REGIONAL NUCLEAR WAR COULD MEAN GLOBAL “NUCLEAR FAMINE”

A regional nuclear war involving the numbers of weapons possessed by India and Pakistan would trigger a global climate disaster and could lead to global famine according to findings presented at a joint medical conference on nuclear war organized by IPPNW, its UK affiliate Medact, and the Catastrophes and Conflict Forum of the Royal Society of Medicine. Emergency medical specialist Ira Helfand presented “An Assessment of the Extent of Projected Global Famine Resulting from Limited, Regional Nuclear War” at the conference – Nuclear Weapons: The Final Pandemic — Preventing Proliferation and Achieving Abolition, in London on October 5, 2007.

Dr. Helfand cited research by conference speakers Alan Robock of Rutgers University and Owen B. Toon of the University of Colorado, demonstrating that debris ejected into the stratosphere from about 100 nuclear explosions and subsequent fires would cause sudden global cooling and decreased precipitation for up to 10 years, resulting in shorter growing seasons and significantly lower grain production.

Dr. Helfand warned that “a total global death toll in the range of one billion from starvation alone,” along with “major epidemics of infectious diseases” were foreseeable outcomes of the climate effects of nuclear explosions on this scale. He explained that there are already 800 million people in the world whose daily caloric intake falls below minimum requirements. “A small decline in available food would put this entire group at risk. A sudden decline in agricultural production could trigger massive famine.”

The two-day conference also examined the current state of understanding about the health effects of exposure to low doses of ionizing radiation; the impact of uranium mining on the health of indigenous mining communities in India, Australia, and elsewhere (see page 6); the dangers posed by the use of highly enriched uranium in reactors that produce medical isotopes; and the humanitarian consequences of a possible US military attack against Iran.


ONLINE: PHOTOS AND REPORTS
A full report and presentations from The Final Pandemic conference:

IPPNW.ORG
I hope that IPPNW’s International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and the campaign for the conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention will yield positive results...

The Mongolian Government supports IPPNW’s noble goals and activities.

H.E. Nambar Enkhbayar, President, Mongolia

DOCTOR-TO-DOCTOR
DIPLOMACY: IPPNW IN IRAN
IRAN
Co-President Ime John continued IPPNW’s outreach to Iranian physicians with a one-week visit to Tehran and Isfahan in June. Dr. John met with members of the Society of Chemical Weapons Victims Support (SCWVS), including the Society’s Head of International Relations, Dr. Shahriar Khateri. In addition to discussing IPPNW’s programs and campaigns with Iranian physicians and medical students, Dr. John met with municipal officials in both cities, delivering a letter from Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba of Hiroshima inviting Iranian participation in Mayors For Peace.

Recalling the devastation of nuclear war as experienced by the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Dr. John told an audience at the Tehran Municipality Office that “the effects of the atomic bombs on those cities, like the horror of chemical weapons used against the people of Iran during the Iran-Iraqi war in the 1980s should never be allowed to recur. The immense human suffering and the environmental degradation as a consequence of these weapons of mass destruction should be a sad reminder that...[all of us must] resist war and embrace peace.”

On April 7, IPPNW medical students with the Nuclear Weapons Inheritance Project joined with Iranian students to organize a Target X installation in Tehran. Medical student exchanges between Iran and IPPNW’s Swedish affiliate, SLMK, are planned for the future.

CONDEMNING THE US-INDIA NUCLEAR ENERGY AGREEMENT
INDIA AND UNITED STATES
Opposition to the nuclear energy agreement between the US and India may prevent it from ever going into effect. Prime Minister Singh told the US in October that political obstacles in his country had frozen the agreement, which had also raised global proliferation concerns.

