

**Fourth Simons Symposium
On
Weapons of Mass Destruction and Their
Elimination**

***Revisiting the Russell-Einstein Manifesto for Humanity's Sake:
Paths Toward a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World***

**61st Pugwash Conference on Science & World Affairs
Nagasaki's Voice: Remember Your Humanity**

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I appreciate, very much, the opportunity to introduce the fourth Simons Symposium on Nuclear Disarmament. I would like to add my welcome to those of the gentlemen who have come before me. And congratulate Dr. Tatsujiro Suzuki, Chair of the Organizing Committee, Professor Paolo Cotta-Ramusino, Sandy Butcher and their team at Pugwash Conferences who, in collaboration with the Nagasaki Prefecture, Nagasaki City and Nagasaki University, have organized this 61st Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs.

This is my first visit to Japan, and I would like to express my heartfelt sorrow for the citizens of Nagasaki and Hiroshima who suffered, from what can only be called, crimes against humanity. And to also express my sincere admiration for the resilience of the people of Nagasaki and Hiroshima who have rebuilt their lives and their cities after an event so catastrophic and abhorrent it should never have occurred.

We must ensure that atrocities - such as the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – both violations of International Humanitarian Law - under any circumstances - never happen again. ¹

In today's Simons Symposium, we will revisit Pugwash Conferences' foundation document, the *Russell-Einstein Manifesto for Humanity's Sake* and its call for the renunciation of nuclear weapons, and also explore *Paths Toward a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World*.

The signatories, of the 1955 Russell-Einstein Manifesto, speak on behalf of “members of the species Man whose continued existence is in doubt;” and state that “People scarcely realize in imagination that the danger is *to themselves and their children and to their grandchildren.*” Sixty years later the truth of both statements remains unchanged.

The immense danger of nuclear weapons and the catastrophic consequences of their detonation are little understood and rarely thought about in the public realm. This continues to be a most difficult message to get across. The general public does not understand that nuclear weapons did not disappear at the end of the Cold War; that they are not weapons of war; that they are weapons of extinction and - if used in a war - of suicide.

There remains a great need to educate the general public. In the 1980s five million Europeans marched in protest against the deployment of US Weapons on their soil. There was a one million march in New York to protest the buildup of the US nuclear arsenal. These numbers stunned President Reagan and caused him to propose eliminating nuclear weapons.

Even with 21st century communications mobilizing technologies today it has not been possible to draw numbers enough to make such a statement in order to further the issue of nuclear disarmament. The protests, for the most part, all take place in cyberspace. Yet, if on the ground, the visibility would raise the citizens' awareness of the dangers, and encourage more people to participate in activating for a world free of nuclear weapons.

¹ The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were in violation of the rules of International Law: of The Hague 1907 Conventions and The Hague 1922-23 Draft Rules of Air Warfare, rules which were fully subscribed to by the United States. And moreover, the bombings violated the United States own 1940 War Department Field Manual 27-10, *Rules of Land Warfare*. These laws all prohibit targeting peaceful, civilian populations

We have not - to date - found the way.

The Manifesto calls for the renunciation of nuclear weapons – to give them up - but its basic premise is that nuclear weapons are here to stay and despite agreements not to use them, the signatories believe that *in times of war*, these agreements “would no longer be considered binding.” For this reason - as the only solution - the Manifesto calls for the abolition of war; and is in essence, a *pessimistic document* that accepts that the genie cannot be returned to the bottle.

It dooms humanity - this generation and all future generations - to ceaseless activity: to eliminate, to dismantle, to destroy, and somehow dispose, securely and safely, the Highly Enriched Uranium and plutonium - and at zero - to monitor and to police *ad infinitum* for signs of breakout, for any resumption of nuclear weapons activity.

Fortunately, dramatic advances in technology since 1955 have made it possible to monitor all explosions using seismic technology developed to monitor earthquakes. Satellite technology makes it possible to monitor developments from outer space. Technology is available to verify adherence. Commitments on transparency make onsite monitoring possible - all of which, certainly, eases the Sisyphian task.”

