missile defence is also a central irritant in the relationship between the two states with the overwhelming majority of nuclear weapons, the United States and Russia.

There are steps that can be taken to address these fears and the inertia it generates, and we urge you and your Government to mount, as called for by the 2010 unanimous Parliamentary motions, “a major world-wide Canadian diplomatic initiative in support of preventing nuclear proliferation and increasing the rate of nuclear disarmament.” We suggested that, through such an initiative, Canada promote, among others, the following measures:

1. **Transparency:** To overcome the fear and hesitation referred to above will require much greater transparency and openness. Transparency, championed particularly by Canada in the NPT context, was again affirmed as an essential confidence-building measure at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, but the reporting obligations that have been established continue to be routinely ignored by most NPT states.

2. **Towards a new Euro-Atlantic security community:** Canada should actively support programs like the Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative (EASI) to promote security cooperation and shared responsibility as a way of addressing the conventional military imbalance within the Euro-Atlantic region. A similar conventional military imbalance in the South Asia region also requires the active pursuit of a security community there. The objective in each case must be the creation of a security community in which states in the region “agree never to use or threaten force against one another.”

In the EASI project there is an appropriate acknowledgement that there is a need to go beyond formal or governmental diplomacy to involve civil society and informed citizen diplomacy of the kind that the Pugwash movement has engaged in since its founding in 1957.

3. **Sole purpose and no-first-use of nuclear doctrines:** It is striking that none of the threats highlighted in the context of the recent NATO strategic concept review is effectively, or even marginally, deterred by nuclear weapons or by NATO’s implied first-use threat. The threats that most worry NATO planners include asymmetrical attacks, terrorism, cyber attacks, WMD attacks from non-state actors, and rogue-state long-range missiles. The nuclear capabilities of the NWS that are members of NATO might be regarded by some as a deterrent to long-range missile threats, but that deterrent operates independently of NATO. Nuclear weapons, including those based in Europe, have no role in addressing the other identified threats.

Because nuclear weapons are ineffective against the primary threats, the security of NATO states would be undiminished, and further nuclear reductions would be encouraged, by renouncing NATO’s collective nuclear policy, and by insisting that as long as NWS arsenals continue to exist their role should be confined to the sole purpose of deterring the use of nuclear weapons by others. All states with nuclear weapons should be called on to issue no-first-use declarations as an unambiguous way of reinforcing the commitment to reducing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies.

4. Promote a nuclear weapons convention: To engage the broad international community more directly in the nuclear disarmament process, preparatory work needs to begin on a nuclear weapons convention or, as the UN Secretary-General put it, on “a framework of separate, mutually reinforcing instruments.” The December 7, 2010, House of Commons motion called for Canadian action in support of the Secretary-General’s five-point disarmament plan and the Government should thus undertake consultations with like-minded states and civil society groups in exploring ways and means of moving forward toward a nuclear weapons convention.

5. Implementing key elements of the agreed nuclear disarmament agenda: All 64 of the actions agreed to at the 2010 NPT Review Conference need active support and, in that context, we urge special attention to these three measures:

- Entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty;
- Negotiation of a fissile materials treaty;
- Action to make the IAEA Additional Protocol the minimum safeguards requirement for all states.

At the Pugwash conference we heard that disarmament progress is additionally undermined by: “the duplicity of the nuclear weapons states and NATO, the timidity of the non-nuclear weapons states, irresponsible media, weary and confused public opinion, and lack of religious, academic and business leadership.”

At the same time, an agenda for responsible action by nuclear weapon states, non-nuclear weapon states, the media, and civil society is now available. It remains for key states, like Canada, supported as it is by a committed public and the will of Parliament, to break the restraints of uncertainty, hesitation, and inertia and press forward with bold diplomacy toward the common goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

We commend the above proposals for your active consideration and look forward to your response. We hope that they can serve as a further impetus for Canadian leadership on the world stages, including in future NPT-related meetings.

Please accept our good wishes for you and your family.

Sincerely,



Prof. Walter Dorn
Chair



Ernie Regehr, O.C.
Vice Chair

cc: The Hon. John Baird, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada
The Hon. Peter MacKay, Minister of National Defence
The Hon. Tom Mulcair, Leader of the Official Opposition, the New Democratic
Party of Canada;
The Hon. Bob Rae, the Liberal Party of Canada;
Daniel Paillé, Bloc Québécois
Elizabeth May, the Green Party of Canada
Planning committee for workshop “A Secure World Without Nuclear Weapons”:
Adele Buckley; Helmut Burkhardt; David Harries; Alexa McDonough, O.C.;
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NB: Copies of this letter are also being sent by email.

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Past Chairs: Dr. Adele Buckley; The Hon. Douglas Roche, O.C.; M.Gen.(ret) Leonard Johnson;
Dr. Wm. Epstein, O.C.; Prof. John Polanyi, C.C.