



Report on Consultations

Delegation of Former European Ministers Led by the Rt. Hon. Des Browne MP

**Washington, DC
1-4 March 2010**

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Introduction

The Pugwash Conferences brings together, from around the world, influential scientists, scholars and public figures concerned with reducing the danger of armed conflict and seeking cooperative solutions for global problems. In line with its mission, Pugwash has over fifty years experience of Track II work in US-Russia and European arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament initiatives, including supporting negotiation and implementation of seminal treaties such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and others. Pugwash has also, since its inception, worked to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in defence strategies, and thus the risk of the use of nuclear weapons in conflict.

From March 1-4, 2010, Des Browne MP led a delegation of senior European leaders to Washington, DC to discuss European attitudes to nuclear arms and disarmament policy with the Obama administration.

The delegation included:

- Former UK Secretary of State for Defence Des Browne;
- Former Norwegian Prime Minister Kjell-Magne Bondevik;
- Former Czech Foreign Minister Jan Kavan;
- Former Italian Minister for European Affairs Giorgio La Malfa;
- Pugwash Secretary-General Paolo Cotta-Ramusino; and
- Pugwash President former Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala.

They were joined by: Pugwash Executive Director Jeffrey Boutwell; Martin Butcher (rapporteur), Special Projects Coordinator, Pugwash; and Shata Shetty, (rapporteur), researcher to the Top Level Group of UK Parliamentarians for Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation.

Members of the delegation met with senior administration officials at the National Security Council, the Department of Defense, the Department of State and the Office of Science and Technology Policy. Roundtable discussions were held at the Nuclear Threat Initiative, the Brookings Institution and the Atlantic Council. The British Embassy hosted delegation members for a working dinner.



Jan Kavan, Kjell-Magne Bondevik, Des Browne, Paolo Cotta-Ramusino, and Giorgio La Malfa

The aim of the delegation was to understand the current situation within the Obama administration on key items related to the agenda springing from the President's landmark April 2009 Prague speech on nuclear arms and disarmament, including:

- NATO nuclear policy and US nuclear deployments in Europe;
- Strategic arms negotiations;
- Entry-into-force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; and
- The May 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

As senior leaders from across the political spectrum, all of whom have had experience on policymaking on national security issues, they sought to ensure that European perspectives on these issues were heard and understood by their colleagues in the administration.

The following report is a composite of the perspectives and opinions expressed in meetings with senior administration officials, European diplomats, and with think-tanks and NGOs in Washington DC. It can serve as a background to understanding administration policy on nuclear arms and disarmament. As with all Pugwash meetings, there was no attempt to seek consensus and the views in this report should not be attributed to any one participant.

We would especially like to acknowledge the support of The Ploughshares Fund and the Connect US Fund for this visit. Pugwash would like to thank the Nuclear Threat Initiative, the Brookings Institution and the Atlantic Council for their support in organizing this delegation's programme.

The Nuclear Posture Review

The delegation's visit had been timed to coincide with the revised date announced by the Obama administration of its Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), with the aim of engaging the administration and lawmakers on the substance and implementation of this key policy document. Instead, with the NPR postponed to allow for further debate on key issues, the delegation engaged with the administration on key issues under debate as the NPR is concluded.

The delegation offered some points based on mainstream European thinking on nuclear weapons policy. Noting that the US Nuclear Posture Review is now delayed until late March or more likely April, it was pointed out that people around the world are concerned. They are looking for this document to show progress toward implementing the President's agenda, and will be discouraged if it is a status quo document. Administration officials stressed that the President is committed to the whole Prague agenda, and that the goal is to reduce the roles and numbers of nuclear weapons; to strengthen deterrence and maintain a safe arsenal. They described the NPR as a roadmap for achieving the goals set out in Prague.

In particular, the delegation stressed that if the Nuclear Posture Review could send a strong signal that the purpose of nuclear weapons is only to deter the use of nuclear weapons, this will demonstrate that steps are being taken to decrease the salience of nuclear weapons in defence doctrines. A corollary of this is that non-nuclear weapons states parties to the NPT should receive guarantees that they will never be attacked by US nuclear weapons.

