Restoring Canada’s Nuclear Disarmament Policies

Expert Seminar, February 3-4, 2008
Cartier Place Hotel, Ottawa

Sponsored by Middle Powers Initiative, Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, the Rideau Institute, Canadian Pugwash Group, Physicians for Global Survival, and The Simons Foundation

Summary:

Overall, clear themes emerged among participants. Briefly:

• Despite the government’s claims to the contrary, Canada has been slowly shifting away from its traditionally strong support for nuclear disarmament at a time when the global propensity to use nuclear weapons has increased dramatically in the last several years.

• There is a pattern emerging within Canada’s voting record to support this observation.

• Nuclear weapons pose the most significant threat to human security today.

• Despite commendable effort by a select few, there remains little interest among the majority of parliamentarians in the issue of nuclear disarmament. This needs to change if we are to restore Canada’s historical, steadfast opposition to nuclear disarmament.

• Canada, like other NATO members who are also signatories to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) holds contradictory nuclear policies. The doctrinal emphasis of NATO on nuclear weapons as necessary for deterrence needs to be shifted to a strategy of minimal deterrence and eventual abolition.

• There appears to be much diversity of opinion on whether upcoming Presidential elections in the U.S. will impact on the current nuclear policies of that country.

• A majority of Canadians oppose the use and possession of nuclear weapons, however, there is a need to engage the public more broadly on this critical issue.

Canada’s Nuclear Disarmament Policies: A Faltering Trend?

The first session’s introductory remarks by Steven Staples, President of the Rideau Institute, were followed by notable speakers Robin Collins, Peggy Mason, and Bev Delong, who spoke about the recent trends in Canadian disarmament policies, and outlined possible steps to reverse their decline.

• In 1951 Canada worked on a U.S.-drafted disarmament treaty to prohibit atomic weapons. Canada played a leading role in nuclear disarmament at that time.

• Throughout the 1950s however, as a member of NATO, Canada was caught within NATO’s shift towards a greater reliance on nuclear weapons to counter the Soviet threat.

• In the early 1960s, debates between Diefenbaker and Pearson about installing nuclear weapons on Canadian soil grabbed the attention of the Canadian public.

• In 1963, the Conservatives were defeated partly because of Canadian fears that loyalty to NATO had become more important than reservations about nuclear weapons.

• In the late 1960s, Canada co-sponsored the “Irish Resolution” at the UN, considered by many to be a challenge to NATO’s nuclear policy.
• In 1970, when the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty came into force, Canada had played a leading role in its development and subsequent adoption.

• In 1996, the World Court Opinion weighed in heavily on the side of NPT obligations, and although Canada voted in favour of only a portion of the follow-up resolution at the First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) of the UN, disarmament momentum appeared to take on greater relevance in Canadian policy circles.

• In 2002 and 2003, Canada voted in favour of the New Agenda Coalition at the UN, which is an alliance of middle-power states pressing for further disarmament progress.

What Needs to Be Done?

• It is imperative that the Canadian government play a leading role in disarmament, especially since the U.S. has signaled that the use of nuclear weapons is no longer an 'unthinkable option'.

• There needs be an ongoing discussion about the shortcomings of doctrines that are based on nuclear deterrence, and Canada has an important role to play in this process. One step that could be taken is the completion of a cost benefit analysis of nuclear versus non nuclear deterrence, and a subsequent discussion of policy alternatives, in relation to NATO.

• Under NATO’s Strategic Concept, nuclear weapons are considered essential to global security and stability. Canada should push for a review of this policy.

• Canada should consider withdrawing or abstaining from NATO’s Nuclear Planning Group.

• Canada should refuse American offers of nuclear defence.

• The Canadian Parliament should consider enacting criminal legislation in which Canadians at home and abroad are forbidden from participating in the development of nuclear weapons.

• The Canadian government should use public education to build support for disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

• The Canadian government should work to support processes of verification. Canada has experience in this area and could be instrumental in the re-establishment of a verification research unit.

• The Canadian government should continue to press for progress in addressing the NPT’s institutional deficit, calling again for annual meetings, regular reports from member states and the creation of a standing bureaucratic group to work between meetings.

