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Berlin, April 24, 2014

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Dear colleagues,

It is a matter of course to open this newsletter with the great event in honor of Peter Weiss. Even a quick glance at his decades-long commitment reveals the tremendous energy and drive and the never giving-up in the fight against the weapons that can exterminate humanity and destroy the Blue Planet beyond recognition - the atomic bombs. The abolition of this hellish stuff is the life task of Peter Weiss and he has put all of his legal competence and power into it.

Thank you, Peter. We wish you a lot of creative power in future, as well.

We will meet him soon again – at all the events, which IALANA is going to organize at the end of April/in the beginning of May during the Prep-Com prior to the NPT Review Conference and which we will document in this newsletter. What's next in the struggle for a nuclear-free world; what strategies are successful in the process of dissuading the nuclear weapon countries from possessing them? These are exciting questions in a time of increasing international tensions in Europe, as well as in the Far East, when references to "bipolar confrontation" and "Cold War" are being made once again. Do we need a new policy of détente? How can the process of disarmament be re-launched? SIPRI has confronted us once again with incomprehensible statistics on military spending, while at the same time there is neither money, nor an existing political will to avert climate change.

In New York the international IALANA will also conduct some planning for the rest of the year and beyond with its Board Meeting. Many remembrance events of this or the next year (2014: 100 years since World War I; 25 years since the Fall of the Berlin Wall, 2015: 70 years since the end of World War II; 70 years since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; 60 years Russell-Einstein Manifesto) depict not only historical data, but are also current challenges of peace-oriented policy.

Therefore IALANA will also be actively involved in the Conference on the Centenary of World War I under the title: "Facing the Dangers of 21st Century Great Power War". Further details can be found in this issue. Peaceful and sustainable alternatives are needed, this certainly includes - and it is not presumptuous to say worldwide - the defense of democratic basic rights against spying and surveillance. Awarding the whistleblower prize to Edward Snowden by the German IALANA was certainly an important step to further awareness-raising of a still unsettled public. Increased activities in this direction are considered necessary, as well. The fact remains - peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons require wise policy, intense diplomacy and lobbying, but especially the

mitment of people. IALANA will continue its active work and involvement, even in the large-scale anti-nuclear actions in New York in the context of the NPT Conference in 2015.

Peter Becker

Reiner Braun

Contents

Preface.....1

Facing the Dangers of 21st Century Great Power War. A Conference on the Centenary of WWI.....3

Law’s Imperative: A World Free of Nuclear Weapons (Honoring Peter Weiss)5

Peter Weiss: Nuclear Disarmament: The State of Play7

Peter Weiss: Climate Change Isn’t the Only Thing That Threatens the Whole Planet’s Future.....9

Side Events at the NPT PrepCom in New York.....10

Afghanistan between troop withdrawal and elections. Interview with Karim Popal.....11

Whistleblowers in Security Politics Awards 2011/2013.....16

IPB Declaration on Ukraine.....16

Statement of Cooperation for Peace (Germany) on Ukraine.....18

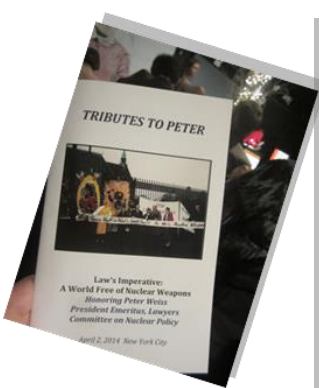
Obama whitewashes World War I.....19

Marking the 50th anniversary of the Shimoda Case.....20

Issues raised during the “Human Beings Cannot Coexist with Nuclear Energy or Weapons” session.....21

ICBUW Germany: News and recent activities.....23

Peace Event Sarajevo 2014.....23



FACING THE DANGERS OF 21ST CENTURY GREAT POWER WAR:

A Conference on the Centenary of World War I

A century ago, an assassination in Sarajevo triggered World War I, a war that killed or wounded tens of millions. World War I was only the beginning of three decades of great power competition and warfare that culminated in the development and use of the atomic bomb. As in 1914, we confront an era of militarized competition between rising and declining powers, intense disputes over territory and resources, arms racing, complex military alliances, rising nationalism, and religious tensions. The beginning of this century, like the last, also is defined by deepening economic interdependence and competition, revolutionary advances in communications, and the belief that great power war would end civilization as we know it, and is thus unthinkable. Yet from the Persian Gulf to the East China Sea there are more than enough wild cards to spark incidents that could spiral towards war.

All of this is occurring within an economic framework dominated by immense capitalist firms that have gained sufficient power in much of the world to write their own rules. And we are now facing another feature of the time that brought us world wars: intractable global economic crisis, with the actions essential to break the impasse thwarted by the extreme accumulation of wealth and power by elites determined to keep things as they are.

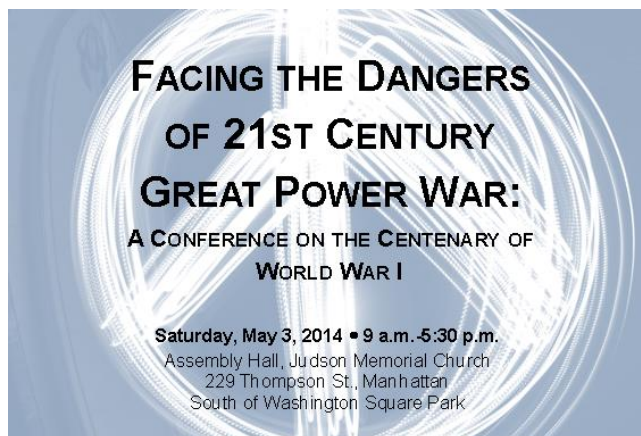
This conference will be held alongside the 2014 preparatory committee meeting for the 2015 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. The clearest opportunity of the nuclear age to eliminate The Bomb—the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the superpower confrontation that had immense nuclear arsenals as a central feature—is behind us. Nuclear disarmament efforts have stalled. Complex new arms races are ramping up, combining powerful, accurate

conventional weapons capable of global reach with missile defenses and a wide spectrum of electronic warfare. Nuclear weapons remain a catastrophic threat if warfare spirals beyond limits in a manner inconceivable at the outset—as it did in the great power wars of the last century. As former British Prime Minister Harold MacMillan put it, “We thought of air warfare in 1938 rather as people think of nuclear war today.”¹

This new round of arms racing comes at a time when familiar factors may combine with novel ones to heighten the potential for conflict. Ascendant powers are challenging those that long have been dominant in regions that have been key arenas of economic and geopolitical contention. The magnitude and pace of development of these new powers is unprecedented, and is occurring in the context of equally unprecedented effects flowing from limits to key resources and to the carrying capacity of planetary ecosystems.

At this conference, bearing in mind the catastrophic warfare of the first half of the last century, we will ask participants to consider the following questions: How significant is the risk of great power war in the coming decades? What are the prospects for disarmament in a time of rising tension among great powers? What factors must be addressed in evaluating the risk of great power war, and what other issues and movements are elements in building movements that might forge a path to a world that is genuinely more peaceful? And, what then must we do?

The conference will bring together activists and academics with knowledge and experience about emerging dangers in key regions, from wars, resource conflicts and profound ongoing political realignments in the Middle East, to growing tensions in the Western Pacific over territory and resources as well as the U.S. strategic “pivot” to Asia. As we learned at the height of the Cold War—also the peak of a wave of liberation and environmental movements—people and popular movements determine if we have war or peace, justice or oppression. Join us on May 3 to face our past, confront the present, and think about how to build our future.



Registration information: There is no charge for the conference. An inexpensive lunch will be available on site at cost. We would appreciate pre-registrations indicating whether people wish to purchase lunch. Please indicate whether you would like a vegetarian meal. Register by writing to Jennifer Sherys-Rivet at JSherysr@afsc.org. For more information, call 617-661-6130.

Conference conveners and sponsors: American Friends Service Committee, Peace and Economic Security Program; International Peace Bureau; and the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms and its U.S. affiliates, Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy and the Western States Legal Foundation.

Endorsing Organizations: Abolition 2000 Global Network to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons, Peace Action

Our thanks to the Rosa Luxembourg Stiftung for their support.

¹H. MacMillan, *Winds of change, 1914-1939* (London: 1966), 575; quoted in Michael Sherry, *The Rise of American Air Power: The Creation of Armageddon* (New Haven: 1987), 74.

Facing the Dangers of 21st Century Great Power War

A Conference on the Centenary of World War I

Saturday, May 3, 2014 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

Assembly Hall, Judson Memorial Church

229 Thompson St., Manhattan

South of Washington Square Park

9:00-9:30 Registration There is no charge for the conference. Please see registration information below if you wish to reserve lunch, which will be available on-site at cost.