The delegation heard that there will be a reduction of the role of nuclear weapons in US strategy through changes in declaratory policy. These changes could be considerable. The administration will stress that they wish to downgrade the role of nuclear weapons in relations with Russia and China. The discussion is framed as to whether the deterrence of other nations' nuclear forces is

the sole role or the primary role of US forces. The new declaratory policy could be linked to stronger Negative Security Assurances in the context of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), under which non-nuclear weapon states party to the NPT are assured that they will not be attacked with nuclear weapons.

It was suggested to the delegation that if the number and role of nuclear weapons in the arsenal are reduced, then greater provision for conventional Prompt Global Strike (PGS) and ballistic missile defences will be necessary. There is still a debate about whether the PGS is a niche capability or whether it is the future of strategic deterrence as the US moves towards eliminating nuclear weapons.

Finally, it was made clear that the final outcome of the NPR will be a political decision for the President. The bureaucracy will present options to the President, and he is fully capable of taking big decisions that “leapfrog” the more cautious recommendations from departments.



Gary Samore, Shata Shetty, Kjell-Magne Bondevik, Des Browne, Giorgio La Malfa, Martin Butcher

Extended Deterrence in Europe

The delegation stated the desire of the mainstream of European politics across the continent to contribute to the success of the President’s Prague agenda, and stressed the extent to which the disarmament portions of that speech had been welcomed in Europe. It was felt that this message may not be heard clearly enough in Washington DC.

The issue of the removal of forward based US nuclear weapons in Europe, a small remainder of the Cold War arsenal, is one where Europe can assist the President directly.

Delegation members also stressed the extent to which all NATO members have a responsibility to address nuclear issues, as all NATO nations rely on nuclear weapons for their defence. There is a clear desire in the administration for a debate on how to assure extended deterrence in new security circumstances. There is no question that allies continue to require some form of nuclear deterrent from the United States, and also a clear demonstration of US military support for the

security of Europe. The administration is keen to ensure that changes in arrangements for NATO deterrence do not prompt proliferation in Europe.

The delegation emphasized the need for strong political leadership to drive the NATO Strategic Concept Review process.

They also said that recent initiatives from the Norwegian, German, Belgian, and Dutch governments seeking to explore ways to guarantee European security without the presence of US nuclear weapons on European soil deserve attention and discussion.

The administration has engaged in the debate with key allies, and welcomes the chance in the NATO Strategic Concept Review to discuss the role of nuclear weapons in Europe. It was made clear that the German initiative was helpful, and the 5-nation letter to the Secretary General of NATO calling for debate was welcome. There are concerns that, if NATO does remove nuclear weapons from Europe, some newer NATO members might raise the need for enhanced contingency planning, a strengthened NATO Response Force and a demonstration that the US defence guarantee is solid. This might complicate relations with Russia, who might perceive these moves as aggressive – given their new strategic concept that lists NATO as a major threat to Russia.

The delegation noted that newer NATO members tend to be viewed from Washington DC as a homogenous bloc, which they are not. There is a diversity of opinions in central and eastern Europe on the nature of security threats, and relations with Russia. Administration officials noted that there is a tendency in the region to conflate Article V mutual defence guarantees solely with nuclear weapons. However, the delegation noted that it is far from true that all newer NATO members wish to retain nuclear weapons in Europe.

Administration officials stated that there is a need to address the small number of nuclear weapons based in Europe in the context of overall sub-strategic nuclear forces. Russia has some 5,000 such weapons, and the US 2,000. There are hopes that these can be included in future arms control negotiations. There are concerns that the seeming increasing reliance by Russia on non-strategic nuclear weapons, and their integration into warfighting doctrine, is complicating the possibility of withdrawal from Europe. The delegation expressed the opinion that the 200 or so weapons in Europe could be withdrawn to clear a path for negotiations on the larger number of weapons.

The delegation stated that the removal of US nuclear weapons from Europe can help establish a norm that no country should base its nuclear weapons on foreign soil. This may be an important precedent to make at this time, before other countries follow the current US example.