Nuclear Weapons in Today’s Canadian Foreign Policy

"Some argue that the use of nukes is necessary to protect our way of life. Just the opposite is true. The very existence, short of the contemplated use of nukes, is sufficient to erode profoundly our humanity and our way of life." — Senator Romeo Dallaire

There is significant debate over whether Canada’s policy towards nuclear weapons has changed since 9/11. The government maintains that the policies and positions remain consistent, while academics and activists note troubling changes. Michael Byers, Canadian Research Chair in Global Politics and International Law at the University of British Columbia, notes a lack of political will within the current Canadian government to take a defined stance counter to U.S. policy on the matter of nuclear disarmament and Iran. Professor Byers points out that between 2002 and today the Canadian government has added an important condition to their commitment to nuclear nonproliferation as described on their website, indicating a significant change in their position:

Senator Romeo Dallaire
Canada has long held a policy objective of non-proliferation, reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We pursue this aim steadily, persistently and energetically, consistent with our membership in NATO and NORAD and in a manner sensitive to the broader international security context.


Prof. Byers states that this text indicates that Canada, as a country that has refused to build nuclear weapons, and then eliminated nuclear weapons from its soil, indicates that currently, security trumps legal obligations to disarmament.

Canada, historically, has been considered a moral authority on the issue of nuclear disarmament, but today’s political leadership is failing to use its moral authority to advance this issue internationally. To assert broader leadership on the issue of nuclear disarmament, he suggests that Canada play an important role in the negotiations with Iran, that we leave the Nuclear Planning Group, and, noting suggestions that the North should be declared a nuclear weapons free zone [NWFZ], he suggests that all of Canada be declared a NWFZ.

In contrast to the evidence, arguments, and thoughts presented by Michael Byers, Mark Gwozdecky, Director, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (Nuclear) Division, DFAIT, stated that the Canadian government has maintained a consistent commitment to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. He suggests that “Canada believes in, and is working toward, a world eventually free of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons.” However, he states that the pursuit of this goal must be consistent with increases, not decreases, in our collective security.

Mr. Gwozdecky notes troubling setbacks in non-proliferation within the international community, including North Korea’s defection from the NPT, Iran’s non-compliance with its Security Council obligations, and the discovery that non-state actors do play a role in proliferation. Canada has played an active role in the Six Party Talks, supporting further political, commercial, and development linkages with North Korea upon the resolution of the nuclear crisis.

These developments have been complemented by setbacks in nuclear disarmament: the review conference of the NPT failed to agree on an outcome document in 2005; the CTBT has failed to enter into force; and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva has failed to agree on a work programme since 1998. Despite challenges, Russia and the U.S. have continued to reduce their stockpiles of nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, Canada has continued to urge states to ratify the CTBT and continues to support the three pillars of the NPT.

Mr. Gwozdecky also notes that whenever nuclear non-proliferation or disarmament is discussed, there needs to be recognition that “until they are completely eliminated, nuclear weapons continue to have a deterrent effect.” Additionally, it must be recognized that achieving disarmament in Iran and North Korea would be a significant boost for the NPT.

Despite Canada’s commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, as posited by Mr. Gwozdecky, in a speech written by Senator Romeo Dallaire and delivered by Kim Kroeber, the Senator expressed his disappointment with current Canadian foreign policy as it relates to nuclear weapons. Sen. Dallaire writes that the trouble with Canadian policy is that it does not reconcile the moral imperative to abolish nuclear weapons with the assessment of national gains. Nuclear weapons are not necessary to ensure security, but in fact, dramatically increase insecurity, and threaten our way of life. He suggests that the Canadian government can recognize the need to uphold basic human values and abolish nuclear weapons, rediscovering the moral foundations of Canadian foreign policy, without committing political suicides, as past government’s
have improved domestic support by opposing U.S. policies. Additionally, he states, that the government must recognize that Canada’s role in NATO is in direct conflict with our NPT obligations. Senator Dallaire calls on the Canadian government to formulate a consistent, coherent nuclear policy, with the ultimate aim of abolishing nuclear weapons.

**Analysis of Canada’s votes in U.N First Committee 2007**

"The government seems torn on the NPT/NATO issue, and the lack of authoritative statements by the political leadership is a cause of confusion and concern. What is clear is that Canada has ceased to be either a champion or a leader in ridding the world of the ultimate evil of nuclear weapons.” — Hon. Doug Roche and Jim Wurst

Doug Roche, O.C., Chairperson of the Middle Powers initiative and former Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament, and Jim Wurst discovered in a timely study that Canada’s voting pattern in the UN Disarmament Committee reflects policy incoherence. Canada has continued to support and play a leading role in the New Agenda Coalition resolution to “accelerate the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments.” However, in 2007, Canada abstained or voted “no” on half of the resolutions put before the committee. Most notably, Canada abstained in the vote on the New Zealand resolution which recognizes the need to take “further practical steps to decrease the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems.” Canada explained their abstention by stressing Canada’s role in NATO, a body that still considers deterrence an important part of international security. The citation of NATO as a reason for abstention calls into question whether the NPT is still a central element of Canadian foreign policy or whether Canada’s role in NATO has become more important than the NPT.

