

## British Pugwash Group

### Annual Report of the Executive Committee 2013

#### 2013 in perspective

The core concern of British Pugwash remains the continued existence of active WMD programmes, and particularly states that still rely on nuclear weapons as part of their defence strategies. The most immediate issue today is the question of Trident renewal in the run-up to the 2015 General Election. Much of our effort in 2013 and continuing in 2014 will focus on this debate.

More generally, we are concerned at the slow progress being made in negotiations aimed at the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. We have taken the view that the time is ripe for British Pugwash to re-launch its appeal, made following Margaret Beckett's visionary speech at the Carnegie Conference in 2007, for Britain to establish a Disarmament Institute. A workshop early in 2014 will take this forward.

Among other long-held beliefs, our support for the NPT continues. Unfortunately the commitment made at the 2010 NPT RevCon to hold a conference on a Middle East WMD Free Zone has yet to be fulfilled, but UK contributions to the work plan leading up to the 2015 RevCon are going ahead, including specific work on dismantlement verification, in which British Pugwash has been involved. We have also conducted research on attitudes of non-nuclear weapons states towards disarmament with the aim of building consensus. Meanwhile we have not forgotten Pugwash's long history of engagement on chemical and biological weapons, and plan to focus attention on this topic in 2014. We also remain convinced of the need for scientists to exercise their ethical

responsibilities. One example is the lack of clear ethical guidelines covering the use of 'drone' and robotic technologies in modern warfare, which are to some extent replacing the traditional 'boots on the ground' approach. This trend has been driven by the growing aversion among military powers, including the UK, to casualties incurred in remote theatres of war.

Equally topical is the issue of UK energy policy. In February 2013, we published a report entitled *Pathways to 2050*, challenging the government to take strategic policy decisions and make (or solicit) the required investments. During 2013 it has taken, or supported significant investment decisions and is now struggling with their cost and environmental implications, and objections to the price guarantee which it has offered for nuclear electricity.

#### Changes at British Pugwash

This year has seen some changes in the leadership of British Pugwash. After many years of devoted service, Professor Robert Hinde has retired as President (though not as a member of the Executive Committee).

Robert has been a key player in British Pugwash for over two decades and served until this year as Chair of the Pugwash Trust. He has been instrumental in



much of the group's work aimed at the abolition not just of nuclear weapons, but of war itself.

Carol Naughton has retired from the post of Deputy Chair, and Dr Ian Crossland has been elected in her place. He has extensive experience of working in the field of nuclear energy, and has played a key role in several recent British Pugwash projects.

We have also added two valuable new members to our Executive Committee – Dr Patricia Lewis, Research Director, International Security, at Chatham House, who brings a wealth of knowledge of the worlds of nuclear disarmament and verification; and Dr Julia Amos, who has a wide range of contacts with the younger generation of scientists, as well as personal experience of peace work in developing countries.

## Projects

### Trident

Current work on Trident draws together a number of strands, in which Executive Committee members Nick Ritchie and Carol Naughton have played key roles in formulating and publicising British Pugwash's ideas.

The government's *Trident Alternatives Review*, published in July 2013, indicates that some of these ideas are beginning to filter through, and ideas on how the UK can begin to 'step down the nuclear ladder' (including significant de-alerting) are now part of Liberal Democrat policy.

However, the scope of the Review was very limited and in the run-up to the 2015 General Election, we anticipate focusing effort on arguing for more substantial progress towards relinquishing nuclear weapons.

In the lead-up to the general election, the Nuclear Weapons Policy Liaison Group – an informal collaboration of experts aiming to inform decision makers of the technical and political issues involved – continues to meet and work behind

the scenes. With new funding from Network for Social Change, it appointed a Parliamentary Liaison Officer in 2013 to enhance its work at Westminster.

