

**Canadians for a
Nuclear Weapons Convention**



**Rassemblement canadien pour une
convention sur les armes nucléaires**

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Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention

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A project of Canadian Pugwash Group 56 Douglas Drive, Toronto, ON M4W 2B3

Email: cnwc@pugwashgroup.ca

CNWC Report to Canadian Pugwash Group

(September 2020)

Submitted on behalf of the Steering Committee of Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, a project of the Canadian Pugwash Group.

This report covers the period
September 2019 through August 2020.

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1. Engagement with the Government of Canada

Over the past 12 months CNWC sent two formal policy letters to the Government of Canada:

January 23, 2020 (See Appendix 1 for full text)

The letter, signed by 89 influential Canadians, all having been honored by the Order of Canada, reviewed the dismantling of the international arms control/disarmament regime, pointed to the fragile state of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and called on Canada to build a “bridge between the nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states” based on support for the call, by the Chair of the NPT preparatory process, on all member states to commit to the implementation of Article VI, and on nuclear weapon states to recommit to their “unequivocal undertaking...to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament.” The letter also called on Canada “to support and publicly call for a number of immediate measures which are aimed at reducing the risks of nuclear use and at building a political climate more conducive to disarmament” – notably the removal of nuclear weapons from high alert status, the removal of US tactical nuclear weapons from Europe, acknowledge the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as a welcome and effective initiative that is fully compatible with the NPT, and encourage NATO, Russia, and China to begin “ongoing talks on the conditions and requirements for strategic stability and disarmament.”

June 9, 2020 (See Appendix 2 for full text)

This follow-up letter noted that the current pandemic is “teaching us, with dramatic clarity and urgency, the extent to which current spending priorities, along with the prevailing understanding of security, are tragically failing humanity.” It encourages Canada and other governments to use the additional time afforded by the postponement of the NPT Review Conference to early 2021 “to reflect on the true basis of human security and how it can be more effectively pursued within the NPT context.” It notes that during her visit to Ottawa in February, the UN High Representative for Disarmament, Izumi Nakamitsu, called on Canada to “take a leading role” in helping

states build a spirit of cooperation and flexibility to save the NPT. The letter also expressed deep “disappointment” that the Foreign Minister’s major address on foreign policy made no reference to “the nuclear weapons problem let alone Canada’s responsibilities as an active member of the NPT.” It urged the Prime Minister to “bring the nuclear danger and the need for clear action to the attention of the Canadian people in order to strengthen public awareness and support for bold Canadian action,” concluding that “CNWC’s continued call for the start of comprehensive negotiations toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons as a prerequisite for peace is not a lonely cry but a vital part of the new fabric of human security.”

2. Visit to Ottawa of the UN High Representative for Disarmament, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu (February 18-19, 2020)

This was the fourth time that CNWC hosted the visit of a UN High Representative to Ottawa – earlier visits were by Sergio Duarte, Angela Kane, and Kim Won-Soo. These visits have focused on bringing nuclear disarmament concerns more directly to the attention of the Government, Parliamentarians, and government officials. Once again, Global Affairs Canada engaged its protocol office to recognize Ms. Nakamitsu’s presence as an official visit.

These UN HR visits have also helped to identify CNWC as a significant interlocutor with the Canadian policy community, in and out of Government.

i. Parliamentary Breakfast Meeting:

We are especially grateful to Member of Parliament John McKay and his staff for hosting and organizing this event. Mr. McKay was committed to making it a politically inclusive event, and thus representatives from each of the other Parties joined him to serve as joint sponsors. More than 20 MPs and Senators participated in the meeting, a modest turnout, but still fairly strong given the challenges of getting Parliamentarians to add another event to their already crowded schedules.

Ms. Nakamitsu made informal introductory remarks, representatives from each of the parties offered brief responses, and there then followed a lively Q and A session. Alyn Ware of the international Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament was present and able to make a number of good contacts toward revitalizing a Canadian PNND group.

Appendix 3-1 includes the invitation to Parliamentarians and the list of co-sponsors.

ii. Meetings with Global Affairs Canada:

The High Representative had meetings with Global Affairs Canada officials, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rob Oliphant, MP, and with

the Ambassador for Women, Peace and Security over lunch. Ms. Nakamitsu indicated she was very pleased with all of these engagements.

iii. Dinner with the High Representative:

CNWC hosted a dinner with Ms. Nakamitsu and civil society leaders. Two Global Affairs officials and a representative of the University of Ottawa's Centre for International Policy Studies also participated.

iv. Public lecture at University of Ottawa

Ms. Nakamitsu gave a public lecture at the Centre for International Policy Studies, co-sponsored with CNWC, on the topic: **“Securing Our Common Future: Why Disarmament Matters Today as Much as Ever.”**

The session was chaired by Prof. Alexandra Gheciu of the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and the Centre for International Policy Studies. Dr. Jennifer Simons, President of The Simons Foundation Canada and member of the CNWC Steering Committee, gave the opening and welcoming address (See **Appendix 3-2**), followed by the address by Ms. Nakamitsu (see **Appendix 3-3**). It was a full house of about 75 people with a particularly engaged Q and A session, followed by a reception.

v. Press reports and commentary:

See **Appendix 3-4** for a list of, and links to, related reports and commentaries. We owe a special thanks to Jennifer Pedersen for all her work in reaching out to media representatives.

4. CNWC Award

Since 2011 CNWC has presented the annual Distinguished Achievement Award for exemplary action in support of nuclear disarmament. The 2019 recipients were physicians Mary-Wynne Ashford and Jonathan Down of Victoria, BC. The citation reads: “for your enduring and steadfast work towards a world without nuclear weapons and your special commitment to teaching and energizing students on the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons.”

See **Appendix 4-1** for the announcement and more extensive tribute (it also includes a list of previous recipients of the award). CNWC Steering Committee member Doug Roche presented the award (his comments are in **Appendix 4-2**). The recipient responses are in **Appendix 4-3** and **Appendix 4-4**.

5. Thank you

CNWC is a volunteer led project and is thus supported by a wide variety of individuals and organizations – not all of which can be listed here, but with special thanks we draw your attention to the following:

- The Canadian Pugwash Group is the sponsoring organization for the CNWC project and, in addition to the important public affirmation that comes with that sponsorship, the CPG also brings critically important financial and administrative support, the latter coming especially via the CPG Treasurer who looks after the financial administration. Special thanks to CPG Chair Paul Meyer and Treasurer Peter Venton.
- The Simons Foundation Canada has provided CNWC a three-year grant to support administration of the project, and in the Fall of 2020 the Foundation will assume basic secretariat services for CNWC. Special thanks to the Foundation for its critically important support.
- The more than 1,000 recipients of the Order of Canada who have endorsed the CNWC call lend these efforts a heightened sense of gravitas and credibility. Many of these supporters sign on to particular letters to the Government of Canada.
- CNWC is supported by a distinguished Advisory Panel.
- Sarah Bowles has provided ongoing and varied administrative support.
- And, of course, the CNWC Steering Committee does the basic work.
- We are especially indebted to the distinguished jurilinguist Gérard Snow for his ongoing translation service to CNWC.

6. Steering Committee Members 2019-2020

Adele Buckley
Beverly Delong
Cesar Jaramillo
Ernie Regehr
Douglas Roche
David Silcox
Jennifer Allen Simons

7. The CNWC mandate

The basic purpose and aims of CNWC:

CNWC invites recipients of the Order of Canada to endorse the following statement:

“The United Nations General Assembly’s first resolution (January 24, 1946) called for the elimination of nuclear weapons from national armaments. That remains the formal

objective of the international community, but it has not prevented a monumental nuclear arms race, the legacy of which is dangerously present in the almost 15,000 nuclear weapons that remain in national armaments, some 1,800 of which are on high alert and capable of being fired on 15 minutes' notice. In 2017 the UN General Assembly adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which opened for signature on 20 September 2017. It marks a significant milestone in the pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons and Canada should sign it as a matter of urgency. This nuclear prohibition treaty reinforces the need for a comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention through which to codify the agreements, regulations, institutional arrangements, and verification measures essential to accomplishing the prohibition and irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons.

“Accordingly, we call on all member states of the United Nations – including Canada – to endorse, and begin negotiations for, a Nuclear Weapons Convention.”

In pursuit of that broad objective, CNWC is engaged on essentially five fronts:

- a) we reach out to Order of Canada recipients to invite them to endorse the call for a NWC, keep those who endorse the call informed of our activities, and invite participation by them - especially in signing on to our communications with Government;
- b) we engage with government, through letters, briefings, and meetings, pressing not simply for them to endorse a NWC in principle, but encouraging direct action on specific elements of the global nuclear disarmament agenda;
- c) hold nuclear disarmament forums and information sessions for Parliamentarians, convinced that without more literate legislators re nuclear issues, Governmental action and progress will be impeded;
- d) present an annual award designed to celebrate and encourage civic action in support of disarmament; and
- e) from time-to-time co-sponsor conferences and workshops with like-minded groups on agreed disarmament agenda items.

Submitted on Behalf of the CNWC Steering Committee
September 2019
Ernie Regehr, Chair, CNWC Steering Committee

Appendix 1 – January 2020 Letter to Prime Minister



23 January 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister,

Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, supported by more than 1,000 recipients of the Order of Canada, write once again to urge you and your Government to make nuclear arms control and disarmament a national priority. In this letter, we make specific suggestions, notably that Canada work diligently toward achieving an international consensus to save the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) at its Review Conference in 2020.

