

Voices of Experience
NPT PrepCom Panel
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Thank you.

Distinguished members of the panel, Excellencies, ladies, and gentlemen. I am delighted as the President of the Pugwash Conference Science and World Affairs and a successor of Sir Joseph Rotblat to have links with Jonathan Granoff and Michael Douglas and to be here as a co-sponsor of this important event in the United Nations Building. I think it is also an honour to share the sponsorship of this event with the Office of Disarmament Affairs and the Global Security Institute and its President, Jonathan Granoff to whom we are all grateful. I'd like to pay special tribute to Jonathan because we all know that it is Jonathan's dynamism and his relentless energy that helps to sustain not only the Global Security Institute but also many of us working in the field of disarmament. Thank you Jonathan.

I am also glad that this occasion asked me to reestablish my links with Michael Douglas who I recall 11 years ago embarked on a journey and accepted the role of Messenger of Peace at the request of Secretary-General Kofi Annan. I am very grateful that during my tenure as the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Michael gave me absolute support. He was willing to go to places like Gramsch, Albania to work for the destruction of small arms. He was also willing to go to Sierra Leone in order identify himself with the cause of child soldiers. Thank you Michael. I am glad to see you continuing with your good work.

The title of this discussion, "Voices of Experience" is a little daunting. We heard one the definition of experience from Sergio Duarte. I also recall what Oscar Wilde said, "Experience is the name that everyone give to their mistakes." There is also the fact that we were asked by Jonathan to give advice on the basis of our experience. That reminds me of what the French writer Francois de La Rochefoucauld said, "Good advice is something that a man gives when he is to old to set a bad example!"

Experience can also lead to cynicism and that unfortunately leads to a sense of déjà-vu when one sees new paths and breakthroughs, because in the past such breakthroughs had fallen through. We must fight against this corrosive element of cynicism and, like Sergio Duarte said, We must combine our experience with hope and idealism. We must never forget that in our own times the Cold War - that dark period of international relations- ended with the fall of the Berlin Wall. We must not forget that the system of apartheid in South Africa collapsed finally and we have now a non-racial democracy in South Africa. We must not forget that the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty that we have all hoped for was finally realized in the United Nations General Assembly. It has not yet entered into force but the moratorium exists and we have all the expectation that the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty will enter into force. All of these were seemingly impossible goals that were achieved. They were achieved through sheer relentless determination, not only on the part of governments, but also on the part of civil society. This is

the reason why we must never be daunted by impossible goals as long as we are consistent in our idealism.

Basing our idealism on the experience of the past, we must continue to work for the goal of the elimination of the nuclear weapons. I would like to adapt William Shakespeare by saying, "Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer by this son of a Kenyan father and an American mother! But it is not yet a glorious summer. It is perhaps the springtime of hope. We must, all of us, work toward achieving that summer, because it is a common task of all of us. It is not something that can be ushered by one man.

We have had in the past, "voices of experience" telling us that nuclear weapons which they had once advocated; nuclear deterrence which they had once advocated during the Cold War, was wrong. We had Robert McNamara and General Lee Butler, both of them my colleagues on the Canberra Commission, speaking unambiguously against nuclear weapons that they had once managed themselves. More recently, we have had "voices of experience" in the four elder statesmen of the United States who are referred sometimes as "the four horsemen," sometimes as "the gang of four," and sometimes as "the four knights." In any case, George Shultz, Henry Kissinger, Sam Nunn, and Bill Perry have indeed created a major groundswell of opinion through the two op-eds they published in the Wall Street Journal in 2007 and 2008. Their views and their visions of the nuclear weapons free world has influenced not only the United States presidential campaign, but the United States President himself.

President Obama's speech on April 5th in Prague represents a major breakthrough in the United States policy regarding nuclear weapons. He has also gone further and appointed a team of extremely experienced and talented people to help support him in ushering in the policies that he announced in Prague. I am proud to announce that one of them is a veteran of the Pugwash Conferences, Professor John Holdern. He is the chief science advisor to President Obama and received the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of Pugwash in 1995 and made the statement on behalf of Pugwash.

If we deconstruct the speech in Prague we find that there are many promises. These are promises that we must help President Obama to keep. There is a promise of the United States ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which is not going to be an easy task. It will require 67 senators to have this important treaty ratified at long last, after it was rejected some years ago. And for that I think the citizens of the United States must supply pressure on their senators to ensure that they vote positively. But even beyond United States ratification, we have eight other countries that have either not signed or not ratified the treaty. These countries also need to be persuaded to follow the example of the United States in order to help the treaty enter into force. This is a very important step in which all of us must play a supporting role.

