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Middle Powers Initiative Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: New Imperatives and Openings for a Nuclear Weapon-Free World

The Sixth Meeting of the Article VI Forum

Berlin, Germany
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The Berlin Article VI Forum

The sixth Article VI Forum was held in Berlin, January 29-30 with the theme *New Imperatives and Openings for a Nuclear Weapons-Free World*. Convened with the support of the Government of Germany, the Forum explored how the non-proliferation and disarmament agenda could be pursued in this period of transition. The forum participants looked at many of these changes - especially in the shift in elite opinion in key countries - as a source of optimism for the various immediate and long-term initiatives, tempered by the understanding that there are numerous counter-trends.

In opening the Forum, **Ambassador Henrik Salander**, the new Chairman of MPI, said “In several ... possessor states, leadership has recently been transferred or may change in the near future. Whether this is promising or problematic we don't know yet.” He said middle power countries have to ask themselves what they want from the nuclear weapon states. While the “easy answer is a nuclear weapon free world, I think a clearer answer might be that we want a paradigm shift - a radical change in the tone and above all in the content of the discussion between governments about nuclear weapons.”

In his welcoming remarks, **Deputy Foreign Minister Gernot Erler** of Germany emphasized the need for a successful NPT review conference in 2010 that re-affirms non-proliferation efforts and re-energizes commitment to nuclear disarmament. Erler pointed out that the prospects for movement on the disarmament agenda are more promising given recent arguments made by the four US and four German elder statesmen and statements made by President Obama. Minister Erler also noted the need for NATO to determine a security strategy that will contribute to disarmament and non-proliferation, while arguing that NATO has already acknowledged the decreasing reliance on nuclear security. “The international community cannot afford to be passive. We need a renewed effort to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime in all its aspects - including nuclear disarmament,” he said.

Given the landscape of “new imperatives” that are emerging in light of the four American elder statesmen and the Secretary-General of the United Nations’s five-point plan for nuclear disarmament, **Mr. Sergio Duarte**, the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, emphasized de-legitimizing nuclear weapons unequivocally with the goal of complete disarmament, not simply disarmament of some. Such action means states upholding previous disarmament commitments, particularly those of the NPT. Mr. Duarte said a nuclear weapons convention would make commitments to the NPT binding and to create an impetus for countries to internalize the disarmament agenda. Such steps are based on and adhere to the vision of the Secretary-General’s five-point plan.

Speaking on the panel *US -Russian Security Relationship*, **Prof. Anatoli Diakov**, the Director of the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, said that after decades of arms reduction dialogue, Russia and the US have a shared understanding of nuclear dangers, but have still “not become true allies.” He said stark differences remain on several core issues hampering progress on renewing or replacing START. Russia wants to include missiles and other delivery systems in the negotiations, including those which can be converted for conventional warhead delivery. Under the Bush administration, the US rejected the proposal to include delivery means and conventional warheads, and prefers a short, political, legally non-binding agreement. Russia maintains that, according to domestic law, the sought-after verification provisions will be illegal under a non-binding agreement. Another issue of crucial importance, said Prof. Diakov, is missile defense.

Hon. Jan Lodal, Past President of the Atlantic Council of the United States, stressed the importance of framing bilateral discussions within the context of nuclear abolition. It is not enough to focus on the threat of nuclear terrorism or rogue states, but rather the global problem of nuclear weapons. Bilateral negotiations should not “get in the way” of global abolition efforts. The nuclear threat, he maintained, is not a bilateral issue. Mr. Lodal focused on ways to establish minimum numbers of warheads in new treaties; agreements that strive to achieve a Cold War-esque “parity” will be difficult to achieve, and nearly impossible to ratify in the US Congress. He also stressed the need to eschew old definitions of “tactical” and “strategic” weapons. All these weapons represent the same risk, and such categorizations only obfuscate negotiations and take our eye away from the goal of a world free from nuclear weapons. He emphasized that there must be a clear commitment to limit existing nuclear weapons to only one issue - preventing the use of those weapons while working for a nuclear weapon-free world.

In *Resolving Challenges to the Non-Proliferation Regime*, **Ambassador Robert Grey**, the Director of the Bipartisan Security Group, opened the discussion of current challenges by looking at the case of Iran. He attempted to broaden the traditional US perspective by examining the historical relationship between Iran and traditional powers, paying attention to the US-Iranian relationship over the last 60 years, as well as the skeptical view the Iranians hold of the United Nations. As a path forward on the nuclear issue he suggested a much broader diplomatic discussion on issues of interest to both the Iranians and the US.

Dr. Oliver Meier of the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy Hamburg, then examined the recent US-India nuclear cooperation deal and highlighted the many areas in which this agreement contravenes the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Beyond the explicit contradiction of the NPT and undermining of the Nuclear Suppliers’ Group’s principles this deal embodied, one particular byproduct of this deal that he found troubling was the creation of a new distinction between “good” and “bad” nuclear weapon states. With the understanding that this deal cannot be reversed, he then went on to explore ways in which the “collateral damage” to the NPT can be limited, for example by having states parties agree not to export enrichment and reprocessing technology to non-states parties.

