

COMMUNIQUE OF THE PUGWASH COUNCIL

50th Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs: "Eliminating the Causes of War", Cambridge, UK: August 3-8, 2000

Tackling one of the most fundamental challenges of the 21st century, "Eliminating the Causes of War", the 50th Pugwash conference on Science and World Affairs met at Queens' College, Cambridge, UK from 3-8 August 2000.

Drawing their inspiration from the Russell-Einstein Manifesto of 1955 - "Shall we put an end to the human race or shall mankind renounce war", more than 150 participants from 47 countries focused on the proposition that war must cease to exist, especially when the very survival of the human species is called into question by nuclear weapons.

Recent developments, however, including the highly controversial US missile defence program, raise the grim prospect of a renewal of the nuclear arms race. In his closing address, Sir Michael Atiyah, President of Pugwash, noted the threat that missile defences pose to the stability of international relations and the entire structure of nuclear weapons arms control.

Other dangerous developments on the world scene include the failure of the US Senate to ratify the CTBT, certain changes in Russian nuclear doctrine, further nuclear proliferation, and the latent danger of terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction, including biological and chemical.

Recognizing these critical threats to human security, the Pugwash Council calls on all governments to adhere to international agreements to which they are a party, such as the ABM Treaty, the Comprehensive Test Ban, and the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and to the chemical and biological weapons conventions.

But bolder steps are needed. Pugwash calls upon the nuclear powers to implement their "unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals: made at the Sixth Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in April 2000. As immediately steps toward that goal, Pugwash urges nuclear powers to accelerate the de-alerting of their nuclear forces, to withdraw tactical nuclear weapons from outside national territory, and to ratify the CTBT and other unfulfilled commitments at the earliest possible date. More intensive efforts are also needed to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention with a verification protocol and to broaden implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Pugwash recognizes that weapons of mass destruction are only one manifestation of human conflict, and that internal wars fought with widely available small arms and light weapons are killing and maiming millions of people. In six conference working groups, participants analyzed the multiple and inter-related causes of conflict: human nature; political and economic issues; religion and ethnicity; poverty; environmental issues; and the misuse of science. The international community must make a concerted and sustained effort to address all these roots of conflict, through the alleviation of poverty, improve mechanisms for conflict resolution and prevention, and greater tolerance of the differences embodied in our global family.

To end the scourge of war, the Pugwash scientific community stresses the need to broaden democratic norms of governance, to strengthen international institutions, and the rule of law, to reduce global inequities that often spark conflict, and above all to work for the application of science for the benefit of humanity.