9:30-11:00 90 minutes **Looking forward, looking backward: WWI, today's risk of great power war, peace movements, and disarmament.** Chair: David Webb, Leeds Metropolitan University, Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space.

Introduction, overview (by the conveners)

World War I: Anticipations and realities. Dr. Erhard Crome, Rosa Luxembourg Stiftung.

The history of World War I, and the remembrance of its centenary, generally is focused on Europe and its settler colonies, despite its impact on the entire world. The role and view of the rest of the world of the meaning of WWI then and now. Zia Mian, Princeton University.

The risk of great power war today and arms control and disarmament movements: what have we learned from the past, or even the present? Andrew Lichterman, Western States Legal Foundation.

11:00-11:30 30 minutes **Break**

11:30-12:45 75 minutes **The risk of great power war: regional perspectives (1).** Chair: Lisa Clark *Beati i costruttori di pace*, Italy

The U.S. and the "Pacific Pivot:" ascending powers confront the global hegemon, old regional conflicts renewed? Joseph Gerson, American Friends Service Committee; M.V. Ramana, Princeton University.

The Middle East and SW Asia: Resource wars, imperial overstretch and regional realignments. Irene Gendzier, Boston University.

12:45-1:45 Lunch Break (60 minutes; an inexpensive lunch will be available for sale on site.)

1:45-3:00 75 minutes **The risk of great power war: regional perspectives (2): BRICs, sub-imperialisms, and post-Cold War conflicts** Chair: Arielle Denis, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

Michael Klare, Hampshire College; Emira Woods, Institute for Policy Studies; Paul Lansu, Pax Christi Europe.

Break 30 minutes **3:--3:30**

3:00-4:15 75 minutes **The limits of the moral imagination: industrialized warfare, moral thresholds, and the forgotten history of arms control: what can we learn from the past about avoiding disastrous wars in the future?** Chair: Alicia Godsberg, Peace Action New York. John Burroughs, Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy; Paul Walker, Global Green; Götz Neuneck, Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg.

4:15-5:30 (75 minutes) **Disarmament movements, peace movements, and what is to be done amidst a new round of great power competition and conflict?** Chairs: Joseph

Gerson, American Friends Service Committee, and Jacqueline Cabasso, Western States Legal Foundation.

Reiner Braun, International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms; Akira Kawasaki, Peace Boat; Judith LeBlanc, Peace Action.

Registration information: There is no charge for the conference. An inexpensive lunch will be available on site at cost. We would appreciate pre-registrations indicating whether people wish to purchase lunch. Please indicate whether you would like a vegetarian meal. Register by writ-

ing to Jennifer Sherys-Rivet at JSherysr@afsc.org. For more information, call 617-661-6130.

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Endorsing Organizations: Abolition 2000 Global Network to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons, Peace Action

Law's Imperative: A World Free of Nuclear Weapons

Forum and Reception

Honoring Peter Weiss, LCNP President Emeritus

April 2, 2014

Downtown Community Television, New York City, www.dctv.org

Attended by about 100 people, the reception celebrated the contributions of Peter Weiss to nuclear disarmament and the international rule of law, and raised funds for the future work of LCNP. A distinguished human rights and international lawyer, Peter retired in 2013 as President of LCNP, having served in that position since 1981. A booklet, *Tributes to Peter*, released at the event contains numerous appreciations of Peter and fascinating bits of history.

With Cora Weiss, President of Hague Appeal for Peace and Peter's wife, moderating, Jennifer Simons, Vancouver, Phon van den Biesen, Amsterdam, Peter Becker, Kassel, Germany, and other friends and colleagues made short remarks. And lawyer and chanteuse Nancy Stearns performed a Phil Ochs song, "When I'm Gone," with the pertinent lyrics: "Won't be asked to do my share when I'm gone, So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here".

The reception was preceded by an equally well-attended educational forum moderated by John Burroughs, LCNP Executive Director. It featured a stellar cast of speakers offering incisive analyses of law and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Former UN Legal Counsel **Hans Corell** stated "that disarmament and non-proliferation are best pursued through a cooperative rules-based international order, applied and enforced through effective multilateral institutions, with the UN Security Council as the ultimate global authority". However, the United States had violated the UN Charter by invading Iraq and Russia violated the Charter by annexing Crimea. He observed: "If permanent members of the Council violate the very law they are set to supervise, what signal does this send to the world?"

Virginia Gamba, Director of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, said: "The fundamental question we should all be asking is, 'what offers the most reliable guarantee against any future use of nuclear weapons?' And my answer is: global nuclear disarmament." She explained that to be effective and enduring, disarmament must be verified, transparent, universal, and legally binding. Ms. Gamba said about Peter Weiss: "He embodies what I value most about civil society initiatives in disarmament. He is using his brain for peace."

Elizabeth Shafer, LCNP Vice President, examined the fundamental legal requirement of good faith. She concluded: "A common view now is that states like Iran and North Korea are acting in bad faith regarding their nuclear plans, but

a more realistic approach would be to take a long-term view of recognizing the egregious lack of good faith of the nuclear weapon states, for more than four decades, in complying with the nuclear disarmament obligation of Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.”

Roger Clark, Professor of Law at Rutgers Law School, Camden, observed that the Model Nuclear Weapons Convention, of which Peter Weiss was a principal drafter, has “special contemporary resonance”. He explained: “The two Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Norway in 2013 and in Mexico this February, are to be followed later this year by a further event in Vienna, hosted by Austria. The Chair’s summary from Mexico says it all: ‘It is a fact that no State or international organization has the capacity to address or provide the short and long term humanitarian assistance and protection needed in case of a nuclear weapon explosion. Moreover, it would not be possible to establish such capacities, even if attempted.’”

Professor Clark continued: “These are the stark truths and they are strikingly similar to the World Health Organization material urged on the International Court of Justice in 1995, and on which Jonathan Schell, whose recent death we mourn, was at pains to inform us. It is good that there is a new emphasis on such material. The facts critically undermine the legitimacy of nuclear weapons. What comes next is the law and its imperative: abolition. That is what should be addressed in Vienna, even if only tentatively.” He noted that the Model Convention would prohibit development, testing, production, stockpiling, transfer, use and threat of use, and elimination, of nuclear weapons, and asked: “How do we generate the political will to negotiate on all of these, as I believe we must? A daunting task, but one on which the survival of our Spaceship Earth depends.”

Peter Weiss, Co-President of the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms and LCNP President Emeritus, described the current state of play as to nuclear disarmament, with both bad news and good news. He observed regarding law: “Law alone cannot bring about a nuclear weapons free world. But law must be an essential component in the path leading to that goal. The law is clear. Nuclear weapons are, by their very nature, incompatible with humanitarian law. All that is needed is for the governments of this world to comply with the unanimous mandate of the International Court of Justice ‘to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.’” Peter said regarding the abolition of nuclear weapons: “Despair is not an option; denial is not an option. The only option is perseverance.”



Peter Weiss: Nuclear Disarmament: The State of Play

(Published first in IPS, then Huffington Post and other publications in March 2014)

If psychosis is a loss of contact with reality, the current status of nuclear disarmament can best be described as psychotic.

On the one hand, the nuclear issue is beginning to creep out from under the rug where it has lain dormant for several decades. On the other hand, the commitment of the nuclear weapon states to a nuclear weapons-free world is honored more in the breach than in the observance.

U.S. policy on nuclear disarmament is at best a mixed bag; that of the other eight nuclear armed powers is not much better.

Let us begin by adding up the pluses and the minuses of nuclear disarmament.

On the plus side, we have a president of the United States, which is central to the problem, who has spoken out repeatedly on the subject, albeit in a decelerating mode. In a speech at Purdue University on Jun. 16, 2008, he said, "It's time to send a clear message to the world: America seeks a world without nuclear weapons ... we'll make the goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons a central element in our nuclear policy."

There was no reference to how long it might take. A year later, in the famous Prague speech of May 6, 2009, Obama said, "I state clearly and with conviction

America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons," but he added, "This goal will not be reached quickly -- perhaps not in my lifetime."

He was 48 at the time. Four years later, on Jun. 19, 2013, in Berlin, Obama said, "Peace with justice means pursuing the security of a world without nuclear weapons -- no matter how distant that dream may be."

In all fairness, the trajectory to abolition announced in Prague has either been implemented or blocked

through no fault of the president: A substantial reduction in nuclear arms has been negotiated with Russia and the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. security strategy has been lessened.

The ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the negotiation of a Fissile Materials Treaty, both of which the Obama administration favors, have been held up, one by the U.S. Senate, the other by another country.

