

Everyone

presented at

**“International Disarmament and Non-Proliferation:
World Security without Weapons of Mass Destruction”**

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I would like to thank those in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran who have organized this conference, the name of which contains its noble purpose: “International Disarmament and Non-proliferation: World Security without Weapons of Mass Destruction.” It is a goal which can and must be achieved in our lifetimes.

There is probably no more popular poet in both Iran and the United States than Mevlana Jalaldeen Rumi. Thirty years ago who could have imagined we could share such a sign of hope? In the *Masnavi* he said:

The opposition (among) people takes place because of names. Peace occurs when they go to the real meaning. *Masnavi* II, 3680

There is a verse in the Quran that likewise should give us hope:

O people! Indeed, we have created you from a male and a female, and have made you nations and tribes that you may get to know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you, in the sight of God, are those with the most *taqwa* (God consciousness). Indeed, God is all Knowing and Aware. (*Surat Al Hujraat*, Chapter 49 verse 13)

Although there are now more people than ever before, we are able to know each other better than ever before. Moreover, our shared concerns far outweigh our differences. Let me give a simple example, I buy gasoline for my car from a Russian concession in my neighborhood in the suburbs of Philadelphia; when my computer blinks I get help from a young person in India, probably Bangalore; and the money with which I pay for these goods and services is backed by loans from China, which produces many products we all use in our daily lives. In other words, our lives are deeply interconnected.

More than this, the very climate of the planet is challenged, the oceans' pH balance is in danger, over 70% of the world's fishing stocks are at risk, we lose over 100 plant and animals species per day, one and one half acres of rainforest is destroyed every second, and half the population of our one funny family of humanity is living in unacceptably impoverished circumstances. These are real challenges that require our collective efforts. What is our humanity if we do not quickly get over our fears and differences and learn to work together?

If one country believes it is acceptable to dump pollutants into the ocean, all can dump through its flag. A universal normative, legally enforceable system is needed to protect the oceans. Do we not need a similar system to control nuclear materials and eliminate nuclear weapons? Do we not need a new level of working together?

To achieve these goals, a new attitude will be needed. Some believe that multilateral agreements *per se* diminish sovereignty. They believe that sometimes the benefits outweigh the costs and thus encourage engagement on that basis. I ask that you consider a different point of view toward some multilateral and universal arrangements. If the first duty of the sovereign is to protect its citizens and a multilateral or universal regime is needed to accomplish a goal, such as effectively addressing a shared environmental or nuclear threat, then is it not of the essence of fulfilling sovereignty to enter into such an arrangement based on cooperation? Our children will all suffer if we do not find new levels of global cooperation and understanding. This suffering will not discriminate between our various languages, religions, national identities, or cultural sophistication. It is not correct for us to pass on such a legacy when we can do better.

What is needed are bridges of articulated shared interests and trust. What we have are walls of fear, words of hostility that emphasize our differences. We can do better.

The uses of science and technology have allowed us to weaponize everything from the biological mysteries of life, the smallest atomic particles, and the very firmaments, and we call this capacity development. I really do not think this is human progress. It is not a metric that is consistent with the wise. More compassion, caring, understanding, and justice are the metrics that make for peace and that is what the wise certainly admonish us to seek.

It is time that we focused more on human security and obtaining international and regional relationships based on a new realism of the practical and moral imperative of protecting the global commons -- the environmental living systems upon which all civilization depends such as the climate, the oceans and the rainforests -- and ending poverty. This refocus will quickly reveal that the possession of nuclear weapons is utterly wasteful and contrary to reason.

Making sure that all countries in one's region feel secure is a necessary first step in this course. The alternative is repeating cycles of arms races, conflict and insecurity. We can do better.

We cling to past injustices and find ourselves burdened such that the bridges of trust are not strong enough to carry us across. Can we learn to walk forward? Can we learn to work together to address our shared challenges of this moment in history?

Nuclear weapons present the greatest paradox of our modern situation. The more the weapon is perfected the less security is obtained. As long as some countries have them all people are at risk. Any use would be catastrophic beyond measure. As I said once before when visiting this beautiful country, "Hitler had to drag six million people into ovens of death, we now have put wings on the ovens and put six billion people at risk."