We begin by expressing appreciation that your Government is actively responding to the global climate crisis. But there is another global existential threat that requires urgent attention – namely, the threat of annihilation by the 14,000 nuclear weapons still maintained by nine countries.

Thirty years ago, the Cold War ended with major reductions in nuclear weapon stockpiles and a surge of hope that the folly of seeking security through mutually assured destruction would soon be consigned to history. But relations between the West and Russia are once again toxic. The U.N. Institute for Disarmament Research recently said that the risk of nuclear weapons being used is at its highest since World War II.

The nuclear powers are spending billions of dollars to “modernize” their arsenals. This renewed nuclear arms race is pursued in the context of a dangerously deteriorating global security environment in which the institutions and agreements meant to advance arms control and disarmament are crumbling. So thorough is the collapse of arms control and disarmament that, if the 2010 US-Russia New START agreement is not renewed before its February 2021 expiry, not a single international treaty will be left to impose specific limits on arsenals.

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Since 2000, a succession of key treaties has been abandoned: the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (in 2001), the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (in 2007), the Iran nuclear deal (abandoned by the US in 2018), and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces agreement (in 2019). The Trump Administration is now threatening to also pull out of the 2002 Treaty on Open Skies – an agreement that allows members, which include Russia and the United States, to conduct surveillance flights over each other's territory in support of Ronald Reagan's famous counsel to "trust but verify" (Canada was key in developing this Treaty and is a depository state). The 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty still lacks key ratifications needed for it to enter into force. For more than two decades the UN's designated forum for negotiating treaties, the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament, has been deadlocked and has made no progress on a promised treaty, actively championed by Canada, to block further production of fissile materials for weapons purposes.

The still central, but seriously beleaguered, NPT imposes on all states a legal obligation to eliminate their nuclear weapons. The Treaty's central failing is that it sets no deadline, or even a general timeline, for disarmament and does not prescribe a specific schedule of cuts to arsenals. Thus, the nuclear powers continue their brazen refusal to honour their legal obligations and, as a result, this Treaty too is in danger of being abandoned – in this case, not by the nuclear powers, but by the growing number of non-nuclear-weapon states that question whether the nuclear weapon states will ever forgo their nuclear arms. If that perception continues to be justified by the intransigence of the nuclear powers, certain Middle East non-nuclear states will inevitably conclude that they have no choice but to seek nuclear weapons for themselves.

As is the case in its response to the climate crisis, Canada on its own will not make the decisive difference in efforts to overcome the nuclear crisis. But in the past, Canada was helpful in working actively with like-minded states to strengthen the NPT. Another such moment, crying out for creative diplomacy, has arrived. Canada is challenged to call upon its store of political standing and diplomatic ability to work to save the NPT at its Review Conference April 27-May 22, 2020. A bridge between the nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states can best be built by adopting recommendations put forward last year by the Chairman of the Conference's preparatory process.

Canada should thus give leadership to a proposal to lead off the coming NPT Review Conference with a Ministerial-level declaration that would offer broad support to those recommendations by: a) recognizing the existential nuclear threat and reinforcing the urgency of the moment; b) recognizing the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear use by reiterating the Reagan-Gorbachev dictum that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought;" and c) reaffirming the disarmament steps and actions - including the "unequivocal undertaking" by the nuclear powers "to accomplish the total

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elimination of their nuclear arsenals” – that were approved by consensus at the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences.

We also call on Canada to support and publicly call for a number of immediate measures which are aimed at reducing the risks of nuclear use and at building a political climate more conducive to disarmament:

- urge the United States to accept Russia’s recent offer to immediately extend the New START Treaty;
- encourage nuclear weapon states to remove all their nuclear weapons from high alert status;
- urge the United States to remove all tactical nuclear weapons from the territories of NATO partner states in Europe;
- urge the United States (and NATO) and Russia to declare they will never be the first to use nuclear weapons;
- support the long-standing call for a credible process to develop a treaty to establish the Middle East as a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction;
- acknowledge the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as a welcome and effective initiative that is fully compatible with the NPT; and
- encourage NATO, Russia, and China to commence ongoing talks on the conditions and requirements for strategic stability and disarmament.

New efforts are now being made to strengthen international cooperation, notably through the creation of the Alliance for Multilateralism, led by Germany and France. We call on Canada to demonstrate leadership in restoring a rules-based international order, specifically by working to save the NPT.

We are aware and deeply appreciative of the ongoing work of Canada’s skilled officials and diplomats on this file, but they need to be overtly supported and encouraged at the highest political level, particularly by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

We look forward to hearing from you on the details of your new Government’s response to the existential nuclear weapons threat.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Acker, C.M.
Constance Backhouse, C.M.
A. Charles Baillie, O.C.
Christopher Barnes, C.M.

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Judith Hall, O.C.
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Lettre au premier ministre – 23 janvier 2020

Le très honorable Justin Trudeau
Premier ministre du Canada
Cabinet du premier ministre
80, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON
K1A 0A2

Monsieur le premier ministre,

Le Rassemblement canadien pour une convention sur les armes nucléaires, appuyé par plus de 1 000 lauréats de l'Ordre du Canada, vous écrit de nouveau pour vous presser, ainsi que votre gouvernement, de faire du contrôle des armes nucléaires et du désarmement une priorité nationale. Dans la présente lettre, nous faisons des recommandations précises, dont celle que le Canada travaille diligemment à l'obtention d'un consensus international autour de la sauvegarde du Traité de non-prolifération nucléaire (TNP) à la Conférence d'examen du TNP de 2020.

Nous tenons tout d'abord à vous remercier pour l'approche proactive de votre gouvernement face à la crise climatique mondiale. Mais il y a une autre menace existentielle à l'échelle mondiale tout aussi urgente : il s'agit du danger d'annihilation que présente les 14 000 armes nucléaires que possèdent toujours neuf pays.

Il y a trente ans, la Guerre froide s'est terminée sur des réductions importantes des arsenaux nucléaires et une montée d'espoir que cette folie d'aspirer à la sécurité par l'assurance d'une destruction mutuelle serait bientôt reléguée à l'histoire. Mais les relations entre l'Occident et la Russie se sont de nouveau envenimées. L'Institut des Nations Unies pour la recherche sur le désarmement a déclaré récemment que le risque du recours aux armes nucléaires n'a jamais été aussi élevé depuis la Seconde Guerre mondiale.

Les puissances nucléarisées dépensent des milliards de dollars à la « modernisation » de leurs arsenaux. Cette course renouvelée aux armes nucléaires se déroule dans un contexte qui ne cesse de se détériorer sur le plan de la sécurité mondiale et dans lequel on assiste à l'écroulement des institutions et des accords voués à l'avancement du contrôle des armes et du désarmement. Cet écroulement est rendu au point que, si l'accord New START américano-russe de 2010 n'est pas renouvelé avant son

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échéance de février 2021, il ne restera plus un seul traité international susceptible d'imposer des limites précises sur les arsenaux.

Depuis l'an 2000, une série de traités clés ont été abandonnés : le Traité sur les missiles antimissiles balistiques (Traité ABM) de 2001, le Traité sur les forces armées conventionnelles en Europe de 2007, le pacte nucléaire iranien (abandonné par les USA en 2018) et le Traité de limitation des armes nucléaires à moyenne portée de 2019. L'Administration Trump menace maintenant de se retirer également du Traité « Ciel ouvert » de 2002, cet accord qui permet aux membres, y compris la Russie et les États-Unis, de survoler leurs territoires réciproques, suivant le conseil célèbre de Ronald Reagan de « faire confiance tout en vérifiant » (le Canada a joué un rôle clé dans l'élaboration de ce traité et est un des États dépositaires). Le Traité d'interdiction complète des essais nucléaires de 1996 a toujours besoin de ratifications clés pour entrer en vigueur. Pendant plus de deux décennies, le forum désigné par l'ONU pour la négociation des traités, savoir la Conférence sur le désarmement sise à Genève, est dans une impasse et n'a fait aucun progrès vers le traité promis, dont le Canada s'est fait le champion, visant à stopper la production de matière fissile aux fins d'armement.

Le TNP, quoique sérieusement diminué, demeure crucial en ce qu'il impose à tous les États l'obligation légale d'éliminer leurs armes nucléaires. Sa grande faiblesse, cependant, c'est qu'il ne fixe aucune échéance, même pas un échéancier progressif, pour le désarmement et ne prescrit pas un calendrier précis pour la réduction des arsenaux. Il n'en faut pas plus pour que les puissances nucléaires continuent de refuser effrontément d'honorer leurs obligations légales, si bien que le Traité lui-même est menacé d'abandon, non par les puissances nucléaires, mais par le nombre croissant d'États non nucléarisés qui doutent que les États nucléarisés se débarrassent vraiment de leurs armes nucléaires. Si l'intransigeance des puissances nucléaires continue d'alimenter cette perception, certains États non nucléarisés du Moyen-Orient vont inévitablement conclure qu'ils n'ont pas d'autre choix que de se munir d'armes nucléaires.

Tout comme dans le cas de son engagement face à la crise climatique, le Canada ne pourra seul parvenir à désamorcer la crise nucléaire. Il reste que, dans le passé, le Canada s'est rendu utile en collaborant activement au renforcement du TNP avec des pays aux vues similaires. Voilà qu'une autre occasion similaire s'offre à lui de faire preuve de diplomatie créative. Le Canada est mis au défi de puiser dans sa réserve d'expérience politique et d'habileté diplomatique pour travailler à la sauvegarde du TNP à sa Conférence d'examen du 27 avril au 22 mai 2020. Un pont peut être érigé entre les

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États nucléarisés et non nucléarisés par l'adoption des recommandations mises de l'avant l'an dernier par le président du processus préparatoire du TNP.