But reduction is not elimination and the Defense Department (DOD) and Department of Energy (DOE) continue to pursue policies that are clearly incompatible with nuclear disarmament, to wit:

The Nuclear Employment Strategy of the United States, issued by the DOD on Jun. 19, 2013, states that nuclear weapons will be used only in extreme circumstances, but that it is too early to limit their employment strictly to deterrence.

The Assessment of Nuclear Monitoring and Verification Technologies, released by the Defense Science Board in January 2014, concedes that for the first time since the beginning of the nuclear age the United States needs to be concerned not only with horizontal proliferation, i.e. to countries not possessing nuclear weapons, but also with vertical proliferation, i.e. in nuclear weapons countries.

But the 100-page report makes no reference to monitoring and verification requirements in a nuclear weapons-free world.

On Feb. 6, in an apparent violation of at least the spirit if not the letter of the Nonproliferation Treaty, the U.S. announced that it had conducted a successful impact test (not involving an explosion) of the B-61 nuclear bomb. Donald Cook, deputy administrator for defense at DOE, said that engineering on the new bomb had commenced and that this would make it possible to replace older models "by the mid or late 2020s."

Thus, U.S. policy on nuclear disarmament is at best a mixed bag; that of the other eight nuclear armed powers is not much better.

Now for the good news. Last year saw more encouraging action by non-nuclear powers than most previous years:

- In February the Foreign Ministry of Germany, a member of NATO, hosted a Forum on Creating the Conditions and Building a Framework for a Nuclear Weapons Free World, convened by the Middle Powers Initiative. It was attended by 26 governments and a number of civil society organizations.

- In March, the Foreign Ministry of Norway, another NATO country, convened in Oslo a Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, attended by 128 governments, and numerous civil society organizations.

- On Oct. 21, Ambassador Dell Higgie of New Zealand delivered to the First Committee of the U.N. the statement adopted by 125 countries, many of whom had attended the Oslo conference. It declared that the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is through their total elimination.

- A Governmental Open Ended Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament met for the first time in May in Geneva and produced in August a report to the General Assembly which outlined a variety of approaches to reaching nuclear disarmament, including a section on the role of international law.

- Also for the first time, on Sep. 26, the General Assembly held a high level meeting on nuclear disarmament

in which country after country, represented by presidents, foreign ministers and other high officials, called for prompt and effective progress toward a nuclear weapons free world.

- Finally, and most importantly, during the follow up conference to Oslo held in Nayarit, Mexico, Feb. 13 and 14, Sebastian Kurz, the foreign minister of Austria, announced that he would convene a conference in Vienna later this year because "the international nuclear disarmament efforts require an urgent paradigm shift."

The Vienna conference will not be simply a third rehearsal of the unspeakable horrors of nuclear weapons. It will get down to serious business, perhaps even the commencement of drafting a convention banning the use and possession of these weapons, as suggested by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

But there is a problem: The countries that have nuclear weapons have boycotted both Oslo and Nayarit. What if they boycott Vienna as well? That is the question. It is also the challenge facing the growing anti-nuclear weapons community, both official and unofficial. Embarrassment can be a tool of diplomacy.

The Nonproliferation Treaty, to which the nuclear powers pay lip service, requires good faith efforts by all states to achieve a nuclear weapons free world. This is a good time to remind the nuclear states, and particularly the big five, of that all important obligation.

This piece originally appeared as an op-ed in the Inter Press Service (IPS) News Agency. Peter Weiss is President Emeritus of the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy. He is the keynote speaker at "Law's Imperative: A World Free of Nuclear Weapons" on April 2 in New York.

Peter Weiss: Climate Change Isn't the Only Thing That Threatens the Whole Planet's Future

Justine Drennan April 4, 2014

US nuclear weapon test MIKE of Operation Ivy, the first test of a thermonuclear weapon, Oct 31, 1952 (Creative Commons)

Lawyers, scholars, policy experts and others gathered at New York's Downtown Community Television Center Wednesday evening with keen awareness that climate change isn't the only threat hanging over the whole planet's future. The event, organized by the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy (LCNP), was meant to both honor its president emeritus, Peter Weiss, for his decades of work for nuclear disarmament, and highlight the ongoing need for such work.

Weiss was a key force behind anti-nuclear weapons submissions to the International Court of Justice, which in 1996 issued an advisory opinion ruling the threat or use of nukes broadly illegal. But in recent years, Weiss has written, "the horror is gone" from perceptions of nuclear weapons, simply because nuclear war has been avoided so far—not because the threat is gone. The US is still working on perfecting nuclear weapons, in February announcing the successful test of an improved B-61 nuclear gravity bomb, and Obama's demands for disarmament have weakened in the face of the great power deterrence mindset.

"The nuclear weapons powers, far from taking any concrete steps in good faith," Weiss said Wednesday, "are taking steps backwards." As with climate change, a few large countries hold most of the potential to destroy everything, and the environmental and nuclear threats remain "the only two things that are going to end this whole adventure called life," said Weiss's wife, Cora, herself a veteran activist.

The two threats are linked by more than the scale of destruction they threaten. The use of even a small fraction of the world's nuclear weapons would have devastating environmental effects, ripping through the ozone layer and plunging the planet into a sudden and extreme "nuclear winter." As LCNP vice president Elizabeth Shafer put it on Wednesday, "What would be the point, really, if a state said, 'We need to use nuclear weapons in order to save the state,' whereas the escalation of nuclear weapons would cause the destruction of the whole world?"

The late Jonathan Schell, a longtime *Nation* contributor, made that argument powerfully, and participants on Wednesday said more voices like his and Weiss's would be needed to fight for disarmament in the future. Public pressure was key in the lead up to the 1996 ruling, and activists are seeking to reframe the nuclear threat in terms of "human security" rather than realpolitik. Meetings in Germany and Norway in 2013, and one in Mexico in February attended by nearly 150 countries, have focused on nuclear weapons' humanitarian toll, helping make this "the best year for nuclear disarmament in probably the last decade," Weiss said. Many are arguing that "nuclear weapons are not only militarily useless, expensive, illegal, but they're immoral," said LCNP board member Jonathan Granoff. In that view, risk management arguments for nuclear weapons are irrational in the same way that "one wouldn't say, 'We'll reduce slavery by 30 percent,' because we've understood that it's an immoral institution."

Most significantly, in Weiss's eyes, Austria will host a meeting later this year that, "in the words of the Austrian foreign minister, is going to be a 'paradigm change' in considering this problem." Weiss hopes the meeting will finally begin work on a convention to completely ban nuclear weapons, as past conventions have banned biological and chemical weapons. If this work got underway, Weiss might not be above some clever ploys to promote his cause. He recalled recruiting Zimbabwe to speak at the ICJ hearings, which were proceeding in alphabetical order by country, so that the pronuclear US and UK wouldn't have the last word. Any convention would also face P5 resistance, but Weiss's final message on Wednesday was clear: "Despair is not an option; denial is not an option. The only option is perseverance."

Side Events at the NPT PrepCom in New York

April 28 - May 9, 2014

The last Prep-Com prior to the NPT Review Conference 2015 will take place from 28th April 2014 – 9th May 2014 in New York.

A few weeks after the Mexico conference addressing the humanitarian consequences of nuclear arms, the discussions on nuclear disarmament are back on the international agenda. Official and civil society supporters of a world without nuclear arms meet again with those who insist on retaining them (particularly the P5).

IPB, INES, and IALANA with the support of the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation and Foundation Peace Education are organizing a series of joint “Side Events” at the PrepCom once again. These can be found in the attached flyer. (Please pay attention to the different venues).

We cordially invite you to participate in the discussions.

We would like especially to refer to the conference on Saturday 3rd May: Facing the Danger of a 21st Century Great Power War: A Conference on the Centenary of World War I.

You are cordially invited to participate in these interesting debates.

Colin Archer; Reiner Braun; Lucas Wirl

NPT SIDE EVENTS – Program

1. Nuclear Weapons in Europe – stop the process of modernization – start steps to disarmament

Monday, April 28, 10am-1pm, Room C With: Dave Webb (CND, GB), Arielle Denis (ICAN, France), Lisa Clark (Beati i Costruttore di Pace, Italy), Ludo de Brabander (vrede, Belgium), Peter Becker (IALANA)

2. The revolution in nuclear technology: nuclear weapons and automatization

Tuesday, April 29, 1pm-3pm, UN Church Center

With: Reiner Braun (IALANA/IPB, Germany), Subrata Ghoshroy (USA/ India), Claus Montonen (INES, Finland), Andrew Lichterman (WSLF, USA)

3. Strategies to reach a world without nuclear weapons – how to reach an international draft agreement for a nuclear weapons free world and a start of negotiations?

