VITAL SIGNS

IPPNW AND ICAN BRING ABOLITION MESSAGE TO 2008 NPT PREPCOM

When nuclear weapon states give themselves credit for dismantling aging and outdated strategic weapons, while maintaining silence about their investments in programs to build 21st century arsenals, what are non-nuclear-weapon states to think?

Do non-nuclear-weapon states have an obligation to uphold their end of the bargain under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), whether or not the nuclear-weapon states make good on their own commitments?

Can global expansion of the nuclear energy industry take place without jeopardizing the entire non-proliferation regime?

When will the promise of the NPT be fulfilled through the negotiation and adoption of a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) to abolish the only weapons capable of destroying humanity?

These questions [see answers below], among others, were raised loudly by IPPNW and representatives of more than 60 other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who participated in the second Preparatory Committee meeting for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, held from April 28 to May 9 in Geneva.

More than a dozen doctors, medical students, and staff guaranteed a strong IPPNW presence at the PrepCom, promoting the Convention among diplomats and other NGOs, attending ICAN workshops, organizing a “Nuclear Weapon Free – My Cup of Tea” event, and taking part in a simulation game to negotiate an NWC. Former co-president Gunnar Westberg presented an IPPNW paper on the climate effects of regional nuclear war, during a formal NGO session in the PrepCom assembly hall.

Unlike the failed 2005 Review and the 2007 PrepCom, where procedural wrangling prevented substantive discussion, many state delegations openly pressed the nuclear weapon states to make deeper, faster, and more permanent cuts in their arsenals, while insisting that non-proliferation must go hand-in-hand with disarmament.

The beleaguered US-India nuclear technology deal, which seriously undermines the non-proliferation goals of the NPT, became a focal point of NGO opposition to the so-called peaceful uses of nuclear energy enshrined in Article IV.

The 2008 PrepCom ended without substantive decisions or official recommendations. Any hopes for a positive outcome in 2010 now hinge on the decisions made during May 4-15, at the 2009 PrepCom in New York.

ANSWER KEY:
1) What else can they think? The nuclear weapon states are far from compliance with Article VI.
2) Yes. But can anyone wonder why they are losing patience with the double standard?
3) No.
4) As soon as civil society demands it loudly and effectively enough.

ONLINE: REPORTS
A full PrepCom report, including text of Dr. Westberg’s presentation on climate effects of regional nuclear war:
IPPNW.ORG
“REHABILITATION UNDER FIRE”
NEW REPORT ON IRAQI HEALTH
UNITED KINGDOM
The failure to protect or rebuild health services in Iraq since the 2003 invasion is highlighted in a new report published by Medact (IPPNW-UK). “Rehabilitation under fire: health care in Iraq 2003-7” describes how war and its aftermath continue to have a disastrous impact on the physical and mental health of the Iraqi people. It outlines the urgent measures needed to improve health and health services.

Researched and written by Iraqi, UK, and US health professionals and academics, the report focuses on the many failures of the occupying forces and their governments to protect health, or to help rebuild a health system based on primary health care principles. It assesses the current state of the health system: the impact of insecurity on the workforce and the chronic lack of supplies, medicines, and equipment. It contains a special focus on the neglected area of mental health care.

In particular, the report describes: the failure to follow good practice in rehabilitation of health care services; how powerful economic and political interests dominated health-related decisions; the failure to respect the Geneva Conventions related to medical neutrality.

The report makes key recommendations including: greater support for the World Health Organization in the region; more space for Iraqis to determine which health system they need; more flexible funding for initiatives to meet humanitarian needs.

STUDY RESULTS ON ELEVATED CANCER RATES NEAR NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS RELEASED
GERMANY
IPPNW-Germany is focusing public attention on a new study providing evidence that children under the age...
of five who live near nuclear power stations may develop cancer at higher rates than the national average. The study was paid for by the Federal Radiation Protection Agency (BfS), the German government’s main adviser on nuclear health, and was conducted by the German Register of Child Cancer. The German affiliate had been lobbying for the study since 2001 and collected more than 10,000 letters from citizens demanding that BfS commission the study. Dr. Angelika Claussen, chair of IPPNW-Germany commented that “The precautionary principle enshrined in European environmental law now demands that the German nuclear power stations be switched off immediately” and that “the burden of proof of cause of illness should no longer have to be borne by parents, but conversely by the operators of the nuclear installations.” The executive summary of the German report can be found on ippnw-europe.org.

INDIAN DOCTORS WELCOME AUSTRALIAN DECISION NOT TO SELL URANIUM TO INDIA

Indian Doctors for Peace and Development (IDPD) have issued a press release supporting Australia’s decision not to sell uranium to India, and Prime Minister Rudd’s announcement of a new international Commission to advance nuclear disarmament. IDPD also welcomed the statement of Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, and emphasized the need to implement the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan for global nuclear disarmament.

