

The Eric Fawcett Memorial Forum 2004

Development of Canadian Policy in the Shadow of US Defence and Foreign Policy

**Annual Joint Forum of
Canadian Pugwash Group and Science for Peace
April 17, 2004
University of Toronto**

**Report prepared by Christie E. Dennison
a member of Canadian Student Young Pugwash**

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Introduction

On April 17, 2004, Science for Peace and the Canadian Pugwash Group co-hosted the Eric Fawcett Memorial Forum. The day's events maintained and honoured the spirit of collaborative, dedicated learning that Eric Fawcett embodied. The recollection of Dr. Fawcett's consistent efforts to support and challenge his colleagues and fellow scientists, not only in sympathetic milieux but also in repressive environments, had particular relevance as participants gathered to discuss the possibilities for "Development of Canadian Policy in the Shadow of US Defence and Foreign Policy".

While there was commonly felt discontent and apprehension about many of the decisions and international actions taken by the US Administration of George W. Bush, negativity was not the prevailing sentiment of the day. On the contrary, all of the presenters took the opportunity to focus discussion on what can be done, and what is being done, in Canada and around the world to respond to this challenge.

The agenda and speakers list (see Annex) allowed participants to experience and explore the topic at hand from a variety of perspectives, including the foreign political, academic, and pragmatic. Exchange between speakers and audience, questions, and comments punctuated the day, adding to the breadth of topics covered and, importantly, allowed for the expression of a few proposals and new ideas.

The text of several presentations can be viewed on the Science for Peace and Canadian Pugwash Group websites¹. This report makes reference to specific presentations, but is

Conference report prepared by Christie E. Dennison, a member of Canadian Student Young Pugwash, with the assistance of Phyllis Creighton, Science for Peace, and Franklyn Griffiths and Derek Paul, Canadian Pugwash Group.

¹ www.scienceforpeace.sa.utoronto.ca and www.pugwashgroup.ca.

primarily intended to reflect the coincident topics and themes discussed, as well as to highlight the novel ideas and proposals put forth.

The Challenge of Controversial Unilateralism

The prevailing international climate is dominated by the George W. Bush Administration in the United States.

Those present agreed that the predominant characteristic of this Administration's policies and actions—unilateralism—poses the greatest challenge to those who would endorse a different climate – a more temperate one, exhibiting fewer extremes. In other words, our displeasure comes not only from the fact that policies are made and actions are taken unilaterally by the US, but also from the fact that we disagree with many of those policies and actions. This makes for 'controversial unilateralism', and poses a challenge.

Each of the speakers approached the challenge of controversial unilateralism differently. Nicola Short delved into the reprehensibility of recent American unilateralism citing examples such as the decisions to confront Russia by abandoning the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty, to withdraw from the Kyoto Protocol, and to reject the scope and potential of the International Criminal Court. These agreements, if upheld by the US, would have kept the US within a multilateral internationalist frame. According to Short, the Bush Administration was seeking to dissociate the United States from this frame entirely. What the Bush Administration was more interested in doing was framing world events in a way that would justify the adoption of a unilateralist stance. So, scene by scene, the US moved away from multilateral agreements, iterating the need for a unilateral defence posture.

The Bush Administration framed 9/11 as an act of war partly to lead to an agreement on the 'need' for pre-emptive use of force. Moreover, there has been a series of conflations of 9/11 with terrorism, Afghanistan, and weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. These conflations are

“Bush’s foreign policy is associated with unilateralism, the assertion of the right to the pre-emptive use of force, and the war in Iraq. This relied on several things, namely the effective framing of the 9/11 attacks as an act of war rather than as an issue of law and order, the conflation of al Qaeda with Afghanistan, then Iraq, and later, the deployment of other rationales for the intervention in Iraq such as weapons of mass destruction and democratization.”

*Nicola Short,
York University*

central to the framing required to ‘justify’ the invasion of Iraq.

Taken in concert, Short’s arguments illustrate that careful framing of events in sequence can lead to a slanted understanding of the events themselves, consequently justifying a particular response. In this case, the framing of international events since George W. Bush’s election in 2000 led to the justification of a controversial, unilateralist American foreign and defence policy.