Action this year to announce a withdrawal would be popular with the Non-Aligned Movement. It seems that the administration is ready to make one substantial move in the very short term, and then consider other smaller steps to complete withdrawal – possibly in conjunction with the deployment of the first stages of Phased Adaptive Missile Defences in Europe. It was said that ballistic missile defences can form part of a 21st Century system of deterrence, although there are some problems with this, notably the negative effect on future arms control and security relations with Russia.

It was made clear that modalities for drawing down nuclear weapons based in Europe, and potentially eliminating them, are the focus of administration discussions, but that there is a desire to avoid unintended consequences. In particular, there is concern to achieve this without destabilizing NATO.

The delegation heard that some newer NATO nations tend to equate the Article 5 mutual defence guarantee of the NATO treaty with nuclear deterrence, and that there is a desire and need to examine their security needs in depth to see how best these can be assured. As part of this, and to improve Allied solidarity, there is a need to adapt the Alliance to the full range of 21st century security issues. In that context, there was agreement that nuclear weapons are irrelevant to issues such as energy or cyber-security. The delegation stressed that NATO must do all it can to meet the needs of newer members in the current and near future context. Administration officials also stressed the need to address concerns about Russia amongst some allies.

There was an awareness that budgetary issues, particularly the need to procure a new generation of Dual Capable Aircraft in the medium term, may make this debate moot. There are doubts in the administration that European nations are willing or able to purchase F35s, or to make the Eurofighter dual capable. There are also security concerns about the risk of terrorists seizing warheads based in Europe, particularly following the recent incident at Kleine Brogel in Belgium. These issues colour the NATO nuclear debate.

START Follow-On and Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

The delegation offered any assistance that might be useful to the administration in the achievement of the negotiation and ratification of the START Follow-on agreement, and on the ratification and entry-into-force of the CTBT.

It was also said that while Europeans understand that the US may find it necessary in the lead-up to the CTBT and START Follow-On ratification processes to increase funding to ensure the safety and reliability of its nuclear stockpiles, any assurances that can be made, and repeated at the highest levels, that this will not entail new nuclear warheads nor increased weapons capabilities will be very reassuring to allies and might possibly decrease the likelihood of continued arms races in other parts of the world.

Start Follow-On

There was clear frustration from the administration that the START follow-on agreement had not yet been concluded. It had been hoped that this would have been finished and forwarded to the Senate for ratification to proceed, since the Treaty is a relatively modest step intended to bring arms control back on track and prepare the ground for future agreements, rather than a transformative step itself.

Negotiations with the Russians are proving more difficult than had been anticipated, and perceived divisions in Moscow are fuelling that difficulty. There is concern that issues believed solved such as missile defence, have then been reopened by the Russian side.

The treaty will achieve a modest cut in launchers and reduction of around one-third in deployed warheads. Even this has proved difficult because of the unequal nature of the US and Russian arsenals. However, the treaty is mostly concluded with issues such as verification, telemetry (sharing of information on missile tests) and inspections the major outstanding problems.

There is also a need to work out a compromise on missile defence. If these are in any way limited by the treaty, then it will never pass the Senate. The Russians have concerns that, in the future, US missile defence plans could negate their nuclear arsenal and give the US a first strike capability over Russia. The administration is at pains to incorporate Russia into missile defence to the extent possible, and to stress that it is aimed at Iran and others, not at Russia. However, suspicion of the US runs deep in Moscow. However, this acknowledgement of Russians concerns in no way translates to a readiness to slow missile defence programmes.

It was noted that the administration and NATO are keen to work cooperatively with Russia on missile defence. However, up to now, missile defences have been a very difficult issue which impede the possibility of progress in arms control and disarmament beyond the START follow-on agreement with Russia. The desire of some NATO nations to move forward, even without Russia, is a further complicating factor, as is strong support for missile defence programmes in the US Senate and a refusal to link them into arms control agreements.