Le Canada devrait ainsi faire figure de proue dans le mouvement pour que la prochaine Conférence d'examen du TNP s'ouvre sur une déclaration au niveau ministériel qui viendrait appuyer dans l'ensemble ces recommandations : a) en reconnaissant la menace nucléaire existentielle et en renforçant l'urgence d'agir; b) en reconnaissant les conséquences humanitaires catastrophiques d'un recours au nucléaire, suivant la formule Reagan-Gorbatchev selon laquelle « une guerre nucléaire ne peut être gagnée et ne doit jamais être engagée »; et c) en réaffirmant les mesures de désarmement – y compris « l'engagement sans équivoque » des puissances nucléaires de « réaliser l'élimination totale de leurs arsenaux nucléaires » – qui ont été approuvées par consensus aux Conférences d'examen de 2000 et de 2010.

Nous engageons aussi le Canada à faire pression publiquement pour des mesures immédiates visant la réduction des risques du recours au nucléaire et l'instauration d'un climat politique plus favorable au désarmement, notamment :

- en pressant les États-Unis d'accepter l'offre qu'aurait faite récemment la Russie de prolonger immédiatement la durée de l'accord New START;
- en exhortant les États nucléarisés à retirer toutes leurs armes nucléaires qui entraînent un état d'alerte; en pressant les États-Unis de retirer toutes les armes nucléaires tactiques des territoires des États partenaires de l'OTAN en Europe;
- en pressant les États-Unis (avec l'OTAN) et la Russie de déclarer qu'ils ne seront jamais les premiers à recourir aux armes nucléaires;
- en appuyant la demande réitérée bien des fois d'établir un processus crédible d'élaboration d'un traité visant à faire du Moyen-Orient une zone exempte d'armes nucléaires et d'autres armes de destruction massive;
- en reconnaissant le Traité sur l'interdiction des armes nucléaires comme initiative souhaitable et efficace, entièrement compatible avec le TNP;
- en exhortant l'OTAN, la Russie et la Chine à entamer des pourparlers continus sur les conditions préalables à la stabilité et au désarmement à long terme.

De nouveaux efforts sont maintenant faits pour renforcer la coopération internationale, notamment par l'intermédiaire de l'Alliance pour le multilatéralisme, sous la direction de l'Allemagne et de la France. Nous engageons le Canada à faire preuve de leadership dans la restauration d'un ordre international fondé sur les règles, en particulier en travaillant à la sauvegarde du TNP. Car, comme Mikhaïl Gorbatchev le disait récemment, les dangers nucléaires actuels sont « colossaux ».

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Nous sommes bien conscients et reconnaissants du travail continu de nos éminents officiels et diplomates canadiens dans ce dossier, mais ils ont besoin d'être ouvertement appuyés et encouragés aux niveaux politiques supérieurs, particulièrement par le premier ministre et le ministre des Affaires étrangères.

Dans l'espoir de recevoir bientôt des détails sur la façon dont votre nouveau gouvernement entend contrer la menace existentielle des armes nucléaires, nous vous prions d'agréer, Monsieur le premier ministre, l'expression de nos sentiments les plus distingués.

Carolyn Acker, C.M.
Constance Backhouse, C.M.
A. Charles Baillie, O.C.
Christopher Barnes, C.M.
Gerry Barr, C.M.
Paul Beeston, C.M.
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Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention

Rassemblement canadien pour une convention sur les armes nucléaires

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Appendix 2 – June 2020 Letter to Prime Minister



[CNWC Media Release June 11, 2020](#)

Fund Human Security, Not Nuclear Weapons, CNWC Urges

Leading Canadian peace advocates have called on the Government to end its silence on the looming nuclear weapons threat and to take greater responsibility in the global effort to save the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). In a letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (CNWC) also criticized the “staggering” cost of nuclear weapons at the expense of properly funding internationally agreed sustainable development goals.

“CNWC’s continued call for the start of comprehensive negotiations toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons as a prerequisite for peace is not a lonely cry but a vital part of the new fabric of human security,” the letter said.

CNWC is a project of the Canadian Pugwash Group (part of the Nobel Prize winning international Pugwash movement) and is supported by more than 1,000 prominent Canadians, all recipients of the Order of Canada. The group recently sponsored the visit to Ottawa by Izumi Nakamitsu, U.N. High Representative for Disarmament, who warned that the danger of “the use of nuclear weapons — either deliberately, by accident, or through miscalculation — is higher than it has been in decades.”

There are more than 13,000 nuclear weapons held by nine states, all of whom are modernizing their arsenals in a new nuclear buildup, which will

cost \$1 trillion in this decade. This spending, the CNWC letter said, is “tragically failing humanity” at a time when human security needs are greater because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The letter criticized the government’s silence on this matter and said Canada needs to take a heightened sense of responsibility, especially since it is running for a seat on the U.N. Security Council.

Text of CNWC letter to Prime Minister (in both official languages) can be found below.

For more information, contact:

Ernie Regehr, O.C. (Chair, CNWC Steering Committee)

eregehr@uwaterloo.ca

519-591-4421

The Hon. Douglas Roche, O.C. (Member, CNWC Steering Committee)

Douglas.roche@gmail.com

780-984-8292

June 9, 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C.
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON, K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister,

The ravages of COVID-19 are teaching us, with dramatic clarity and urgency, the extent to which current spending priorities, along with the prevailing understanding of security, are tragically failing humanity. While Secretary-General Antonio Guterres pleads for a global ceasefire and for governments to spend an extra \$2 billion to help fragile countries deal with the pandemic, we learn that worldwide military expenditures have risen to \$1.9 trillion.

We are now facing the stark reality that those costly armies and weapons cannot protect us from COVID-19 — or its successors. The old ways of trying to build security — through bigger and better weapons — continue to rob us of the focus, human ingenuity, and resources needed to advance the security of the most vulnerable. The perversion of global priorities through the prevailing militarized understanding of security is best illustrated by the ongoing failure to properly fund the 17 areas of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). It becomes clearer with each day of the present crisis that going forward it will be through full attention to human security — building sustainable health systems, ensuring access to clean water, building affordable housing, pursuing environmentally responsible food production, and finally facing the climate change crisis — that we will find the path to durable peace and security.

Yet, while funding for the SDGs and human security languishes, we are reminded by Joseph Cirincione, president of the Ploughshares Fund of Washington, D.C. and a guest of CNWC at meetings with the Government of Canada in 2018, that those steadily expanding military expenditures are also driving a “new nuclear buildup” that is set to reach the “staggering” cost of more than \$1 trillion in this decade.

CNWC last wrote to you on January 23, 2020, suggesting a number of practical measures aimed at reversing this destructive trajectory of misplaced public spending, at reducing the risks of nuclear war, and at building a political climate more conducive to disarmament. In that letter, signed by 89 prominent Canadians, all recipients of the Order of Canada, we called on Canada, *inter alia*, to urge the United States to accept

Russia's recent offer to immediately extend the new START Treaty, and to support the recommendations put forward last year by the Chairman of the preparatory process for the forthcoming Review Conference of the NPT. We look forward to your early and detailed response.

We note that this country played a leadership role in the creation of the Open Skies Treaty, and thus we also urge your Government to join 10 European Union countries in emphasizing the importance of the treaty and in committing to its continued implementation. We expect Canada to call on the United States to continue to honour the treaty and on Russia to lift flight restrictions, notably over its Kaliningrad region.

The postponement of the NPT Review Conference to early 2021 affords governments additional time and opportunity to reflect on the true basis of human security and how it can be more effectively pursued within the NPT context. The need for such rethinking was emphasized by the UN High Representative for Disarmament, Izumi Nakamitsu, when she visited Ottawa as the guest of CNWC earlier this year and called on Canada to "take a leading role" in helping states build a spirit of cooperation and flexibility to save the NPT. We thank the Government of Canada for cooperating with us on this timely visit.

High Representative Nakamitsu warned that in this present bleak political environment, the danger of "the use of nuclear weapons — either deliberately, by accident, or through miscalculation — is higher than it has been in decades." Today, nuclear weapons states are rushing to modernize their arsenals, and the disarmament architecture so carefully constructed over many years is near collapse. There can be no doubt that the renewed nuclear arms race between the major nuclear powers is the greatest threat to peace since the depths of the Cold War.

While a gridlocked U.N. Security Council, charged with maintaining peace and security in the world, is almost impotent, we note that on February 26, 2020 it did call on all States parties to the NPT "to cooperate in facilitating progress in non-proliferation, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and nuclear disarmament." All current members of the Security Council reaffirmed "joint responsibility for the future of the Treaty."

With Canada currently running for a seat on the Security Council, this "joint responsibility" affirmation must be taken extremely seriously. For this reason, CNWC was very disappointed, in reading the comprehensive speech on foreign policy given by Foreign Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne to the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations February 21, 2020 not to see even one reference to the nuclear weapons problem let alone Canada's responsibilities as an active member of the NPT.

Downplaying nuclear disarmament in public fora and inter-governmental arenas will result in less public support for forward-minded policies. We are aware that your Government does engage regularly with many countries, including the U.S. and Russia, on non-proliferation and disarmament issues in an effort to find common ground, particularly in the lead-up to the NPT Review Conference. We urge you as Prime Minister to also bring the nuclear danger and the need for clear action to the attention of the Canadian people in order to strengthen public awareness and support for bold Canadian action.