“...New strategic and tactical doctrines predicated not only on the use of nuclear weapons but also on the development of new types, which make their use more likely, have come to the fore. The trend to address universal problems via the constitution of small groups of ‘like-minded nations’ poses serious concerns for the validity of important international agreements.”

*Sergio Duarte,
Brazilian
Ambassador-at-
large for
Disarmament Affairs*

One way of meeting the challenge posed by the Bush Administration’s foreign policy is therefore to dispute and oppose the manipulative framing of events, and to offer alternative explanations and frames.

The Conflict between Nuclear and Non-Nuclear Weapons States

From the point of view of Brazilian diplomacy, the challenge of unilateralism in American foreign and defence policy is not so much the lens through which that policy is viewed but America’s relative power on the international scene. From Ambassador Sergio Duarte’s exposition on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review process, it became clear how subject the process is to the will of its co-chairs, Russia and the United States. Ambassador Duarte highlighted the serious challenges to the non-proliferation regime that have arisen from both within and outside the range of the NPT. Not the least of these challenges comes from strategic and tactical doctrines predicated not only on the use of nuclear weapons but also on the development of new types. In addition, the strategic configuration of the world no longer resembles that of 1968, when the treaty was finalized. It now includes the emergence of “non-state actors” – an unprecedented and frightening development.

Of great concern is the imbalance of discriminatory restrictions placed on non-nuclear-weapons states, such as Brazil, and Canada, while nuclear weapons states show little will to accept multilaterally negotiated curbs on their freedom of action.

By 1990, at the fourth Review Conference, there was an increasing perception of insufficient progress with regard to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, compounded by the failure to start meaningful multilateral negotiations. The fifth Review Conference, in 1995, adopted a strengthened review process, and achieved agreement on an indefinite extension to the treaty. Many consider the most important result of the last Review Conference, in 2000, to be the “unequivocal undertaking” by the nuclear weapons states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament; this was one of the “13 practical steps”.

From the Brazilian perspective, there is currently little cause for optimism, given the unilateralist tendencies of current American leadership. The confrontations regarding nuclear issues that have occurred between the US and Russia and the US and North Korea are examples of the severity of the challenge this type of unilateralism poses. Ambassador Duarte noted that, as we prepare for the 2005 Conference, the panorama looks bleak indeed. Nevertheless, proposals for a change of direction are possible, and could include pressing the need to commit and then implement the 13 Steps, as well as increasing accountability of nuclear weapons parties to fulfil their treaty obligations. We cannot afford to see progress achieved by consensus only five years ago lightly dismissed, and the small groups of like-minded nations must challenge the international regime. It is necessary to strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) so that it can effectively curb freedom of action of the parties to the NPT and monitor the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Not only are more ideas needed for stringent restrictions on activities of non-nuclear weapons states, but the nuclear weapons states must acknowledge that the Non-Proliferation Treaty in no way can be interpreted as legitimizing the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons.

Ambassador Duarte left us with the challenge of pondering

the inescapable truth contained in the words of Jayantha Dhanapala, former Undersecretary General of the UN and former President of the NPT Review Conference:

“...ultimately I believe that the indefinite perpetuation of this deadlock on nuclear disarmament will jeopardise the regime far more than even [recent] nuclear detonations”.

Reactions in China, Europe and Russia to American Unilateralism

Sergei Plekhanov offered the forum some thoughts on the nature of the world’s reaction to American unilateralism, and opened by recalling Henry Kissinger’s pre-9/11 warning that “explicit insistence on predominance would gradually unite the world against the United States.

In the first months of the Bush presidency, US-Chinese relations significantly deteriorated. In contrast to Clinton’s policy of engagement and partnership with China, the Bush Administration initially proceeded from a premise that China presented a long-term threat to US interests. China’s continuing military modernization, backed up by its strong economic performance, Beijing’s determination to reassert its sovereignty over Taiwan, and China’s dealings with “rogue states” were cited as grounds for a tough line on China. Perception of a ballistic missile threat from China was among the motives for the drive to deploy the ballistic missile defence (BMD) system. Some analysts saw the idea of US invasion of Iraq containing an anti-Chinese angle, given China’s strategic interest in Persian Gulf oil resources.

