

Report: MPI Forum, "How to Make the NPT Review Conference Successful"
May 2, 2005
By Zachary Allen

On May 2, 2005, the opening day of the 2005 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Middle Powers Initiative (MPI) organized a forum for diplomats and NGO representatives on "How to make the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Process Successful." The panel featured Ambassador Sergio de Queiroz. Duarte, President of the NPT Review Conference; Hon. Marion Hobbs, New Zealand's Minister for Disarmament; and Ambassador Paul Meyer of Canada.

Hon. Douglas Roche, O.C., Chairman of the MPI, moderated the discussion. He established the context for the forum by presenting MPI's Final Report of the *Atlanta Consultation II: On the Future of the NPT*. He stated: "MPI believes that a basis for a successful RevCon would be the determination of the centrist states to play a pro-active role in upholding the integrity of the disarmament and non-proliferation goals of the NPT. In the present circumstances, a steely resolve by these key nations to protect and advance the security interests of the whole world through an effective NPT may well lead to a successful meeting."

Ambassador Duarte expressed his gratitude to MPI and the other NGOs that work on disarmament. He said that the results of the Atlanta Consultation II were very important to those diplomats who participated physically, and that President Carter's engagement was a source of encouragement and inspiration. Ambassador Duarte focused the remainder of his remarks on the need for a balanced approach to the three "pillars" of the NPT's core bargain: non-proliferation, disarmament, and the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The question of how to treat this core bargain is central to the debate that has plagued the opening of the NPT Review Conference with regard to adopting an agenda.

Minister Hobbs, whose country is currently coordinating the work of the New Agenda Coalition, emphasized the importance of maintaining a positive outlook during the review process despite grave challenges, and highlighted the achievements that the treaty has already enabled. She also made reference to the numerous tools and achievements that have been made in context indirectly related to the NPT. For example, she singled out MPI for its work in garnering support among NATO countries for the New Agenda Resolution during the 2004 meeting of the First Committee of the UN General Assembly. She highlighted the importance of the recent conference of States Party to Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaties in Mexico. And she applauded the grassroots efforts of the Mayors for Peace Campaign.

Ambassador Meyer urged creativity and non-complacency in order to see the NPT through this difficult time. He expressed Canada's firm desire to see a final document emerge from the NPT Review Conference. He presented Canada's now well-known proposals to shore up the "institutional deficit" of the NPT as one way to make clear progress. Canada advocates an overhaul of the NPT review process, which is inadequate to deal with sudden crises such as a future assertion of withdrawal from the Treaty. Ambassador Meyer also reiterated his country's unwavering commitment to greater NGO access and participation in the NPT process as well as

increased reporting by States on their progress toward compliance with the NPT.

The panel presentation was followed by a lively discussion among the several diplomats and the overflow crowd of NGO representatives who were in the room.