Wednesday, April 30, 1pm-3pm, UN Church Center

With: David Krieger (Middle Power Initiative/INES, USA), Alyn Ware (PNND, New Zealand), Susi Snyder (PAX – formerly IKV Pax Christi), Yayoi Tsuchida (Gensuikyo, Japan); Magnum Løvold (ICAN)

4. Nuclear weapons and nuclear energy – abolish both

Thursday, May 1, 1pm-3pm, UN Church Center

With: Dave Webb (CND, GB), David Krieger (Middle Power Initiative/INES, USA), Peter Becker (IALANA), Hirose Taka (Japan Council Against A&H Bombs), Jackie Cabasso (WSLF, USA)

Afghanistan between troop withdrawal and elections (Interview with Karim Popal)

Reiner Braun interviewed Karim Popal, a German-Afghani lawyer and member of the German IALANA board of directors, on the current situation in a sorely afflicted country.

Reiner Braun: What is your assessment of the situation facing people in Afghanistan as of Autumn 2013, in particular related to the issues of troop withdrawal, Taliban attacks, acts of brutality and corruption?



Karim Popal: The situation for people in Afghanistan in Autumn 2013 is drastic. Corruption is higher than ever. There is not an official body in the country which is not corrupt. Whoever pays the Attorney General in Kabul the most can have anyone they do not like arrested. Many judicial bodies are corrupt and dependent on this corruption. Paying bribes to the judiciary and the authorities makes anything possible in Afghanistan. The security situation is very bad. At any moment in any place in the country, people can fall victim to an attack carried out by the Taliban or NATO. The number of civilian casualties killed during NATO actions is constantly increasing. It is so bad now, even pupils are being bombed on their way to school. I have been contacted by Afghan parents who lost children, killed by American bombardment as they were going to school. Nowhere is safe anymore. Even political leaders in the north of Afghanistan feel threatened, since the armed resistance has spread to all provinces and villages. A good example of the precarious security situation is the ceremony to mark the withdrawal of the Bundeswehr from Kunduz. The entire Afghan police force and all Afghan soldiers had to hand in their weapons before the German Minister of Defence Thomas de Maizière and Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle could safely be brought to Kunduz to attend the ceremony. Representatives of the provincial government were also subject to significant observation because of the presence of the German ministers. This clearly illustrates the dramatic deterioration in security. Foreign troops are extremely insecure and do not trust anybody anymore.

Reiner Braun: In your opinion, who are the most important candidates in the forthcoming presidential elections in 2014? What is the significance for the country of these elections and the election campaign, which is already underway?

Karim Popal: One of the most important candidates definitely has to be Sayyaf. He is the head of an Islamic conservative party, comparable to the Salafist movement in Germany. He is striving to establish an Islamic government and introduce Sharia. Additionally, he is a friend of the USA, a billionaire and owner of numerous buildings and properties in Afghanistan. Sayyaf is certain he has God on his side and his candidacy for the presidential election was made with the approval of the Americans. Karzai's older brother is also a candidate. A powerful and rich man, he is only standing for election because he wants to become famous and hopes to gain financial advantages. He thinks he can win the election simply because he is Pashtun, however, this time support for him is lacking even among the many Pashtuns. Another Pashtun candidate is Prof. Dr. Ashraf Ghani. He claims to be employed as a lecturer in America but nobody knows which university he teaches at. So this seems to be propaganda. With the consent of the Americans he came to Afghanistan and has recently given up his American citizenship so he could be nominated for the election in Afghanistan. His deputy is Raschid Dostum, a militia leader who was a General in the Afghan army during the Soviet occupation. So if Ghani is elected, Dostum will become the Vice-President of Afghanistan and numerous further commanders with blood on their hands would come into power. Another important candidate is Abdullah Abdullah. This man belongs to the Jamiat-e Islami (Islamic Society of Afghanistan), which is a coalition of civil society organisations that was led by the assassinated Rabbani, who had previously been the political leader of the Northern Alliance during the Taliban regime. He also belongs to the Shorai Nezar (Council of Guardians). Abdullah Abdullah already stood against Karzai for the presidency in 2009. Although he was considered to be a candidate with a real chance of winning, in the end he lost and this time around he will also probably be among the losers. As well as these 4 candidates there are some 32 further insignificant candidates. [Ed. note: This was true in the preliminary rounds at the time of the interview. In Nov 2013, the electoral commission announced the final list of 11

candidates, which includes the 4 named above.] As far as the significance of the election for the country is concerned, I'm sorry to have to say that it reflects the current state of affairs in the country. The forthcoming elections make the general political situation and the precarious security situation extremely clear. Although there is a line of puppets, war criminals and warlords from Afghanistan standing for election as President, the CIA and NATO are still unsure so America-friendly candidates such as Ashraf Ghani had to be flown in from the USA. This explains why about 90% of Afghan associations, civil society and opposition parties are against this election. They would prefer a great assembly of Afghans, like the "loya jirga", and are expressly demanding that the entire Afghan population be entitled to participate in the election. Not even half of the Afghan population took part in previous elections. Furthermore, it can be assumed that in a country where the drug business and corruption determine the course of political processes and the opposition is not participating in the election, the winners of the election will be those with the greatest financial resources and most powerful sponsors. These elections are not being held for the Afghan people: instead, they are theatre being staged by the western countries and NATO occupiers to deceive the world's public into thinking that democratic conditions prevail in Afghanistan.

Reiner Braun: Will the intervention forces really be withdrawn completely?

Karim Popal: Publicly NATO is announcing its withdrawal from Afghanistan for 2014. However, the truth is that there are dialogues between the Afghan government, the warlords, the drug dealers and NATO regarding the continued presence of NATO forces in Afghanistan. Apparently the German government also wants to continue training Afghan soldiers and police, allowing it to deploy several hundred soldiers and advisers in Afghanistan to represent its interests there. The Afghan population is demanding an unconditional NATO withdrawal. Despite this, the Americans, Germans and British want to retain deployed forces in the country.

Reiner Braun: What about the threat of civil war?

Karim Popal: A civil war is only to be feared if the NATO countries remain in Afghanistan – or rather, their advisers and trainers. NATO is hated in Afghanistan; even the Germans are no longer the "Alaman" they were 10 years ago. The Afghan population initially saw the Germans as friends at the beginning of the NATO occupation since these two countries had never fought a war against each other. However, they then had to realise, with significant disappointment, that this friend was also an occupier, and even turned out to be the one responsible for the highest number of civilian casualties. Neither the population in general nor the opposition is prepared to tolerate the continued presence of the hated NATO soldiers in Afghanistan. The presence of NATO will be the cause of any future war in the country, between the paid war criminals on one side – the so-called Afghan government – who have been involved in all the wars of the last 33 years, and the opposition on the other. It is propaganda to claim that the Afghans will fight each other and that Western forces have to remain deployed there to prevent it: this propaganda is a product of the West, with its roots in NATO circles. The overwhelming majority of the civil society, the opposition and even the armed resistance are of the opinion that a general assembly of Afghan nations can solve all the problems. Nonetheless, one prerequisite for peace and democracy is an end to NATO's interference in the affairs of the Afghans and the country's population. There will be neither democracy nor peace with the presidential candidates put forward by foreign powers: the war criminals and war barons.

Reiner Braun: What are the relevant political and social forces in Afghanistan, and how do they relate to the intervention forces? What do they think of the question whether there can be a peace from outside?

Karim Popal: Political and social forces in Afghanistan consist of a large number of civil society associations and other actors who are engaged in a dialogue with each other to achieve unity and secure peace in the country. After 33 years of war, Afghans are absolutely convinced that peace will not come from outside and democracy cannot be forced upon them. Afghans are also convinced that the so-called 'democratisation' of the world is wartime propaganda from the American superpower, which abuses the words 'human rights' and 'democracy' and claims to be trying to create peace and democracy by using NATO soldiers. In fact, Afghanistan provides the best example of how unsuccessful these policies of the Western powers are. The whole population agrees that the responsible parties for the wars in Afghanistan can be found in the imperialist powers. For decades they have been fighting proxy wars in the country, right up to and including today's occupation of Afghanistan and the installation of political puppets in the form of war criminals and drug barons.

Reiner Braun: How can the peace movement support the peace process in Afghanistan?