CNWC's continued call for the start of comprehensive negotiations toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons as a prerequisite for peace is not a lonely cry but a vital part of the new fabric of human security.

Yours sincerely,

The CNWC Steering Committee

Ernie Regehr, O.C. (Chair)

Douglas Roche, O.C.

Jennifer Simons, C.M.

David Silcox, C.M.

Adele Buckley

Beverly DeLong

Cesar Jaramillo

CC: The Honourable Chrystia Freeland
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs
The Honourable François-Philippe Champagne
Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Honourable Harjit Sajjan
Minister of National Defence
The Honourable Andrew Sheer
Leader of the Official Opposition
Yves-François Blanchet
Leader of the Bloc Québécois
Jagmeet Singh
Leader of the New Democratic Party
Elizabeth May
Parliamentary Leader of the Green Party

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Le 9 juin 2020

Le très honorable Justin Trudeau
Premier ministre du Canada
80, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0A2

Monsieur le premier ministre,

S'il y a une chose que les ravages causés par la COVID-19 nous apprennent de façon tout aussi éclatante qu'urgente, c'est à quel point les priorités que nous accordons aux dépenses publiques ainsi que notre conception de la sécurité publique sont malheureusement des échecs pour le sort de l'humanité. Au moment même où le secrétaire général Antonio Guterres plaide pour un cessez-le-feu mondial et supplie les gouvernements de dépenser deux milliards de dollars supplémentaires pour aider les pays fragiles à surmonter la pandémie, nous apprenons que les dépenses militaires à l'échelle planétaire ont augmenté jusqu'à atteindre 1,9 trillion de dollars.

Force nous est d'admettre que ces armées coûteuses et ces armements dispendieux ne peuvent rien contre la COVID-19 et les autres épidémies à venir. Ces vieilles recettes de renforcement de notre sécurité au moyen d'armes toujours plus puissantes nous éloignent sans cesse de la priorité, de l'ingéniosité et des ressources qu'il faut pour améliorer la sécurité des groupes les plus vulnérables. Rien n'illustre mieux cette perversion des priorités mondiales par le prisme d'une sécurité militarisée que notre échec continu à financer convenablement les 17 secteurs des Objectifs de développement durable (ODD). Il devient plus clair chaque jour de la crise actuelle que, dans l'avenir, ce sera dans une attention soutenue pour la sécurité humaine – la construction de systèmes de santé durables, l'accès à l'eau propre et à un logement abordable, une production alimentaire respectueuse de l'environnement et, en fin de compte, un affrontement véritable de la crise du changement climatique – que nous trouverons le chemin vers une paix et une sécurité durables.

Pourtant, pendant que le financement des ODD et de la sécurité humaine se languit, Joseph Cirincione, président du Ploughshares Fund de Washington et invité du Rassemblement canadien pour une convention sur les armes nucléaires (RCCAN) à ses réunions avec le gouvernement du Canada en 2018, nous rappelle que ces dépenses militaires en croissance constante sont en même temps la source d'un nouveau renforcement nucléaire qui, à cette allure, devrait atteindre le coût stupéfiant de un trillion de dollars durant la décennie en cours.

Le RCCAN vous a écrit le 23 janvier 2020 pour vous recommander un certain nombre de mesures pratiques visant à renverser cette ruée destructive de dépenses publiques inopportunes, à réduire les risques d'une guerre nucléaire et à instaurer un climat politique plus favorable au désarmement. Dans cette lettre, souscrite par 89 éminents Canadiennes et Canadiens, tous lauréats de l'Ordre du Canada, nous avons notamment engagé le Canada à presser les États-Unis d'accepter l'offre qu'aurait faite récemment la Russie de prolonger immédiatement la durée de l'accord New START et à appuyer les recommandations mises de l'avant l'an dernier par le président du processus préparatoire en vue de la prochaine Conférence d'examen du Traité de non-prolifération nucléaire (TNP). Nous espérons recevoir bientôt une réponse détaillée de votre part à ce sujet.

Nous désirons faire remarquer que notre pays a joué un rôle de premier plan dans l'élaboration du Traité « Ciel ouvert ». Par conséquent, nous pressons votre gouvernement de se joindre à dix pays de l'Union européenne pour faire valoir l'importance du traité et faire progresser sa mise en œuvre. Nous comptons sur le Canada pour engager les États-Unis à continuer de respecter le traité et engager la Russie à lever les restrictions aériennes, notamment au-dessus de sa région de Kaliningrad.

Le report de la Conférence d'examen du TNP au début 2021 donne plus de temps et de possibilités aux gouvernements pour réfléchir sur les fondements véritables de la sécurité humaine et sur les manières de les réaliser plus efficacement dans le cadre du TNP. L'importance de cette nouvelle façon de voir les choses a été soulignée par la haute représentante de l'ONU pour les affaires de désarmement, Izumi Nakamitsu, lors de sa

visite à Ottawa plus tôt cette année en tant qu'invitée du RCCAN. Elle a engagé le Canada à assumer un rôle de premier plan dans les efforts pour aider les États à forger un esprit de coopération et de flexibilité en vue de sauver le TNP. Nous remercions le gouvernement du Canada pour sa collaboration à l'occasion de cette visite qui tombait à point nommé.

La haute représentante Nakamitsu a prévenu que, dans le contexte politique morose actuel, le risque du recours aux armes nucléaires – délibéré, accidentel ou par erreur de calcul – est plus élevé qu'il n'a jamais été depuis des décennies. Aujourd'hui, les États nucléarisés se pressent de moderniser leurs arsenaux, si bien que le dispositif de désarmement élaboré avec soin au fil des ans est sur le point de s'écrouler. Il n'y a aucun doute que la course renouvelée aux armes nucléaires entre les grandes puissances nucléaires constitue la plus grande menace à la paix depuis le cœur de la Guerre froide.

Chargé de maintenir la paix et la sécurité dans le monde, le Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU, égaré dans une impasse qui le rend presque impuissant, a tout de même engagé tous les États parties au TNP, le 26 février 2020, à collaborer en vue de faire avancer la non-prolifération, les recours pacifiques à l'énergie nucléaire et le désarmement nucléaire. Tous les membres actuels du Conseil de sécurité ont renouvelé leur engagement commun à l'endroit de l'avenir du Traité.

À l'heure où le Canada postule pour un siège au Conseil de sécurité, cet engagement renouvelé doit être pris extrêmement au sérieux. C'est pour cette raison que le RCCAN a été très déçu, à la lecture du grand discours sur la politique étrangère qu'a livré le ministre des Affaires étrangères, François-Philippe Champagne, au Council on Foreign Relations de Montréal le 21 février 2020, de ne pas y trouver la moindre allusion au problème des armes nucléaires, ni même aux responsabilités du Canada en tant que membre actif du TNP. Minimiser le désarmement nucléaire dans les forums publics et les arènes intergouvernementales aura pour effet de diminuer l'appui du public envers les politiques progressistes. Nous savons bien que votre gouvernement s'entretient régulièrement avec beaucoup de pays, y compris les États-Unis et la Russie, sur les questions de non-prolifération et de désarmement en vue d'arriver à un terrain d'entente, particulièrement en préparation de la Conférence d'examen du TNP. Nous

vous pressons, en votre qualité de premier ministre, de porter aussi à l'attention de la population canadienne le danger du nucléaire et l'opportunité de mesures claires à ce sujet, dans le but de renforcer la sensibilisation du public et d'obtenir son appui pour une action canadienne audacieuse.

La demande constante du RCCAN pour le démarrage de négociations d'envergure en vue de l'élimination complète des armes nucléaires comme condition préalable à la paix n'est pas une réclamation solitaire, mais un élément essentiel du nouveau plan pour la sécurité humaine.

Nous vous prions d'agréer, Monsieur le premier ministre, l'expression de nos sentiments les plus distingués.

Le comité directeur du RCCAN

Ernie Regehr, O.C. (Chair)
Douglas Roche, O.C.
Jennifer Simons, C.M.
David Silcox, C.M.
Adele Buckley
Beverly Delong
Cesar Jaramillo

CC:

L'honorable Chrystia Freeland
Vice-première ministre et ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
L'honorable François-Philippe Champagne
Ministre des Affaires étrangères
L'honorable Harjit Sajjan
Ministre de la Défense nationale
L'honorable Andrew Sheer
Chef de l'opposition
Yves-François Blanchet
Chef du Bloc Québécois
Jagmeet Singh
Chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique
Elizabeth May
Parlementaire Chef du Parti vert

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Appendix 3 – Visit of UN High Representative for Disarmament



An Address to Members of Parliament by the UN's Chief Disarmament Diplomat

Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu
Under-Secretary-General and High
Representative for Disarmament Affairs

**Thursday, February 20, 2020
7:30am – 9:00 am
Room 410, Wellington Building
(full breakfast included).**

Sponsored by Michel Boudrias MP, Jack Harris M.P., Elizabeth May M.P., Hon. John McKay M.P., Arnold Viersen M.P., and Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention:

Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, the UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament, bluntly warns that the struggle for nuclear arms control and disarmament is “going backwards” and calls for “a new vision” to re-establish arms control dialogue and negotiations.

She sees 2020 as a crucial year for disarmament and for re-energizing the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. It will take place in the face of increasing hostility between the major nuclear powers, the challenges of new weapons technologies and nuclear “modernization” programs, and the ongoing dangers of nuclearized regional conflicts.

