

***53rd Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs***  
**Advancing Human Security: The Role of Technology and Politics**

**Halifax and Pugwash, Nova Scotia, Canada**  
**17-21 July 2003**

**To the Pugwash Community**  
**By Adele Buckley, Chair, Halifax Conference Committee**

The 53rd Conference brought 172 scientists and scholars from 39 countries to Halifax Canada for a conference with a familiar format, and at the same time it was unique in its stimulation of both an intellectual response and a heartfelt intensity in relation to its theme "Advancing Human Security: The Role of Technology and Politics." The Canadian Pugwash Group, with 30 attendees, was delighted with its role as host, and the chance to have first meetings with new Pugwashites at the airport, in the university residences, at meals and, of course, in the conference venues at Dalhousie University. Evidence of our success at fostering the right conference ambience is found in the following sample comment "I have benefited a lot in meeting and having introduction to different professors around the world and their diverse views. I found flexibility and responsibility among the participants which made me impressed. Indeed this sort of gathering will have great impact on global security affairs. I am also impressed with the working system of Pugwash and its background. As a new member, I am proud of it and will do my best to achieve its aims."

The opening session of the conference heard a welcoming address by Senator Douglas Roche, O.C., Chair, Canadian Pugwash Group, and then received the report of Secretary-General Paolo Cotta-Ramusino. The support of the host country is demonstrated by several means, the most visible of which is the participation of senior government officials. The Hon. Susan Whelan, Minister of International Cooperation, gave the keynote speech "Promoting Human Security After Conflict." Minister Whelan chaired a lively question and answer session that lifted the whole conference group into "discussion mode." The first day was completed with a reception at historic City Hall. Even as the first sessions began, and throughout, we received significant media attention nationally and locally - on TV, radio and newspapers, thus raising public awareness of current issues in nuclear disarmament, missile defense, peacekeeping, terrorism, human development and environmental change.

Eminent speakers addressed the conference through several invited lectures. Dr. Jayantha Dhanapala, (former) Undersecretary-General of the United Nations for Disarmament Affairs, gave the Dorothy Hodgkin Lecture, a central event of the Conference. Professor M.S. Swaminathan, President of Pugwash Conferences, world leader in agricultural plant genetics and the head of the research institute bearing his name, at Chennai, India gave the President's lecture on the topic of sustainable food security. The closing dinner was addressed by Chris Bryant, Dept. of Economic Development, Nova Scotia on the topic "All Security is Local." Professor Sir Joseph Rotblat, Nobel Laureate and founder of the Pugwash movement, gave the Public Forum lecture on the topic "The Nuclear Issue: Pugwash and the Bush Policies." It was a night to remember, as Jo Rotblat received a standing ovation for his incisive analysis of the current problems in nuclear disarmament. Through media interviews, many others had a chance to hear his views, and all of us admired his stamina and patience for interviews in the face of a very full schedule.

The entire conference convened in Pugwash, Nova Scotia at Thinkers Lodge, the place of origin, on a day billed as "Back to Pugwash." It was a high point for many who had spent years in the Pugwash movement, because very few of the Pugwashites had ever seen Pugwash. The conference grew too large for the original venue after only a couple of years from its first meeting in 1957, at which there were 22 scientists from 10 countries. Jo Rotblat and Ruth Adams, representing the 1957 group, both addressed the crowd, seated on the lawn, with the sea in the background. An open plenary session was held at the local high school, and as we boarded the buses after the elegant final reception at the Thinkers Lodge, it was not hard to see that many felt reluctant to leave. For a day to remember, all Pugwashites attending would undoubtedly be glad to join us in thanking the Pugwash Park Commission for arranging such a fine event.

The ultimate goal for this specific Conference was to advance human security by dialogue with stakeholders, and by new viewpoints that would strengthen Canada and the global community in their ability to respond to threats to human security. The Pugwash Conferences are ongoing; because of this continuity, the impact level sought for the conference is enhancement of the freedom and safety of citizens. The conference outcomes, as seen in the Working Group Reports, and the various speeches of the conference, are on the website [www.pugwash.org](http://www.pugwash.org), thus enabling the possibility of a wide readership.

A number of Working Group papers were very significant, and from those, we have selected a representative group that, we believe, has enduring value. Many excellent papers were presented, but are not seen in this newsletter due to space limitations. We particularly commend the ISYP members for their mature and insightful contributions to the WG discussions, and presented papers. One of the six papers, the one from WG6 is from a student contributor.

Only with financial contributions and the work of many volunteers and staff can we proceed with the annual Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs. For the 53rd Conference, we gratefully acknowledge the support received from several Canadian government agencies, private foundations, and friends of Pugwash:

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To all who made the effort to come to Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, we say thanks and hope you will come again.

In peace,  
Adele Buckley, Chair, Halifax Conference Committee