I’m glad to support the campaign for a Nuclear Weapons Convention. The commission of weapons of mass destruction which I headed, said that we ought to have an outlawing of nuclear weapons, just as we have outlawed biological weapons and chemical weapons by conventions. And you and I can participate in this work.

Message of support from Dr. Hans Blix, Chairman of the newly formed Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction
IPPNW IN ACTION

ONLINE: ADDITIONAL PHOTOS AND REPORTS
IPPNW.ORG, ICANW.ORG AND IPPNW-STUDENTS.ORG

1 TILMAN RUFF OF MAPW (IN MIDDLE) WITH LEADERS OF THE CONGRESS ORGANIZING COMMITTEE, DR. ARUN MITHA, GENERAL SECRETARY OF IDPD (LEFT) AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZER MS. AMARJEET KAUR (RIGHT) OF THE ALL INDIA TRADE UNION CONGRESS. MORE THAN 600 DOCTORS AND MEDICAL STUDENTS FROM 44 COUNTRIES BROUGHT IPPNW’S CALL FOR THE ABOLITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND FOR THE PREVENTION OF WAR AND SMALL ARMS VIOLENCE, WHEN THEY GATHERED IN NEW DELHI FOR THE 18TH WORLD CONGRESS FROM MARCH 9-11.

2 DOUG KLINE, IPPNW DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE, PRESENTING THE PRESIDENT OF THE INDIAN AFFILIATE AND NEWLY ELECTED IPPNW REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT FOR SOUTH ASIA, DR. LIVTING SINGH CHAYLA, WITH TOKENS OF SINCERE APPRECIATION FOR HIS CENTRAL ROLE IN ORGANIZING THE 18TH WORLD CONGRESS IN DELHI.

3 VISIBLE AND VOCAL IPPNW PRESENCE AT THE MARCH 2008 WORLD CONFERENCE ON INJURY PREVENTION AND SAFETY PROMOTION IN MERIDA, MEXICO. AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, HEALTH MINISTERS OF 30 NATIONS SIGNED A DECLARATION THAT URGENT ACTION MUST BE TAKEN TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE. LEFT TO RIGHT: DR. EMPERATRIZ CRESPIN, EL SALVADOR; DR. IME JOHN, NIGERIA; MEDICAL STUDENT CESAR ALEMAN, NICARAGUA; MARIA VALENTI, AIMING FOR PREVENTION COORDINATOR, USA; JENNIFER HAZEN, PHD, SMALL ARMS SURVEY, GENEVA; DR. WALTER ODHIAMBO, KENYA; DR. BOB MTONGA, ZAMBIA.

4 BRIDGING INTERNATIONAL BORDERS: THE MOMENTS BETWEEN PLENARIES, WORKSHOPS, PANEL DISCUSSIONS, REGIONAL, BOARD, STUDENT OR IC MEETINGS AT A WORLD CONGRESS ARE WHEN AFFILIATE MEMBERS SHARE STRATEGIES AND DEVELOP A CAMARADERIE THAT SPANS DISTANCE. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ROMAN SANDOZ, SWITZERLAND; AGYENO EHASE, NIGERIA, AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE OF 2004-2008, KHA-GENDRA DAHAL, NEPAL.

5 WORLDWIDE, SIXTY-TWO IPPNW AFFILIATES AND DOZENS OF ACTIVE STUDENT CHAPTERS ARE WORKING TOGETHER ON ICAN, AIMING FOR PREVENTION AND OTHER DIVERSE AND IMAGINATIVE PROGRAMS. DR. AMINU ZAKARI MOHAMMED, NIGERIA (LEFT) WITH ANOTHER AFFILIATE MEMBER AT THE AFRICAN REGIONAL MEETING HELD DURING THE IPPNW WORLD CONGRESS.

6 SENATOR DOUGLAS ROCHE, CANADA AND THE VICE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI M. HAMID ANSARI AT THE INAUGURAL SESSION FOR IPPNW’S 18TH WORLD CONGRESS IN DELHI INDIA.

7 VITAL SIGNS
VOLUME 19 ISSUE 2 2008
"[ICAN] aims to break the current stalemate in disarmament negotiations by generating support for a legally binding Nuclear Weapons Convention. Such a treaty is feasible, necessary and increasingly urgent. Now is the time to make it a reality. I can imagine a world without nuclear weapons, and I support ICAN.