The Executive-Director of the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, **Dr. Harald Müller**, followed with a broader view of the multitude of challenges to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Dr. Müller looked at the North Korean, Iranian, and Indian situations. He also talked about the need to bring Israel into these broader discussions and the need to push for a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East. Beyond all of these individual challenges, Dr. Müller viewed the lack of progress towards disarmament by the nuclear weapon states as the greatest challenge of all. He was optimistic that none of these challenges singularly could take down the NPT, but feared that all of them combined might be too much for the NPT to sustain.

A theme running through the panel on *Opening: Reviewing NATO Strategic Concept* was that the US nuclear weapons based in five European NATO countries were anachronistic, counter to the obligations of the NPT and a drag on any real rapprochement between the Alliance and Russia. **Dr. Rebecca Johnson**, the Executive Director of the Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, said, “NATO continues to behave as if nuclear weapons are the indispensable glue for Euro-Atlantic coherence and deterrence.” There is too much debate over the issue to avoid a discussion, she said, giving officials and civil society the chance “to argue that they must open the Strategic Concept, debate the role of nuclear weapons and update nuclear policy.” That updated policy, she said, should include the non-nuclear weapons states ceasing to equip aircraft for nuclear weapons and, as part of the Strategic Review, NATO should give up tactical nuclear weapons (TNW) in Europe, thus ending nuclear sharing and deterrence based on the potential for first use and then

use this decision as “tactical leverage” to get Russia to mothball its own TNW.

Dr. Hans Kristensen, Project Director, Federation of American Scientists, who has done extensive research on weapons deployment in Europe, estimated that there are approximately 200 US gravity bombs still deployed at six bases in five countries (Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey). The Russian deployment, he said, is “very hard to assess.” He estimated that there are perhaps 5300 weapons total remaining in the stockpile (2000 of which are operational), including inactive weapons in line for dismantlement. All are deployed on Russian territory. He saw signs for optimism that these weapons could be eliminated in NATO countries, since government views are “wildly out of sync” with public opinion and that “the military sees it as burden in general.” He said Cold War explanations for the deployments are “wearing thin” so that the rationale is now “entirely political.”

Ms. Marit Nybakk, MP of Norway, took up the same political line. “On the nuclear question, NATO still lives in the Cold War, and we wonder why,” she said, “If the NATO Summit comes up with a decision to change the Strategic Concept, how can we play a role and influence the result concerning the role of nuclear weapons in the concept?” As a parliamentarian, she argued for fellow parliamentarians to work through their national governments and to be active in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly to influence the nuclear debate. “NATO bureaucrats in Brussels, I’m sure are more powerful, but don’t underestimate the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. They represent their national parliaments. So they have to go back to their parliaments and say what they did in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly,” Ms. Nybakk said.

A myriad of short- and long-term initiatives to advance the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda were covered in the two-part panel on *Strengthening and Transforming the Regime*. The thorny issue of balancing Article IV rights to nuclear power with the need to prevent proliferation was addressed by several speakers in this session. Anticipating a global growth in nuclear energy, **Amb. Klaus-Peter Gottwald**, the Commissioner for Disarmament and Arms Control in the German Foreign Ministry, explained his government’s proposal for assuring access to nuclear fuel supplies called the Multilateral Enrichment Sanctuary Project (MESP) - whereby a host state creates a nuclear “sanctuary” under IAEA authority and the enrichment cycle is facilitated by a commercial entity. NPT states parties would have the option to purchase nuclear materials for peaceful use from the fuel bank. Amb. Gottwald explained that the MESP proposal seeks to strengthen the NPT by multilaterally controlling the nuclear fuel cycle.

Mr. Herman Scheer, MP of Germany, argued that the recently founded International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) - with 75 founding members - was a crucial step in strengthening the NPT and disarmament efforts. The technology transfer bargain of the NPT, which permits member states to acquire nuclear energy for peaceful use, is an antiquated aspect of the agreement as it is no longer an economically competitive source of energy and the development of nuclear fuel inherently spreads the risk of proliferation. In contrast, renewable energies are economical and pose no proliferation threat. Scheer, who is also the President of EUROSOLAR, suggested that a renewable energy technology-sharing amendment be added to the NPT.

Dr. Frank von Hippel’s presentation focused on the need and feasibility of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT). The basic requisites of such a treaty would be verification by the IAEA and verified commitments that existing civilian and excess military stocks not be used for military purposes and that existing stocks of highly enriched uranium for fuel naval and other military reactors not be used for weapons.