1955 was a simpler time. When Lord Russell and Albert Einstein initiated the Manifesto there was a total of three thousand, two hundred and sixty-seven nuclear weapons possessed by only three countries, the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom.²

The political militarized realm has changed. There are now nine countries – counting North Korea - with some 15,800 nuclear weapons between them; and with 1,800 of the U.S. and Russian weapons on high-alert status and targeted for immediate launch.³ All nuclear weapons states are upgrading; creating new capabilities for their nuclear weapons; and planning and budgeting for years ahead to continue to modernize their programmes, their delivery systems and the infrastructure required for their maintenance. Pakistan is rapidly expanding its nuclear arsenal far exceeding that of India, its nuclear rival; and within 10 years could be the third largest nuclear power.⁴

The aspect of The Manifesto which attracts most attention is the call *from* human beings *to* human beings to “*Remember your humanity*”, thus to act morally and ethically, to reflect on the responsibility for all life, and the responsibility to *act solely* according to this dictum, thus relying on the goodwill, the goodness, the ethical and moral nature of humans. But can the humanitarian prospect transcend the mistrust, the fear, the blinkered single-mindedness of the forces of political, military and economic might?

² www.nrdc.org/nuclear/nudb/datab19.asp . US 3057, Soviet Union 200, UK 10

³ <http://fas.org/issues/nuclear-weapons/status-world-nuclear-forces/>

⁴ www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/report-pakis, August 27th, 2015

A moral sense was demonstrably absent in the war-planning departments during the Cold War when decisions were made on how many million deaths it would take to deter the enemy.⁵

Morality, though, has always been a nascent aspect following the atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. From the beginning the bombings were surrounded by secrecy, guilt and shame, hidden by censorship; and fear that the true story would destroy the myth that the weapons were used to end the war against Japan and to save lives; and the myth of the goodness of the American prospect.

Those who knew the truth of the bombs' catastrophic consequences - the scientists, the military commanders, the veterans – *did* suffer from feelings of horror, guilt, shame and remorse, and many became active agents for their elimination.

A moral prohibition on the use of nuclear weapons does appear to exist. Because of the abhorrent devastating consequences, it is too horrifying for those responsible for the nuclear button – heads of state and those in the military – those who would bear the burden of responsibility for their use.

In the 70 years following the bombings there have been occasions of near use, accidental use and many accidents. But no nuclear weapons have been used in the wars since Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

It appears, therefore, that there is an ***unofficial moratorium***. This situation, however, is not acceptable to those who understand the dangers, nor is it acceptable to the non-nuclear weapons states; and for the first time the moral, humane, dimension is gaining traction.

Sixty-five years after their use, language was accepted in the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Final Document on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. Since then one hundred and fifty-eight (158) of the one hundred and ninety-three (193) United Nations member-states are actively moving forward the elimination of nuclear weapons as *a moral issue* rather than the political, economic, technical reasons that went before.

One hundred and nineteen (119) states signed the Austrian Government-initiated Humanitarian Pledge, raising to conscious awareness the Russell-Einstein Manifesto appeal to “Remember Your Humanity” and forging a commitment to co-operate in efforts to stigmatise, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons. Whether the outcome will result in a Ban or a Convention remains to be seen because the states that have the weapons call the shots.

While we sit around and wait for the nuclear weapons states to suffer a crisis of conscience, humanity is in danger from the possession, the very existence, of these weapons. Nuclear threats appear to be “intensifying and multiplying.”⁶

⁵ In 1978 the U.K. the Defence Ministry decided that nothing less than 10 million deaths would deter the Russians, and as well, promoted ground-bursts over air-explosions because ground-bursts would kill 15-20% more people. The documents clearly stated that the British must be prepared to follow through with this.

⁶ Ramesh Thakur, *Global Conflict Trends, 2015*

The world has changed radically since we convened two years ago in Istanbul. At this time there was optimism that the Israel and Palestine peace process would have a successful outcome. And optimism that the Iran nuclear negotiations would succeed and the Middle East states could move forward to establish the Zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

Only the Iran nuclear negotiations were successful. In the following year - 2014 - the Israel/Palestine talks collapsed, and Israel and Palestine are enduring another escalating wave of violence. And also in 2014, ISIL changing its name to ISIS, declared a caliphate in parts of Iraq and Syria and is waging a barbaric war to secure this territory.

