

Written by John Hallam

Friday, 12 July 2013 14:37 - Last Updated Sunday, 08 February 2015 22:17

**LETTER ON CATASTROPHIC HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES OF NUCLEAR
WEAPONS USE FAXED TO STRATEGIC FORCES SUBCOMMITTEES OF US CONGRESS
AND RUSSIAN DUMA**

POTUS(Obama) - 202-456-2461
Secy of State Kerry 202-647-0122 202-647-6434, 6047
Hagel (Sec Def.) 703-697-6602
US-UN Mission 212-415-4443

House Strategic Forces Subcommittee
Mike Rogers Chair, 202-225-5820
Trent Franks Ariz, 202-225-6328
Doug Lambourn Calif, 202-226-2638,
Mike Coffman Colo, 202-226-4623
Mo Brooks Ala, 202-225-4392
Joe Wilson S.
Carolina, 202-225-2455
Michael Turner Ohio, 202-225-6754,
Rich Nugent Fla, 202-226-6559,
Jim Bridenstine,Okla, 202-225-9187,
Jim Cooper Tenn. (Ranking Member) 202-226-1035,
Loretta Sanchez Calif, 202-225-5633,
James Langevin RI, 202-225-5976
Rick Larsen Wash, 202-225-4420
Marc Veasey, Tx, 202-225-9702
Andre Carson Indiana, 202-225-5633

Senate Strategic Forces Subcommittee
Senator Marc Udall Chair, 202-224-6471
Senator Sessions, Ranking, 202-224-3149
Senator Reed 202-224-4680
Senator Mc Caskill 202-228-6326
Senator Donnelly, 202-224-5011,
Senator King 202-224-1946,
Senator Vitter, 202-228-5061
Senator Lee 202-228-1168.
Senator Fischer 202-228-1325

Russia

Geneva
Mission 41-22-733-1031 UN mission 1-121-628-0252 Australian Emb
6295-1847

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Moscow

7-495-728-5090

7-495-606-0376

7-495-9102-134

7-495-692-8024

7-495-692-9577

Other

UNODA 1-121-693-4066

Aust FM 61-2-6273-4112 6261-2151

Members of the Strategic Forces Subcommittees of the US Congress and the Russian Duma

Senior Nuclear Forces Decision Makers

80 GOVERNMENTS DECLARATION ON CATASTROPHIC CONSEQUENCES OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS USE

President Putin

President Obama

United States Secretary Of Defense Chuck Hagel

Russian Minister Of Defence

United States Secretary Of State John Kerry

Russian Minister Of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov,

Dear Members of the Strategic Forces Subcommittees of the US Congress and
the Russian Duma,

Dear Senior Decision-makers on nuclear forces in the United States and Russia,

The undersigned non-governmental organizations are sending you a declaration on catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons use made at the 2013 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee, signed by 80 (listed) governments. A much larger number of governments including many from NATO have expressed sympathy and solidarity with what it says.

A 'decent respect for the opinions of mankind', as the US Declaration of Independence puts it,

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must take into account the fact that vote after vote at the United Nations, starting with the very first vote ever taken by the General Assembly, has asked for the elimination of nuclear weapons. The motive behind all these votes has been self-explanatory: It is the simple insight that if nuclear weapons are not eliminated they will sooner or later, most probably by accident, malfunction or miscalculation, be used, and such use could be fatal for humankind. It is notable that this declaration contains the words:

“It is in the interest of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstances.”

Recent research done by a number of distinguished climate scientists, using up to date NASA climate models, indicates that the environmental consequences of the use of even the relatively small nuclear arsenals of India and Pakistan could lead to up to a billion deaths globally. A full-scale US versus Russia nuclear “exchange” would destroy civilization—the “world” as we know it. Peer-reviewed studies predict the long-term environmental consequences of such a conflict would likely eliminate growing seasons for at least a decade, leading to global famine for most, if not all, humans.

As long as the US and Russia insist on maintaining large fractions of their nuclear arsenals at launch-ready status, a significant (non-zero) probability of an accidental (or otherwise) large-scale use remains. The only certain way to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used, as this and other declarations make clear, is to abolish them.

We note that the Obama administration seems to have now acknowledged the vital significance of this climate research, and a US official has even described it at the Geneva NPT Prepcom last May as a 'major driver' of administration policy. This is a significant and welcome change from previous administration statements. However we would argue forcefully that the only rational response to these well established and uncontested facts is to seek to eliminate nuclear arsenals completely on an urgent basis. No other responsible and rational alternative exists.