Dr. von Hippel, a Co-Chair of the International Panel on Fissile Materials, argued that creating the FMCT

under IAEA safeguards would make weapon reductions far more difficult to reverse and that verification is possible.

Ambassador Nobuyasu Abe, the former UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, reported on the new bilateral effort by the Japanese and Australian governments launched to reinvigorate the drive towards a world free of nuclear weapons. While the International Commission on Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament is co-chaired by Japan and Australia, its overall structure includes members of nuclear weapon states, non-nuclear weapon states, and those states possessing nuclear weapons outside of the non-proliferation regime. Amb. Abe, who is an Advisory Board member for the Commission, said considerable time will be devoted to examining ways states possessing nuclear weapons outside of the NPT can be brought into the regime.

Mr. Mark Fitzpatrick, Senior Fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, reported on a project for which he recently served as managing director, the final product of which was *Abolishing Nuclear Weapons*, co-authored by George Perkovich and James Acton. While much scholarly and practical work is currently being done to create an environment in which the world can go from thousands of nuclear weapons to hundreds, he said, this book sought to go the next step. Its goal was to explore and lay the ground work for the set of conditions necessary to live in a world with zero nuclear weapons. It begins with the premise that disarmament is not an end in and of itself; rather it is a means towards a more secure world.

Ambassador Jaap Ramaker, the Special Representative to Promote Ratification of the CTBT, closed out this panel discussing the prospects for ratification of the treaty. He noted that since 2005, 25 additional nations have ratified the treaty. He spent the majority of his time discussing the chances of the CTBT in the US Senate, concluding that he was optimistic that it would be ratified under the Obama Administration. He said that once the US and China ratify, the calculus for the remaining seven holdouts changes completely.

On the panel, *Openings for a Nuclear Weapons Convention*, **Mr. Jonathan Granoff**, the President of the Global Security Institute, said a paradigm shift towards a cooperative security framework is not only necessary, but it is possible. Mr. Granoff pointed to the five-point plan of the UN Secretary-General for comprehensive non-proliferation and disarmament, including a call for negotiations to ban nuclear weapons globally, such as the Nuclear Weapons Convention proposed by Costa Rica and Malaysia. Such a convention, he argued, would fulfill Article VI of the NPT, fulfill the call set forth by the International Court of Justice, would end the NPT's codification of a nuclear apartheid and reinforce the atmosphere of cooperation needed to establish normative legal regimes in other areas of our common needs.

Dr. Jürgen Scheffran, Senior Research Scientist, Disarmament and International Security at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, laid out general principles of the Model Nuclear Weapons Convention (MNWC), as drafted by a consortium of lawyers, engineers and physicians. The route laid out by the MNWC encompasses both incremental and comprehensive approaches, through five phases starting with de-alerting the weapons and closing or converting nuclear weapons research and production facilities leading to the destruction of all nuclear weapons.

Baroness Sue Miller provided an overview of what she dubbed “the low politics” of achieving a nuclear weapon-free world: the role of national parliaments in advancing the norm of nuclear abolition. She argued

for the need for involved, sustained input from civil society if MPs are to align themselves with the goal of disarmament; in the UK, for instance, disarmament is seen as a unilateralist move, which is undesirable to the electorate. As a UK delegate to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Ms. Miller discussed the draft IPU resolution on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, circulating within the security and peace committee. She noted that MPs participating in the IPU are “ill-equipped” for a discussion on these issues. Proponents of nuclear disarmament should educate IPU delegates in a way that is relevant for them and their particular national security concerns.

In his concluding remarks, Amb. Salander characterized the consultation as “a very rich discussion [with] an astonishing number of different angles and inroads” on the issues before the Forum, including how to engage the nuclear weapon states.

The following governments participated in the Berlin Article VI Forum: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden and Switzerland. In addition, representatives of the United Nations and NATO attended.

THE MIDDE POWERS INITIATIVE

Through the Middle Powers Initiative, eight international non-governmental organizations (the Albert Schweitzer Institute, Global Security Institute, International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Weapons, International Network of Engineers and Scientists, International Peace Bureau, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom) are able to work primarily through "middle power" governments to encourage and educate the nuclear weapons states to take immediate practical steps that reduce nuclear dangers and commence negotiations to eliminate nuclear weapons. MPI is guided by an International Steering Committee, chaired by Ambassador (ret.) Henrik Salander of Sweden.

MPI is a program of the Global Security Institute.



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The Global Security Institute is dedicated to strengthening international cooperation and security based on the rule of law, with a particular focus on nuclear arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. GSI was founded by Senator Alan Cranston whose insight that nuclear weapons are impractical, unacceptably risky, and unworthy of civilization continues to inspire GSI's efforts to contribute to a safer world. GSI has developed an exceptional team that includes former heads of state and government, distinguished diplomats, effective politicians, committed celebrities, religious leaders, Nobel Peace Laureates, disarmament and legal experts, and concerned citizens.



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