

CONNECTING INCONVENIENT TRUTHS: THE URGENCY OF NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT IN A WORLD OF PRESSING PROBLEMS

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Baroness Williams, Lord Rees, Ladies & Gentlemen,

I am honoured to have you, Baroness Williams, chairing this event. Not only have you been a resolute campaigner for nuclear disarmament but you have also been that rarity in public life – a principled politician – bringing into the real life of politics the qualities of Cordelia, the Shakespearean character you played on stage in your youth.

I am also privileged that the venue for this event is the Royal Society - the world's oldest science academy - which has just begun celebrating its 350th anniversary. My felicitations to you, Lord Rees, on this occasion and on your leadership. As the eleventh President of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs I am proud that many of my predecessors have been distinguished members of this institution.

Ladies & Gentlemen,

We have just been witness to celebrations of the twentieth anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall symbolizing the end of the Cold War, a toxic legacy of which is the nuclear weapon – unquestionably the most destructive weapon invented by humankind. In an excess of zeal at that moment in 1989, Francis Fukuyama proclaimed the “the end of history” saying famously ““What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.” That hubristic neo-conservative dogma, which Fukuyama himself recanted later as he came to criticize the George W. Bush Administration and vote for President Obama, has, in the intervening two decades, propelled the world into a succession of calamities. The invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq and the bombing of its civilians; escalating global military expenditure of which the US share in 2008 was 41.5%; the gulag of Guantanamo and the practice of torture and rendition; casino capitalism on Wall Street causing the greatest financial meltdown since the Great Depression of 1929 and the general rejection of multilateral co-operation as a means of finding durable global solutions to global problems are some of them. We now have the first African-American elected as President of the sole super-power in the world and, with his policies, a unique opportunity to reaffirm multilateralism and global inter-dependence has been created. It is, in essence, an opportunity to ‘reboot’ the global system and change the narrative of international relations radically.

As the Pugwash Council statement said, following the 58th Pugwash Conference held in The Hague in April this year, the new international climate “makes it possible for multilateral co-operative solutions to be negotiated for the critical issues affecting the global community. On nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, weapons of mass destruction terrorism, the international economic crisis, the urgent problem of climate change, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the strengthening of the rule of law, human rights, and other issues, the moment has arrived and we must seize the opportunity.”

Regrettably, the international community appears not to be seizing, but to be missing this opportunity. A Food Security Summit organized by the FAO in November this year confronted the stark fact of one billion hungry people in our world but declined to commit to the \$ 44 billion needed as agricultural aid and failed to set a target date for the eradication of hunger. Under investment in agriculture – the source of livelihood for 70% of the poor – will mean that in 2050 when the world's population reaches an estimated 9.1 billion, we will be in a worse situation than we are today.

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A week from today the UN Climate Change Conference will take place in Copenhagen. Our hopes of a treaty being signed there have already evaporated and even agreements on emissions of greenhouse gases among the developed and developing countries with pledges of financial aid pose a difficult challenge. In April 2010 the Obama Administration will convene a World Nuclear Security Summit to ensure the safeguarding of the nuclear materials in the world and counter efforts of terrorist groups and the black-market to exploit existing loopholes and weaknesses in the systems in place. In May 2010 the parties to the Treaty for the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will meet in New York for its Eighth Review Conference forty years after this lynchpin of the global non-proliferation regime entered into force. Both conferences must succeed in achieving the twin inter-related objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The alternative is a slide into nuclear anarchy.

Global inter-dependence has long been established as a universally acknowledged truth. The findings of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change only proved this irrefutably. No state however powerful and wealthy can solve the problems facing its citizens without global co-operation. That co-operation, as the UN Millennium Summit Declaration said, must be based in this century on the fundamental values of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility as lessons gleaned from the pages of history. The holistic approach to international peace and security that has now evolved compels us to recognize that there can be no security without development; no development without security and no security or development without human rights. There has also got to be a convergence of national security and human security. We are thus more ready to see the inter-connection among the problems facing our global community from nuclear weapon possession and proliferation, the risks in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the problems of climate change, the escalation of world military expenditure to levels exceeding those of the Cold War and the conflicts they fuel, the poverty of the Bottom Billion, international terrorism and the danger of non-state actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction, the widespread violation of human rights and other issues. The global chain connecting us all is as strong as its weakest link.