Considering the fact that other NATO states voted for the resolution, Canada’s abstention is disconcerting because it may reflect a renewed alignment with the U.S. Throughout 2007, Canada abstained on several resolutions for which it normally has shown support and this incoherence is reducing Canada’s stature on nuclear issues. Examples of this incoherence include: Canada’s abstention on Mexico’s proposal for the U.N. to hold a conference to identify appropriate ways of eliminating nuclear dangers; Canada’s decision to hold back its traditional co-sponsorship of the CTBT resolution before eventually offering its support; and finally, Canada’s abstention on a resolution calling for Israel to join the NPT despite having voted for the resolution in previous years. There is no doubt that the Canadian government is committed to the NPT, but this research has demonstrated that the Canadian government’s loyalties may be divided between its commitment to the NPT and to NATO policy. According to the Hon. Doug Roche and Jim Wurst, “the lack of clarity in Canada’s voting record stems from the government’s ambiguous stance.” It is time to ask leaders to clarify Canada’s position.

**Link of interest...**

**Engaging Parliament**
Alexa McDonough, NDP Member of Parliament, and Chair of the Canadian Chapter of the Parliamentary Network for Nuclear Disarmament (PNND), and Bryon Wilfert, Liberal Member of Parliament and Associate Critic for Foreign Affairs, then discussed their views on nuclear issues and what role parliament can play in the debate.

Alexa McDonough expressed several concerns about the role of parliament in nuclear issues. Firstly, she discussed the challenge for the Parliamentary Network for Nuclear Disarmament in getting MPs out to see the many interesting speakers on nuclear issues, and cites consistently low attendance for the minimal impact of MPs. Secondly, multilateral policies are
hindered due to the division within the Liberal party. In her view, despite government rhetoric which states the converse, there has been an obvious shift in Canada’s position on nuclear issues. Ms. McDonough has written many letters to the government addressing, amongst other things, the current NATO-NPT tensions and inconsistencies in Canadian foreign policy. One of the greatest challenges is how to engage parliament on the issue of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. According to Ms. McDonough, without public education and increasing pressure from civil society organizations, or a serious nuclear threat, moving nuclear issues up the parliamentary agenda will be challenging.

The speaker from the Liberal party, Bryon Wilfert, asserted Canada’s continued opposition to nuclear weapons; however, like McDonough he also sees a need for Canada to take more action on the issue. Additionally, he expressed concerns about the spread of the nuclear threat to include non-state actors.

There is a need to engage parliament and to build support for this issue. To complement the many calls for action in parliament, Robin Collins raised the point that to engage parliament means engaging the people that hold parliament responsible, and unfortunately, it is challenging to engage the public on this issue.

**Canada and NPT vs. Canada and NATO. Which will it be?**

*"The U.S. development of more nuclear weapons-related technologies for fighting limited nuclear wars on the battlefield, and in space, will make their use more, not less likely. Threatening to use pre-emptive nuclear retaliation against terrorist groups or rogue states makes nuclear war more ‘credible’ now than it has been since the Cuban missile crisis."* — Erika Simpson

While public interest in nuclear issues languishes, the global propensity to use nuclear weapons has increased dramatically in the last several years. Erika Simpson, of the Canadian Pugwash Group and Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Western Ontario, explored America’s new doctrine of pre-emptive strikes postulated in 2002 and later in 2006. In 2002, The U.S. Nuclear Posture Review described three scenarios allowing the use of nuclear weapons: their use against targets able to withstand non-nuclear attacks; in retaliation for a nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons attack; and in the event of surprising military developments, such as in the cases of Iran or North Korea. In 2006 the Bush administration repeated their commitment to pre-emptive strikes. According to Erika Simpson, the American doctrine will only make the world less secure. The doctrinal emphasis needs to be shifted to a strategy of minimal deterrence and eventual abolition. Adopting a doctrine of pre-emptive nuclear war will be neither credible nor sustainable.

Most recently, a group of retired NATO generals have suggested that NATO also adopt a policy of pre-emptive nuclear strikes. Although this proposition has been met with opposition, it has some support within NATO, such as Guy Roberts, head of the NATO Nuclear Planning Group.

