

British Pugwash Group

Annual Report of the Executive Committee 2014

Developments in 2014

This has been a momentous year for developments on the international disarmament scene, with major implications for British Pugwash.

Following the decision of Syria to accede to the Chemical Weapons Convention on 14 October 2013, a programme for the destruction of its entire CW stockpile and all its associated manufacturing equipment began immediately, and was largely completed by August 2014. This work was monitored by experts from around the world, including Richard Guthrie, who is a member of the British Pugwash Executive Committee (see page 2).



Members of the OPCW-UN Joint Mission in front of the last ISO container, just prior to loading onto the Ark Futura ©OPCW

One of the key issues in the run-up to the Scottish referendum on independence on 18 September 2014 was the commitment by the Scottish National Party (SNP) to remove all nuclear weapons from an independent Scotland.

Following the “no” vote, the SNP has continued to make this demand. There have been long debates about the time that this would take, and the cost of relocating these weapons in England. It is possible that this will alter the balance of public opinion on the need to retain the UK “nuclear deterrent”.

In December 2014, the Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Vienna, received considerable media coverage. The P5 nations were initially disposed to boycott this meeting, as they had on previous occasions, but in the end, the US, UK, and China attended, but not Russia or France. This movement has given encouragement to the Non-Aligned Movement and the League of the Arab States to put pressure on the P5 states to honour their commitments under Article 6 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

British Pugwash has responded to these developments by producing briefing papers and providing factual information for British government officials and for the various political parties. We have also sought to go beyond the immediate future, and our own limited resources, by working to establish a British International Nuclear Disarmament Institute (BRINDI), which will bring together UK expertise on nuclear disarmament issues.

We remain concerned about the need for scientists to exercise their ethical responsibilities, particularly in a world where dual use of science and technology presents increasing problems for us.

We have also continued to take an active interest in energy policy, not only in the UK, but also in Europe as a whole and worldwide. We have been participating in the production of a Position Paper by the European Physical Society Energy Group, which highlights some of the weaknesses of EU energy policy.

New faces at British Pugwash

The British Pugwash Group has welcomed three new members to its Executive Committee this year.

Amb. Peter Jenkins, a British diplomat for 33 years, served twice as Ambassador in the UK Mission to the International Atomic Energy Agency, from 2001 to 2006.

He was also President of the 2007 IAEA Conference on Illicit Trafficking of Nuclear Materials, and participated in the UN negotiation of a Convention on Corruption.

Richard Guthrie's work has focused on technology control and innovation issues, particularly those relating to materials and technologies that can have hostile as well as peaceful uses.

From 1988-2003 he collaborated with the Harvard Sussex Program on public policy towards chemical and biological weapons, and in 2003-2006 he was Project Leader of the Chemical and Biological Warfare Project of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

He is currently a member of the Pugwash Study Group on the implementation of the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions.

Arthur Petersen obtained a PhD in atmospheric sciences at Utrecht University in 1999 and another PhD degree in philosophy of science at the VU University Amsterdam in 2006.

Since then his research has mainly been directed at managing uncertainties related to scientific knowledge. He has been active in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – both as an expert and as a member of Dutch government delegations to IPCC meetings.

For some years he was also Chief Scientist at the PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, and a Visiting Professor at the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment at the LSE.

Since September 2014 he has been Professor of Science, Technology and Public Policy at UCL. He has been active within Pugwash, both as Chair of Pugwash Netherlands, and more recently as a sub-group convener of the BRINDI Working Group.

Projects

Trident

Our work on Trident in 2014 drew together a number of strands, in which Executive Committee members Dr Nick Ritchie and Carol Naughton played key roles in formulating and publicising our ideas. Much of our work on this issue was focused through participation in the **Nuclear Weapons Policy Liaison Group** (see below).

The international initiative highlighting the unacceptable humanitarian impact of any use of nuclear weapons continues to gather momentum following the third international conference on this theme in Vienna in December 2014, attended by Dr Ritchie. The humanitarian initiative challenges the legitimacy of nuclear weapons and the practice of nuclear deterrence at a time when the UK plans to invest tens of billions in replacing the Trident submarine fleet.



Trident II D5 missile fired from HM Submarine Vanguard during tests in the Western Atlantic in 2005
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The Nuclear Weapons Policy Liaison Group

The Nuclear Weapons Policy Liaison Group is an informal collaboration of experts aiming to inform decision makers of the technical and political issues involved in nuclear weapons policies. It continued to meet regularly in 2014.