China’s response to the Bush challenge contained elements of resistance and accommodation. China speeded up its military modernization and upgraded its cooperation with Russia in a shared stand against US hegemonism. At the same time, China pursued diplomacy to defuse tensions in US-China relations and continued to expand its economic ties with the US

After 9/11, China declared its support of the US and readiness to participate in international efforts against

terrorism, but this support was tinged with wariness of American motives. Sharing US concern over the global threat presented by radical Islamists, China saw the establishment of US military bases in Afghanistan and post-Soviet Central Asia as potentially leading to a geopolitical encirclement. Still, as many other governments around the world, Beijing decided that opposing Bush's campaign against terrorism would be dangerous; besides, China's own concerns about the rise of Islamist radicalism in its Uigur-Sinkiang region were consonant with the main theme of the "War on Terror".

"Have we seen a picture of the world uniting in response to the unilateralism of the U.S.? No. We have witnessed the adoption of disparate and conservative postures assumed in the face of the challenge. On the other hand, we have also seen in China and Russia an increasing willingness to follow the U.S. example of unilateralism and the willingness to use force against backyard disturbances."

*Sergei Plekhanov,
York University*

The invasion of Iraq was strongly opposed by China. However, the opposition was carefully calibrated, reflecting Beijing's intention not to undermine most important aspects of its relations with Washington. Significantly, after the Iraq invasion China emerged, with American support, as a key player in the multilateral talks on the North Korean nuclear issue.

The Bush Administration's policy toward China has also undergone significant evolution from the initial perception of China as the main potential threat to a more complex and realistic view, presuming the existence of broad areas of common interests between the two countries.

Reviewing European reactions to the policies of the Bush Administration, Plekhanov noted the Administration's original tendency to treat Europeans as "children in the sandbox" incapable of serious strategic thinking and behaviour, whose opinions are unworthy of serious American attention. The disdain for Europeans has reflected both the perception that the end of the Cold War has undercut Europe's strategic importance to the US and growing American concerns about competition from the EU.

Transatlantic relations suffered a series of blows from fall 2002 to spring 2004, when the Bush Administration's drive towards the invasion of Iraq met stiff opposition from France, Germany and Russia. But the Iraq crisis also generated a split in Europe between opponents and

supporters of US policy. While supporters, led by Britain, initially seemed vindicated by the quick occupation of Iraq, the events of 2004, exposing the failure of the occupation and the collapse of its political rationale, pushed dominant European political opinions toward a stance more critical of the US. The defeat of the Aznar Government in the Spanish election illustrated this development. Ironically, however, there is now more interest on both sides in developing a joint approach to the Iraq crisis. Bush's disdain for disloyal Europeans has given way to a strong need for European support in the search for a politically acceptable endgame in Iraq. But it remains to be seen whether a common ground can be reached on the definition of the politically acceptable.

“How much leeway does Canada have living next to the hyperpower that is on a unilateralist binge?”

*Sergei Plekhanov,
York University*

Russia has responded to Washington's new hard line by adopting a diverse set of strategies. On the one hand, President Putin has been making attempts at containing the US thrust by developing a strategic partnership with China, cooperating with France and Germany to try and prevent the invasion of Iraq. Under Washington's pressure, Putin has been forced to accept the dismantling of the ABM Treaty and the signing of the largely nominal Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty, which replaced START-1 and START-2, and pushed *de facto* into rearmament.

On the other hand, Putin has been actively cultivating a cooperative relationship with the US. He became the first world leader to declare strong support of the US after 9/11, and Moscow has closely cooperated with Washington in the overthrow of the Taliban regime in Kabul, as well as in intelligence sharing on terrorism issues. Washington, for its part, withdrew most of its objections to Moscow's crackdown on Chechen separatists, classifying them as terrorists. US-Russian cooperation in economic matters has received a new boost in recent years.