The timing now means that START ratification in the Senate is uncertain at best this year, despite a willingness to move as quickly as possible in the Senate. It may be that mid-term elections mean that most hearings and a vote on START will not happen until 2011.

As President Obama said in Prague, there is a desire to work on a post-START agreement with the Russians, and this could cover non-deployed weapons, as well as tactical or sub-strategic weapons.



Jayantha Dhanapala, Des Browne, John Holdren,
Paolo Cotta-Ramusino, (Giorgio La Malfa),
Martin Butcher, Shata Shetty

CTBT Ratification

With the delay on negotiation and ratification of the START follow-on agreement, the ratification of the Comprehensive nuclear Test Ban Treaty has slipped. The administration has begun to engage the Senate on this, but it will not come to the Senate before 2011 at the earliest. It is important that this is done well, as the treaty cannot be allowed to go to a vote and fail again, as that will kill the treaty.

The delegation heard that, with this as with other specific items on the President's agenda, support from Europe will be welcome and necessary to ensure success. The President has boosted the budget for the National Nuclear Security Administration by \$5 billion over 7 years. The enhanced capacity to maintain the nuclear arsenal is intended to give confidence to the Senate that the US can keep its nuclear arsenal safe, secure and reliable without nuclear testing.

The JASON independent scientific advisers to the Department of Defence have said this is possible. The National Academy of Sciences is completing a report for Congress which will say the same thing.

Some concern was expressed that the funding boost for NNSA may have come too early for the CTBT, and that while it might help with arms reductions in the START process, it will have been discounted by the time the CTBT comes forward for a vote. Also that this strategy was pursued to no avail in 1999. However, administration figures were clear that they felt the President was laying the necessary groundwork for ratification of both treaties. In this context the question of the new capability under the Reliable Replacement Warhead programme was raised, and the delegation was assured that the President has terminated the RRW and no new weapons will be designed under President Obama.

The UK in particular, and possibly France, could be of assistance in demonstrating to Congress how a nuclear nation can maintain an arsenal having ratified the test ban treaty.

It was felt that lessons from the UK would be particularly valuable in this field, because of the tight links between the UK and US programmes. *A visit of senior Congressional staff to AWE Aldermaston and London for briefings on how the UK achieves this task in late 2010 or early 2011 could be useful.*

Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference

The delegation conveyed the need for a successful review conference, and the urgent need for concrete steps toward disarmament in the lead up to the NPT Review Conference.

Concluding the START Follow-On negotiations, progress on the CTBT and FMCT, and removal of US nuclear weapons from Europe are important steps in the right direction. In particular, consultations should be organized involving all the Middle Eastern states aimed at defining an "agenda of progress" for a Middle Eastern zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

These concerns were heard and understood by the administration. A desire for a successful review conference is shared. It was felt that, while the timing has not been what was wished for, that successful negotiation of the START follow-on and strong public support for CTBT ratification should contribute to a positive outcome. It was said that the administration is in a

weak position with regard to Pakistan and progress on the NPT, because of the need for their assistance in other policy areas.

The administration wishes to make progress on the Middle Eastern resolution, and is working to this end with countries in the region. They are particularly conscious that this is important with regard to Iran.

There was an awareness of a need for progress across all pillars of the NPT – disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. There is an understanding that the lack of specific progress since the Prague speech may lead to disappointment, and that expectations need to be managed. There is a hope that nations will understand that the administration is acting in good faith.

Conclusion

Consultations with the administration were extremely useful, as the delegation gained greater insight into current thinking in Washington, DC on a wide range of key issues in arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament.

The delegation took away a deeper understanding of the administration’s strategy for implementing the agenda laid out by President Obama in Prague, and clarified ways in which Europeans can support that agenda.

They ensured that senior figures in the administration heard strong messages of support from Europe, representing diverse geographic and political spread of opinion, for the Prague agenda in general, for specific steps to achieve the President’s goals for multilateral nuclear disarmament, and for ways in which Europeans can independently help create a positive environment for future progress.