While the end of the Cold War must rightly be celebrated so also must we hope for the end of all ideological or civilizational confrontation. What have emerged as challenges facing the entire global community today are perhaps terrorism, nationalism and consumerism. Unless global responses are forged as a common approach to them, we are likely not just to return to the “Great Games” of the 19th century and its balance of power politics but also, more dangerously, to endanger the future of our planet through nuclear annihilation or disastrous climate change or both.

The first of those ‘-isms’ is *terrorism*. Although terrorism predated 9/11, the global reach of modern international terrorism with its complex network of funding, arms purchases and supplies, training and planning is new and 9/11 represents its epitome. It has resulted in a global consensus condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and a recognition that no cause justifies the use of terrorism. Thirteen international conventions have been agreed upon as a bulwark against terrorism. Evidence of terrorist groups seeking weapons of mass destruction has emerged. The discovery of the network of clandestine nuclear proliferation activities of Dr. A.Q. Khan enhances the danger of nuclear terrorism. International cooperation is the key to combating terrorism as a nihilistic and hate-driven global problem threatening the orderly conduct of international relations.

That cooperation is undermined by another “-ism” – nationalism. With multinational economic entities like the European Union and other regional and global organizations, nation states were prematurely regarded as historical relics of the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia. Nationalist competition for real estate and resources dominated international politics until World War II when the United Nations was established with the hope of eliminating “the scourge of war” and ushering in global cooperation for freedom, peace, development and human rights. Today, in this post-Cold War phase, nationalism is alive with a multiplicity of ethno-nationalist groups, all seeking to achieve statehood – even in developed countries like Belgium. It is also evident in the actions of large countries defending their national security interests. This trend cannot be underestimated. Dangers arise from the covert support for terrorism by some countries to groups elsewhere in support of irredentist claims or inter-national rivalries. Encouragement of groups who have used or continue to use terrorist means by the grant of recognition or by arms

supplies violates the global strategy against terrorism however you may disguise it. It can also be self-destructive as terrorist groups created for one purpose mutate horribly to strike back even at their own creators. Thus the Taliban, financed and run by the CIA against the Soviet invaders in Afghanistan, transformed themselves into the extremist force that harboured Bin Laden and incubated global terrorism against the U.S. and others. Within South Asia, Indira Gandhi's short-sighted policy of encouraging Bhindranwale as a counter to the Akali Dal's dominance in the Punjab led to Sikh terrorism and her own assassination. Examples abound but the lessons are not learned as surreptitious means are found to finance, arm and otherwise support groups to destabilize neighbours or opponents in the perceived national interest. And so the unbridled nationalism of some countries is in conflict with the common interest of stamping out terrorism in terms of the UN strategy agreed upon in 2006. We have to ensure that the legitimate pursuit of national security interests meshes with common and co-operative security and a norm-based structure that serves all our interests.

Nationalism also acts as a spur to nuclear weapon possession since nuclear weapons are identified both as an insurance policy for national security and as a symbol of global power status. It is argued that nuclear deterrence cannot be good for some and bad for others. Hence the clandestine WMD programmes of Saddam Hussain's Iraq which, long before the 2003 invasion, were discovered and destroyed by the UN and the IAEA acting under the authority of the Security Council; and North Korea's withdrawal from the NPT and subsequent nuclear tests. Hence also the scenes of popular jubilation when India and Pakistan conducted their nuclear tests in 1998 signifying their advent as nuclear weapon states; and the strong nationalistic reactions of Iran over its enrichment of uranium at its Natanz and Fordow facilities belatedly reported to the IAEA.

Finally, with globalization we have consumerism as a very important driver of the international economy. Since the invention of mass production in the Industrial Revolution consumerism is now a global phenomenon. Consumerism is what lubricates markets and creates a demand for commodities and brands. The recent empowerment of a number of large economies in the South, particularly in China, India and Brazil, has led to a demand for energy and other commodities, entailing a rise in prices already distorted by agricultural subsidies in the U.S., the European Union and other developed countries. Economic nationalism drives protectionism obstructing free and fair trade. Despite the stalemate over the Doha Round of the World Trade Organization, we need to move rapidly for equality in the terms of trade so that developing countries can have access to markets and to commodities that their people seek in an increasingly inter-dependent world. We cannot continue the use of fossil fuels to satisfy the consumer demands of the world. The reports of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) argued that case. To ignore them would be a supreme, self-destructive folly.