Although the U.S. has changed its position on nuclear weapons and others have followed suit, European and Canadian diplomats have shied from discussing this change, primarily because Europe, the U.S., and NATO would prefer to reserve some tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. NATO is estimated to have 100 tactical nuclear weapons stockpiled in Europe. In particular, the British and the French would like to retain nuclear deterrence capabilities without further debate, fearing that such debate could trigger domestic and international dissent.

Prof. Simpson suggests that currently there is a need to consider moral and ethical arguments, to talk about changes and permutations in the deterrence arguments, and in particular, to press for debate at NATO headquarters.

The inherent conflict between the NPT and NATO policy poses challenges for NATO member states. Ernie Regehr, O.C, Senior Policy Advisor, Project Ploughshares, identifies several challenges to the success of the NPT and several new threats to global security. One challenge to nuclear non-proliferation is the spread of
nuclear know-how and materials. Currently, there are 440 nuclear power plants in 31 countries with 240 more plants planned in upcoming years. In addition, 10 countries now have the capacity to enrich, and several other countries have expressed interest in developing that capability.

The dissemination of information and technical abilities requires that the international community create an environment unfriendly to weaponization. We need a security environment, where countries are calculably better off when they forego nuclear weapons creation. One necessary development is the establishment of a rules-based environment, and to this end the NPT is essential. A second step is to create a political environment that is unsupportive of nuclear weapons, of which sub-section 9 of the 13 Practical Steps agreed to at the 2000 NPT Review Conference which called for "a diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies," is essential. A third step is the creation of 'safe neighborhoods" which refer to countries that have the requisite or potential capabilities to weaponize but choose not to. This is necessary if the world would like to increase nuclear energy capabilities while reducing nuclear weapons.

Another important challenge to the NPT is the NATO doctrine as previously mentioned. The NATO doctrine needs to be reversed and NATO must commit to reducing the role of nuclear weapons in their security strategies.

Another important challenge to the NPT is the American commitment to selective non-proliferation. U.S. policy allows nuclear capabilities to some friendly states, but not to hostile states. The Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission chaired by Dr. Hans Blix has explicitly rejected the suggestion that weapons in the hands of some pose no threat, while in the hands of others are a mortal danger. For this reason it is important to consider how Israel, India, and Pakistan can be brought into the NPT. One way to include India would be to establish a conditional civilian nuclear cooperation with India, where cooperation is based on specific and verifiable disarmament commitments. Additionally, nuclear weapons states should be encouraged to ratify the CTBT. Moreover, the international community could determine the conditions under which civilian nuclear cooperation will occur and put a freeze on fissile material until the requisite obligations have been met. For Canada, as a global supplier of uranium, the multilateralization of weapons-sensitive nuclear materials should be an imperative. Additionally, the wording of the NPT, which allows for access to technology without restricting enrichment and reprocessing, must be reviewed. Ultimately, it is crucial that the international community and Canada work on improving verification and the institutional deficit of the NPT.

Wade Huntley Director, Simons Centre for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Research, University of British Columbia, suggested that the focus should not be on whether states join the NPT, but whether they obey it. The discussion with Israel, India, and Pakistan can be framed around the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation would be greatly facilitated by support from the U.S.

Links of interest...
The 13 Practical steps agreed upon at the 2000 Review Conference of the NPT, by all governments signed to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty: [http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/legal/npt/13point.html](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/legal/npt/13point.html)

Dealing with the U.S.

"American foreign policy is a quest for invulnerability." — Paul Heinbecker

Paul Heinbecker, Distinguished Fellow, The Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI), former Canadian ambassador to the U.N., followed Mr. Regehr’s presentation and stated that the U.S. plays an important
role in the direction of global nuclear policy. He notes that regardless of election results in the U.S., the next President of the United States will be someone with whom the international community can work. Mr. Heinbecker believes that with the next American government there will be the opportunity to put the issue of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament back on the table. He notes that under the administration of President G.W. Bush, security was derived from military power; however, future governments may again look to international agreements and verification procedures for security. With a supportive American government, alongside a supportive Canadian government, progress on nuclear issues will be much easier. However, for the Canadian government to be listened to, and to get credit in Washington, they must demonstrate the capacity to act effectively. With this aim in mind, Canadian foreign policy would benefit from better vehicles and more willing people.