Meanwhile, the new WMD Awareness Communications Manager, Hannah Cornford, is developing its public-facing work to make a wider range of young people aware of the issues surrounding Trident. Hannah has consolidated the programme's online communications activity to make information more accessible to a young audience, while developing the 'Back to the 80s' campaign. This campaign reminds readers that the politics behind Trident is outdated, and challenges the need to spend an estimated £100 billion on its renewal. See the new WMDA website and read Hannah's blog.

The real cost of **TRIDENT**, the UK's leading weapon of mass destruction since 1982:

- 100,000 nurses or 70,000 doctors
- 90,000 social workers or teachers
- 85,000 policemen
- 86,000 soldiers
- insulation for every home in the UK
- £1,500 for every person in the UK

Do you think we should go... **BACK TO THE 80s!!!** Join the debate #Backtothe80s

In 2013 British Pugwash also held a series of public meetings on aspects of the Trident issue. Dr Nick Ritchie's timely book *A Nuclear Weapons Free World? Britain, Trident and the Challenges Ahead*, was launched on 12 March at a British Pugwash discussion meeting following the 2013 AGM. He explores the arguments used by supporters of the planned like-for-like replacement of the existing system, focusing particularly on the UK's commitment to nuclear deterrence; the role of our deterrent in defining our national identity; the 'special relationship' with the US; and the submarine-building industry. He also analyses the arguments against renewal, including the defective logic of deterrence, the NPT commitment to nuclear disarmament,



Peter Jenkins, a former UK Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency and Shashank Joshi, a Research Fellow at the Royal United Services Institute agreed, from different perspectives, that the Minister's claim was at best an exaggeration.

## Support for the NPT

### NPT: Reaching Consensus Project

In a FCO-supported project to explore future prospects for the NPT, a British Pugwash team led by Carol Naughton conducted a project based on 29 one-to-one interviews with representatives of 24 key NPT states parties, as well as a diplomatic roundtable. The aim was to identify possible grounds for a new consensus on the link between non-proliferation and disarmament in the context of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, with consideration of the potential role of the UK. The results are available in a published report: *The link between non-proliferation and disarmament in the NPT: is there consensus behind the conflict?* (May 2013).

### Disarmament Institute (BRINDI)

In 2007, the then Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett called for Britain to be at the forefront of thinking and action on nuclear disarmament, and to become a 'Disarmament Laboratory'. In response to that request, British Pugwash has sought to define this concept in more detail, and it now proposes that the UK should establish a British International Nuclear Disarmament Institute (BRINDI) dedicated to the ultimate achievement of a nuclear weapons-free world.

On the way, it would become a hub for the collaboration of key governmental departments and establishments, scientific communities, NGOs and other members of civil society from across the UK who are concerned with nuclear disarmament issues, as well as academia and international partners and institutions. During 2013, with the help of a new team member, Anna Sliwon, preparations were made for an expert workshop to take this concept forward in 2014.

cost, and public opinion. He reviews the various alternative nuclear weapons policies which the UK might adopt in the short- to medium-term. A growing number of influential UK politicians and senior military figures are becoming convinced by the arguments against retaining Trident.

On 13 March, we collaborated with the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) in promoting a public debate on UK policy, led by senior UK opinion-formers.

<http://www.iiss.org/en/events/events/archive/2013-5126/march-ea59/trident-replacement-debate-9b06>

Further questioning the arguments put forward for renewing Trident, a British Pugwash discussion meeting on 23 September debated the accuracy of the claim made by Defence Minister Philip Hammond on 15 July on BBC Radio: "We do not believe that, with nuclear threats if anything proliferating, with more countries seeking to get nuclear weapons, this is the time to downgrade [the UK's nuclear deterrent]."



### Verification of disarmament

Continuing another strand of work on the verification of disarmament, the International Panel on Fissile Materials (IPFM) asked British Pugwash to present its November 2012 report *Verification of Nuclear Weapon Dismantlement: Peer Review of the UK MoD Programme* at a Chatham House meeting on 21 March 2013. The following discussion focused on whether the UK Government (and hence MoD) was correct in basing its approach to verification on an interpretation of articles 1 & 2 of the NPT that precluded the release of any information about the design or manufacture of the weapons being dismantled to any third party, even to 'independent' inspectors engaged in the process of verification.