And why do I say "we." Especially why do I say "we" in a land which has publicly renounced developing nuclear weapons and has leaders who have stated that nuclear weapons are immoral and not of any strategic value? Because we all are part of the human family and each of us can make a contribution, and must make a contribution, to a more peaceful planet from wherever we are placed.

I am an American and thus have a heightened duty to press for progress on nuclear disarmament. I am deeply gratified to have a President who has publicly declared nuclear weapons abolition to be both a moral and practical goal toward which he has committed to strive. The Secretary-General's Five Point Plan for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament is a comprehensive agenda that provides an excellent framework for progress.¹ The Middle Powers Initiative has issued a set of similarly comprehensive recommendations to be advanced specifically within the NPT context.² As we move towards a nuclear weapons-free world, confidence in preventing proliferation through stable, secure, reliable, consistent verification and monitoring systems to control fissile materials will have to be in place. Moreover, these systems will also have to apply to all countries, especially nuclear weapons states. Such systems will make everyone safer. They are part of the social and physical architecture that must be constructed as we move to a nuclear weapons free world. They demonstrate that non-proliferation and disarmament are best achieved in a mutually reinforcing manner.

When any country does not take affirmative steps to help create that infrastructure, it is reinforcing the walls of fear and distrust that exist amongst us. When any country advances human interest by strengthening such systems it builds bridges of confidence and trust, performing a service to us all.

For example, ending testing of nuclear weapons is in everyone's interest. When advocates in my country press for progress we are often told that the fear of proliferation constrains making formal commitments. There is powerful momentum generated when countries bring the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) into a ratified status. Many question the integrity of any country that claims it has no nuclear weapons aspirations and yet does not take steps to help universalize the test ban by ratifying the CTBT.

¹ See Annex I.

² See Annex II.

The Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty Organization's physical system represents the kind of world we must create -- a web of functioning centers which serve not only to constrain development of new weapons but also to monitor the very health and physical activities of the living earth, our shared home. The seismic measurement centers are several hundred in number and they are serviced by a fully multi-national, multi-cultural, and multi-religious group of international public servants. And who do they serve? Everyone.

If this system does not ripen into fully universal, reliable and legally grounded status by entry-into-force of the CTBT who will suffer? Everyone.

If, on the other hand, a few nations step forward and begin changing the narrative of *us* and *them* to *everyone* we will see a new dawn. If a few nations begin actually making operational a verification system we can all depend upon and push to bring all into such a system, we will all benefit. More importantly, if a few nations will change the qualities upon which they act, from challenge to cordiality and cooperation, from building walls of fear and belligerence to bridges of recognized shared interest, who will benefit? Not just everyone here today in this generation, but many generations to come. That is our opportunity. I sincerely hope we seize it while it lasts.

As a minimum to change the equation between the US and Iran, I would urge the commencement of direct talks, without preconditions, where each party is free to raise any issues of concern and where the other party is obliged to give such subjects serious consideration. An outstretched hand and far more transparency, leading to confidence - building and trust, will benefit everyone. Exchanges of parliamentarians on a regular basis as well as formal diplomatic interactions across the broadest range of shared interests would be a good first step. There must be confidence built that Iran does not have a secret nuclear materials enrichment program. There must be confidence that that the US and NATO presence in the region is to build stability and not seek dominance. There must be confidence that the US does not threaten Iran. There must be confidence that Iran does not threaten any other country in the region.

These are not high hurdles for our respective countries. It is certainly the aspiration of the people of both countries to live in peace with all.

May God gift us with the purest of intentions and bring all nations and peoples peace and prosperity. May these good intentions be fulfilled. Thank you.

Post Script:

To each among you have we prescribed a law and an open way. If God had so willed, He would have made you a single people, but (His plan is) to test you in what He hath given you: so strive as in a race in all virtues. So compete with another in good works. Unto God you will all return, and He will then inform you of that wherein you have differences.

(*Surat Al Maida*: Chapter 5 Verse 48)

Annex I

The Secretary-General's Five Point Plan can be found online at: <http://www.un.org/en/events/peaceday/2009/sgproposal.shtml>.