In contrast, Wade Huntley was unsure as to whether the change in leadership will have a great impact unless nuclear policy becomes an election issue. Additionally, he fears that much of the debate on nuclear issues is focused on nuclear terrorism. He notes that it is difficult to judge the impact of a new American government on this nuclear proliferation and disarmament debate, however, Dr. Huntley agrees that there will likely be greater support from any of the current presidential candidates, than has been seen recently.

**Links of interest...**


**Revitalizing Canadian Public Opinion**

“The majority of Canadians support the elimination of all nuclear weapons through an enforceable agreement.” — Result of the Global Public Opinion on Nuclear Weapons

Jennifer Simons, President, The Simons Foundation, then presented data from a new public opinion survey co-sponsored by the Simons Foundation. (Appendix I) The results from this poll, which surveyed over 2000 Canadians, demonstrate that the Canadian people support efforts to reduce nuclear weapons. Specifically, the survey showed that 88% of Canadians felt that nuclear weapons made the world a more dangerous place. This result is consistent with the public opinion in other states, including Italy, Great Britain, the United States, Israel, France, and Germany. The majority of Canadians also support eliminating all nuclear weapons through an enforceable agreement [73%], while this option received only moderate support in the United States, Great Britain, Israel, France [between 43-51%].

The fact that only 54% of Canadians surveyed believe that the use by NATO of nuclear weapons is never justified may be related to the fear among Canadians that non-state actors are gaining access to nuclear weapons.

The survey’s results indicate that, ultimately, the public supports a leading role for the Canadian government in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. According to Dr. Simons it is now time to move the issue of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament beyond the converted, to reach out to newer, younger, members of the populace in order to spark further action.

**Link of interest:**

Appendix I: Simons Foundation poll survey of over 2000 Canadians

**TABLE 1:** Percentage of public who felt “nuclear weapons made the world a more dangerous place”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Over 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Over 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>Over 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>Over 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Over 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Over 70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 2:**
Percentage of public who want the “elimination of all nuclear weapons through an enforceable agreement”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>43%-51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>43%-51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>43%-51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>43%-51%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 3:** Justification for the use of nuclear weapons, as a percentage of the 2000 Canadians polled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those who believe “the use of nuclear weapons capability is never justified”</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who believe there may be a justification for their use in war.</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who believe there may be a justification in deterring a possible attack.</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 4:** Threat of the use of nuclear weapons, as a percentage of the 2000 Canadians polled.

| Threat of nuclear weapons’ use by terrorists.                             | 51%        |
| Threat of nuclear weapons’ use by one or more countries.                  | 31%        |
| Threat from both terrorists and countries are equally dangerous.           | 15%        |

**TABLE 5:** Concern of the spread of nuclear technology, as a percentage of the 2000 Canadians polled.

| Those who believe “nuclear technology exports should only be allowed to countries with little or no threat of developing nuclear weapons”. | 73%        |
Canada must recover its leading role in working for the elimination of nuclear weapons, a role that has been cast into doubt under the Harper government. That was the dominant finding for the sponsors of a special seminar of 20 nuclear disarmament experts held February 3-4, 2008 in Ottawa.

The seminar was co-sponsored by six leading groups: the Middle Powers Initiative, Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, the Rideau Institute, the Simons Foundation, Canadian Pugwash Group and Physicians for Global Survival — all of which have endorsed this statement.

The seminar considered the new report of Canada World’s Poll, principally sponsored by The Simons Foundation, showing that 88 percent of Canadians think nuclear weapons make the world a more dangerous place and would support the elimination of nuclear weapons through an enforceable agreement.

Special attention was paid to the incoherence and contradiction between Canada supporting the “unequivocal undertaking” to the total elimination of nuclear weapons required by the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and Canada’s continued allegiance to NATO’s policies stating that nuclear weapons are “essential.”

Concern was expressed during the seminar that NATO’s policies for the retention of nuclear weapons are now trumping the NPT’s legal obligations for nuclear disarmament. The government’s own website, stating that Canada’s nuclear policy now must be consistent with NATO’s policies, calls into question whether the NPT is still the central instrument in which Canada’s nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament policy is rooted. A strong call was made for Canada to work with Germany and Norway in their current efforts to overhaul NATO’s outdated policies, particularly as set out in its Strategic Concept, for retention of nuclear weapons.

Having heard the testimony and discussion of the experts at the seminar, and with a view to the preparations underway for the 2010 Review conference of the NPT, the sponsors of the seminar have set out this urgent agenda:
1. Prime Minister Harper must unambiguously affirm the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. In that call, he would be joining senior American figures Henry Kissinger, William Perry, George Shultz, and Sam Nunn who in January issued that call a second time, joined by Mikhail Gorbachev, Madeleine Albright, Colin Powell and a growing list of global leaders.