However, she also sees real opportunities. The 2020 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will mark its fiftieth year and could become a key moment in the return to a common vision and path leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. She calls for renewed dialogue among major powers based on respect for one another’s legitimate security interests and on a recommitment to the disarmament steps already agreed to at past NPT Review Conferences.

Ms. Nakamitsu acknowledges that states like Canada have in the past played important bridge-building and facilitating roles, and that they will once again have the same opportunities at the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

Izumi Nakamitsu speaks out of extensive expertise and experience in global conflict management. A former professor of international relations and peacebuilding professional, her United Nations work, before heading up Disarmament Affairs, has included crisis response operations in the UN Development Program, advising on large movements of refugees and migrants, and directing the Asia and Middle East Division of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

Welcome to Madame Izumi Nakamitsu
CNWC Event
Ottawa
February 18-19th, 2020

My name is Jennifer Allen Simons. I am President of The Simons Foundation Canada and a Member of Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention; an initiative of the Canadian Pugwash Group. The Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (CNWC) involves more than 1,000 Canadians honored by the Order of Canada, who have declared their support for a more active engagement by Canada on nuclear disarmament, including the start of negotiations toward a Comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention – a verifiable treaty on the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

On behalf of the Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, I am pleased to welcome Madame Izumi Nakamitsu, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

Madame Nakamitsu has a long history of expertise in the issues which concern us most. She has gained this expertise in various positions she has held at the United Nations, including membership in former Secretary-General Kofi Annan's Committee on UN Reform.

She holds academic credentials in law and the Foreign Service, was Professor of International Relations at Hitotsubashi University and served as a member of the Foreign Exchange Council to Japan's Foreign Minister. Madame Nakamitsu has for many years contributed to disarmament and was named by Fortune Magazine as one of the World's 50 Greatest Leaders.

Madame Nakamitsu, welcome to Canada. We are honoured that you accepted the invitation from our organization, Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention.

Canada, as you are no doubt aware, is a founding member of the United Nations, fully committed to the principles of the UN Charter; and is committed to the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

And we, Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, believe that the risk of nuclear weapons use - through accident, miscalculation or deliberate detonation - is higher than at any point since the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. All nuclear weapons states are upgrading their nuclear weapons and delivery systems. They are developing new types and new uses for nuclear weapons. And a new

nuclear arms race has begun. Yet nuclear disarmament has faded into obscurity on the global agenda.

We are concerned that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is endangered. And if the New START Agreement, the remaining arms control treaty, is not extended the NPT will be the only treaty restricting nuclear weapons. Furthermore, four states possessing nuclear weapons are not party to the NPT. In essence, there will not only be no progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons, but rather nuclear chaos may ensue.

We are concerned that the NPT will collapse because the nuclear weapons states parties to the NPT have rejected their disarmament commitment – the essential Third Pillar of the NPT. The disarmament Pillar is integral to the treaty, and its success, rests on the nuclear weapons states' commitment to eliminate their weapons.

The new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is a welcome initiative which addresses this transgression, and in this sense, complements and is fully compatible with the NPT. However, in important respects the Ban Treaty is deficient and in no sense, can it replace it.

It is imperative that Canada and all states, both non-nuclear and those protected under the so-called nuclear umbrella, exert every effort to strengthen and save the NPT. This can only be achieved if there is to commitment to concrete disarmament steps.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty cannot succeed without this. The NPT cannot continue to be a mere controller and manager of non-proliferation or it will fail.

I believe I can speak for Canada when I say that we are determined to make progress on disarmament. We are committed to support you, Madame Nakamitsu, to work for a positive outcome of the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Thank you!

Please welcome Madame Nakamitsu.
End

Izumi Nakamitsu
High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

***“Securing our Common Future:
Why disarmament matters today as much as ever”***

University of Ottawa, Wednesday, 19 February 2020

Dr. Alexandra Gheciu,
Dr. Jennifer Simons,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for the gracious introduction and what a pleasure it is to join you today. My sincere thanks to the University of Ottawa’s Centre for International Policy Studies for inviting me to deliver this lecture. My deep appreciation also to *Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention*, and to Ernie Regehr and Senator Douglas Roche in particular, for making this event happen.

This august institution has produced many inspiring Canadians, including my esteemed former colleague and close friend, Louise Arbour.

It is also a pleasure to be back in Canada. Since the inception of the United Nations, Canada has been a champion of multilateralism and of disarmament.

From seeking to ban landmines and nuclear testing, to holding accountable those who dare to use chemical weapons and advocating for a long overdue ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, few can lay claim to having had as great an impact on the elimination of Weapons of Mass Destruction and the regulation of conventional weapons as Canada.

I would especially like to applaud Canada for its leadership on an issue of the utmost importance to me – the advancement of women’s empowerment and promotion of the rights of women and girls, something Canada’s feminist foreign policy does much to progress.

This leadership extends also to the field of disarmament. Canada remains among the strongest and most consistent voices in support of both the achievement of gender parity in disarmament processes, as well as the systematic recognition of the gendered impact of different weapons and the solutions required to respond to these realities in a sustainable manner.

I should highlight too the leadership role Canadian scientists, diplomats and civil society have played, and continue to play, in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

As the title of my lecture indicates, the need for that quality of leadership has not diminished.

I want to begin today by saying that an important element of my role as High Representative for Disarmament Affairs is public outreach, often through speeches or lectures such as this. I

speak to many different groups and stakeholders, but I particularly relish speaking at academic institutions such as this one and having the chance to engage with thought leaders – of both this generation and future generations. I do hope we will have a robust question and answer session.

While the concept of ‘youth’ is somewhat amorphous, by some metrics we are witnessing the largest generation in history: 1.8 billion “young” people, 90 percent of whom reside in developing countries. Working with and for young people is, therefore, central to ensuring a more peaceful and prosperous world for all.

This is a responsibility I take seriously because the world around us is one that is increasingly marked by division, distrust and a dearth of dialogue.

Relations between countries, including those possessing nuclear weapons, are declining as diplomacy gives way to bellicose rhetoric and the militarization of international affairs.

As Secretary-General Guterres said to the General Assembly: “Across the global landscape, we see conflicts persisting, terrorism spreading and the risk of a new arms race growing.”

It is an environment in which the use of nuclear weapons – either deliberately, by accident or through miscalculation – is higher than it has been in decades.

This is what I would like to speak about today – the grave dangers posed by nuclear weapons and the pressing need for diplomatic measures to confront those dangers.

Given the complexity of today’s international context, with its raft of priorities – from climate change to sustainable development, pandemics and migration – it is useful to consider why nuclear weapons should be among the most urgent.

I can name three reasons.

First, after seventy-five years, nuclear weapons remain the most destructive weapons invented. Most of the weapons in today’s arsenals are vastly more powerful than those that incinerated Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

Second, along with climate change, nuclear weapons pose one of two existential threats to the planet – nuclear war threatens the prospect of an environmental cataclysm.

And third, any use of nuclear weapons would precipitate a humanitarian catastrophe. No country can adequately respond to the use of a nuclear weapon, especially one detonated in a populated area.

For these reasons, the Secretary-General has repeatedly underscored that the pursuit of nuclear disarmament is the United Nations’ highest disarmament priority.

And for these reasons, the international community has worked to prevent the use of nuclear weapons and to take steps towards their elimination.

Total numbers of nuclear weapons are a fraction of what they were in the mid-1980s, and a sound framework of instruments has been developed to reduce the risks of nuclear war and advance nuclear disarmament.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, or the NPT, has emerged as the lynchpin of this regime – a bulwark against the proliferation of nuclear weapons and a de facto negotiating forum to achieve gains in nuclear disarmament.

Such progress was possible largely due to political leadership from nuclear weapons possessors, especially the United States and the Russian Federation, but also global efforts to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons; to build transparency, trust and confidence; and to advance an understanding that the pursuit of a world free of nuclear weapons enhances all countries' security.

Sadly, in recent years this progress has first slowed, then stalled, and now appears to be in retreat.

What the Secretary-General has termed “the nuclear menace” is growing. The norm against the use of nuclear weapons and the collective goal of a nuclear weapon-free world are threatened in ways not seen since the height of the Cold War.

Contrary to the perceptions of many, the threat of nuclear weapons never left us. Even today there are still some fourteen thousand nuclear weapons in existing arsenals. What has changed – what has provoked a sense of alarm among many – is the result of several intersecting developments.

The first is what I would call a return to Cold War-style mindsets about the utility of nuclear weapons. Rhetoric about nuclear warfighting is increasingly common and is coupled with expensive nuclear weapon modernization campaigns – campaigns that go beyond maintaining the security and safety of nuclear weapons to the development of new military missions.

Many have argued that we have moved from a quantitative nuclear arms race based on numbers to a qualitative nuclear arms race based on faster, stealthier and more accurate weapons.

The second development relates to the way in which the nuclear landscape and, indeed, the global security landscape, has shifted. The nuclear bipolarity of the Cold War is gone, but it is not yet clear what has replaced it. Regional tensions with nuclear overtones, such as recently in South Asia, are not declining. Regional proliferation concerns including in the Middle East and East Asia, are worsening.

In parallel, transformative technologies in areas such as computing power, machine learning and sensors are driving the development of new means and methods of warfare. If left unchecked, these could have dangerous ramifications, including for the use of nuclear weapons. Conflict in cyberspace or outer space could have strategic consequences. The development of artificial intelligence poses serious questions about human control of decisions over the use of force. Our increasingly digitally linked world has exposed new vulnerabilities, such as the possible hacking or spoofing of command and control structures.