With new funding from Network for Social Change, it appointed Varinder Bola as its new Parliamentary Liaison Officer in autumn 2014 to take the work forward in the run-up to the general election. WMD Awareness (see page 3) has been working with Varinder to produce a "positive narrative" that is intended to help the incoming government pursue a progressive nuclear weapons policy for the 21st century.

WMD Awareness

The Talking Trident project has looked at public attitudes to nuclear weapons. In February 2014 WMDA worked with research agency ComRes to ask 4,207 adults aged 18+ (including 1,108 aged 18-35), across the UK, ten questions about nuclear weapons. The aim of this research was to:

- Find out more about people's attitudes to nuclear weapons and their knowledge about Britain's nuclear weapons system, Trident, ahead of the government's decision on whether to renew the system – due to be made in 2016.
- Identify differences in knowledge and opinion among age groups, particularly between those who have grown up since the Cold War (18-35 year olds) and older voters (aged 36+).

The research shows that:

UK adults aged 18-35 tend to oppose nuclear weapons and the like-for-like renewal of Trident:

- Only 19% believe the UK's nuclear weapon system should be renewed to maintain its current size and capacity, compared to a third (33%) of 36+ year olds.
- 51% agree that the UK's nuclear weapon system should be disbanded or reduced in size and capacity.
- More than half (54%) think nuclear weapons for defence purposes are too expensive for governments to maintain.
- 47% disagree that nuclear weapons protect the countries which possess them from modern day threats such as terrorism, while only 38% agree.

Many people in this age group are not engaged with the debate on nuclear weapons:

- Only 6% believe spending on defence should be the government's priority over the next 10 years.
- Almost half (45%) didn't know whether or not the UK government is legally bound to work towards disarmament under the Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- A third (34%) believes renewing Trident is going to cost up to £5 billion. It is actually estimated to cost up to £100 billion.

WMD Awareness' Young Ambassadors have responded to the findings by launching Talking Trident, a national debate to raise awareness of the issues surrounding defence and Trident.

Hay Festival 2014

The 10th Rotblat annual lecture, organised as usual by WMD Awareness, was delivered by Jonathon Porritt. His new book *The World We Made* focuses on building a sustainable, fair and compassionate world by 2050, which would mean a world free from nuclear weapons.

He believes that, by 2022, "many senior military or ex-military leaders will have concluded that Trident is undermining the ability of this country to provide security for its people. It will not address the security problems we will face and will be so costly and dangerous that we would be a much safer country without it." See WMDA's films from Hay at:

www.youtube.com/user/AwarenessWMD

Trident and Scottish Independence

On 20 October British Pugwash held a public discussion meeting on another issue with implications for the future of Trident – the referendum on Scottish independence. Professors Malcolm Chalmers and William Walker debated the future prospects for Scottish independence and its likely impact on the future of Trident. They concluded that this is a subject which will remain very much a live issue in the coming years.



l to r Dr Nick Ritchie, Professor William Walker and Professor Malcolm Chalmers

Support for the NPT

Disarmament Institute (BRINDI)

Since 2007, British Pugwash has been exploring how UK expertise might best be brought together in a British Nuclear Disarmament Institute that would tackle the problems which need to be solved if the world is to achieve the long-term goal of global nuclear disarmament.

In 2008 it proposed 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 collaboration between key governmental departments and establishments, scientific communities, NGOs and other members of UK civil society who are concerned with nuclear disarmament.

Following a number of political set-backs over the years, BRINDI has made rapid progress during 2014. On 1 April, we held a very successful workshop in which 20 UK experts spent a day discussing an outline proposal which we had prepared for the creation of this Institute.

Our proposal defined a possible scope for its work, and suggested how the relevant parts of government could also participate. BRINDI was envisaged as an independent institution, which could advise governments, and bring together all the technical, political, military, diplomatic and public outreach skills which will be involved in eventually getting to global zero.

Following that workshop, we developed a Prospectus which would be suitable for discussions with potential donors or partners with BRINDI.

Working Group

During the second half of the year we established a BRINDI Working Group, consisting largely of selected participants from the April workshop, who could assist us in taking the project forward. Four subgroups are taking the lead on different areas of work:

- Establishment of BRINDI's status as a legal entity;
- Selection and appointment of an interim executive director;
- Finding appropriate headquarters for BRINDI and appropriate partners;
- BRINDI operational matters.

These four sub-groups have all been active and have made good progress on their tasks. In parallel with this, British Pugwash has been working to build up our links with UK government departments.

Verification of disarmament

This is a major topic within the agenda of BRINDI. In addition, it is an area in which the US and the UK have agreed to collaborate, and on 4 December the US State Department invited other nations to participate in an International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification. This will work through an official public-private partnership with the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI).

