

Media Release
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NATO'S NUCLEAR POLICIES ENDANGERING STABILITY, SAYS CANADIAN PUGWASH GROUP

OTTAWA - The Canadian Pugwash Group today warned that the West's relations with Russia will only worsen if NATO members and Russia continue to avoid their commitment to nuclear disarmament.

The group says that as signatories to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, NATO members and Russia have made a commitment to negotiate and achieve nuclear disarmament. But NATO's support of U.S. plans to place interceptor missiles in Eastern Europe is derailing progress.

"NATO's nuclear policies are outdated and dangerous - the central tenet of the NATO Strategic Concept is that nuclear weapons are 'essential'," says Dr. Adele Buckley, Chair of the Canadian Pugwash Group. "That is why Canadian Pugwash is asking the Canadian government to use its resources and reputation to lead NATO countries on a path toward denuclearization."

Released today, the brief "Canadian Pugwash Calls for NATO to Denuclearize" urges NATO members that "an appropriate target year for NATO's repudiation of policies spelled out in the NATO Strategic Concept is 2009, 60 years after the formation of the alliance."

This afternoon, a delegation of Pugwash disarmament experts will meet with British High Commissioner H.E. Anthony Cary, the first in a series of meetings with NATO and G8 members' representatives in Canada. The Pugwash delegation has been invited to meet with the Embassies of Germany and Russia in the coming weeks.

"The ongoing deterioration of U.S.-Russian and U.S.-NATO relations contains a potential for very serious threats to international security. There is an urgent need for a joint effort to establish a new dialogue between the two sides," said Professor Sergei Plekhanov at the Department of Political Science at York University, former advisor to President Mikhail Gorbachev and Canadian Pugwash member.

This year, from July 5 to 8, nuclear scientists and disarmament experts will mark the International Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs' 50th anniversary by once again meeting in its birthplace, Pugwash, Nova Scotia.

Attending the 2007 meeting, titled "Revitalizing Nuclear Disarmament," will be more than 30 experts from around the world, including former military officers who once wielded nuclear weapons and diplomats who forged international agreements to control the weapons.