Message of support from His Holiness the Dalai Lama"
How many doctors are aware that they contribute to a nuclear proliferation and terrorist risk every time they order a nuclear bone or lung scan, or other procedure utilizing an isotope produced using HEU, directly usable in a nuclear weapon? Almost certainly very few. How many of the patients involved are aware of this? Probably even fewer.

Tilman Ruff, Bill Williams, IPPNW doctors writing about HEU in Medicine, Conflict and Survival, VOL 23, NO 4, 2007

The health sector is a significant user in highly enriched uranium (HEU) commerce. Nuclear medicine departments that purchase HEU-derived radiopharmaceuticals, and the clinicians they serve, are subject to the big suppliers' stranglehold on the supply market and thus inadvertently enable and contribute to the persistence of this vulnerable nuclear proliferation pathway. Medical needs do not require further production of either HEU or LEU. Currently, 85kg of HEU is used annually to provide 95% of global usage of Mo-99. At this level, blending down just 10 tons of HEU to LEU would create a stockpile that could support global medical reactor-based isotope needs for more than a century.

In September 2006, IPPNW resolved to advocate a shift from HEU to LEU for medical isotope production. At its Delhi Congress in 2008, IPPNW formally incorporated this objective into ICAN.

Health professionals can help reduce the risk of nuclear weapons proliferation, especially by terrorist groups, through the elimination of medical HEU commerce, by:

1. Downloading essential resources, including a draft resolution, a briefing paper on HEU, and a powerpoint presentation that can be used to describe the HEU problem (and the solution) to your medical associations. [ippnw.org/Programs/ICAN/HEU.htm]

2. Contacting national medical association and/or specialty associations to find out what process they use. Then advocate the elimination of HEU fuel and targets from the supply chain for medical isotopes

3. Optimizing use of appropriate non-ionizing radiation imaging technologies, for example MRI or ultrasound.

4. Optimizing use of appropriate non-reactor based ionizing radiation imaging technologies, for example PET scanning.

5. Promoting research and development of nonreactor generation of isotopes currently sourced from reactors, in particular Mo-99.

At every Congress the medical students nominate and elect new international student representatives (ISRs). The ISRs for 2008 - 2010 are Agyeno Ehase Sunday, medical student in his final year at the University of Jos in Nigeria and Wenjing Tao, fourth year medical student at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden.

ONLINE: STUDENT PROJECTS
IPPNW-STUDENTS.ORG
**PRESCRIPTION FOR SURVIVAL - A DOCTOR’S JOURNEY TO END NUCLEAR MADNESS**

**PUBLICATION DATE JULY 1, 2008**

IPPNW is excited to announce the upcoming publication of “Prescription for Survival - A Doctor’s Journey to End Nuclear Madness,” penned by Dr. Bernard Lown, IPPNW founding co-president and the original developer of the cardiac defibrillator. Dr. Lown is also credited with introducing Lidocaine as the primary first response for heart attack victims. This account of the formation, struggles and triumphs of IPPNW is a powerful manifestation of Margaret Mead’s maxim that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world.

A description of the book by Berrett-Koehler Publishers: “More than a memoir, this book sheds new light on what really drove and still drives the nuclear arms race, the critical importance of citizen involvement in social change efforts, and what Lown terms the ongoing epidemic of militarism, which a glance to recent headlines shows is still very much with us.”

**ONLINE: MULTIMEDIA LEARNING TOOL**

**AN INTERACTIVE ONLINE COURSE IN HEALTH WORK, VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND PEACE BUILDING**

MEDICALPEACEWORK.ORG

The free, self-paced, online course consists of seven modules containing lessons, standardized questions and case studies. The goal of medical peace work is to strengthen the peace capacity of health professionals and was developed in partnership by health organizations, teaching institutions and a number of European IPPNW affiliates.
To coincide with the NPT PrepCom, thirty medical students held a “Nuclear Free – My Cup of Tea” event on Rue de Mont-Blanc in Geneva, Switzerland on May 1st and distributed about three hundred informational flyers on My Cup of Tea and ICAN. Medical students from Sweden, Germany and Switzerland arranged this event in cooperation with a youth disarmament network in Europe known as Ban All Nukes Generation (BANG).

The activists invited the public to stay for a cup of tea and had informal discussions about nuclear abolition, the challenges of disarmament, and how individuals can contribute their time and energy to nuclear abolition. The participants are then encouraged to bring up the topic with their friends and family the next time they sit down for a cup of tea and create a “peaceful chain reaction.”

**A PEACEFUL CHAIN REACTION**

GRASSROOTS PROJECT CREATING PUBLIC AWARENESS: PREVENTION IS THE ONLY CURE AGAINST NUCLEAR WAR

[ONLINE: MORE ON THIS PROJECT]

IPPNW-STUDENTS.ORG/CUPOFTEA.HTML