First introduced in October 2008, the Plan includes the following:

I. All parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, especially the nuclear-weapon States, should fulfill its requirement to enter into negotiations on nuclear disarmament, which could focus on either a convention or framework of agreements banning nuclear-weapons.

II. The nuclear-weapon States could assure non-nuclear-weapon States that they will not be the subject of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

III. Existing nuclear arrangements and agreements (e.g. a ban on testing, nuclear-weapon-free zones, and strengthened safeguards) need to be accepted by States and brought into force.

IV. The nuclear Powers could also expand the amount of information they publish about the size of their arsenals, stocks of fissile material, and specific disarmament achievements.

V. Complementary measures are needed such as the elimination of other types of WMD; new efforts against WMD terrorism; limits on conventional arms; and new weapons bans, including of missiles and space weapons.

Annex II

The Middle Powers Initiative, based on the results of the Atlanta Consultation III and the series of Article VI Forums, recommends the following policy options to the 2010 NPT Review Conference:

1. *Disarmament*: Reaffirm the unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear arsenals. Encourage states parties, especially the nuclear weapon states, to initiate comprehensive national research and development programs to support continued progress toward a world free of nuclear weapons, including expanded work on verification technologies. Agree to begin collective preparatory work for negotiations on a convention or framework of instruments for the sustainable, verifiable and enforceable global elimination of nuclear weapons.

2. *Transparency*: Support establishment of a UN-based, comprehensive accounting system covering size of nuclear arsenals, delivery systems, fissile materials, and spending on nuclear forces.

3. *CTBT*: Support early entry-into-force of the CTBT. Oppose conditioning approval of the CTBT on programs inconsistent with the CTBT's role, stated in the treaty's preamble, as an "effective measure" in "constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons."

4. *FMCT*: Support negotiations for a fissile materials treaty that comprehensively prevents the use of existing materials outside military programs for weapons acquisition and that fosters disarmament.

5. *Doctrines*: Reaffirm the commitment to a "diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies to minimize the risk that these weapons ever be used and to facilitate the process of their total elimination." Agree that nuclear weapon states will make legally-binding assurances of non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states parties to the NPT that are in compliance with the obligation of non-acquisition of nuclear weapons. Encourage all states now part of nuclear alliances to take steps to reduce and phase out the role of nuclear weapons in their security doctrines.

6. *Nuclear forces*: Welcome the new agreement on strategic nuclear forces between the United States and Russian Federation. Agree to build on this progress through the following steps:

- Accomplish further reductions in the US and Russian nuclear arsenals in their entirety, deployed and non-deployed, strategic and non-strategic, in accordance with the principles of irreversibility and verification, including through verified dismantlement of warheads. Include other states with nuclear arsenals in the reduction process as soon as possible, to be carried out in coordination with preparations and negotiations for a convention or framework of instruments for the global elimination of nuclear weapons.
- All states with nuclear weapons declare the size of their stockpiles and commit not to increase them;

- Lower the operational status of nuclear forces and implement steps to reduce quick-launch capability;
- Remove all nuclear weapons deployed on the territories of non-possessor states;
- Refrain from activities inconsistent with moving toward a world free from nuclear weapons, including expanding capabilities to produce nuclear weapons, designing and manufacturing modified or new-design warheads, modernizing delivery systems, and retaining Cold War deployments based on long gone adversarial relationships.

7. *The Middle East Resolution*: Agree on methods to advance the commitments in the 1995 Middle East resolution, preferably a special representative empowered by the three NPT depository states or an international conference convened by the UN Secretary-General.

8. *Non-Proliferation and the Nuclear Fuel Cycle*: Agree that the Additional Protocol is a standard for compliance with non-proliferation obligations. Commit to the multilateral regulation of nuclear fuel production and supply, such as through the establishment of a low enriched uranium fuel bank to assure a guaranteed supply of nuclear reactor fuel. At the same time, encourage increased reliance on renewable sources of energy and joining and supporting the International Renewable Energy Agency.

9. *NPT Governance*: Agree to strengthen NPT governance by providing for meetings of states parties empowered to assess compliance with non-proliferation and disarmament requirements and to take decisions; establishing a standing executive body; and establishing a small secretariat.

These recommendations are dated April 12, 2010, and are subject to revision. For more information, see: www.middlepowers.org