UK energy policy

Following earlier presentations of the British Pugwash expert report, *Pathways to 2050: Three possible UK energy strategies (2013)*, Dr Christopher Watson has been collaborating with colleagues in the European Physical Society Energy Group on the development of a Position Paper on European Energy Policy.

At its meeting in Lisbon on 13-14 November 2014, the Position Paper on European Energy Policy was discussed and subsequently finalised. Dr Watson is now collaborating with its Chairman on making a presentation at the EPS Energy Conference in Karlsruhe in May 2015. The paper will highlight weaknesses in the current EU energy policy.

Science and ethics – the military robotics debate

The ethics of developing technologies

Professor John Finney has continued to work with the UNESCO Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Information and Technology (COMEST), representing Pugwash President Amb. Jayantha Dhanapala. He participated in the COMEST meeting in Quebec in October 2014, where ethical issues of converging technologies were further discussed. The meeting also worked on revising the 1974 UN Declaration on the Status of Scientific Researchers, on COMEST's draft "Ethical Perspective on Science, Technology and Society", and on finalising its draft report on the ethics of climate change.

Also, as part of an associated workshop on Ethics of Converging Technologies, John Finney presented a paper on "Addressing Global Inequalities through Ethical Governance of Science & Technology" that leaned heavily on some of the ideas of British Pugwash past-President Professor Robert Hinde.

John has also represented Jayantha on the Steering Group of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, coordinated by Human Rights Watch. Following very successful discussions in September 2013 on the occasion of the UN First Committee in New York, the UN Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) held an informal meeting of experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems in May 2014, with 87 states participating.

The high level of engagement by a range of countries showed an appetite to continue this work in 2015. Accordingly, at their meeting in November 2014, states parties to the CCW agreed by consensus to continue their deliberations on “the questions related to emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems” by holding another informal meeting of experts on 13-17 April 2015.

At the UN Human Rights Commission (HRC) meeting in June 2014, Christof Heyns, the UN Special Rapporteur on extra-judicial, summary or arbitrary executions followed up his 2013 HRC report by stressing the importance of the HRC remaining seized with the issue of autonomous weapons systems, because of its implications for human rights during armed conflict as well as for law enforcement.

In further UN activities related to autonomous weapons, members of the campaign were asked to present at the July meeting of the UN Secretary-General’s Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters. More details are on the campaign’s website:
<http://www.stopkillerrobots.org/>

Security by Remote Control: can it work?

At a British Pugwash discussion meeting on 20 March, Paul Rogers, Professor of Peace Studies at Bradford University, traced attempts by western powers, especially the US, to move to a “war light” strategy which, in reducing “boots on the ground”, lessens military casualties and the cost of sending military forces overseas. The experiences of Iraq and

Afghanistan increased the attractiveness of such remote control options. Recent developments in Iraq and Syria made his remarks all the more relevant.

Paul Rogers examined not only the use of armed drones, operated by the US, UK and a number of other nations, but also the expansion of special forces and private military companies. In the UK it is very difficult to obtain figures for the number of special forces personnel but a new special forces support group has been established to provide logistical support for SAS and SBS (Special Boat Service) operations.

Also below the radar is the rapid expansion of private military companies (separate from private security companies such as G4S) which are more combat-oriented and tend to be drawn from ex-special forces personnel. Professor Rogers concluded that we are moving into an area of proliferation which raises ethical and legal issues and has consequences that are difficult to predict, with little hard information available.



WMDA Talking Trident campaign: how young people view the nuclear debate (see page 6)

Hosted Projects

WMD Awareness (WMDA)

In addition to the work on nuclear policy outlined above, over the last 12 months WMD Awareness has developed its Ambassador programme, recruiting and training 25 passionate young people to lead its work in raising awareness about nuclear weapons.

The Ambassadors have developed their skills and confidence and participated in many aspects of WMDA's work, making films, including one with Natalie Bennett (see p 5), getting articles published in the *Huffington Post*, and putting on events around the country. We have supported them to bring their ideas to life. One Ambassador, Andrew, for example, is halfway through a speaker tour he has organised at different universities, to encourage debate about Trident ahead of the election.

Core funding awarded the previous year by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust has been supplemented in 2014 by funding from Lush Charity Pot and Network for Social Change to expand the Ambassador programme.