But the case against the use of carbon emitting fuels is leading to a fresh demand for peaceful uses of nuclear energy – the 'nuclear renaissance' that is being talked about. Although Article IV of the NPT guarantees that non-nuclear weapon state parties will have an 'inalienable right' to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the world has suddenly woken up to the perils of this. It is less the threat of massive radiation leaks or accidents, like Chernobyl and Three Mile Island, to human lives and the environment that lies behind this concern now. It is more the fact that there are no credible firewalls between the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the development of nuclear weapons. The signing of the Additional Protocol of the IAEA, which is purely voluntary, is no longer the confidence building measure it was thought to be. A slew of proposals for the multilateralization of the fuel cycle have been placed before the international community. While some states will opt not to have their own enrichment facilities others will not want to be dependent on foreign supplies of nuclear fuel to meet their development needs. The dilemma could be resolved through innovative technology in the form of proliferation-resistant reactors and the elimination of highly-enriched uranium. The discovery of other cheaper and safer sources of energy and greater investment in wind and solar power could also lower the demand for nuclear power.

The inter-connectedness of these 'isms' is self-evident. So also is their link with prevailing crises and the solutions. The first crisis is, of course, the possible use of the 8392 nuclear weapons deployed by the nine nuclear weapon states (out of their combined arsenals of 23,300 warheads) either by accident or through intent in accordance with their nuclear doctrines. President Obama said in Prague that "One nuclear weapon exploded in one city – be it New York or Moscow, Islamabad or Mumbai, Tokyo or Tel Aviv,

Paris or Prague – could kill hundreds of thousands of people. And no matter where it happens, there is no end to what the consequences might be – for our global safety, our security, our society, our economy, to our ultimate survival.” Building on the 1980s studies of a “nuclear winter” caused by the use of nuclear weapons, more recent research has concluded that even a minor nuclear war with 0.03% of the current global arsenals will produce catastrophic climate change.

Nuclear weapon proliferation arises largely from the strong demand for national security in a world of competing nationalisms where some nations are permitted to have these weapons and others are not. Neither the NPT nor the Nuclear Terrorism Convention together with UN Security Council Resolution 1540 which seeks to prevent terrorist groups acquiring weapons of mass destruction, can hold this demand in check as long as nuclear weapons are held by some states and vast amounts of enriched uranium and separated plutonium lie around. Just last week British Pugwash issued a report on how to deal with the UK’s plutonium stockpile – the largest in the world.

The second crisis confronting us all is climate change caused by our consumption patterns globally, the prevailing structure of international trade and our failure to invest in and cooperate in the search for new environmentally friendly sources of energy. Lord Rees in his lecture last year “Science: the Coming Century” said it eloquently – “We are destroying the book of life before we have read it.”

Both crises have the best chance of being resolved through a nuclear weapon free world - consistently espoused by Pugwash and others and more recently endorsed by the influential Wall Street Journal op-eds of George Schultz, Henry Kissinger, Sam Nunn and Bill Perry. It is the vision being pursued by President Obama. Any hesitancy or delay in implementing President Obama's nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation policies can be dangerous even though Obama himself hedges on a time table for achieving his vision. The path-breaking Obama-Medvedev Joint Statement of April 1 followed by Obama's Prague speech of April 5 set the goals for those policies. They have begun to be implemented through –

- ❖ the swift commencement of bilateral US-Russian negotiations for a follow-up to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) expiring in December this year with significant nuclear weapon reductions in the two countries which together own 95% of the nuclear weapons in the world;
- ❖ the lifting of US impediments to the negotiation of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) in the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament posing a challenge to other countries to reciprocate;
- ❖ the unprecedented special message sent by Obama to the parties to the NPT at their Preparatory Committee meeting in New York in May this year stressing US commitment to the NPT in all its aspects;
- ❖ the significant presence and statement of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at the Article XIV Conference of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT);
- ❖ President Obama's statement from the chair of the United Nations Security Council on 24 September and the unanimous adoption of Resolution 1887 (2009) - albeit weighted more to non-proliferation than to nuclear disarmament; and
- ❖ the return to diplomacy laced with realpolitik resulting in fresh negotiations with Iran on the basis of IAEA proposals and the prospect of direct US-North Korean talks with the visit of US envoy Stephen Bosworth to Pyongyang.