Karim Popal: The peace movement has a significant responsibility with regard to Afghanistan. Afghan people have suffered tremendously in the last 33 years: approx. 2 million deaths to be mourned; more than 7 million people have fled; Afghanistan is a country without a Gross Domestic Product worth mentioning; it is a country which produces c. 90% of the world's opium, despite the presence of NATO soldiers; the Afghan people have become victims of imperialist and NATO power games. For 33 years sadness has been spreading throughout the country. The eyes of mothers and widows never have chance to dry: schoolpupils, women, children and fathers are dying on a daily basis. So this dismay and the Afghan people's situation lead to a great responsibility for the peace movement. As the only independent power, the peace movement is obliged to do more to ensure progress towards peace in Afghanistan. I could fill pages with the pain of the Afghan people: almost two million internally displaced people, hundreds of thousands of abused women, youth without work but with a weapon in their hands, deportees who are unfortunately all illiterate. All of this indicates how badly this country needs peace. The trip to Afghanistan by the peace movement delegation was, as far as I can see, very successful – they had the chance to become witnesses to the cry for peace. All Afghans want peace. It is the NATO war alone which is destroying peace in Afghanistan. The task of the peace movement should be to use their involvement in Afghanistan to clearly show the people of the world how a badly affected people are crying out for peace. And that despite this, NATO is continuing its war simply to push through its imperialist interests. The geographical position of Afghanistan and its natural resources are more important for the NATO war than the effects on 23 million people who are struggling by any means possible to escape the clutches of the NATO puppets (war criminals, drug barons and corrupt government officials). Peace in Afghanistan has to become a priority. The degree of suffering so far among the population means that in future all political ideologies and struggles have to be renounced. All Afghans, all the political and social forces in the country, have to come together and make joint progress towards peace, by means of their own efforts. The peace movement can play an important role in this peace process if it continues to remain active. It can help to bring all Afghans around the same table – something which NATO has deliberately hindered.

Reiner Braun: Is less external help more? Shouldn't there be a withdrawal of the NGO camarillas, too?

Karim Popal: The international NGOs in Afghanistan have fallen into severe disrepute. They are being accused of corruption, embezzlement and not being trustworthy. As far as the Afghans can see, the NGOs have only one purpose in the country: to ensure that the donor countries' money flows back home. Supposed specialists have been paid for so-called reconstruction work at the rate of EUR 500 per day. The work of the NGOs in Afghanistan is limited to the building of a few schools and the drilling of a few wells: real reconstruction has not taken place. This is why the Afghans are asking themselves: "Where did the billions end up which have been spent in Afghanistan for reconstruction?" Afghans have come to the conclusion that some of these billions ended up in the coffers of the NGOs. So they are calling for the withdrawal of the NGOs, too. A few wells and schools built of clay can also be built by Afghan charities that are active internationally, and this has indeed already happened. It is tragic to see how a charitable association such as the Afghan Volunteer Women's Association under the patronage of Roger Willemsen can build more schools and wells than the German federal aid organisation GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit). The withdrawal of NGOs has now become one of the Afghan population's demands. International organisations are not necessarily part of the solution but rather part of the problem; this applies particularly to those taking part in so-called civil-military cooperation, who subordinated themselves to the logic and structures of the military.

Reiner Braun: After the (partial) withdrawal, what will happen to the former employees of NATO and the Bundeswehr?

Karim Popal: This truly is problematic – the situation for those previously working for NATO, the German armed forces and other such institutions in Afghanistan. The country's people face a very bad economic situation. Afghans cannot find work and anyone investing in the country has the opportunity to draw upon an 'army' of unemployed. NATO made use of this, endangering life and limb of many innocent people in the process. Even workers who did not directly work for military purposes, such as farmers, cooks and cleaning staff, are at risk. Uncountable numbers of these ancillary staff have

been killed over the years at various locations in Afghanistan. Just a month ago, a person who worked for the German Bundeswehr in the Kunduz region was killed. He had worked for the Germans 4 years ago! The situation faced by these people is a huge problem because we are talking about several thousand workers in a number of towns and locations around Afghanistan, who have suddenly lost their jobs due to the reductions in forces and now have to fend for themselves. The Federal Government has a responsibility towards the people it employed and should offer them residence or asylum opportunities.

Reiner Braun: Who will save Afghanistan from the West or from NATO?

Karim Popal: The Afghan population will save Afghanistan. The West, and in particular NATO, is regarded in Afghanistan as an occupying power. And despite having spent billions, this occupying power has turned the majority of the population against it. If NATO remains in Afghanistan the resistance will simply spread further. Then the war will last a further 30 years, people will continue to die, and the Afghan people will continue to mourn further victims. An Afghan government elected by the Afghan population is the only voice that can represent Afghans. This is the only way Afghanistan can be saved.

Reiner Braun: Is it possible to strengthen women's rights by means of war?

Karim Popal: Human and women's rights have been repeatedly violated in Afghanistan. Now as in the past, women are being treated, bought and sold as commodities. The proportion of girls' schools is 26% compared to the number of boys' schools. The Afghan government took a few 'alibi women' into parliament. Some of these women, regardless of their position or office, are not able to clearly define their job but the wish of the government and the West is for them to carry out this job anyway, e.g. as judge or politician. Afghanistan is one of the countries where persecution and oppression of women unfortunately occurs. Regarding women's rights, NATO and the West can be accused of play-acting and hypocrisy. Outwardly they claim the NATO occupation is linked to the aim of liberating women and protecting democracy; however, all of the people who oppress women are being supported by NATO. All of the war criminals, warlords and Afghan government officials in service of NATO are polygamous. That is one sign which makes it clear NATO is not interested in women's rights. NATO is tolerating violations of human and women's rights in Afghanistan; this policy is obviously in their own interest and that of the continuation of their occupation of the country. A large number of Afghanistan's women's rights campaigners have had to flee the country in the last 8 years. Some of these women's rights activists have sought asylum in the Federal Republic of Germany. For example, about one month ago, Ms Sadeh Poor had to flee Afghanistan because she published an article about violence against women.

Reiner Braun: Law and Islam, constitutional state and democracy, international law and legal commitments – what are we talking about exactly?

Karim Popal: Afghanistan is an Islamic country and the 33 years of war there have benefitted radical Islamic forces there enormously. Every day of NATO occupation in Afghanistan is another day against democracy, human rights and international law. Every civilian death, particularly children, and every wartime rape is of use to fundamentalism and radicalism in Afghanistan. Only if the war in Afghanistan comes to an end and a peace process begins can democracy and constitutionalism be established and human rights and international law be recognised. The Taliban were previously never willing to accept anything other than sole government through an Islamic party under the leadership of Hekmatyar; however, they are now ready to begin joint discussions, as are numerous left-wing organisations and more than 33 civil society representatives. This was unthinkable during the previous 33 years. 25 years ago I would never have imagined that one day, Islamists, communists and democrats would all sit at the same table. The situation in the country is forcing all of these to *first* negotiate how to achieve peace *before* talking about particular systems of government; it is this coming-together which is so essential for peace in Afghanistan. And it can actually only happen in democratic conditions, so it means Afghanistan's path to the future can only lead there via democracy. However, Afghans will only be able to start walking this path if NATO unconditionally withdraws from their country. All in all we can say that civil society is generally not in agreement on ideological issues but it unanimously agrees on the issue of peace. There is no actor in the civil society whose first aim is not peace. This creates hope for the future.

Reiner Braun: International co-operation and solidarity with Afghanistan: Are these just leftover keywords from left-wingers or the alternative to fundamentalism?

Karim Popal: International co-operation and solidarity with Afghanistan and Afghans can only be unconditional. Afghans have gained a lot of different experiences in the last 33 years. From the 1970s to 1980s a small minority was in power, supported by the Soviets. They wanted to turn an Islamic country into a socialist one. The results were 7 million refugees and more than 2 million deaths. For this reason, international co-operation and solidarity with Afghanistan has to be unconditional solidarity. This applies particularly to organisations working towards democracy and peace in the world. The peoples of the world can only practice mutual solidarity if they accept and respect each other. If the Left still believes it can bring 500 communists to power in a country with 33 million inhabitants, or if the West thinks it can bring warlords and puppets into government: both beliefs will cause war in Afghanistan. Only if the will of the Afghan people is accepted can peace and democracy become feasible. In Afghanistan now peace has top priority, not any particular left-wing or Islamic ideology. The suffering of the people is so enormous: most of them are busy thinking about their next meal rather than about politics. Left-wingers are ready to sacrifice themselves for their left-wing beliefs; fundamentalists die for the interests of fundamentalism; the warriors in Afghanistan see the occupation of the country as a reason to wage war. It is only when peace prevails in Afghanistan and NATO has unconditionally withdrawn that Afghans will be able to see how badly affected the whole country is and to put their isolated interests behind them. It is this suffering of the population that brings Afghans together now. Peace is only possible if all actors behave democratically, exhibit mutual tolerance, and form a government together. This government will not be a left-wing one, nor will it be Islamist-fundamentalist: it will be a democratic government.