Participants in the Atlantic Council roundtable led by Walter Slocombe (pictured on the right)



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Delegation Members

Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik

Bondevik served as Prime Minister of Norway from 1997 to 2000, and from 2001 to 2005, making him Norway's longest serving non-Socialist Prime Minister since World War II. Bondevik was a member of the [Storting](#) (Parliament) from 1973 to 2005. In addition to leadership positions in his party, the Christian Democratic Party, Bondevik was also Minister of Foreign Affairs 1989-1990, Minister of Church and Education, 1983-1986, also Prime Minister Willoch's deputy 1985-1986, and state secretary at the Office of the Prime Minister during 1972-1973.

The Rt. Hon. Des Browne, MP

Browne has been a Labour member of Parliament since 1997. He served as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office 2001-03; Secretary of State for Defence 2006-08 and Scotland 2007-08, and as the Prime Minister's Special Envoy to Sri Lanka 2009-. He is the convener of the Top Level Group of UK Parliamentarians for Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, which includes 16 former UK ministers.

Mr. Jan Kavan

Kavan was the foreign minister of the Czech Republic from 1998 until 2002, and deputy prime minister from 1999 until 2002. He was a member of the Federal Assembly from 1990-1992, a member of the Senate from 1996-2000 and a member of the Chamber of Deputies from 2002-2006. He was also the President of the United Nations General Assembly from 2002 until 2003. He is a member of the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD).

Hon. Giorgio LaMalfa

LaMalfa has served as member of the Italian Parliament, 1972-1994 and since 1996. He served as a member of the European Parliament 1989-1992, 1994-1999 and as Budget Minister 1980-1982. He was Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Chamber of Deputies 1983-1987, Chairman of the Comitato per la Legislazione of the Chamber of Deputies, 1998. He was Secretary General of Italy's Republican Party, 1987-2001, Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Chamber of Deputies 2001-2005, Minister of European Affairs, 2005-2006, and President of Italy's Republican Party 2001-2006.

Amb. Jayantha Dhanapala

Dhanapala is Pugwash President (2007 -), former UN Under-Secretary General for Disarmament Affairs, 1998 - 2003, Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the USA (1995-7) and to the UN Office in Geneva (1984-87). He was President of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and a member of both the International Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission (the Blix Commission) and the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

Prof. Paolo Cotta-Ramusino

Cotta-Ramusino is Secretary General of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs since August 2002. He is also Professor of Mathematical Physics at the University of Milano (Italy) and Senior Researcher at the Italian National Institute of Nuclear Physics. He was formerly Director of the Program on Science, Technology and International Security at the Landau Network - Centro Volta (Como) (where he conducted research on the conversion of Russian Nuclear Cities and the development of programs for cooperation on energy-related issues in the Korean peninsula).

Dr. Jeffrey Boutwell, Executive Director, Pugwash Conferences.

Mr. Martin Butcher, Special Projects Coordinator, Pugwash Conferences

Ms. Shata Shetty, Researcher, Top Level Group of UK Parliamentarians for Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation.



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Schedule of Meetings and Seminars

Please note that hyperlinks are provided in the text, indicated by underlined text. If you hold down the <control> button while clicking, you will be redirected to the relevant web page.

Monday, 1 March:

- 17:30 Coffee with Julian Borger, The Guardian
Des Browne, Giorgio La Malfa, Jan Kavan, Paolo Cotta-Ramusino
Hotel Palomar
- 19:30 Dinner with [Mr. Dominick Chilcott](#), British Deputy Head of Mission
Residence of the Deputy Head of Mission

Tuesday, 2 March:

- 9:00-10:00 “Joint Assistant Secretary of Defense Roundtable” with principals
engaged in US Nuclear Posture Review

[Amb. Alexander Vershbow](#), Assistant Secretary of Defense for
International Security and former US Ambassador to NATO

[Michael Nacht](#), Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global
Strategic Affairs