Clearly though there are miles to go and campaign promises to keep before we begin to cheer. The Republican right in the US has not been idle. Fearful scenarios of "death panels" are being conjured up to block Obama's domestic health reform plans. Similar obstructionist tactics are evident in the nuclear disarmament area both within the US and with some NATO allies. Despite this Obama has succeeded, inter alia, in holding his course and has announced, as a confidence-building measure, that US Ballistic Missile Defence plans will not involve systems in the Czech Republic and Poland. But the unfulfilled agenda is huge as is the task of setting the right conditions for a successful NPT Review Conference in May 2010. A new US Nuclear Posture Review must reflect the Obama vision accurately by abandoning first use and launch-on-warning capabilities de-emphasizing the role of nuclear weapons in US defence strategy. The US Senate must "advise and consent" to two Treaties - the US-Russian START now being negotiated and the CTBT. This will require 67 Senators. They will have to include Republicans some of

whom may have voted negatively the last time the CTBT came up for ratification. A well-organized campaign is thus needed with compromises being reached that are not so Faustian as to vitiate the final achievement and lose Obama the domestic and international support he now has.

This is where the international community has a role to play. Already the Nobel Peace Prize Committee has clothed Obama with added moral authority to continue to pursue his, and I quote from their citation, "vision of a world free from nuclear arms (which) has powerfully stimulated disarmament and arms control negotiations." Western European leaders, especially those in NATO, and leaders of countries enjoying the shelter of the US nuclear umbrella must step up to the plate and help persuade US Senators of the global importance of ratifying the new START and the CTBT. Clear-headed strategizing and a reaching out by political leaders, parliamentarians and eminent civil society figures in countries with close ties to the US Senate could help especially through the hearings that the US Senate plans to hold. There is, as I have often said, an international responsibility to protect the vision of Obama. The new German Government has called for the elimination of US nuclear weapons on its soil. The UK has set an example through the op-ed published by Douglas Hurd, Malcolm Rifkind, David Owen and George Robertson in the Times of June 30, 2008; the June 2009 report of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee on "Global Security: Non-proliferation" and the launch on 29 October, 2009 of the Top Level Group of UK Parliamentarians for Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament and Non Proliferation (including Baroness Williams) who share the vision of a nuclear weapon free world.

However until the UK Government and the Governments of other nuclear weapon states take more practical steps towards realizing this vision, a credibility gap will remain between the nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states within the NPT. Over six decades after Hiroshima and Nagasaki incremental steps towards a nuclear weapon-free world makes the goal seem a mirage. The Global Zero group has set a target of 2030 for the completion of its phased verified programme for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Reports of the International Commission for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament (ICNND) co-chaired by the former Foreign Ministers of Australia and Japan point to advocacy of a 'minimization' point of over 1000 nuclear warheads by 2025 while President Obama says "perhaps not in my lifetime".

The simplest and most direct route would be to negotiate a verifiable Nuclear Weapon Convention to outlaw nuclear weapons in the same way the world outlawed Biological and Chemical weapons. This is not naïveté. A draft Convention is before the UN proposed by Malaysia and Costa Rica and recommended by the Secretary-General in his 5-point plan of October 2008. It will contribute towards easing global tensions and resolving the burning issues of our times - nuclear weapons, climate change, terrorism, poverty, international finance and human rights which intersect. With the elimination of nuclear weapons we have, in the words of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, "a global good of the highest public order".

Ladies & Gentlemen,

We are in an institution dedicated to scientific inquiry and the energizing of the relationship between science and society. There is no greater task than achieving peace and security through disarmament. Einstein, the co-author of the Manifesto that continues to inspire Pugwash, once said, "Concern for man himself and his fate must always be the chief interest of all technical endeavours...in order that the creations of our minds shall be a blessing and not a curse to mankind. Never forget this in the midst of your diagrams and equations." Scientists remain at the centre of weapon laboratories, the military-industrial complexes and energy-consuming industries in all countries. National loyalties and protectionist pressures are strong in such situations and I can only quote the Russian playwright Anton Chekhov who said, "Science cannot be national, in the same way that a multiplication table cannot be national. If a science becomes national it ceases to be a science." The common humanity of all scientists should act as a code of ethics to ensure nuclear disarmament and to arrest and reverse climate change. The Russell-Einstein Manifesto of 9 July 1955 said, "We appeal, as human beings, to human beings: Remember your humanity, and forget the rest."

It is time to follow this advice before it is too late.