Reiner Braun: What do you hope will come out of the international Afghanistan conference in April?

Karim Popal: Firstly, Afghanistan should not be allowed to be forgotten by the world, and also not by the peace movement. Further, a dialogue needs to be encouraged. Neither NATO, the European countries, the Afghan government, the organisations holding power in Afghanistan nor the candidates in the presidential election have a convincing concept for peace. The involvement of the German, French, British and American governments in this regard was focussed on sharing power between the Taliban and other actors. They have tried everything in the last 5 years to convince Hekmatyar and the Taliban to share power in Afghanistan with the Afghan government and the pro-American Northern Alliance. The Taliban and Hekmatyar have not accepted this offer, so there is no visible chance of a concept for peace which would give the Afghan population cause for hope. In fact, Afghans can only have hope if an opportunity is created for all members of the widest range of different organisations with diverse political views to come together and enter into dialogue with each other.

The activities of the peace movement have been shown to have an effect in Afghanistan and clearly demonstrate that a dialogue such as this is possible. The international Afghanistan conference is the first conference in 33 years of Afghan history where representatives of different parties have agreed to participate. This conference is creating hope within the Afghan population that Afghans are actually capable of talking to each other and solving their problems themselves, despite all the imperialist and warmongering interference from NATO. Furthermore, the conference can also contribute to uncovering the NATO propaganda which claims that Afghans will tear into each other as soon as the troops withdraw. This conference is a good example of how Afghans, rather than reaching for their weapons, will actually try to talk to each other, be tolerant, and make it possible to create a peaceful Afghanistan after 33 years of war. Finally, the conference will make a tangible contribution to this home-building and come up with practical considerations of how peaceful reconstruction can be achieved. So I think the conference will be immensely important.

Reiner Braun: Thank you very much for the conversation.

The interview was conducted on October 14, 2013

Dieter Deiseroth, Annegret Falter (eds.)

Whistleblowers in Security Politics Awards 2011/2013

Chelsea E. Manning Edward J. Snowden

“No one has the right to obey.”

(Hannah Arendt)

The video *Collateral Murder* has become a symbol of the brutalization of thought, speech and action of soldiers in time of war, as well as of the assertion of power-political interests without any concern for humanitarian losses. The video has been shown or cited countless times in the international mass media. Millions of people were able to watch it because one private serving in the US Army in Iraq had the courage to defy the blind obligation of secrecy and make the material public with the help of Wiki-Leaks: Chelsea (Bradley) Manning. For this, Manning has been awarded the German Whistleblower Prize 2011.



“Courage is contagious.”

The unprecedented crackdown on Chelsea Manning was supposed to silence whistleblowers in the United States, but the expectations of the American government were not fulfilled. No sooner had the military trial against Manning begun than the greatest global spying scandal of all time was made public. Edward J. Snowden had leaked digital documents proving that the USA and the UK are operating suspicionless mass surveillance and communications monitoring systems, and thus are violating both the integrity of sovereign states and international law. For this, Snowden has been awarded the German Whistleblower Prize 2013.

IPB Declaration on UKRAINE:

Dialogue and East-West cooperation are the key

March 11, 2014.

The events of the last few days and weeks only serve to confirm what the IPB and others in the disarmament wing of the international peace movement have been asserting for years: that in times of political tension, military force solves nothing¹.

It provokes only more military force from the other side, and risks pushing both parties up and around an infernal spiral of violence. This is an especially dangerous course when there are nuclear weapons in the background.

But even if there were no nuclear weapons, this would be a thoroughly alarming situation, given the violation of international law perpetuated by Russia on the Crimean peninsula.

The dramatic events in Ukraine are playing out against the background of a harvest of resentment within the Russian Federation as a result of repeated Western unilateralism and lack of restraint, including:

- the expansion of NATO up to Russia's borders; and
- the encouragement and funding of the 'colour revolutions', which has been perceived as interference in its neighbourhood. This makes Russia doubt whether the agreement they have had with Ukraine over the military bases in Crimea will be kept to in the future.

Let us be quite clear: to criticise the West for reckless and domineering behaviour is not to condone or defend Russia; conversely, to criticise Russia for its own reckless and domineering behaviour is not to let the West off the hook. Both sides bear responsibility for the deep-rooted tragedy that is unfolding and that promises



to both ruin and split Ukraine and plunge Europe, and indeed the wider world, back into some new form of East-West conflict. The talk on the Western news channels is all of how fast to climb the ladder of anti-Russian economic sanctions, while Russian mass demonstrations of post-Sochi pride risk tempting Putin to overreach in his zeal to build a counterweight to the arrogant West via his Eurasian Union.

The task of a peace movement is not only to analyse causes and denounce oppression, imperialism and militarism wherever they manifest. It is also to propose ways forward, paths out of the mess. It should be obvious to all but the most hawkish politicians that the number one priority in the coming days and weeks must not be point-scoring and lecturing one's opponents but dialogue, dialogue, dialogue. While we recognise that the UNSC has recently passed resolutions calling for "an inclusive dialogue recognizing the diversity of the Ukrainian society", the best bet right now for a real resolution of this difficult conflict would seem to be the Swiss-led OSCE (of which Russia a member state). Indeed, it is clear that some discussion between the leaders of East and West is occurring, but it is obvious that their views of the whole situation are far apart. Yet there is no alternative; Russia and the West have to learn to live and talk with each other and indeed work together for mutual benefit, as well as resolving the fate of Ukraine.

Meanwhile there is much to be done at the citizen level. IPB supports the recent call made by [Pax Christi International](#) to religious leaders and all the faithful in Ukraine, as well as in the Russian Federation and in other countries involved in the political tensions, "to

act as mediators and bridge-builders, bringing people together instead of dividing them, and to support non-violent ways to find peaceful and just solutions to the crisis." Women should be given a much more prominent voice.

Among the top priorities for action in both short and long term must be to overcome the poverty in the country and the unequal distribution of wealth and opportunities. We recall reports showing that unequal societies produce much more violence than equal societies². Ukraine – like many other conflict-ridden countries – must be helped to provide education and jobs, and not least for the angry young men who let themselves be recruited into diverse forms of fundamentalism. A minimum of security is necessary in order to encourage investment and job creation; hence the importance of political interventions to bring the sides together and to demilitarize the region.

There are several additional steps that should be promoted:

- withdrawal of Russian troops to their bases in Crimea or to Russia, and of Ukrainian troops to their barracks;
- an investigation by UN / OSCE observers of complaints of human rights violations among all communities in Ukraine;
- no military intervention by any outside forces;
- convening of high level talks under the auspices of the OSCE and international peace organisations with participation from all parties, including Russia, US and EU as well as Ukrainians from all sides, men and women. The OSCE should be given an expanded mandate and responsibility, and its representatives allowed access to all sites. The Council of Europe can also be a useful forum for dialogue between the different sides.

1. See for instance the IPB's Stockholm Conference declaration, Sept 2013: *"Military intervention and the culture of war serve vested interests. They are extremely expensive, escalate violence, and can lead to chaos. They also reinforce the idea that war is a viable solution to human problems."*

2. Summarised in the book *The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better* by Richard G. Wilkinson and Kate Pickett.

From:

http://www.ipb.org/web/index.php?mostra=news&menu=News&id_nom=IPB+Statement+on+Ukraine

Statement of Cooperation for Peace (Germany)

Ukraine: De-escalation instead of marching into a hot war

March 3, 2014.

Cooperation for Peace, an umbrella organization of more than 50 organizations of the German peace movement calls on Western and Eastern governments to avoid any action that risks worsening the situation in the Ukraine. Movement of troops as well as rhetoric of war of both sides must stop. Russia's actions against international law in the independent Ukraine must be stopped immediately. Also there must be an end to the irresponsible instrumentalization of the Ukraine by Western countries and their aggressive, Cold War-style rhetoric. There must be no military actions by NATO nor transports of weapons in the region.

We call on the Ukrainian government to stop their nationalist rhetoric and movement of troops. This must include an immediate demobilization of the reservist forces. We warn that cooperation with Fascists leads to war! The desolate economic situation with its dramatic social impacts on the people was created by the oligarchy and corrupt politics. Chauvinistic rabble-rousing and re-stimulating fears of “external enemies” must end, these are distractions. Instead of a long term integration of the Ukraine in the European Union, the West should immediately offer economic and social aid without any preconditions and without the neo-liberal dictates of the IMF.