As well, in 2014, President Putin intervened in the Ukraine and annexed The Crimea - straining to the extreme - relations between Russia and the United States and NATO.

President Putin flaunting his nuclear option, Russian military's provocative incursions into NATO member's territory and both Russian and US combat jets in the air in Syria, create the very real danger of nuclear incident which - by miscalculation or design - could lead to a nuclear exchange.

The return to Cold War-like postures on the part of Russia and the United States, and Russia and NATO; and the current chaotic situation in the Middle East, are detrimental to any achievements in the arms control regimes.

One of the consequences of this estrangement is the break down in intelligence sharing and cooperation that played a part in ensuring the security of Russia's fissile materials and warheads, which Al Qaeda and ISIS have been attempting to acquire aided by the Russian mafia engaged in the smuggling of nuclear materials.

Russia's surprising intervention in Syria fans the flames of the current friction between the United States and Russia; and is a complicating factor in furthering the creation of a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Middle East.

Following the success of the nuclear negotiations, Iran has shown it is prepared to take the lead and has called for the expansion of Iran's new commitments from Iran to a zone that encompasses the whole the Middle East. However, the new Russia/Iran/Syria troika - backing the Syrian government - is greeted with hostility and suspicion by many Middle Eastern states as well as those in the West, and is detrimental to Iran's leadership role in a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction. This new troika will also jeopardize the growing *rapprochement* between Iran and the United States and will hamper normalization of Iran's relations with the West.

These escalating political and military actions when added to the already alarming nuclear risks from accidents, accidental, malicious or mistaken launch, cyber attacks to command/control and warning systems - which may be inadequate or have failed - raise the level of danger to new heights. The need is urgent to undertake measures to alter this perilous situation.

Global Zero is actively engaged in initiatives to reduce and ultimately eliminate the risks to humanity incurred by the possession of nuclear weapons, and has a comprehensive plan of action with concrete measures to address the nuclear risks we face today.

The Global Zero Nuclear Risk Reduction Commission's plan with practical steps for de-alerting nuclear weapons, has received wide acceptance and support from governments interested in furthering its recommendations.

Global Zero is also in the process of forming a Commission on Asia Pacific Security and Nuclear Risk Reduction. This Commission will build on the previous work on nuclear risk assessment and risk reduction measures. These substantial objectives, for lowering the threshold and ultimately removing the threat of an accidental or malicious detonation, include analysis and concrete recommendations for cyber-security for the nuclear command and control systems. Action on these recommendations will draw us back from the brink of a catastrophic event.

Bruce Blair, Co-Founder of Global Zero is here and chairing the first Panel. I know he would be pleased to provide more information on these Commissions' analyses and recommendations.

Every effort must be made to end the estrangement between Russia and the West; to restore the former post-Cold War cordial working environment so that engagement on the elimination of nuclear weapons can return to the forefront of relations between the United States and Russia.

Ways must be found to encourage President Putin to take up President Obama's 2013 Berlin overture to engage in negotiations to reduce the two countries nuclear arsenals to 1,000 deployed strategic weapons each - a step on the path to zero which will cut the arsenals by half.

Humanity is at great risk from a nuclear detonation. Eric Schessler, investigative journalist and author of *Command and Control*, in a recent interview said that – and I quote him - “The odds of a major city, somewhere in the world, being destroyed by a nuclear weapon are probably greater today than ever before. Unlike global warming, that sort of catastrophe will occur instantaneously and won't be reversible.”⁷ We do not want a catastrophe such as this to be the catalyst for the elimination of nuclear weapons and a ban.

We all know the risks and we must continue with a renewed urgency, on the path to a world free of nuclear weapons. The way forward is clear yet the challenge is immense.

I look forward to a fruitful exchange of ideas on ways and means to achieve this nuclear weapon free world in order to ensure that the crimes against humanity such as those inflicted on Hiroshima and Nagasaki never again occur.

Thank you!

⁷ Mark Hertsgaard, “3 Minutes Until We all Die”, *The Nation*, January 23rd, 2015