2. That assertion by the Prime Minister must in turn be coupled with a re-energized Canadian diplomacy to produce action on priority, actionable, and universally agreed steps toward nuclear elimination, such as:
   - De-alerting all deployed weapons to remove the threat of accidental annihilation,
   - Entry into force of the comprehensive ban on testing nuclear weapons (CTBT),
   - A ban on production of fissile material for weapons purposes (FMT), and
   - Substantial, irreversible, and verified reductions to existing arsenals.

3. Canada must work for a review of NATO nuclear policy to reject the fiction that nuclear weapons “preserve peace.” Canada should press NATO to revise its Strategic Concept to acknowledge that nuclear weapons pose an unacceptable risk to humanity, and that their early elimination is essential to human security. To move from words to action, NATO should be challenged to remove, and dismantle, all US tactical nuclear weapons from the territories of non-nuclear weapon states of the alliance and to call on Russia to reciprocate with cuts to its arsenal of tactical weapons as a step toward complete nuclear disarmament.

4. India, Israel, and Pakistan must be integrated into the disarmament and non-proliferation mainstream. To that end, Canada should continue to call on all three to honor the repeated demands of the international community “to accede to [the NPT] as non-nuclear-weapon States promptly and without conditions.” Until India signs the NPT, Canada should also insist that any proposed civilian nuclear cooperation with India be contingent on India taking clear and irreversible steps toward disarmament, including ratification of the CTBT, a verifiable freeze on its production of fissile materials for weapons purposes, and formal acceptance of the disarmament obligations set out in Article VI of the NPT.

5. Canada must also be energetic in non-proliferation efforts, especially since Canada is a prominent supplier of uranium and technologies for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In the context of increasing demand for energy and the spread of nuclear technology, Canada should be a leader in the pursuit of multilateral control over all weapons-sensitive elements of the nuclear fuel cycle.

6. Canada should also mobilize political and diplomatic resources to continue efforts to enhance the NPT’s administrative, diplomatic, and enforcement mechanisms so that NPT states can more effectively address non-compliance issues.

The seminar recognized that a world facing rapidly advancing climate change and an extraordinary array of additional challenges — energy deficits, burgeoning pollution, acute water shortages, unrelenting hunger, grossly inadequate health services, and chronic armed conflict — should not also be burdened with the continuing threat of nuclear annihilation. In the face of cumulative and deeply consequential environmental damage, the human community is awakening to the reality that the earth is a delicate, fragile home. Each generation has a sacred duty to nurture the planet and to care for its people. It is a duty that is violated and dishonored by the maintenance of arsenals to assault, or even to threaten, the earth and its people with the almost limitless destructive power of nuclear weapons. Responsible stewardship of the earth requires no less than the permanent elimination of nuclear weapons, and Canada’s place should be clearly in the vanguard of this inescapable struggle.

The report on the seminar is available at: www.rideauinstitute.ca
Contacts for sponsoring groups:

Middle Powers Initiative
The Hon. Douglas Roche O.C., Chairperson
Email: djroche@shaw.ca
Phone: (780) 466-8072

The Simons Foundation
Dr. Jennifer Allen Simons, President
Email: jennifer_simons@sfu.ca
Phone: (778) 782-7778

Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
Bev Delong, Chairperson
Email: bevdelong@shaw.ca
Phone: (403) 282-8260

The Rideau Institute
Steven Staples, President
Email: sstaples@rideauinstitute.ca
Phone: (613) 565-9449 ext 24, Cell. 613-290-2695

Canadian Pugwash Group
Dr. Walter Dorn, Chair
Email: dorn@cfc.dnd.ca
Phone: (416) 482-6800 et 6538

Physicians for Global Survival
Dr. Nancy Covington, President
Email: nancy.covington@ns.sympatico.ca

Groups endorsing this declaration:

Project Ploughshares

Canadian Federation of University Women

Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), section canadienne

Pacific Peace Working Group

The Canadian Section of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

International Physicians for Humanitarian Medicine, Geneva

The Boundary Peace Initiative

Project Ploughshares Calgary

Lawyers for Social Responsibility

Brampton Coalition for Peace and Justice

Veterans Against Nuclear Arms (VANA) ON-QUE Region

Canadian Voice of Women for Peace

World Conference of Religions for Peace Canada

Veterans against Nuclear Arms, Saskatchewan

World Federalist Movement - Canada

Group of 78

Artistes pour la Paix

Science for Peace

Canadian Unitarian Council

Peace Monitoring Group

Peace Watch Working Group,
First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa

Hiroshima Day Coalition

Toronto Raging Grannies

KAIROS BC-Yukon

Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility

Canadian Peace Alliance
Le Canada doit reprendre son rôle de leader en vue de l’élimination des armes nucléaires, un rôle qui a été mis en doute sous le gouvernement Harper. Telle est la principale conclusion des commanditaires du séminaire qui regroupait 20 spécialistes du désarmement, les 3 et 4 février dernier, à Ottawa.