The next element is the United States–Russian negotiations. I am happy that the first meeting had already taken place and the second meeting is scheduled for June. We hope for deep cuts, which will help to replace the treaty that expires at the end of December this year. But to go beyond that we have to reach an agreement among all the nuclear weapons state on global zero.

Then we have the proposal of the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty and we had a meeting of the panel conducted here in this building last week, which has hopeful suggestions and with the new atmosphere and the new position of the United States that the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, a verifiable Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty is one of the goals of this administration. I do hope that the Conference on Disarmament will begin working on negotiations the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty.

There is also the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which President Obama reaffirms as a very important treaty. It is the most widely supported treaty in the disarmament arena in the world. We have already seen this week, an adoption of the agenda in a vastly different atmosphere compared to the 2005 Review Conference that ended as a disaster. So we think that the outcome of this Prep Com has a positive role to play at the Review Conference next year.

Finally there is a Security Summit that President Obama proposed. Although the content of this summit has not yet been spelled out in detail, my hope is that summit will be an opportunity for the leaders of the world to discuss the security of the nuclear material, the problem of weapons of mass destruction terrorism, and nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation as was proposed by the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission in 2006. Talking about the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in particular, there is of course the danger that skillful drafting by competent diplomats may try to paper over cracks and have a declaration that can be adopted at the next NPT Review Conference. We have seen this happening before and civil society in particular is tired of these compromises. They want to see a meaningful movement, a moving forward, and that is what we demand from the next Review Conference as the civil society. Of course conference diplomacy is important and I don't want to make an advertisement for my book that was published in 2005, but I think the selection of the next President, which has already been made by the conference officers, together with delegations playing a role in constructive diplomacy can help to establish links across the conventional political divisions that we have in the disarmament community. Together they can come out with constructive results.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is in many ways a curious treaty that has many interesting features. It was first operative for a limited period, which was then extended indefinitely in 1995. It also has two sets of states recognized - nuclear weapons states and non-nuclear weapons states with unequal obligations. The non-nuclear weapon states are supposed to remain non-nuclear, but unfortunately some of those inducements had been extended to countries outside the NPT, almost to the point of rewarding them for crossing the threshold when you consider the India-United States nuclear agreement.

So we have many problems that have to be confronted when the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference comes up. Disarmament treaties are either treaties that ban categories of weapons -we had that with regard to cluster ammunition recently, but we also have the arms control aspects. I think the problem with Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is that it attempts unsuccessfully to fuse the ban of non-nuclear weapons states acquiring nuclear weapons, with arms control for those who have the nuclear weapons. Unless they fuse, the disarmament aspect with the arms control aspect in Article Six, I do not think that the NPT can be a sustainable treaty. We are in a situation in this moment of opportunity for the international affairs

community; we know that there will be resistance from the military industrial complex not only in the United States, but in other countries as well. It was the complex that President Eisenhower warned us about in 1961. They are once again active; there are various interest groups in different countries supporting the retention of nuclear weapons. The struggle against the vision of the nuclear weapons free world will not be easy. We have to be aware that we have a number of obstacles. We have to be aware of the number of challenges that lie ahead and in this, the role of the civil society is vital, to reboot the system and to ensure support of the Obama policies.

Within civil society, the role of youth is vitally important. The campaign on the Peace and Educational Program of the United Nations is extremely important here, because we need to educate our youth on the lessons of our experience and the importance of not losing this opportunity of achieving global zero. There are of course promises that governments must keep and we have miles to go before we can sleep. There are miles to go before we achieve the global zero. We all accept the logic of zero but the logic of it will have a number of imperatives.

The question we must ask ourselves is, will civil society accept for example, the Reliable Replacement Weapon as a bargain for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty ratification? No, we cannot.

Will we, in civil society, accept a plateau of a United States–Russian agreement of 1500 nuclear weapons with any progress beyond it unlikely to appear in the nearest future? No, we cannot.

Will we, in civil society, accept the incremental steps towards a nuclear weapons free world with a global zero as mirage that gets further and further away from us? No, we cannot.

Will we accept the current emphasis on proliferation and weapons of mass destruction terrorism as a distraction from the vital goal of eliminating the nuclear weapons? No, we cannot.

We will not!

Thank you!