Negotiations, dialogue, mediation, and civil conflict resolution are the imperative of the hour. To interrupt the preparations for the G8, just when there is a widely-expressed demand for dialogue, is irresponsible. Increased dialogue, particularly with Russia, is needed. We call for a special summit of the OSCE with a clear priority on civil conflict resolution.

We also call for an international group of mediators consisting of Nobel Peace Laureates as well as Right Livelihood Laureates – for example Kofi Annan, Mairead Maguire, Adolfo Perez Esquivel, Jody Williams and Paul Walker – and of organizations like the International Peace Bureau (IPB) and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). This group of mediators should immediately start discussions with all sides to reach an agreement on an immediate halt to all military activities. US and Russian Cold War rhetoric is contra-productive to reaching the diplomatic solution of the crisis favored by European governments. NATO has no business in the Ukraine. NATO's global ‘pincer-movement’ strategy towards the East, as well as the missile defense shield, must be ended.

Our solidarity lies with the people in Moscow, Kiev and in Crimea, and everywhere working against war. We condemn the persecution and criminalization of the opponents of war in Russia and the Ukraine. These people must be supported in our country by manifold actions and protests.

100 years after World War I we maintain: Peace can only be reached and secured by the actions of the people. We particularly request of the German government that it not pursue German great-power interests, thereby deepening the conflict. Rather we demand of the German government to work in the tradition of Gustav Heinemann and Willy Brandt by giving primacy to diplomacy, conciliation and reconciliation, negotiations and civil conflict resolution.

Obama Whitewashes World War I

President Obama just went to Flanders Field in Belgium to pay homage to those who lost their lives in World War I.

But rather than use the occasion to point out the idiotic hideousness of that war, he whitewashed it, praising “the profound sacrifice they made so that we might stand here today.”

He saluted their “willingness to fight, and die, for the freedom that we enjoy as their heirs.”

But this was not a war for freedom. It was a triumph of nationalism, pitting one nation’s vanity against another. It was a war between empires for the spoils.

Historian Allen Ruff, who is studying the causes and effects of World War I, was not impressed with Obama’s speech. “With Both NATO and the European Union headquartered in Brussels,” Ruff says, “it would have been a true homage to the dead buried in Belgium a hundred years ago if Obama spoke out against all major power imperial ambition, the true cause of so much slaughter then and since, rather than mouthing some trite euphemisms about the honor of dying for ‘freedom.’ ”

But Obama insisted on repeating the very propaganda that fed that war. Without irony, he quoted the poem from John McRae that was used to encourage soldiers to sign up and civilians to pay for war bonds. Here’s the verse that Obama cited:

“To you from failing hands we throw

The torch; be yours to hold it high.

If ye break faith with us who die

We shall not sleep, though poppies grow

In Flanders fields.”

Obama chose not to quote the great World War I poet Wilfred Owen, who was killed just days before the end of that most senseless slaughter. The title of his famous poem, “Dulce et Decorum Est” refers to the line that

soldiers said on their way to the war, meaning, “How sweet and right it is to die for your country.”

Here is the second half of that poem, where Owen describes a soldier next to him dying from an attack of poison gas.

“In all my dreams before my helpless sight,

He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace

Behind the wagon that we flung him in,

And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,

His hanging face, like a devil’s sick of sin;

If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood

Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,

Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud

Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—

My friend, you would not tell with such high zest

To children ardent for some desperate glory,

The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est.*”

Pro patria mori.



Yet there was delivering that “old lie” with “high zest,” and the obscenity of it should not escape us, even 100 years on.

For the soldiers Obama praised did not die for “freedom,” but for something much more base.

They died for the same reason U.S. soldiers died in the Iraq War. As Howard Zinn noted, ten years ago, “They died for the greed of the oil cartels, for the expansion of the American empire, for the political ambitions of the President. They died to cover up the theft of the nation’s wealth to pay for the machines of death.”

Marking the 50th anniversary of the Shimoda Case

(Atomic Bomb Trial against the State of Japan)

Statement on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons Use and the Illegality of Atomic Bombing

December 8, 2013

Japan Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms
(Toyoko Tazaki Trans.)

Today, deep concern prevails among the international community over the catastrophic human consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. On the basis of this shared concern, 125 states issued a joint statement in the United Nations General Assembly First Committee on October 21, 2013, stating the following: “It is in the interest of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstances”; “all efforts must be exerted to eliminate the threat of these weapons of mass destruction”; and “the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is through their total elimination.” This declaration for the total elimination of nuclear weapons with recognition of the humanitarian impacts, strongly suggests the illegality of the use of nuclear weapons under the context of the existing international law.

International (humanitarian) law already exists among humankind, which illegalizes any use of weapons leading to a non-humanitarian outcome. 50 years ago, on December 7, 1963, the Tokyo District Court handed down a decision on the Shimoda Case (Ryuichi

I only hope to live long enough to hear a U.S. President speak honestly about war. This one sure won’t.

Matthew Rothschild is senior editor of The Progressive magazine.

From:

<https://www.progressive.org/content/obama-whitewashes-world-war-i>

Shimoda et al. v. The State), or so-called, “the Atomic Bomb Trial.” The decision stated, that “since an aerial bombardment with an atomic bomb [by the United States Air Force] brings the same result as a blind aerial bombardment from the tremendous power of destruction, even if the aerial bombardment has only a military objective as the target of its attack, it is proper to understand that an aerial bombardment with the atomic bomb on both cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was an illegal act of hostilities, as the indiscriminate bombardment of undefended cities.” It also concluded that “it is not too much to say that the pain brought by the atomic bomb is severer than that from poisons and poisonous gases, and we can say that the act of dropping such a cruel bomb is contrary to the fundamental principle of international laws of war that unnecessary pain must not be given.”

Furthermore, the framework for this ruling is the same as that for the International Court of Justice’s Advisory Opinion on “Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons (1996), which states, “the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law.” Taking this into account, the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement stated in its 2011 Resolution, “to find it difficult to envisage how any use of nuclear weapons could be compatible with the rules of international humanitarian law.”

Nevertheless, nuclear-weapon states and client states are conducting affairs as if laws prohibiting nuclear weapons do not exist, relying on nuclear deterrence for maintaining their national security. In their view, out-

lawing of nuclear weapons is the goal to be achieved in the distance future. In the meantime, nuclear weapons remain to be great threat to humankind. Taking such position is in fact “being responsible to itself alone,” and “ignoring” the interest of the very survival of humanity.

Security issues are becoming far more significant in today’s world. Security can only be genuinely attained under “international peace based on justice and order,” and this is made possible not by “Rule of Power” but by “Rule of Law.” International law and the Constitution of Japan both seek preservation of our peace, security and existence without the use of nuclear weapons.

When discussing the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, we cannot ignore the real facts of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings and their legal consequences.

Issues raised during the “Human Beings Cannot Coexist with Nuclear Energy or Weapons” session in the “Second Nationwide Research and Exchange Conference in Fukushima on Nuclear Power and Human Rights”¹

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(Yaeka Inoue & Toshinori Yamada Trans.)

1. The nature of the nuclear power plant accident and the reasons to step away from nuclear energy

¹ JALANA held the two-day-long Conference on April 5 and 6, 2014 at Fukushima University, in cooperation with other NGOs. After the plenary sessions on the first day, JALANA and Japanese Lawyers International Solidarity Association (JALISA) organized a break-out session entitled “Human beings cannot coexist with nuclear energy or weapons” for the second day. This article is an introductory report from that session. The First “Nationwide Research and Exchange Conference in Fukushima on Nuclear Power and Human Rights” was held April 7 and 8, 2012; the final statement is available at IALANA NEWS July August 2012.

The Fukushima Daiichi Power Plant accident is creating new hibakusha (exposed persons), nuclear refugees, and uninhabitable areas. The horrors of the enormous and unprecedented damage are caused by radiation, which human beings lack the knowledge and technology to control. Nuclear power generation uses energy produced by nuclear fission, which produces entirely unnatural radioactive byproducts. In fact, the hazards begin with mining and refining uranium and continue through the lack of any adequate technique for disposing of the radioactive waste. Another hazard, of course, is nuclear terrorism. Nuclear power generation is inherently dangerous from the start to the end of the nuclear fuel chain.

2. The “logic” of nuclear energy

The official reasons for promoting nuclear power generation include: 1) a stable supply of electric energy; 2) environmental benefits; 3) economic benefits; and 4) complete safety with no possibility of serious accident. These arguments have been used even after Fukushima. They completely ignore the obvious and inescapable dangers of nuclear power generation, stressing only convenience and profits for the industry. The logic of subordinating safety to profit is equally evident in the export of nuclear power plants.