Indian Doctors for Peace and Development (IDPD) and Physicians for Social Responsibility-USA (PSR)
IPPNW raises nuclear awareness in Pyongyang

DEM. PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

SLMK brought IPPNW’s nuclear abolition message to another critical region in June, when it organized a return delegation of doctors and medical students to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Swedish physician Martin Tondel led a group comprising medical students Wenjing Tao, Johannes Norberg, and Thomas Silfverberg, who brought a collection of IPPNW publications along with medical texts to the Korean Anti-Nuke Peace Physicians (KANPP), the federation’s North Korean affiliate. At Ansan General Clinic —one of several hospitals visited during the trip — the delegation had an opportunity to learn about basic health services in DPRK, after which they met with the Dean of the Pyongyang University of Medicine and a group of nine medical students. Dr Tondel presented a new paper on the health consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, which was followed by an open discussion of nuclear issues. “We were able to speak more openly than we had expected,” Dr. Tondel said, “both with medical students and doctors and health personnel...and we have a good idea about the next steps in strengthening this cooperation.”

ONLINE: REPORTS

A full statement on the US/India nuclear energy agreement available:

ippnw.org/News/Statements.html

released a joint statement on August 17 condemning the deal, and calling on the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to block its implementation. The US and Indian affiliates said the deal undermines the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by allowing India to keep a third of its reactors under military control without international inspection, including two “fast-breeder” reactors that could produce fuel for weapons. They called instead for investments in renewable sources of energy that will enhance India’s long-term energy security.

IPPNW, which has been working to oppose the agreement since it was first announced early in 2006, delivered copies of the statement to the foreign ministries of each NSG member country, and will keep up the pressure to ensure that this dangerous deal is rejected.

Join the monthly sustainer program, Partners in Peace, and help ensure the continuity of our global campaigns.

Contact Daniel Karp: dkarp@ippnw.org, 617.868.5050 x204
1 Global launch of ICAN at NPT Conference in Vienna, Austria. Left to right, Dr. Ron McCoy, IPPNW, Felicity Hill, ICAN, Carlos Vargas, Costa Rican Mission, and Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba, Mayors for Peace.

2 Medical students Tamara Shashikadze from Georgia and Michael Gnilo from the Philippines at the Faslane Blockade in Scotland.

Overriding Trident Bike Tour: September 28th-30th, a group of 30 medical students, doctors and political activists biked from Dover to the London Conference. Enroute the group informed the public about the dangers of nuclear weapons, and held Target X installations and meetings with mayors and local press. Online: IPPNW-STUDENTS.ORG/OTT

Medical Peace Work: Dr. Klas Melf of Norway leading a video conference with the Canadian Peace-Through-Health group at McMaster University on the emerging field of expertise in health work, violence prevention and peace. Online: UIT.NO/SH/8989

The 6th African Regional Conference, Healing the Wounds of War in Africa: The role of health professionals was held in Nairobi in September. It brought together health professionals including medical students to present and share experiences on the impact of war on health, with a focus on prescribing preventive strategies for the African continent, and care and rehabilitation of the victims. It was organized by IPPNW’s African Regional Office in Kenya.
NEW AIMING FOR PREVENTION STUDY CALLS FOR ONGOING INJURY SURVEILLANCE AFRICA

IPPNW’s African affiliates, under the direction of Diego Zavala of the Ponce School of Medicine in Puerto Rico, have completed a pilot study funded in large part by the Small Arms Survey, Geneva, to determine the causes of injuries in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia, and to provide evidence-based recommendations to local government health authorities in order to encourage the development of armed violence prevention strategies. The 5-country study—the centerpiece of the African Aiming for Prevention program in 2007—was undertaken to support the need for an ongoing injury surveillance system that can help public health practitioners make policy recommendations about prevention of injuries from small arms and light weapons based on empirical data.

During six months of data collection, 4,366 injury cases were recorded in all five countries. Nigeria and DRC stood out as two countries with the greatest proportion of small arms injuries (approximately 40% of interpersonal violence injuries).