Julianne Smith, Principal Director for Europe and NATO, Office
of the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy).
- 12:00-13:30 “European Perspectives on the NPR, Extended Deterrence and the New
NATO Strategic Concept”
A luncheon roundtable, for 20-25, chaired Mr. [Walter Slocombe](#), former
UnderSecretary of Defense for Policy
Atlantic Council
- 18:00 Fourth Annual Christopher J. Makins Lecture
“The Transatlantic Community: Time for Some Lateral Thinking”
The Rt. Hon. Lord George Robertson of Port Ellen
Former Secretary General of NATO

Wednesday, 3 March:

- 08:45 – 10:00 Press and Media Breakfast (entire delegation)
[Old Ebbitt Grill](#)
- 10:30 Meeting with National Security Council

[Gary Samore](#), Special Assistant to the President and White House Coordinator for Arms Control and Weapons of Mass Destruction, Proliferation, and Terrorism
- 12:00 – 13:00 Teleconference with former [US Secretary of State George Shultz](#) and former Senator Sam Nunn
Nuclear Threat Initiative
- 14:30 - [Ellen Tauscher](#), Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs
- 17:15 Dr. [John Holdren](#), advisor to President Barack Obama for Science and Technology, Director of the White House [Office of Science and Technology Policy](#), and Co-Chair of the [President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology](#) (PCAST)
OSTP, New Executive Office Building.
- 19:00 Dinner with [Joan Rohlfing](#), President NTI and senior staff

Thursday, 4 March:

- 09:30 – 11:00 “European Perspectives on Current Nuclear Issues”
Brookings Policy Seminar
Roundtable discussion 25-30
[Amb. Steven Pifer](#), Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy, Center on the United States and Europe, Director, Arms Control Initiative



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Talking Points

General Points

- Europeans welcome the leadership of President Obama and the US administration in encouraging international progress on the move to a nuclear weapons free world.
- Drawing on the bipartisan impetus provided by seminal pieces in the Wall Street Journal by Msrs Shultz, Kissinger, Nunn and Perry, this debate has been taken up in countries across Europe, and our delegation members are key leaders in promoting dialogue on these issues in our home countries.
- However, there is a need to begin to implement these measures, and show concrete progress, both in decreasing the number of nuclear weapons, and their salience.

NATO and Nuclear Weapons

- Recent initiatives from the Norwegian, German, Belgian, and Dutch governments seeking to explore ways to guarantee European security without the presence of US nuclear weapons on European soil deserve attention and discussion.
- Strong political leadership must drive the NATO Strategic Concept Review process.
- In the lead up to the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, strong steps toward reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in US, British and NATO nuclear postures and concrete steps such as the removal of US nuclear weapons from Europe can help create a more positive process.
- Removal of US nuclear weapons from Europe can help establish a norm that no country should base its nuclear weapons on foreign soil. This may be an important precedent to make at this time, before other countries follow the current US example.

Nuclear Posture Review

- The US Nuclear Posture Review is now delayed until late March or April, and people around the world are concerned. They are looking for this document to show progress toward implementing the President's agenda, and will be discouraged if it is a status quo document.
- If the Nuclear Posture Review could send a strong signal that the purpose of nuclear weapons is only to deter the use of nuclear weapons, this will demonstrate that steps are being taken to decrease the salience of nuclear weapons in force doctrines (this is reported to be a key point of contention in the NPR Review). A corollary of this is that non-nuclear weapons states parties to the NPT should receive guarantees that they will never be attacked by US nuclear weapons.

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty & START Follow-On

- While Europeans understand that the US may find it necessary in the lead-up to the CTBT and START Follow-On ratification processes to increase funding to ensure the safety and reliability of its nuclear stockpiles, any assurances that can be made, and repeated at the highest levels, that this will not entail new nuclear warheads nor increased weapons capabilities will be very reassuring to allies and might possibly decrease the likelihood of continued arms races in other parts of the world.

Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference

- It is urgent that concrete steps toward disarmament are taken in the lead up to the NPT Review Conference. Concluding the START Follow-On negotiations, progress on the CTBT and FMCT, and removal of US nuclear weapons from Europe are important steps in the right direction.
- Consultations should be organized involving all the Middle Eastern states aimed at defining an “agenda of progress” for a ME zone free of weapons of mass destruction