Six groupes importants commanditaient le séminaire : le Middle Powers Initiative, le Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, l’Institut Rideau, la Simons Foundation, le Canadian Pugwash Group et les Médecins pour la survie mondiale. Tous ont souscrit à la présente déclaration.

Les spécialistes ont examiné le nouveau rapport de Canada World’s Poll, commandité en grande partie par la Simons Foundation, selon lequel 88 pour cent des Canadiens pensent que le monde est plus en danger à cause des armes nucléaires; ils appuieraient donc une entente exécutoire déterminant l’élimination des armes nucléaires.

Ils se sont attardés en particulier à l’incohérence et aux contradictions du Canada. D’une part, ce dernier appuie « l’engagement sans équivoque » pour l’élimination totale des armes nucléaires, exigée par le Traité de non-prolifération (TNP), mais d’autre part il maintient son allégeance envers l’OTAN dont les politiques affirment que les armes nucléaires sont « essentielles ».

Durant le séminaire, on s’est dit inquiet que les politiques de l’OTAN favorables au maintien des armes nucléaires ne sapent le désarmement nucléaire rendu légalement obligatoire par le TNP. Sur son site Web, le gouvernement affirme que, désormais, sa politique nucléaire doit correspondre aux politiques de l’OTAN, et se demande si le TNP est encore l’instrument sur lequel le Canada doit fonder sa politique de non-prolifération et de désarmement nucléaire. On a fortement incité le Canada à se joindre à la Norvège et à l’Allemagne qui œuvrent au remaniement des politiques dépassées de l’OTAN, surtout celles énoncées dans le concept stratégique, sur le maintien des armes nucléaires.

Ayant écouté le témoignage et les échanges des spécialistes sur la question, et en vue de la conférence de 2010 sur le Réexamen du TNP, dont les préparatifs ont débuté, les commanditaires du séminaire ont défini l’ordre du jour urgent, que voici :

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La cloche de la paix, symbole de l’accord de paix entre le Canada et le Japon, dans le jardin japonais du Jardin botanique de Montréal.
1. Le Premier ministre Harper doit affirmer sans ambiguïté qu’il a pour but un monde sans armes nucléaires. En lançant cet appel, il se joindrait aux seniors étasuniens Henry Kissinger, William Perry, George Shultz et Sam Nunn, qui en janvier ont lancé pour une deuxième fois cet appel, auquel se sont joints Mikhail Gorbachev, Madeleine Albright, Colin Powell de même qu’un nombre grandissant de dirigeants mondiaux.

2. Cette affirmation du Premier ministre doit à son tour être couplée à une relance de la diplomatie canadienne afin de définir des mesures prioritaires, donnant matière à des poursuites et universellement acceptées menant à l’élimination des armes nucléaires. Par exemple :
   - Diminution du niveau d’alerte des armes déployées afin d’éliminer le risque d’une annihilation accidentelle;
   - Entrée en vigueur du Traité d’interdiction complète des essais nucléaires (TICEN);
   - Interdiction de produire de la matière fissile à des fins d’armement; et
   - Réduction substantielle, irréversible et vérifiée des arsenaux existants.

3. Le Canada doit œuvrer à la révision de la politique nucléaire de l’OTAN afin que soit rejetée la fiction voulant que les armes nucléaires « préservent la paix ». Il doit presser l’OTAN de réviser son concept stratégique afin qu’il soit reconnu que les armes nucléaires constituent un risque inacceptable pour l’humanité, et que la sécurité humaine exige leur élimination précoce. Pour passer de la parole aux actes, on doit sommer l’OTAN de retirer et démanteler toutes les armes nucléaires tactiques ÉUA du territoire des pays de l’Alliance non dotés d’armes nucléaires, et d’inviter la Russie, dans le même sens, à réduire son arsenal d’armes tactiques et ainsi faire un pas vers le désarmement nucléaire complet.