Contrary to earlier predictions, the challenge of the Bush Administration's unilateralism has not caused the world to unite against the US. Rather, conservative and disparate positions have been adopted, while certain governments have emulated the unilateral aggressive posturing of the

United States. Plekhanov concluded that the US Administration is indeed casting a long shadow on international relations, and the best hope that remains for stopping, if not reversing, this trend would be a change of the top political leadership in Washington.

Gathering Will: Responding to the Challenge

The participants in this Pugwash and Science for Peace forum remained conscious of the goal to support, promote and defend efforts of resistance in challenging times, and to offer and sustain alternative visions. In this vein, the second half of the forum sought to problematize the observed unilateralism in current American foreign and defence policies.

Senator Douglas Roche of the Canadian Pugwash Group made a timely intervention midday, recalling that the forum's focus is not only to explore the challenge of American policy, but also to examine the options for change and/or resistance in Canada, primarily through the development of Canadian foreign policy. He described Canada's position as a bipolar balancing act: Canada must maintain good Canada-US relations as well as good Canada-UN relations. The possibility of imbalance is always present, but it becomes severe only when the US pole strays far from the UN pole. Recent expressions of American unilateralism have aggravated the situation and it is currently up to Canada to decide how to align itself. This repositioning must be done through targeted policy-making on issues such as the weaponization of space. But it will also be determined largely by the political will and ambition of the Canadian Prime Minister.

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The first of the afternoon's two interlocutors developed a two-pronged address. Maliha Chishti suggested first that unilateralist US posturing depends on the villainization of an 'other'; i.e. the creation of a virulent enemy whom any actor would seem well-intentioned in opposing. Using this image, Chishti described the pitting of Muslim fundamentalism against neo-liberal fundamentalism,

“The Canadian Pugwash Group and the Middle Powers Initiative recommend that Canada take a leading role to energize global dialogue on nuclear weapons, work to build bridges in the nuclear debate, and minimize the negative consequences of missile defence deployment.”

*Building Bridges:
The NPT and
Canada's Nuclear
Weapons Policies,
Policy Paper
prepared by the
Canadian Pugwash
Group and the
Middle Powers
Initiative,
March 2004*

arguing that while Muslim fundamentalism gets the bad rap, neo-liberalism is no lesser evil. This observation is an additional example of the framing that can occur to force policy formulation. Problematizing this sort of activity can be an important part of challenging dominant discourses and clearing the way for the emergence of alternative visions.

Chishti's second premise posited the 'securitization of aid and development'. Her primary assertion was that while we should promote the attainment of security in developed and lesser-developed areas alike, we must be wary of the present trend to merge development, aid, and securitization activities. Building on the notion that underdevelopment is dangerous, new alliances have been emerging between military, civil society, and NGOs. For example, the US has centralized development, aid, and securitization activities in Afghanistan. However, this centralization has led to negative consequences, such as failures in the military delivery of aid packages, due to a lack of specific training and experience to this end in the military. Moreover, the misallocation of reconstruction aid to private, for-profit, foreign corporations has allowed foreign companies to control major sectors of the local economy in the assisted country. The new system of alliances is alarming as it progresses towards a form of global liberal governance and sees aid agencies connected not only to the military but also to financial institutions and transnational businesses.

The conflation of economic policies with foreign policies is also a cause for concern. We must avoid creating a situation in which humanitarian aid and development activities are linked to the institution of neo-liberal economic reforms in a country. Chishti emphasized the need to maintain this separation because the imposition of neo-liberal economic reforms can widen the gap between rich and poor, while development and humanitarian aid activities are intended to achieve the opposite goal.

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Maria Banda's presentation "Power of the Weak? Canada's Diplomacy and the Bush Doctrine" was well-placed at the

end of the day. Banda successfully refocused the group on Canada's realistic policy options when facing controversial unilateralism from the United States, with which we are intricately linked but from which we simultaneously seek distance.

After consideration of Canada's economic ties with, and relative dependence on the US economy, Banda was able convincingly to draw the following conclusions:

“Toeing the U.S. line is not going to help us on softwood lumber, Saskatchewan blueberries, or PEI potatoes... Canada must ensure that our misguided economic pragmatism does not cast aside Canada's diplomatic traditions of multilateralist, liberal internationalism.”