A third development, closely linked to the others, is the decline of the disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation regime. The institutions created to safeguard our collective security and to negotiate the next steps in arms control and disarmament are paralyzed. Arms control agreements painstakingly constructed throughout the Cold War are collapsing.

The dissolution of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty last year was a serious blow not only to regional but global security.

The removal of these brakes on nuclear weapons competition, without a successor in place, serves to exacerbate the concerns I have already outlined. The inability of the international

community to negotiate new instruments undermines faith in multilateral institutions as a means of constraining armed conflict.

In 2017, one hundred and twenty-two countries adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the first multilateral nuclear disarmament treaty in more than twenty years. But while the treaty clearly reflects the legitimate fears of a majority of the international community, no nuclear-armed country or any of their allies have joined it.

Dear colleagues,

These are negative trends, but they are not irreversible. I would, therefore, like to focus on how we can respond to these challenges and craft a way forward to a safer and more secure world.

Almost two years ago, Secretary-General Guterres released his agenda for disarmament, *Securing Our Common Future*. He did so not to prescribe a course of action for UN Member States, but rather to provide a road map of potential solutions to the numerous challenges to international peace and security we face.

The agenda is holistic – it recognizes that, while nuclear weapons pose an existential threat, it is the so-called conventional weapons that are the main killers. These weapons, including their illicit circulation among state and non-state actors, are chiefly responsible for the human suffering caused to men, boys, women and girls caught up in cycles of conflict and armed violence. One need only to look at the news to see the devastating impact. The agenda highlights the need for new partnerships and to seek new ways to ensure new technologies are not used to threaten humanity. It also ensures a diversity of voices are brought into discussions, including civil society, women and youth.

More broadly, the agenda seeks to reinsert disarmament into its historic position as an integral component of conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution.

The four pillars of the agenda – the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, the regulation of conventional weapons, the response to new means and methods of warfare and the need for strengthened partnerships – represent a guiding framework for my office, UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, and for the United Nations system more broadly.

Not everyone has agreed with every part of the agenda, but I have been heartened by the number of countries that have signed up as champions and supporters of key actions, including Canada.

When it comes to nuclear disarmament, there are a number of steps that Member States can take to get back on the path to a world free of nuclear weapons. And on which academic institutions and civil society organizations, including young people, can serve as key advocates and catalysts for action.

The first is to hold the line and stop the erosion of the existing regime. I applaud all efforts to seek new frameworks for a dynamic international context, but we should not abandon time-tested instruments until those new frameworks are in place.

In this context, the extension of the “New START” treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States must be of the highest priority. Should this treaty expire in 2021 without a successor, it will be the first time we have faced unconstrained nuclear competition since the 1970s.

The Secretary-General has been active in encouraging both countries to extend the treaty, as provided for in its articles, and so should the rest of the world.

A second near-term action and one necessary to reinforce the norm against the use of nuclear weapons, is for all countries to reaffirm the Reagan-Gorbachev statement that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.

Third, while I firmly believe that the only way to eliminate the risks posed by nuclear weapons is to eliminate the weapons themselves, there is a clear need for practical measures that can reduce the current risks associated with them.

One place to start could be to restore many of the confidence-building measures utilized during the Cold War, such as working level military-to-military dialogues. Another could be the development of regional risk reduction measures or those to reduce the risks associated with new technologies.

A fourth action is to finish the unfinished business of the last two decades. Both an in-force legally binding prohibition on nuclear testing and a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons are essential elements of a world free of nuclear weapons. They should remain priorities. Canada has invested in leading these processes.

Similarly, in 1995, 2000 and 2010, members of the NPT undertook numerous commitments related to disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Many of these commitments remain unfulfilled. While I appreciate that the changing international context has affected some, the vast majority remain relevant – not least the unequivocal undertaking by the five nuclear-weapon States to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.

Commitments undertaken in the framework of the NPT need to be honoured. Failure to do so fundamentally weakens the Treaty.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The five actions I've outlined are necessary near-term initiatives. But as I have noted, the international environment has evolved considerably since the end of the Cold War. The current context requires, in the words of Secretary-General Guterres, "a new vision".

We must recognize that there are new risks and new opportunities. We need to clearly identify and find solutions for the former, as well as ways to leverage the latter.

Such a new vision requires much more thought and debate before it can have any practical effect. However, there are some clear gaps that need to be addressed. Let me mention several as examples.

Any new vision, first and foremost, needs to take into account the multipolar nuclear order. Efforts to reduce and eliminate not only nuclear weapons themselves, but also their delivery vehicles, need to become more multilateral.

The outstanding issue of missiles needs to be addressed. For too long the dangers posed by missiles and their proliferation has been unconstrained. As these weapons become more advanced and more countries acquire them, it is time to consider how to ensure they do not become an increasingly destabilizing factor in international relations.

The international community should seek solutions to mitigate the challenges today's game-changing technologies will pose to strategic stability and to the existing non-proliferation

safeguards regime. But, perhaps more importantly, it should also consider how we can make better use of these technologies in the pursuit of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Disarmament verification is one area in which new technologies are already being applied, but there are others such as nuclear security measures and safeguards that also have great potential. This underscores that there are many positives that can be associated with the use of new technologies.

The divisive issue of missile defence systems also needs to be discussed. Many of the perceived concerns related to the future of arms control stem from this issue.

Finally, a new vision must make room for new voices. This does not just mean bringing new voices to the table, but to quote a fellow Canadian and disarmament leader, Ray Acheson, of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and Reaching Critical Will, it's about "completely re-setting the table."

For too long the need for gender-balance in disarmament and the inclusion of a gender dimension in disarmament policy has been overlooked. This needs to change. I welcome States', including Canada's, support on this matter, but more needs to be done.

A new approach to disarmament should recognize and address the gendered impact of different weapon types and systems and the impact certain weapons have on the prevalence of gender-based violence. It should underscore that ensuring the equal, full and effective participation of women in all decision-making processes related to disarmament is essential for the promotion and attainment of sustainable peace and security.

There is historic precedence for women's engagement in shaping disarmament instruments, from the making of the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963, to the Anti-Personnel Landmine Treaty of 1999, to the Treaty of Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons of 2017. We must build on these experiences to ensure that the field of disarmament of the future includes the diverse perspectives and experiences needed to unlock creative, innovative and sustainable solutions.

For this reason, my office has initiated a youth for disarmament movement to connect young people with experts to learn about today's international security challenges, the work of the UN and how they can be active participants. We have also established a Youth Champions for Disarmament training programme to impart the necessary knowledge and skills to young people and empower them to make their contribution to disarmament and sustaining peace, as national and world citizens. I trust institutions such as this one will also serve as incubators of new experts and leaders in this field.

In April and May of this year, the States parties to the NPT will hold their five-yearly review of the Treaty. This Conference, which also celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force and the twenty-fifth anniversary of its indefinite extension, presents both a symbolic and a practical opportunity to take action on all of the issues I have raised today.

I believe the Review Conference can be a springboard for the coming years – a way to chart a future course of action and ensure that this vital treaty retains its place as the centrepiece of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime and as a pillar of our collective security. But it is up to States parties to acknowledge that responsibility and act upon it in a spirit of cooperation and flexibility. Again, I trust that Canada will take a leading role in this respect.

With that, I want to thank you for listening to me today, and I hope that we will have the opportunity to work together to craft the world we want for this and future generations.

Media reports and commentary:

Mike Blanchfield, “UN disarmament chief warns of ‘dark side’ of AI, as Liberals tout benefits,” Postmedia Feb. 24, 2020.

<https://postmedia.us.janrainso.com/static/server.html?origin=https%3A%2F%2Fnationalpost.com%2Fpmn%2Fnews-pmn%2Fcanada-news-pmn%2Fun-disarmament-chief-warns-of-dark-side-of-ai-as-liberals-tout-benefits>

Mike Blanchfield, “Benefits of AI touted by Liberals, despite UN warnings of its ‘dark side’,” The Canadian Press, February 24, 2020

<https://globalnews.ca/news/6590510/united-nations-artificial-intelligence/>

Mike Blanchfield, “UN disarmament chief warns of 'dark side' of AI,” National Observer, February 25, 2020

<https://www.nationalobserver.com/2020/02/25/news/un-disarmament-chief-warns-dark-side-ai>

Mike Lapointe, “UN nuclear disarmament rep ‘counting on Canada’ to help bridge tricky international divides,” *The Hill Times*, 20 February 2020.

<https://www.hilltimes.com/2020/02/20/un-nuclear-disarmament-rep-counting-on-canada-to-help-bridge-tricky-international-divides/236847>

CIPS Blog by Ernie Regehr: [Disarmament Diplomacy in the Age of Putin and Trump](#)

Peggy Mason, the Rideau Institute Blog:

<https://rideauinstitute.ca/2020/02/25/un-disarmament-chief-visits-ottawa-fm-champagne-outlines-foreign-policy-priorities/>

Appendix 4 – Annual CNWC Achievement Award

Two Physicians, Mary-Wynne Ashford and Jonathan Down 2019 CNWC Award Winners for Nuclear Disarmament Teaching

Two West Coast physicians, Mary-Wynne Ashford and Jonathan Down, will receive the Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (CNWC) 2019 Distinguished Achievement Award for their teaching on the medical and humanitarian consequences of nuclear war.

The two doctors, who reside in Victoria, B.C., formed a team in 2017 to give joint presentations to inform and energize students in classrooms on Vancouver Island, encouraging them to become involved in nuclear disarmament activities.