3. Nuclear power plants and nuclear weapons

The hidden reason for the promotion of nuclear energy is that the possession of plutonium produced by nuclear power plants makes Japan able at any time to manufacture nuclear weapons that would supposedly be a “trump card for national security.” The nuclear weapon states and Japan still cling to this fantasy. The introduction of nuclear power generation and the impulse to possess nuclear weapons have always been two sides of the same coin. Given this background, any approach to the nuclear power accident must take into account not only the need to completely compensate for the damage done and the need to abolish nuclear reactors but also the implications for nuclear weapons.

4. The “peaceful use” lie and the movement to abolish nuclear weapons

Those who introduced nuclear power plants began by trivializing the damage resulting from the atomic bombing in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. By selling the public on the “peaceful atom,” they sought to disrupt

the anti-nuclear movement, offer a new business opportunity to electric power companies, and open the way toward possession of nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, nuclear weapons have not been used in actual combat since Nagasaki. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) obligates nuclear weapon states to engage in good-faith negotiations relating to general and complete disarmament (Article 6). The International Court of Justice concluded that the threat or use of nuclear weapons would “generally be contrary to the rules of international law” and there exists an obligation to bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects. A Model Nuclear Weapon Convention has been proposed and is an official United Nations document. Furthermore, a movement to ban nuclear weapons because of their “catastrophic humanitarian consequences” is spreading and getting stronger worldwide.

5. The status of nuclear power plants

According to the text of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the peaceful use of nuclear energy is an “inalienable right” of the State Parties (Article 4). Nuclear power generation holds a completely different status from nuclear weapons, whose abolition is already a requirement. Under current international law, the peaceful use of nuclear weapons is a right that almost no country is thinking about prohibiting. Although there are some treaties regarding nuclear accidents (Emergency Conventions for nuclear accidents) and the Convention on Nuclear Safety, these instruments do not prohibit the use of nuclear energy itself. Thus, the inherent danger of nuclear energy is not even recognized in legal regulations. Here we see a clear difference in the legal and social status of nuclear weapons versus nuclear power plants.

6. Our challenge

We need to keep this difference in mind as we seek the abolition of nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants in the belief that human beings cannot coexist with nuclear energy or weapons. In the international community, where the use of nuclear energy is not “illegal” but an “inalienable right,” what kinds of values or logic must we introduce to achieve the abolition of nuclear energy? In addition, we cannot convince those who believe that electricity is necessary the social development without demonstrating that it is feasible to step away from nuclear energy and still supply continuous,

adequate electric power. Our challenge is to obtain electricity while simultaneously eliminating the dangerous use of nuclear energy and global warming caused by the use of fossil fuels.

A Summary Our Break-out Session

We held our session based on the issues raised above.

Toshinori Yamada, a lecturer of Meiji University, surveyed current international law (the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT)) related to nuclear weapons and nuclear power generation (peaceful use of nuclear energy).

Steven Leeper, former chairman of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, addressed the dangers of nuclear weapons and power generation, and their interrelations, the logic of rejecting nuclear power, and campaign organization.

We also referred to the experience of nations that have actually stepped away from nuclear energy. Butch Pongos, an activist in the Philippines, reported on the experience of the Philippines, while Tsunehisa Chiba, a lawyer, reported the experience of Germany.

Finally Kazuko Ito, a lawyer, reported on how the international community sees the Fukushima accident and potential approaches to building the movement that will eliminate nuclear energy around the world.

April 6, 2014

ICBUW Germany: News and recent activities

The petition launched by ICBUW Germany in November 2013 currently comprises over 3000 signatures. It calls the German government to support an international ban of uranium weapons and to provide assistance to the victims. You can sign the petition until November 6th 2014 – the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict – then the signatures will be handed over to Bundestag and Bundesregierung by German ICBUW members.

In support of the petition German ICBUW activists organized and participated in several events to raise more public attention on the issue of uranium weapons. For example within the Munich Peace Conference, which presents civil and peaceful conflict settlement strategies in opposition to the Munich Security Conference, ICBUW Germany provided informations about DU and gained lots of new supporters to its petition. Furthermore the German journalist and producer of the film “Deadly Dust - Todesstaub”, Frieder Wagner, submitted an open letter to Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen. In the letter he describes the inhumane impact of uranium weapons and demands the exhumation and examination of the former German soldier André Horn who probably died of DU.

To take action on DU will be especially important in the next months since there will be a fifth UNGA resolution on uranium weapons tabled in the UN First Committee in October 2014. The last UN General Assembly resolution which called for an precautionary approach dealing with DU was supported by 138 states in 2012. Only UK, France and the US opposed it. At this years resolution the EU parliament wants the EU member states to adopt a common position in favour of a ban, and to help provide clearance and assistance for affected communities. More information on www.icbuw.org.

Peace Event Sarajevo 2014

*“From a world of war and violence
to a culture of peace, nonviolence
and justice”*

**The largest Peace Event
on World War I
June 6-9th 2014, Sarajevo**

*More than 150 workshops
Many cultural events
(concerts, exhibitions, street performances)
International youth camp with activities for young people*

COME,

CREATE,

PARTICIPATE!

www.peaceeventsarajevo2014.eu



Come and join us! Let's transform a World of War and
Violence into a Culture of Peace, Nonviolence & Justice

Come!
Participate!
Create!

June 6-9,
Sarajevo
peace-event.eu

NGO in consultative status (Category II) with the United Nations Economic and Social Council
Member of the Coordinating Committee of The Hague Appeal for Peace 1999

Come, Create, Participate!

Attending the Peace Event in Sarajevo

You will meet several thousands of people committed to peace mainly from Europe and the region of Western Balkans, speaking out together against war and violence 100 years after the beginning of World War I. People all over the world want to live in peace – but the last century has seen wars and violence at all levels and in most parts of the world, including the former Yugoslavia. We believe and want to show that the power of active nonviolence is the only sustainable way to transform a world of wars and violence into a culture of peace and nonviolence. Current events in Ukraine, Syria, Central Africa, and many other parts of the world, as well as the wars in Yugoslavia in the 1990s and the current social protests in Bosnia and Herzegovina, require our joint commitment and public statement that there are alternatives to war in the form of civil, nonviolent conflict transformation, as shown in many successful nonviolent campaigns as well as in official documents like the UNESCO declaration on a “Culture of Peace”. Our common goal remains the vision of Bertha von Suttner, Mahatma Gandhi, Albert Einstein, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, and many more, namely: a world without war and violence. The more of us who participate and demonstrate this clearly at the Peace Event in Sarajevo, the stronger our signal for “another world possible” will be!

An international Forum

In Sarajevo there will be more than 100 workshops and round tables organized around five thematic issues: ► a culture of peace and nonviolence, ► gender, women and peace, ► peace and social justice, ► reconciliation and dealing with the past and ► militarism and alternatives. These workshops, offered by a big variety of local, regional, European and international organizations, will contribute to show the diversity of existing peace work and support a critical analysis and the drawing up of new alternatives. The importance of “dealing with the past and reconciliation” in the Western Balkans and other war-torn societies, as well as lessons to be learned from the history of wars and violence 100 years after World War I, will be highlighted in discussions.

A Cultural event

We will also be present on the squares and streets of Sarajevo with cultural contributions. The Peace Event should be marked by a culture of peace represented in all its facets and made accessible to everyone. Peace is something that should be celebrated.

Join the Youth Camp of dialogue and cultural exchange!

From June 6th to 10th, 2014, Sarajevo will also be a major meeting point of young people to stand up against war and for a peaceful, just and sustainable future. In our large-scale Sarajevo Youth Camp we will discuss our commitment against war, develop alternatives and present these to the public. This gathering will be a contribution to strengthen the Youth Peace movement in Europe. All of you are invited to come, participate and create.

Peace from the bottom

The Peace Event Sarajevo 2014 is currently being prepared by an international, a national and a local coordinating committee. More than 100 groups from Bosnia and Herzegovina, cooperating in the Network for Building Peace / Mreža za izgradnju mira, are co-organizing the event. Peace activists from all former Yugoslavian countries are actively participating as well. The event happening in Sarajevo from June 6th to 9th is a symbol of peace, reconciliation and understanding as an alternative to war – an example of the “common house of Europe” seen from a grass-roots perspective. During these four days, we want to try to actively “live” peace.

We hope that you will come and join us, and we are looking forward to meet you in Sarajevo. Register today by filling in the registration form on our website: www.peaceeventsarajevo2014.eu!

(More information can be found on the website and in this newspaper.)

*The International, National and Local
Coordinating Committee*