### Science and ethics – the military robotics debate



[MQ-9 Reaper in flight \(Wikipedia Commons\)](#)

British Pugwash has developed a new strand of work to address the ethics of modern military robotics, which is highly relevant to its concern with ethical and humanitarian constraints on the conduct of warfare. This followed a discussion at the 2012 meeting of UNESCO's World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Information and Technology (COMEST), on which Pugwash has a seat. On 21-22 March 2013 an expert workshop, hosted by Birmingham University's Institute for Conflict, Cooperation and Security, discussed the ethical issues involved and how these might be addressed by COMEST. Speakers included Christof Heyns, UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary

executions. The workshop was supported by the Network for Social Change, the Marmot Trust, the University of Birmingham Institute of Advanced Studies, the Department of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Birmingham, and the University of Birmingham Institute for Conflict, Cooperation and Security.

A short report on the workshop was presented to the COMEST meeting in Bratislava in May, when COMEST accepted a recommendation to consider including this issue in its future workplan. A joint COMEST/Pugwash session on 'Ethics of Converging Technologies' at a two-day workshop following on from the Bratislava meeting included two of the main participants at the Birmingham workshop.

An International Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, coordinated by Human Rights Watch, was launched in London on 23 April. International Pugwash is a member of the steering group with Pugwash President Amb. Jayantha Dhanapala and Professor John Finney participating in their meetings.

### UK energy policy

British Pugwash launched its expert report *Pathways to 2050: Three possible UK energy strategies* at a discussion meeting on 14 February. The report discusses three possible UK energy strategies which our Working Group constructed using the Pathways to 2050 Calculator, made publicly available by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). Each strategy – 'High Nuclear', 'High Renewables' and 'Intermediate' – achieves the UK's commitment to reduce its emissions of greenhouse gases by 80% by the year 2050, using energy technologies which either exist or can reasonably be expected to be brought to sufficient technical and commercial maturity in time. The report was also presented at a meeting of the Oxford Energy Society on 8 May and at the 27-30 October 2013 conference of the European Physical Society (EPS) in Budapest. The report has provoked a lively debate at the meetings between the protagonists

of the three possible pathways. Further presentations, and an expansion to include debates on European energy policy, are foreseen in 2014.

### WMD Awareness (WMDA)

WMD Awareness concentrates on increasing awareness of nuclear weapons among young people in Britain. Therefore the programme's recent focus, in addition to the work on nuclear policy outlined above, has been on creating online content that this audience wants to share. So far this has involved upgrading and updating the programme's website and social media channels, ensuring that all aspects of WMDA's activity are integrated and that it takes account of the increased importance of social networking in its outreach work. Visit the site: [www.wmdawareness.org.uk](http://www.wmdawareness.org.uk)

The programme has recently been awarded a further grant by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust to pursue this work into 2014 and beyond. Support has also come from the Network for Social Change. Next steps will involve undertaking market research to find out more about young people's attitudes to nuclear weapons in the UK. The results of this research will be used to lead a debate. This debate will be played out online and at events using audio, visual and written content to capture and share the nation's views. To support this work the programme is recruiting a Communications Assistant and a young Sounding Board. Members of the Board will create content, volunteer at events and provide feedback and advice on WMDA's communications activity.

Appropriately, Dr Hans Blix, the former UN Chief Weapons Inspector in Iraq in 2002-3 gave the ninth Joseph Rotblat lecture at the Hay Literary Festival on 26 May 2013. This lecture is organised annually at the Festival by WMDA.

He said of Britain's Trident system: "Today the UK is contemplating a new generation of Trident nuclear submarines. Washington is not pushing for this costly procurement. Is it required to



Hans Blix with John Snow at the Hay Festival 2013

protect UK independence? Or pride? Japan and Germany seem respected even without nuclear weapons. I would vote for a place for the UK in the Guinness Book of Records, if it dropped the plan."