“Their teamwork approach is innovative and productive and worthy of being emulated throughout Canada,” said Ernie Regehr, CNWC Chairman. “We are giving this award to recognize them and also encourage similar programs across Canada to help young people understand the gravity of the nuclear weapons problem and how they can participate in nuclear disarmament groups.”

Dr. Ashford is a retired family physician and former Co-President of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985. She was a high school chemistry and English teacher before studying medicine. Her book, *Enough Blood Shed: 101 Solutions to Violence, Terror, and War*, has been translated into Japanese and Korean.

Dr. Down is a developmental paediatrician, a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of British Columbia. He is the incoming President of Physicians for Global Survival and a charter member of the Vancouver Island Peace and Disarmament Network.

Sandy Webster Worthy, former Curriculum Coordinator for Victoria Public Schools, in whose high school class Drs. Ashford and Down have appeared, described how students become “energized” on hearing the two doctors. “At first, they sit in stunned silence,” she said, “and then it’s like they want to pick up a torch and get activities going in their schools.” Another teacher, Mark Neufeld, who teaches global issues classes to high school students, said the Ashford-Down presentations were “remarkable” in helping young people grasp the realities of the threat to their existence.

The award will be presented to Drs. Ashford and Down September 26 at 6 pm at a reception at the Cartier Place Hotel, Ottawa.

Previous recipients of the CNWC Achievement Award are:

2011 Murray Thomson
2012 Bev Delong
2013 Fergus Watt
2014 Adele Buckley
2015 Paul Dewar
2016 Peggy Mason
2017 Metta Spencer
2018 Debbie Grisdale.

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Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention

Rassemblement canadien pour une convention sur les armes nucléaires

A project of Canadian Pugwash Group 56 Douglas Drive, Toronto, ON M4W 2B3

Email: cnwc@pugwashgroup.ca

CNWC Award Presentation, Ottawa, September 26, 2019
By Douglas Roche

We are gathered here tonight to honour two distinguished peace education activists, Dr. Mary-Wynnne Ashford and Dr. Jonathan Down, for their exemplary and inspiring teaching on the medical and humanitarian consequences of nuclear war.

The term “peace education” embraces a wide field of subjects that make up the common security agenda. “Disarmament education” is a special area concentrating on the reduction and elimination of armaments — the instruments that killed 100 million people in the 20th century and go on threatening every person on the planet today. The most horrendous of these instruments of death are, of course, nuclear weapons.

When the first United Nations Special Session on Disarmament was held in 1978, the final document created a disarmament education initiative to explain to the largest possible number of people that, in the nuclear age, security is not found in an ever-expanding accumulation of arms, but in the development of international cooperation. Disarmament information programs were launched around the world and, in 1980, UNESCO held a World Congress on Disarmament Education. The University for Peace in Costa Rica was founded. Fellowship and research programs were started. The development of the themes for a culture of peace, to replace the culture of war, followed. The Government of Canada joined other governments in helping to finance the growing number of civil society disarmament education programs.

The two decades that followed the first Special Session on Disarmament were an exciting time. I felt energized throughout this period. The world was, coherently, moving forward, and the structural architecture for nuclear disarmament was beginning to take shape. Disarmament education raised the level of public engagement.

Then — something happened. Call it the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Call it the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Call it the sweeping powers of the military-industrial complex. An array of forces led to a loss of public focus on needed disarmament efforts. Our youth today are not being taught the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of even one of the 14,000 nuclear weapons possessed by nine countries. There is a gigantic disconnect between the gravity of the nuclear weapons crisis and governmental inaction. More public knowledge is needed about nuclear disarmament steps that are being taken, such as the new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Disarmament education must be revived. Enter the two visionary doctors.

Mary-Wynnne Ashford and Jonathan Down have grasped the magnitude of this problem and turned their formidable teaching skills into action. The two doctors, who reside in Victoria, B.C., formed a team in 2017 to give joint presentations to inform and energize students in classrooms on Vancouver Island, encouraging them to become involved in nuclear disarmament activities. I have talked to teachers who hail their work.

Their teamwork approach is innovative and productive, and worthy of being emulated throughout Canada, and that is why Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention is proud to give them our annual Achievement Award. As Ernie Regehr, the CNWC Chairman, has stated\: “We are giving this award to recognize them and also encourage similar programs across Canada to help young people understand the gravity of the nuclear weapons problem and how they can participate in nuclear disarmament groups.”

Dr. Ashford is a retired family physician and former Co-President of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985. She was a high school chemistry and English teacher before studying medicine. Her book, *Enough Blood Shed: 101 Solutions to Violence, Terror, and War*, has been translated into Japanese and Korean.

Dr. Down is a developmental paediatrician, a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of British Columbia. He is the incoming President of Physicians for Global Survival and a charter member of the Vancouver Island Peace and Disarmament Network.

It is a pleasure to present the CNWC 2019 award to the Vancouver Island dynamic duo.

**Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention
Awards Ceremony, Ottawa
September 26th, 2019**

Speaking notes by Dr. Mary-Wynne Ashford

I am very surprised and deeply honored to receive this award from the CNWC today, especially in the light of the distinguished past recipients.

I would like to make two points tonight.

The first point arises from the Consultation with Global Affairs Canada held at the end of March this year.

After listening to talks about the issues of Arms Control and Disarmament from eight in the morning to five in the afternoon I was aware of a sense of duty, frustration, resignation, perseverance and not much joy in the room. The speakers were faced with the reality of a US Government that has withdrawn from key treaties and is abandoning the principles of a rules-based system. Their work is slow and arduous and may be for naught in the end.

At the end of the day I commented that perhaps the reason the world is making so little progress in nuclear disarmament is the lack of engagement of civil society. Most people are deeply concerned about climate change and their economic future and not very receptive to adding another issue to worry about.

My second point is about the importance of singing together in social movements. Let me tell you about the actions Jonathan Down and I have carried out over the past two years.

Jonathan called me when Kim Jong Un and Donald Trump began threatening the use of nuclear weapons. It seemed unbelievable that the existential threat was back again.

We began doing public presentations about the current threat of nuclear war. We gave 24 presentations in 2018-19, to over 1200 people. Most of our talks were in high schools to about 250 grade nine and ten students at a time. The remainder were to service clubs like Rotary or Probus, churches, and community groups.

In the beginning, the talks to older adults were more detailed because we assumed that the audience was already fairly knowledgeable about nuclear weapons. They had lived through the Cold War and many had been in the peace movement. That assumption turned out to be a mistake. They told us they had forgotten why we were so terrified of nuclear war, and that they felt raw and filled with despair at the state of the world with the US and North Korea threatening each other with nuclear weapons. It was significant to us that they told us not to tell them

numbers and statistics, not to tell them about treaties, just talk about what we need to know right now and what to do.

Perhaps you remember when you first understood the danger of nuclear war and how you felt. Imagine now that you are a 16 year old who has only seen images of atomic bombs in the context of science fiction and dystopian post-apocalyptic movies. You have not learned what happened to real people and what a threat these weapons are today. You are awake at night worrying about climate change and the future of the planet.

Now you hear from two doctors, that there is a threat of nuclear war between North Korea and the United States, and that it would likely expand to other nuclear weapons states. One student said "you are telling us this could mean the end of life on earth in an afternoon and this is the first time we have ever heard this? How come no one has told us this before?"

What happened in those classrooms changed how we present this material now. We needed to give them the historical facts they didn't know, and we needed to be honest in acknowledging how disturbing the information is. But we also needed to lower the emotional tension in the classroom. We tried to balance the anxiety produced by the world situation, with the positive steps being taken to abolish nuclear weapons. We needed to focus on the success of the Ban Treaty and the enormous influence of civil society.

Jonathan said " We know our slides and this information are shocking and horrifying. All we can say is that every time we present this material, Mary-Wynne and I feel exactly as you do now. We find we need a break and we remember that the thing that sustained us through the peak of the Cold war was singing together and holding hands. Somehow that made us feel we were not alone facing this terrible threat. We'd like you to experience that by standing up and joining us in the John Lennon song, "All we are saying is give peace a chance. "

We had a group of volunteer singers and two choir leaders who were able to join us for many of the school presentations. Students today actually hate singing in a group. They like to stay seated and listen to a professional, but when the choir leader said "take out your imaginary phones and turn on the candle," the students waved their hands and sang with us.

Jonathan and I needed that emotional break as much as the students did.

After singing, we switched to talking about the successes of civil society and the excitement of the Ban Treaty. We told them of the powerful impact of all the young people working as volunteers at the humanitarian conferences in Norway, Mexico and Austria and the Nobel Peace Prize. We told them to take the signature sheets, get twenty signatures, take a picture and send it to us and destroy their original.

We asked them to use our Powerpoint and do a presentation of their own in another class and send us a photo on Instagram.

In one high school, the students went en masse into the library and bombarded the librarian with questions. After that we produced a resource sheet to guide them.

We kept an Excel spreadsheet of each event, the number of attendees, whether or not there was singing or not, and the result. For half of our talks, the singers couldn't join us because the event was too distant or it conflicted with a choir rehearsal.

We reflected together after each presentation and modified our slides and talks. With both adults and students, we found a distinct difference between the events when we sang and those when we didn't. When we sang together and held hand, the audience stayed an extra half hour talking to us and to the choir members. When we didn't sing, the audience left immediately after thanking us for the work we are doing, but not becoming engaged in any way.

