

Closing Remarks

So, here you are at the end of the 2015 review conference. How did it go? Success? Consensus adoption of a substantive final document? Agreement on an action plan? Perhaps just a procedural report? Or maybe complete failure?

If your aim is nuclear disarmament, it doesn't make any difference. The NPT is a valuable instrument and has its place, but it will never lead to nuclear disarmament, no matter how "successful" the review conference is. The NPT is *necessary* but not *sufficient*.

After nine review conferences of the NPT, we hope it is clearer to you now that you cannot rely on the nuclear-armed states to make serious progress on disarmament under the current multilateral regime. If you want something to change, you will have to change it. The nuclear-armed states will not help you; the weasels will not help you. They benefit from the status quo and have no interest in moving from their comfortable positions.

So in the end, it comes down to this question: are you prepared to act without the nuclear-armed states? If you are, then the next step is to begin negotiations on a treaty banning nuclear weapons. If you are not, then we respectfully suggest you stop whining and accept that nuclear weapons are here to stay.

In conclusion, we would like to recall the message Wildfire>_ conveyed to the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in December 2014. There is nothing more to say.

My message today is for those states which do not have nuclear weapons; for those states which, whatever the security threats they face, have forsworn nuclear weapons by joining the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty; for those states which, despite having no nuclear weapons, unjustly bear the risks and will wear the terrible consequences of their use. And my message to you begins with these words from Isaiah:

How long, O Lord? Until the cities are wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without people, and the land lies utterly desolate?

How long will you keep playing this game? How long will you continue to accept the procrastination, empty promises, and endless excuses of the nuclear-armed states? How long will you listen politely to nuclear-armed states that claim to support the Comprehensive Test-ban Treaty as a crucial step towards disarmament, but haven't ratified it after 18 years? How long will you listen to the nuclear-armed states expressing their "unequivocal commitment" to nuclear disarmament, and then saying that they need their nuclear weapons for "stability"? How long will you wait for the mythical "right conditions" for nuclear disarmament?

And now you have at last begun this discussion of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, how many more meetings will you have? How many times will you listen to the harrowing tales of victims? How many times will you listen to the chilling scientific accounts of catastrophic consequences? How many times will you listen to analysis of the alarming risks of accident, miscalculation or deliberate use? How long will you sit, and worry, and complain, and talk, and talk, and talk?

How long until you decide to take this matter into your own hands, and act? Because until you do, this charade is going to continue.

Even if we take the nuclear-armed states at their word, and believe that they are sincere about disarmament, it is clear that they are addicted to their weapons. They are like the alcoholic who is always promising to stop drinking, but somehow never does. Their weapons possess them.

Nobody can force an alcoholic to stop drinking. And nobody can force the nuclear-armed states to disarm. Only they can choose to give up their weapons. But you, the sober members of the family of nations, can stop enabling them. You can remove the ambiguity that supports their habit. You can make clear where you stand, and what you will not accept. You can negotiate, and adopt, and bring into force a treaty banning nuclear weapons.

This is something you can *do*. It is something you can do *now*. The alternative is to sit, passive and impotent, while the nuclear-armed states continue as they always have, risking your security – along with all of human civilization – in a misguided attempt to protect theirs.

It's your future and your choice. You can sit and wait and whine, or you can take control, and negotiate a treaty banning nuclear weapons.