*Maria Banda,
University of
Toronto*

- Canada can maintain a large measure of policy autonomy. "Agreeing to disagree" with US policies has always been an acceptable policy choice. During instances of pressure from the United States to converge, Mexico has shown more autonomy than Canada without suffering retribution as a consequence.
- Polls indicate that Canadians want Canada to play a bigger role in the world and want policy independence from the US. However, an independent policy costs more in foreign affairs, defence, and foreign-aid budgeting.
- Even more public debate is required on controversial questions such as opposition to ballistic missile defence (BMD), peacekeeping as opposed to combat forces, and environmental and health standards.
- Canada can often not act alone in the world of international diplomacy, but must do so in concert with other like-minded nations. Mexico and Canada, for example have much more bargaining power than one might think. The essence of the “power of the weak” lies in their unity and coordination.
- The US cannot "go it alone" and needs allies. It has shown that it cannot deal effectively with the aftermath of wars, as in Afghanistan and Iraq.
- There is opportunity cost associated with trying to "get closer to the US umbrella”, such as losing our reputation in areas where Canada used to play a more independent role.
- Canada's foreign policy-making needs more internal coordination. Canada needs to focus on key, manageable priorities.
- Canada needs a clear vision of its role in the world. We must take the opportunities for creative statecraft that

are available to a middle power, instead of stressing our international constraints.

Taking Action on Canadian Priorities

Of the qualities exhibited by Eric Fawcett, Derek Paul of the Canadian Pugwash Group noted that the most remarkable among them may well have been Prof. Fawcett's ability to show a positive response to new ideas, immediately. In celebration of this attribute, the remainder of this report will be dedicated to recording some of the new ideas emanating from the forum. The only other thing to add is an expression of hope that these ideas will be grasped and propelled forward along the path to implementation.

Extensive discussion surrounded the issue of Canada's "brave" decision to refuse American requests to accompany the mission that invaded Iraq. Although Canada did refuse to participate directly, the point was made that our efforts must not end with abstinence. Walter Dorn, of the Canadian Pugwash Group, asked where we should be on the Iraq issue now, and what our role should be in "cleaning up the mess". Should we allow the US to throw it to the UN, or should the US be held accountable for its actions? In fear that the 'clash of civilizations' may be becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy, Dorn suggested that Canada take action by creating a diplomatic effort to reach out to Muslims and progressive Islamic states around the world. This goodwill gesture could send a message of difference without antagonizing sensitive parties. It holds the potential to build important bridges over the gap that has been created between many Muslim communities and the 'West'.

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Drawing on the idea of framing, which Nicola Short introduced, Franklyn Griffiths, of the Canadian Pugwash Group, posed a timely and insightful question on reframing the abolition of nuclear weapons as a matter of waste management. This measure would not only necessitate a response towards the elimination of nuclear weapons

stores, it would also provide an opportunity to elicit a concrete plan from governments, setting out how they plan to deal with nuclear waste – plutonium, depleted uranium, and spent nuclear fuel in particular. In addition, this reframing would open the door for civil society to work with governments on the nuclear-weapons-as-waste-management issue, within the existing state-centric framework.

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Finally, a shocking reality check: the reminder that none of the “politicking” that goes on between the US and Canada and the rest of the world will matter if the planet we share is unable to support us or becomes uninhabitable. Phyllis Creighton, of Science for Peace, expressed the primordial call for the need to immediately address the ecological degradation of planet Earth.

**Canadian Pugwash Group and Science for Peace
Eric Fawcett Memorial Forum
Saturday, April 17, 2004
Hart House, Music Room
University of Toronto, 7 Hart House Circle**

*“Development of Canadian Policy in the Shadow of
US Defence and Foreign Policy”*

AGENDA

Co-Chairs:

Dr Adele Buckley, Chair, Canadian Pugwash & Prof. Paul Hamel, Chair, Science for Peace

Rapporteur:

