

**SYMPOSIUM ON STRENGTHENING THE  
NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION TREATY**  
**Christiansborg Palace, Copenhagen**  
**November 17, 2008**

On 17 November 2008, a symposium on “Strengthening the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the International Atomic Energy Agency” took place in in one of the large halls of Christiansborg Palace, Copenhagen, the building in which the Danish Parliament hold its sessions. Photos and speeches from the symposium can be found on [www.pugwash.dk/program111.htm](http://www.pugwash.dk/program111.htm). The program was as follows:

Chair, Dr. Jens-Christian Navarro Poulsen, Danish Pugwash Group  
13.10-13.15: Welcome by Dr. John Avery, Chairman, Danish Pugwash Group.

13.15-13.45: Lecture by Dr. Hans Blix, Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission: *“Disarmament after the US Election”*

13.45-14.15: Lecture by MF Holger K. Nielsen, Danish Parliament

14.15-14.45: Lecture by Hans M. Kristensen, Director, Nuclear Information Project, Federation of American Scientists, Washington D.C.: *“Trends in nuclear forces and doctrine”*

14.45-15.00: Discussion from the floor

15.00-15.20: Coffee Break

15.20-15.40: Lecture by Dr. Ali Asghar Soltanieh, Iranian Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency: *“The constraints to strengthening the IAEA and the NPT”*

15.40-16.10: Lecture by Pol D’Hyvetter, Belgium, Coordinator, Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign: *“From the vision to a plan for a nuclear-weapon-free world by 2020”*

16.10-16.20: Lecture by Alyn Ware, Global Coordinator, Parliamentarians for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament: *"Climbing the mountain: the political process of achieving a nuclear weapons convention"*

16.20-16.30: Lecture by Carlos Vargas, Costa Rica, Legal Consultant for Submission of the Nuclear Weapons Convention to the United Nations General Assembly: *"Nuclear disarmament and the abolition of war - the Costa Rican experience"*

16.30-16.45: Discussion from the floor

Organizers: Danish National Group, Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs; Danske Læger Mod Kernevåben (Danish Branch, International Physicians Against Nuclear War); Mandela Centre; SGI Denmark; Danish Peace Academy; International Network of Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility, Danish Institute for International Studies. Supported by the Hermod Lannung Foundation.

The symposium discussed some of the urgent problems faced by the NPT and the IAEA: The NPT is under stress. It needs to be supported and strengthened. The treaty was never designed to divide the world permanently into nuclear and non-nuclear states. It was designed to rid the world of nuclear weapons. But the states which possess these weapons have failed to fulfill their disarmament obligations under Article VI of the treaty. To save the treaty, they must now rapidly fulfill these obligations.

The International Atomic Energy Agency also needs to be strengthened: Since light water reactors use low enriched uranium as fuel, it follows that states using such reactors must either be able to purchase low enriched uranium on the world market or else possess enrichment facilities. But if they possess enrichment facilities, for example high-speed centrifuges, these can be used to produce weapon-usable highly-enriched uranium, and it becomes impossible to distinguish between civil and military nuclear programs.

IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei has called the spread of enrichment and reprocessing facilities the "Achilles heel" of the nonproliferation regime. He has proposed that the entire nuclear fuel cycle, including the production of low enriched uranium fuel rods, and the reprocessing of spent

rods, be internationalized. The internationalization of reprocessing is necessary because spent fuel rods contain weapons-usable plutonium.

In his lecture, Dr. Hans Blix touched on this problem when he said: “..uncertainty about the assurance of supply [of low-enriched uranium] could persuade states to start indigenous enrichment, even though it would not be economically optimal. To avoid such incentives, it would be rational to create mechanisms for the assurance of supply of enriched uranium for nuclear fuel. Where a state embarks on a program for indigenous production of enriched uranium despite the existence of supply assurances, and against its own economic interests, the international community would naturally have reason to be curious and perhaps to embark on measures of dissuasion.”

The second speaker, Danish Parliamentarian Holger K. Nielsen, also addressed this issue with the following words: “This agreement [the US-India nuclear deal] points to a basic problem about controlling that nuclear materials for civilian use are not turned into military purposes. This system requires a workable system of control, but as the dispute with Iran shows, this is very difficult. The answer to this is an internationalization of access to civilian nuclear technology, as was proposed by IAEA Director General Mohamed El-Baradei. Our friends in Norway support an international fuel-reserve under the control of IAEA as a step in this direction. I will take this up in the Danish Parliament...”

“Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation should be put on the European agenda. As a member of the European Union, Denmark should - together with Great Britain and other countries - propose a common European Strategy on the vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world, and in this context agree on common EU positions [with respect] to the revision of the NPT-treaty in 2010.”

“There are great expectations to the new US-administration. We hope - and believe - that after 8 years with unilateralism, disrespect for the United Nations, [and] disastrous wars, we will see a new line in American foreign policy.”



The third speaker, Hans M. Kristensen, gave an authoritative review of present nuclear doctrines throughout the world. In the second half of the program, after the coffee break, Dr. Ali Asghar Soltanieh, Iran's Ambassador to the IAEA, explained the position of his country regarding its program for enrichment of uranium. Then three speakers discussed ways of strengthening the NPT. Pol D'Hyvetter from Belgium discussed the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol, while Alyn Ware from New Zealand and Carlos Vargas from Costa Rica discussed the Model Nuclear Weapons Convention. These three speeches inspired hope in the audience. We left the symposium feeling not only hope that the the global community is at last moving rapidly towards a nuclear-weapon-free world, but we also left with determination to work together for that goal.

John Scales Avery