At the end of 2014 WMDA moved into the British Pugwash office in Great Russell Street to share facilities. This has enabled them to hire a paid intern to assist with organising their "day of action" to take place in March 2015, during which the Ambassadors will raise awareness on the streets of London to round up the work done on the Talking Trident project. Find out more about Talking Trident at: <http://www.wmdawareness.org.uk/talking-trident>

As part of this project WMD Awareness has produced a range of exciting and engaging content to engage young people who are interested in (but not experts on) the subject of nuclear weapons. Find out more: <http://www.wmdawareness.org.uk/>

PeaceJam UK

PeaceJam provides year-long ongoing education programmes for young people between the ages of 15 to 25. The participating Nobel Peace Laureates are directly involved in developing the curriculum and the programme itself. PeaceJam is the only organisation in the world which has so many Nobel Peace Laureates working together long term with young people.



PeaceJam UK mentor Luke Addison, with Desmond Tutu at the premier of the film 'Children of Light' a 2014 PeaceJam event in Monaco

The purpose of the PeaceJam curriculum is to stimulate young people's critical thinking skills, strengthen their research abilities, increase their knowledge of the role of nonviolence in conflict, and promote self-growth and reflection.

During 2014, we have been looking for another university to host the annual two-day PeaceJam UK Youth Conferences. We are delighted to report that the University of Winchester has offered to host the conferences from spring 2015. In the meantime we have hosted two one-day conferences, or Slams, at the University of Bradford.

At the first, Iranian human rights lawyer and Nobel Peace Laureate Shirin Ebadi spoke about her work with the Nobel Women's Initiative. This initiative uses the prestige of the Nobel Peace Prize and the influence and access of the women Nobel Laureates themselves to support and amplify the efforts of women worldwide who are working for sustainable peace with justice and equality.

The second event featured Madeleine Rees, a British lawyer and current Secretary General of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), where she has spoken out against human rights abuses in Bosnia by peacekeepers and others working for the United Nations. In a fascinating session, she answered young people's questions about her work, giving us an insight into her current concerns.

The number of schools and groups around the country working with PeaceJam UK is expanding at a steady rate over the various age ranges, with some schools starting to integrate PeaceJam into their main curriculum.

For more information: <http://www.peacejam.org.uk/>

International Pugwash

Christopher Watson is a member of the Pugwash Council, while Robert Hinde serves as a trustee of the Geneva-based Pugwash Foundation. Sandra Ionno Butcher is Director of the Pugwash History Project.

Student/Young Pugwash

We are currently relaunching our Student/Young Pugwash (SYP) activities and plan to recruit a part-time coordinator, who will engage with students, especially young scientists in full time education, help to set up new Student/Young Pugwash groups and support those that are already developing in several universities.

Another important aspect of the coordinator's role will be to promote continuity within these groups through successive generations of students, as well as assisting SYP groups to coordinate with our hosted projects – WMD Awareness and PeaceJam. To support this initiative we have requested funding from the Network for Social Change.

Pugwash History

The final consignment of archive material (up to 2005) that remained in the British Pugwash office has now been transferred to the archives at Churchill College, Cambridge, where the bulk of Joseph Rotblat's papers are held.

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

None of this work could have been carried out without the generous help of British Pugwash Executive Committee member Sally Milne and, since 2011, several "generations" of interns: Nara Improta, Stuart Pallister, Mica Ahir, Jessica Turner, Harriet Hall, Samantha Lao and Andrew Yap. We receive continuing financial support from the British Pugwash Group.

Photo blog



We are using the Pugwash photo blog to help research photographs in the collection that are without captions or other evidence of who is shown in the picture and where it was taken. We have already had a number of responses to our first series of posts, solving several of our queries about the events and people shown.

Visit the blog to see the latest posts:

<http://www.pugwashphotoarchive.blogspot.co.uk/home-page.html>

Much of British Pugwash's work is funded by foundations, including the British Pugwash Trust (Reg. charity 297539) together with private and other donors. We are particularly grateful this year for support given by:

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Network for Social Change

Polden Puckham Charitable Foundation

Marmot Trust

University of Birmingham Institute of Advanced Studies

The Department of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Birmingham

The University of Birmingham Institute for Conflict, Cooperation and Security

Publications 2014

General Sir Hugh Beach, 'The UK's Nuclear Deterrent', *RUSI Journal*, Volume 159, Issue 2, 2014

In a response to Malcolm Chalmers' article in the December 2013 edition of the *RUSI Journal*, Hugh Beach argues that it is time to move on from 1980s rhetoric of "unilateral" versus "multilateral" disarmament and to act in the UK's true national interests.



General Sir Hugh Beach

British Pugwash *Newsletter* (September 2014) aims to bring members up to date with British Pugwash's current and forthcoming activities.

British Pugwash Trust

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British Pugwash Group

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For WMD Awareness: Carol Naughton; Hannah Cornford

British Pugwash Group

Ground Floor Flat, 63A Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3BJ
Tel 0207 405 6661; email office@britishpugwash.org

Further information at www.britishpugwash.org