

Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs

1995 Nobel Peace Prize

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Statement on No First Use Policies By Pugwash President Jayantha Dhanapala and Pugwash Secretary General Paolo Cotta-Ramusino

"There has been some speculation and debate in the US considering the possibility that the US could adopt a bona-fide No First Use (NFU) policy. This NFU policy would in particular exclude the possibility of nuclear weapons being put in a quick reaction or launch on warning mode. Pugwash welcomes this significant change proposed in US nuclear doctrine amidst increasing nuclear dangers.

Pugwash has always supported the adoption of a strict NFU policy by all states possessing nuclear weapons. Hence Pugwash appreciates very much the possibility that the US would adopt a NFU policy pending negotiations for further cuts in nuclear weapon arsenals.

The concerns expressed by states that would be protected by the umbrella of US nuclear weapons in an extended deterrence scheme is really short-sighted, as any use of nuclear weapons would trigger an immediate and extended destruction of the same countries that are supposed to benefit from the extended deterrence.

Thus, Pugwash supports the adoption of no first use policy by all states possessing nuclear weapons. At the same time, confidence in a conventional arms superiority should not increase the risk of war. In order to avoid large or significant conventional conflicts among states possessing nuclear weapons, the only way is dialogue, conflict resolution, and addressing in a cooperative way the contentious elements that pose a threat to peace and stability."

Jayantha Dhanapala, President of Pugwash
Paolo Cotta-Ramusino, Secretary General of Pugwash