### International Pugwash

Professor John Finney has recently retired from his important role as our main link with International Pugwash. He has been a member of the Pugwash Council and its Executive Committee from October 2007 to November 2013 and, since 2011, has been responsible for the Standing Pugwash Working Group on the Social Responsibility of Scientists. Robert Hinde has served as a trustee of the Geneva-based Pugwash Foundation. Sandra Ionno Butcher is Director of the Pugwash History Project.

### Meeting of European National Pugwash Groups, 3-4 September

In the first of what is hoped will be series of meetings, 30 participants from 10 Pugwash National Groups convened in Noordwijk in the Netherlands on 3-4 September for two days of discussions. This meeting, hosted by the Dutch Pugwash Group, included Czech, Danish, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Norwegian, Russian, Swedish and UK participants. British Pugwash was represented by Professor John Finney, Dr Kit Hill, Amb. Peter Jenkins, and Dr Christopher Watson.

## British Pugwash Annual Report 2013

International Pugwash was represented by Secretary General, Paolo Cotta Ramusino, Steve Miller and Sandra Ionno Butcher.

The meeting began with two talks: one by Hein Roelfsema on 'Is Europe interesting?' and the second by Bob van der Zwaan on Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNWs) in Europe. There followed presentations from each of the National Groups on their recent activities and future plans. The second day focused on a discussion on trends in Pugwash membership, and the scope for collaboration on future activities. The final session reviewed strategy and the governance of Pugwash.

### Quinquennial Conference in Istanbul

The 60th Pugwash Conference on Science & World Affairs was held in Istanbul on 1-5 November and had as its theme 'Dialogue, Disarmament and Regional and Global Security'. There were about 200 participants from a broad spread of countries. There were seven participants from the UK: Gen. Sir Hugh Beach, Dr Ian Crossland, Professor John Finney, Richard Guthrie, Amb. Peter Jenkins, Rebecca Johnson and Dr Christopher Watson.

The Conference began with three days of plenary sessions, including addresses by Abdullah Gül, President of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoglu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Mohammad Javad Zarif, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran and Jennifer Simons (President of the Simons Foundation). The plenary sessions covered a wide range of topics – nuclear disarmament, regional problems in India/Pakistan, Middle East, Iran, Israel/Palestine, Syria, Afghanistan, elimination of tactical nuclear weapons, chemical weapons, nuclear energy safety, cyberwarfare, and Fukushima.

There were working groups on: Nuclear weapons and their elimination; Nuclear energy and security; Regional security in the Middle East; India, Pakistan and Afghanistan; Turkey and its neighbours; Disarmament, conflict resolution and new weapons technology. Hugh Beach presented his paper in the nuclear weapons working group

on 'How would Britain fare as a non-nuclear weapon state?', which was well received.

Many of the keynote speeches and workshop summaries are available on the Pugwash website at <http://pugwash.org/2013/11/01/60th-pugwash-conference-istanbul-2/>

The Conference ended with a session on Pugwash governance, at which the outgoing Council proposed a slate for the following quinquennium, with a considerable increase in its size. The new Council, as adopted by the Conference, has some 50 members, and includes the British Pugwash chair, Christopher Watson and Executive Committee member, Patricia Lewis.

British Pugwash published its *Quinquennial Report* to coincide with the conference (see Publications p. 8).

### PeaceJam UK

PeaceJam UK is an educational programme that empowers young people to work for positive change in themselves, their communities, and the world through the inspiration of the Nobel Peace Laureates, who work personally with them to pass on the spirit, skills and wisdom they embody. Joseph Rotblat worked with the PeaceJam programme and British Pugwash, in partnership with the University of Bradford, brought it to the UK in 2006.