Conclusion

I would like to remind us how wonderful it was when we sang together at peace meetings in the past. If you are willing, please stand and join in singing one of the current songs.

We sang with the video:

Video "The Tide is Rising" - © 2015 Rabbi Shoshana Meira Friedman and Yotam Schachter

Lyrics:

The tide is rising and so are we
The tide is rising and so are we
The tide is rising and so are we
This is where we are called to be
This is where we are called to be

Verses:

The task is mighty and so are we...
The land is holy and so are we...
The storm is raging and so are we...
The sun is shining and so are we...
The world is ready and so are we...

Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention; Award Ceremony Ottawa
September 26th 2019

Dr. Jonathan Down

Good evening.

I wish to acknowledge that we are here on the traditional unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg people.

Thank you for honoring Mary-Wynne and myself with this award which we are very pleased to accept. It is indeed humbling to be considered amongst the ranks of some outstanding previous recipients, - some of whom are here this evening.

It's good to be back in one of my old hometowns, especially since this is where I began to understand the meaning of the words advocacy and activism which is what I would like to talk with you about over the next 10 minutes or so.

In a former life I worked as an Emergency Room Pediatrician at CHEO. This is a major center for pediatric trauma in Eastern Ontario. Unfortunately many children sustain significant head injuries while riding a bike without a helmet. Parents talked about their feelings of guilt in not providing their child with a helmet. So I became involved with a colleague in a research project which explored some of those factors. We provided some educational materials and a coupon to be redeemed at Canadian Tire for a suitable CSA approved helmet. We published our findings and together with a community group we advocated for changes in the law, which eventually led to the introduction of bicycle helmet legislation in the province. For me this was a fairly clear example of identifying a problem, looking at some of the risk factors involved and then taking the next step in advocating for change at a policy level.

However, I do not have a rational explanation for becoming involved with Project Ploughshares. The only one I can offer is the birth of my daughter Nathalie combined with a growing sense of "unease" about the world.

At the time Gorbachev and Regan were negotiating the INF Treaty. In our little peace group in Manotick, there were a couple of amazing artists who volunteered to paint two watercolours of the Rideau River. These were signed by over 250 people and we presented them to the Soviet and US ambassadors, as an expression of our thanks to the two Presidents for making the world a little bit safer.

But who would have thought, that a month later, on the front page of Pravda there was a story about a group of Canadian "simple folk" from Manotick describing us as "workers not always able to sort out the fine points of negotiations between great powers" but who nonetheless "wish to stand up and serve the cause of peace"

The Ottawa Citizen ran a piece highlighting the fact that the front page of Pravda is usually reserved for internal news, unless there's a big event going on. It was the first front page story devoted to Canada since 1945.

I should add that none of the US newspapers picked up the story. With hindsight this was my first experience as a peace activist-although at the time I would have been reluctant to use the term.

In his 1987 book "Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World" Mikhail Gorbachev reflected on his change of thinking about the role of nuclear

weapons and deterrence. He identified two groups of (what we would now call) “influencers”. They were the letters from children and the discussions with physicians. Meeting and speaking with doctors convinced him that a nuclear war was unwinnable and should never be fought. Reading the letters from children touched his innate sense of morality.

Before antibiotics and anaesthetics were invented doctors didn’t have much to offer their patients. But one thing that has been consistent since the days of Hippocrates, has been the role of doctors as teachers.

For those of you who have studied Latin, you may recall that the word doctor is derived from the word “docere” meaning “to teach”. Even in terms of primitive societies the Native American medicine man, or Siberian shaman or ubiquitous seer was an individual carefully selected for his ability to explain disease in a way that the patient would understand. He did more than treat illness. He also needed to explain misfortune often thought of as “bad luck” and then provide advice as to how to prevent a recurrence.

For those of you who know ancient Greek you will recall that the words prognosis and diagnosis are derived from the Greek “gnosis” which means understanding. Diagnosis is not a label it is way of providing understanding and explanation So for Mary-Wynne and myself, teaching is part of our medical DNA. It’s what we say every-time we meet a patient and ask those 5 key words:” how can I help you”? It’s what we do when we go into a Grade 10 socials class and say “how can we help you understand the threat to your health and that of the planet posed by nuclear weapons.”? It’s what Gorbachev was experiencing as he spoke with doctors from both the Soviet Union and the USA when they talked together about the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear war.

So doctors have a long history as teachers. We also have a long history as advocates and activists in public health.

The famous statement from Dr Rudolf Virchow that “medicine is a social science, and politics nothing but medicine at a larger scale” He was convinced that social inequality was a root cause of ill health, and therefore medicine had to be a social science. It was Dr. John Snow who in 1854 identified the public water pump in Soho, London as the source of cholera, and against much opposition persuaded officials to turn off the tap-resulting in cessation of the cholera outbreak that was decimating the population.

So medicine is as much a social science as it is a biological one and doctors being members of civil society have a social responsibility. Society is involved in deciding which problems merit medical attention, for example whether to provide HPV vaccine for children who have yet to have sex but will be at risk for certain cancers once sexual activity begins 2) supervised injection sites using street acquired heroin. Both of these examples reflect societal decisions about the importance attributed to the prevention of cancer and HIV and Hepatitis.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The WHO has called climate change “the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century”. The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres echoes this by saying that climate change “is the most systemic threat to humankind”

The science around climate change is “unequivocal”. In October 2018 the UN based Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change warned us that a rise in global temperature above pre-industrial levels more than 2.0C would lead to dangerous levels of harm to human health. Therefore this target should be abandoned and that we need to keep temperature increases to 1.5C. The report gave us until 2030 to bring carbon emissions to zero-and we are nowhere close to meeting that target-in fact emissions are increasing.

Doctors of the 21st century will need to be knowledgeable about the health consequences associated with climate change. The spectrum of consequences is broad. Extreme heat and burns from wildfires, extreme drought and the associated climate refugees, extreme flooding, changing patterns of infectious disease such as Lyme, evidence that pollution is linked to heart disease and growing evidence of links between care exhaust emissions and Alzheimers.

The importance of physicians being medical experts in this area was spelled out in June 2019 when the American Medical Association adopted as official policy that teaching on climate change be incorporated into medical education so that doctors can counsel patients on how to protect themselves from the health risks posed by climate change. Not only targeting medical students but also across the Medical Education Continuum.

MILITARISM

Militarism is a softer way of describing killing and injuring people, increasing disease and malnutrition, destroying infrastructure and health services and war itself is aptly described as “development in reverse”.

The ecological impact of war and preparations for war is enormous. Militarism is a major contributor to the global climate crisis, and yet military activities are often excluded from international agreed regulations eg Kyoto Protocol

We cannot ignore the fact that militarism is the biggest polluter on earth. It is the elephant in the room and we do not talk about cutting so called military defense budgets to pay for climate defence-which is a real threat to our human security.

Since 2001 the US military has emitted 1.2 billion metric tons of greenhouse gases, equivalent to the annual emissions of 257 million cars on the road. The US Dept of Defence is the largest institutional consumer of oil in the world, and the largest global landowner with 800 foreign military bases in 80 countries.

In addition to the carbon cost the military poisons the water. A 2018 Pentagon Report details widespread chemical poisoning of water supplies on military bases and in surrounding communities worldwide. The Report identifies PFOS and PFOA chemicals in drinking water at levels that are linked to cancer and birth defects..

PFOS and PFOA are used in fire retardants during routine fire-training exercises on US military bases worldwide

Landmines and cluster bombs were described in a US State Dept report as “perhaps the most toxic and widespread pollution facing mankind”

GUN RELATED VIOLENCE

Physicians in the US and Canada have been speaking out about gun related violence and advocating for changes to the gun laws in both countries. They face significant opposition from the gun lobbies and have been chastised for stepping out of their lane. This is a significant public health issue and it is part of our job as doctors to speak out for change

NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Physicians have been speaking out against nuclear weapons since September 1945. As the first foreign physician to arrive in Hiroshima in September 1945 Dr. Marcel Junod said “ do the same for atomic energy as you did for poison gas. Ban its use in time of war, if the worst happens and war itself cannot be avoided. Only a unified world policy can save the world from destruction. State leaders should follow the examples of doctors and scientists, who come together at congresses to share the benefits of discoveries and new ideas with their colleagues. The world would then have the peace of mind it longs for” IPPNW were instrumental in giving birth to ICAN and we refer to this organization frequently during our talks.

CANADA

I would like to close by coming back to this Award and to the reason why it was established 8 years ago. As many of you know in 2010 both the Canadian Senate and the House of Commons unanimously adopted a motion on nuclear disarmament calling on the Canadian Government to “deploy a major worldwide Canadian diplomatic initiative for nuclear disarmament” which Doug Roche describes before the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs as an act of “historic importance” In his testimony Doug says “ never before has the Parliament of Canada acted in such a unified manner to address a paramount world problem:how to rid the world of nuclear weapons, which threaten the existence of people everywhere”.

The fact that the Act was backed by 550 members of the Order of Canada cuts across all economic, social and cultural lines of Canada, added additional weight to the motion. So this Award which was first created in 2011 and given to Murray Thomsen is now celebrating its 8th birthday. There are now 1034 members of the Order of Canada who are calling for a Nuclear Weapons Convention.

But where may I ask is the Government of Canada? Why did they not participate in the negotiations leading up to the Ban Treaty? Why are they not listening to the majority of the world who adopted the Treaty and now are moving towards its ratification?

As Greta Thunberg said when she addressed the US Congress “Don’t listen to me, listen to the scientists”