4. On doit intégrer l’Inde, Israël et le Pakistan dans le courant du désarmement et de la non-prolifération. À cette fin, le Canada doit continuer à inviter ces pays à honorer les demandes répétées de la communauté internationale pour qu’ils « accèdent [au TNP] rapidement et sans conditions à titre d’États non dotés d’armes nucléaires. » Jusqu’à ce que l’Inde signe le TNP, le Canada doit insister pour que toute coopération nucléaire civile avec l’Inde soit conditionnelle à ce qu’elle adopte des mesures de désarmement claires et irréversibles, notamment la ratification du TICEN, le gel vérifiable de toute production de matière fissile à des fins d’armements, et l’acceptation officielle des obligations de désarmement prévues à l’article VI du TNP.

5. Le Canada doit aussi faire un effort notable pour la non-prolifération, surtout qu’il est un important fournisseur d’uranium et de technologies pour un usage pacifique de l’énergie nucléaire. Considérant l’augmentation de la demande d’énergie et la propagation de la technologie nucléaire, le Canada doit être l’un des premiers à favoriser le contrôle multilatéral de tout élément du cycle des combustibles nucléaires susceptible de servir pour des armements.

6. Le Canada doit aussi mobiliser ses ressources politiques et diplomatiques pour poursuivre les efforts de renforcement des mécanismes administratifs et diplomatiques et d’exécution du TNP, de sorte que les pays signataires du TNP puissent résoudre avec plus d’efficacité les problèmes de non-respect.

Pour les participants au séminaire, le monde ne doit pas ajouter à l’avancée rapide du changement climatique et aux défis extraordinaires qui s’y ajoutent — déficits d’énergie, pollution galopante, manques aigus d’eau, faim implacable, services de santé notoirement inadéquats, et conflits armés chroniques — le fardeau additionnel d’une menace continue d’annihilation nucléaire. Face aux dommages environnementaux et à l’accumulation de leurs lourdes conséquences, la communauté humaine s’éveille au fait que la Terre est une maison délicate et fragile. Chaque génération a le devoir sacré d’entretenir la planète et de prendre soin de ses habitants. Le maintien d’arsenaux qui servent à assaillir ou même à menacer la terre et ses habitants, avec la force destructrice presque illimitée des armes nucléaires, viole et déshonore ce devoir sacré. L’exercice d’une intendance responsable de la terre exige rien de moins que l’élimination définitive des armes nucléaires; le Canada doit clairement se placer à l’avant-garde de cet inévitable combat.

Le rapport sur le séminaire est disponible à : www.rideauinstitute.ca
Pour contacter les groupes commanditaires :

Middle Powers Initiative
L’honorable Douglas Roche O.C., Président
Courriel : djroche@shaw.ca
Téléphone : (780) 466-8072

Simons Foundation
Dr Jennifer Allen Simons, Présidente
Courriel : jennifer_simons@sfu.ca
Téléphone : (778) 782-7778

Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
Bev Delong, Présidente
Courriel : bevdelong@shaw.ca
Téléphone : (403) 282-8260

Institut Rideau
Steve Staples, Président
Courriel : sstaples@rideauinstitute.ca
Téléphone : (613) 565-9449 poste 24
Cellulaire : (613) 290-2695

Canadian Pugwash Group
Dr Walter Dorn, Président
Courriel : dorn@cfc.dnd.ca
Téléphone : (416) 482-6800 et 6538

Médecins pour la survie mondiale
Dr Nancy Covington, Présidente
Courriel : nancy.covington@ns.sympatico.ca

Groupes signataires de cette déclaration :

Project Ploughshares
Fédération canadienne des femmes diplômées des universités
Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), section canadienne
Pacific Peace Working Group
The Canadian Section of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
International Physicians for
Humanitarian Medicine, Genève
Boundary Peace Initiative
Project Ploughshares Calgary
Lawyers for Social Responsibility
Brampton Coalition for Peace and Justice
Veterans Against Nuclear Arms (VANA) Région ON-QUÉ
La Voix Canadiennes des Femmes pour la Paix
World Conference of Religions for Peace, Canada
Veterans against Nuclear Arms, Saskatchewan
Mouvement Federaliste Mondiale (Canada)
Groupe des 78
Artistes pour la Paix
Science for Peace
Canadian Unitarian Council
Peace Monitoring Group
Peace Watch Working Group,
First Unitarian Congregation of Ottawa
Hiroshima Day Coalition
Toronto Raging Grannies
KAIROS BC-Yukon
Regroupement pour la surveillance du nucléaire
L’alliance canadienne pour la paix