

Experts' Roundtable

June 23rd, 2010

European Parliament

**Parliamentarians, Europe's nukes and a nuclear weapons-free world:
Developments in NATO nuclear doctrine
and the Non-Proliferation Treaty**

Following the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in May 2010 the Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) and the EU office of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung organised on June 23rd an Experts' Roundtable co-hosted by Frieda Brepoels, MEP, Ana Gomes, MEP, and Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, MEP.

Members of the European Parliament (EP), National Parliaments and representatives of Think Tanks and NGOs were invited to discuss the outcome of the NPT Review Conference, scenarios for future nuclear disarmament (especially with regards to a nuclear weapons convention), and the particular influence the current NATO strategic review might have on global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation dynamics.

Frieda Brepoels opened the roundtable asking, how Parliamentarians can advance the goal of nuclear disarmament, recalling the EP resolution on the NPT in March and the ongoing discussion of the new NATO strategic concept. Randy Rydell, from the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs, Dirk van der Maelen, Member of the Belgium Parliament and Alyn Ware, Global Coordinator of PNND provided the input for a discussion.

Randy Rydell gave an overview of the outcome of the Review Conference. Comparing it to the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference he spoke of an impressive result. All 172 member countries agreed on a final document which reaffirms the commitment to the non-proliferation regime. Throughout the conference the NGO community showed a great deal of activity to help achieving a positive outcome. The final document includes an action plan which

proposes concrete steps ahead in the area of disarmament, non-proliferation, peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as well as for making progress toward a Middle East nuclear-weapons-free zone.

Despite the strong effort of the Presidency of the Conference not in all areas consensus could be found. The questions of consequences for withdrawal of the Treaty, of a multilateral fuel cycle or reporting requirements, are only some of the issues which would be essential for the NPT regime, but which were left out of the final document.



Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, Dirk van der Maelen, Randy Rydell

Dirk van der Maelen stressed the role of national parliaments to promote global disarmament. Currently Belgium is in the process of forming a new government. This provides a good opportunity to include this issue in the government programme. With regards to the tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, which are part of the burden sharing in NATO, he remarked that those weapons are of negotiable military impact, outdated as they are. To dispose of them would be an important political symbol for disarmament. He suggests understanding the Nuclear Weapons Convention as a set of conventions which could include a No

First Use Treaty on European soil. Tactical nuclear weapons would become obsolete. This could encourage Russia to follow the example of disarmament.



Ana-Maria Gomes, Alyn Ware, Frieda Brepoels

In absence of a representative of Costa Rica, who could not attend the meeting, a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was presented, which outlined the proposal for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC). In 1997 Costa Rica submitted a Model Nuclear Weapons Convention to the General Secretary of the UN. The NWC could be part of the mechanism to reach the goal of Global Zero. The model prohibits development, testing, production, stockpiling, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. States possessing nuclear weapons will be required to destroy their arsenals in a series of phases over fifteen years. The treaty also prohibits the production of weapons usable fissile material and requires delivery vehicles

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to be destroyed or converted to make them non-nuclear capable. Even though the final document of the NPT Review Conference does not call for a start of negotiations on the NWC, it included several references to it.

Alyn Ware welcomed the March resolution of the EP, which called for further progress on all aspects of disarmament to enhance global security. The resolution was a timely signal to the US while the Department of State and the Pentagon were still struggling over the role of nuclear weapons in the US nuclear posture review.

During the following discussion it was argued that the tactical nuclear weapons of NATO are a rather weak bargain if it comes to negotiations on disarmament with Russia, as their military impact is questioned. Those weapons seem to be more linked to internal issues within NATO than to external threats. Ana Gomes underlined the necessity to follow this question in the preparation of the new NATO strategic concept, which will be decided on during the NATO Summit in November. Facing the economic crisis it is high time to find a way for a more cost effective burden sharing in the alliance and focus spending on capacities that are needed.