OTHER AFP NEWS

The Journal of Public Health Policy has published an important new series of articles in a special section on small arms violence in Africa written by IPPNW researchers, available: palgrave-journals.com/jphp/journal/v28/n4/

Dr. Balkrishna Kurvey of IIPDEP in India was elected an Executive Member (only five from the world) of the International Network of Scientists and Engineers for Global Responsibility (INES).

Co-President Ime John and Emmanuel Eduru of IPPNW-Nigeria participated in a two-day regional conference in Abuja, Nigeria on the ratification of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons....

IPPNW-Zambia’s Dr. Robert Mtonga was interviewed on the BBC World Service on the advantages of the Arms Trade Treaty—his “guns are bad for health” message covered the economic cost of gun injuries and the impact of small arms violence against women.
NEW STUDY DOCUMENTS
HEALTH PROBLEMS AROUND
INDIA’S URANIUM MINES

INDIAN DOCTORS FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT (IDPD) HAS COMPLETED A YEAR-LONG SURVEY OF HEALTH CONDITIONS AMONG INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AROUND THE JADUGODA URANIUM MINES.

IDPD researchers, including Satyajit Kumar Singh and Shakeel Ur Rahman, collected health information from 2,118 households in five villages around the mines, tailings ponds, and an ore processing plant operated by Uranium Corporation of India, Ltd (UCIL). They compared this data with similar information gathered from villages some 30-35 kilometers away from mining activities.

IDPD found significant increases in congenital deformities and childhood deaths due to congenital deformities; increased sterility; and elevated numbers of deaths due to cancer. Reduced life expectancy among people living near the mines was also documented.

While acknowledging that further study is needed to distinguish radiation effects from the health problems related to mining in general, IDPD blamed UCIL for unsafe operations and for failing to monitor the health of its workers or to provide meaningful treatment and compensation. Drs. Singh and Rahman referred to a December 2006 incident, when a burst pipe spilled thousands of liters of radioactive waste into a creek for more than nine hours before UCIL acted, as typical of the company’s inadequate safety standards.

The IDPD study was funded by a grant from the US-based Ploughshares Fund, and was undertaken cooperatively with the Jharkhandis Organisation Against Radiation (JOAR). An executive summary is available: ippnw.org.
ONLINE: ACTIVISTS’ TOOLKIT AND RESOURCE

ICANW.ORG
NEWS, VIDEOS, MAPS, AND OPINION POLLS ON THE ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

ONLINE: ICANW.ORG
The ICAN website contains new updates on global activities and resources for abolition activists to participate in a number of immediate ways to the global effort to achieve a future no longer threatened by the horror of nuclear war.

THANK YOU
IPPNW would like to thank the following affiliates for their leadership in championing the “Final Pandemic” conference at the Royal Society of Medicine:

- IPPNW GERMANY
- IPPNW NEW ZEALAND
- JPPNW
- MEDACT
- NORWAY (NLA)
- PGS CANADA
- PSR FINLAND
- PSR USA
- SLMK

Also, Ploughshares Fund’s generous support made it possible for IPDP to conduct a public health project on uranium mining in India.

IPPNW Norway’s support enabled the Aiming for Prevention Campaign to complete the six month injury study at emergency rooms in five African countries. A report was presented to the primary study funder, Geneva-based Small Arms Survey (SAS) and will inform the next SAS annual report.

INTERNATIONAL PHYSICIANS FOR THE PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR WAR (IPPNW)

IPPNW is a non-partisan federation of national medical organizations in 60 countries dedicated to safeguarding health by working to ban nuclear weapons and to address the impact of militarism and war on human health.

IPPNW is a non-profit organization registered under Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code.

All gifts to IPPNW are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

IPPNW CENTRAL OFFICE
727 MASSACHUSETTS AVE
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139 USA
Tel: 617.868.5050
Fax: 617.868.2560
Email: IPPNW@IPNW.ORG
Web: IPPNW.ORG
PEACE, HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Plenary sessions and working groups on nuclear abolition, issues of global security and the public health approach to ending small arms violence.

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