

British Pugwash Newsletter: December 2023

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1. New briefing: Aspects of UK Nuclear Weapons Possession

This briefing covers four areas: i) UK nuclear weapons modernisation ii) the UK-US nuclear relationship iii) UK nuclear use policy in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war iv) UK action on nuclear arms control and disarmament.

Download the briefing [here](#).

2. Pugwash Meeting on Irreversibility in the Nuclear Domain

British and International Pugwash convened a discussion on the theme of irreversibility in the nuclear domain in Rome on 20 and 21 November 2023. The 12 participants, present in a personal capacity, came from the USA, Russia, China, India, the UK, Canada, Italy, Belgium, and Germany. The group comprised former diplomats, political scientists, physicists, and a nuclear weapon engineer.

Read more [here](#).

3. Student / Young Pugwash Update: Annual Conference; Negotiation Simulation

The 7th Annual Student / Young Pugwash Conference will be held on 27 January 2024 at King's College London. The subject of the conference is 'Artificial Intelligence: implications for peace and security'. The purpose of the conference is to encourage new thinking on the legal, political and technical questions associated with this topic, with a focus on ethical science.

The call for papers and all details for the event are available [here](#).

Further information on how to attend the event will be sent out to Pugwash members soon.

SYP UK joined with SYP Germany to hold their first joint event on 23 November, a 'Negotiation Simulation', which took place online via zoom. The 12 participants had to consider how they would solve the prisoner's dilemma in a high-stakes international negotiation. Our event used a Harvard Law School scenario focused on oil pricing negotiations between two fictional states.

More information on the exercise is available [here](#).

4. Video of recent webinar: Professor Steve Fetter on rising nuclear risks

The invasion of Ukraine by Russia significantly increased the possibility of nuclear use and continues to be a subject of grave concern. The Doomsday Clock, which marks the threat of global catastrophe, is at the closest point to midnight it has ever been. At this most dangerous of times, it is vital that nuclear risk reduction, arms control and disarmament are revived.

In this talk, held at King's College London on 18 October, Prof. Fetter reviewed US nuclear weapons policy across administrations, especially in relation to the current conflict in Ukraine, and considered how Washington can reduce nuclear risks. He also reflected on emerging technology and strategic challenges at a time of rising international tension, and how scientists and the public can get involved in these issues.

Watch the webinar video [here](#).

The British Pugwash YouTube channel has many other videos available [here](#).

5. Recent articles and reports of interest

Rizwan Choudhury, [Interesting Engineering](#), What we already know about Israel's 'secret' nuclear program

Alastair Gale, [The Wall Street Journal](#), The Era of Total U.S. Submarine Dominance Over China Is Ending

M. Taylor Fravel et al, [Foreign Affairs](#), China's Misunderstood Nuclear Expansion

Igor Patrick et al, [South China Morning Post](#), Biden, Xi set to pledge ban on AI in autonomous weapons like drones, nuclear warhead control: sources

Andrew Cockburn, [London Review of Books](#), Big Six v. Little Boy

Daryl Kimball, [Arms Control Association](#), Why We Must Reject Calls for a U.S. Nuclear Buildup

Noah Robertson, [Defense News](#), China more than doubled its nuclear arsenal since 2020, Pentagon says

Lauren Sukin, [Carnegie Endowment for International Peace](#), When Nuclear Superiority Isn't Superior: Revisiting the Nuclear Balance of Power

Paul Day, [Reuters](#), Support for nuclear has grown dramatically, says global agency chief

US Congressional Commission, [House Armed Services Committee](#), America's Strategic Posture

Charles L. Glaser, James M. Acton, and Steve Fetter, [Foreign Affairs](#), The U.S. Nuclear Arsenal Can Deter Both China and Russia

[Global Security Institute](#), A Letter to Diplomats Negotiating in the United Nations First Committee

[Reuters](#), China expects to OK 6-8 nuclear power units per year in green energy drive