Christie Dennison

9:30 – 9:45	Welcome and Agenda Review Prof. Paul Hamel
	Remembrance of Eric Fawcett Prof. Derek Paul
	<u>Introduction to the Forum</u> (Paul Hamel)
9:45 – 10:15	Prof. Nicola Short
10:15 – 10:45	Ambassador Sergio Duarte
10:45 – 11:00	COFFEE BREAK
11:00 -11:30	Prof. Sergei Plekhanov
11:30	Sen. Douglas Roche, O.C. –Commentator and Questioner
	GENERAL DISCUSSION
12:15 - 1:15	LUNCH
	<u>Continuation of the Forum</u> (Adele Buckley)
1:15 – 1:45	Ms. Maliha Chishti
1:45 – 2:15	Ms. Maria Banda
2:15 – 3:30	GENERAL DISCUSSION
3:30 – 4:00	Potential Joint Activity of SfP and CPG – 2005

Prof. Nicola Short is a Lecturer in Political Science at York University. She teaches Global Politics, Multilateralism, Global Issues in Foreign Policy and Peace Research. Short recently completed her PhD in International Relations at the London School of Economics (LSE). She edited *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, and served as the Research Assistant to the then Director of LSE, social theorist Anthony Giddens. Short received her MA in Peace Studies from the University of Bradford (UK). She has worked on the anti-personnel landmine campaign, and has published on that topic and light weapons in International Negotiation, Disarmament Diplomacy, the International Institute for Strategic Studies' Strategic Comments, and with the International Security Information Service. Short's research focuses on international relations, conflict and development, and the politics of post-conflict reconstruction.

Ambassador Sergio Duarte is Brazil's Ambassador-at-large for Disarmament Affairs. He has had a long, distinguished career in the Brazilian Foreign Service, and has served as Brazil's Ambassador to Canada. Between 1999 and 2001, he was the International Atomic Energy Association's Government Representative for Brazil and was Chairman of the IAEA Board from 1999 to 2000. He was Alternate Representative of the Brazilian Delegation to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, Minister-Counsellor, Deputy Special Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and on the Brazilian Delegation to the UN Disarmament Commission.

Prof. Sergei Plekhanov is Associate Professor of Political Science, Faculty of Arts, York University, and Coordinator of the Post-Communist Studies Programme (PCSP). His research interests include Russian foreign policy, Russia/Soviet Union-American relations, European security and post-communist transition studies. His recent papers include "Canada and Russia in a Changing International Context".

Senator Douglas Roche, O.C. was appointed to the Senate of Canada in 1998. He is an officer of the Order of Canada and Chairman of the Middle Power Initiative, and Past Chair of the Canadian Pugwash Group. Senator Roche was Canada's Ambassador for Disarmament from 1984-1989, and was Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Committee in 1988. He was a Canadian Member of Parliament, 1972-1984, specializing in development and disarmament, and was the founding President of Parliamentarians for Global Action. He has received many awards, and is the author of 17 books, the latest of which is "The Human Right to Peace" (Novalis 2003).

Maliha Chishti is a PhD candidate at OISE. She has worked at the United Nations with the Hague Appeal for Peace, and as a consultant for NGO/Aid groups where she analyses effectiveness of aid in developing countries, most recently Afghanistan. She developed the first "Peace and Disarmament Education Pilot Project" for the UN Department of Disarmament Affairs, and worked on production of the historic Security Council Resolution No. 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security". She recently gave a talk on "The Ethics of Humanitarian Aid and Development".

Maria Banda is an International Relations Specialist, and will receive an Honours B.A., University of Toronto, in 2004. She is also a candidate for the degree of MPhil at the University of Oxford, was a Rhodes scholar in 2003, and has just completed an assignment as Senior Analyst for the G8 Research Group. She has co-authored, with Stephen Clarkson, "Congruence and Conflict: Canada's and Mexico's Responses to Paradigm Shift in the United States", and other work, including a paper for the Conference on Canadian Federalism and Trans-Border Integration in North America (02/03).

Christie E. Dennison is a member of Canadian Student Young Pugwash. Having recently completed an MA in Conflict Resolution at the University of Bradford (UK), Christie is now working at the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre, in Cornwallis, Nova Scotia. Her research interests include gender issues, peacebuilding, and human security. Her paper "From Beijing to Kyoto: Gendering the International Climate Change Negotiation Process" was published in Pugwash International's most recent newsletter.