A lively workshop on human rights at a Slam



In place of an annual conference this spring PeaceJam UK held three one-day Slams – in Coventry, York and Scarborough. The Slam is a one-day conference, which aims to reflect on the work of the previous year and to report back on projects carried out. It is also an opportunity to meet teachers and students from other schools in the area and from further afield; to listen to and ask questions of an inspirational speaker and to take part in a choice of workshops related to the PeaceJam course. Slams are also used as an introduction for teachers and students who are considering taking the course.

At the York Slam for instance, the theme was Courage, addressed by an outstandingly brave African speaker, Rehab Maina, who had stood up for human rights and electoral reform in Kenya. Because she was threatened with serious violence, for her safety she had to leave her family and seek asylum and a new life in the UK. She was hugely impressive. At the Scarborough Slam, the speaker was a Sheffield university student, just a little older than the students attending the conference. She talked about her work on a community project for homeless men and how she had selected her university course. She pitched her talk to her audience perfectly and a very lively question and answer session followed.

This year some schools have started to expand the programme lower down the school, teaching the Leaders programme for 12-14 year olds. They will then continue onto the Ambassadors course and come to the PeaceJam conference when they are older. Google has come on board to work with PeaceJam this year and will be facilitating video link classroom meetings with the laureates and schools from around the world. This is a most exciting development to carry forward to 2014. For details of PeaceJam UK's work, see [www.peacejam.org.uk/](http://www.peacejam.org.uk/)

### Pugwash history

The remainder of the Pugwash/Rotblat archive (up to 2005) which until recently has been stored in the British Pugwash office has now



Joseph Rotblat with colleagues at the 13th Pugwash conference in Karlovy Vary, Czechoslovakia

been sent for cataloguing and will be integrated into the main collection of Joseph Rotblat's papers which is held in the archives at Churchill College, Cambridge. The main concern is that all the material on the history of Pugwash should be safely stored and accessible to historians and others who wish to consult it. Meanwhile, volunteer Ed Ross is also listing and organising all the Pugwash publications held at British Pugwash.

The Pugwash photo archive is continuing to develop. It is based at British Pugwash, and works in collaboration with Sandra Ionno Butcher, Director of the Pugwash History Project. The long term aim of the project is to organise, index and digitalise the collection and make it available to Pugwash members and the public through a searchable database.

In addition, we have developed a photo blog which we will be used to seek information about the many photographs which lack captions or other evidence of who is shown in the picture and where it was taken. To follow the blog, go to: <http://www.pugwashphotoarchive.com/p/home-page.html>

None of this work could have been carried out without the generous help of British Pugwash Executive Committee member Sally Milne and interns Nara Improtta, Stuart Pallister, Mica Ahir and Jessica Turner, with financial support from International Pugwash and British Pugwash.

## Publications 2013

General Sir Hugh Beach, 'How would Britain fare as a non-nuclear weapon state?' Paper given at the 60th International Pugwash Conference, Istanbul 1-5 November 2013

British Pugwash, *Quinquennial Report*, October 2013 (produced to coincide with the International Pugwash Quinquennial meeting held in Istanbul 1-5 November 2013 and made available to participants at the meeting)

Nick Ritchie on 'Trident and the Labour Party' in the *Guardian* 17 July 2013 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/jul/17/crunch-trident-miliband-labour-statesmanship>

*The link between non-proliferation and disarmament in the NPT: is there consensus behind the conflict?* Final report of a British Pugwash Group project, research by Carol Naughton, written by Matthew Harries, Associate, Centre for Science and Security Studies, King's College London (May 2013)

General Sir Hugh Beach, letter to *The Times*, 23 April 2013 querying the logic of Britain's Trident programme

COMEST, 'The ethics of military robotics: developing international agreement on ethical principles relating to the military exploitation of modern information and communications technology'. A short report on a workshop held at Birmingham University 21-22 March 2013

*Pathways to 2050: Three possible UK energy strategies*. Report of a British Pugwash working group (February 2013)

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### British Pugwash Group Executive Committee 2013

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