We commend the declaration below to the strategic forces subcommittees of the US Congress and Russian Duma. We urge both US and Russian governments to take the rational and responsible actions necessary to remove the biggest threat to international strategic stability and human security by eliminating nuclear arsenals.

(NGO signatures at end)

Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference

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of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons:

Delivered by Ambassador Abdul Samad Minty,

Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, at Geneva, 24 April 2013

Chairperson,

I am taking the floor on behalf of the following States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), namely:

Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Belarus, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Cuba, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Georgia, Grenada, Guatemala, Holy See, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Serbia, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Swaziland, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, Uruguay, Yemen, Zambia and my own country, South Africa.

Our countries are deeply concerned about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. While this has been known since nuclear weapons were first developed and is reflected in various UN resolutions and multilateral instruments, it has not been at the core of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation deliberations for many years. Although it constitutes the *raison d'être* of the NPT, which cautions against the "devastation that would be visited upon all mankind by a nuclear war and the consequent need to make every effort to avert the danger of such a war and to take measures to safeguard the security of peoples", this issue has consistently been ignored in the discourse on nuclear weapons.

Yet, past experience from the use and testing of nuclear weapons has amply demonstrated the unacceptable harm caused by the immense, uncontrollable destructive capability and indiscriminate nature of these weapons.

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The effects of a nuclear weapon detonation are not constrained by national borders--it is therefore an issue of deep concern to all. Beyond the immediate death and destruction caused by a detonation, socio-economic development will be impeded, the environment will be destroyed, and future generations will be robbed of their health, food, water and other vital resources.

In recent years, the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons has increasingly been recognized as a fundamental and global concern that must be at the core of all deliberations on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.

This issue is now firmly established on the global agenda: The 2010 Review Conference of the NPT expressed "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons". Similarly, the 2011 resolution of the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement emphasized the incalculable human suffering associated with any use of nuclear weapons, and the implications for international humanitarian law.

The March 2013 Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo presented a platform to engage in a fact-based discussion on the impact of a nuclear weapon detonation. The broad participation at the Conference reflects the recognition that the catastrophic effects of a detonation are of concern and relevance to all. A key message from experts and international organizations is that no State or international body could address the immediate humanitarian emergency caused by a nuclear weapon detonation or provide adequate assistance to victims. We warmly welcome Mexico's announcement of a follow-up Conference to further broaden and deepen understanding of this matter and the resolve of the international community to address the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

It is in the interest of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstances.

The catastrophic effects of a nuclear weapon detonation, whether by accident, miscalculation or design, cannot be adequately addressed. All efforts must be exerted to eliminate this threat. The only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is through their total elimination.

It is a shared responsibility of all States to prevent the use of nuclear weapons, to prevent their vertical and horizontal proliferation and to achieve nuclear disarmament, including through fulfilling the objectives of the NPT and achieving its universality. The full implementation of the 2010 Action Plan and previous outcomes aimed at achieving the objectives of the NPT must therefore not be postponed any further.

Addressing the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons is an absolute necessity.

As an element that underpins the NPT, it is essential that the humanitarian consequences inform our work and actions during the current Review Cycle and beyond.

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This is an issue that affects not only governments, but each and every citizen of our interconnected world. By raising awareness about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, civil society has a crucial role to play, side-by-side with governments, as we fulfill our responsibilities. We owe it to future generations to work together to rid our world of the threat posed by nuclear weapons.

I thank you."

NGO Signatures

Drafting team:

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Steven Starr, Senior Scientist, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Missouri USA,
Alyn Ware, World Future Council(London)/Advisor, Human Survival Project,
David Krieger, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, Santa Barbara, California, USA,

Other NGO Signatures:

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Rene Wadlow, President, Association of World Citizens,

Lorraine Krofchok, Director, Grandmothers for Peace
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Kathy WanPovi Sanchez, Tewa Women United, Environmental
Health and Justice NM USA
Alice Slater, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, New York, NY, USA,
Marcus Atkinson International Events Coordinator Footprints
for Peace, Cincinnati, Ohio, USA,
Kevin Martin, Peace Action, Silver Spring, MD, USA,

Joan Russow PhD, Global Compliance Research Project Victoria
BC Canada
Dr Jennifer Allen Simons, The Simons Foundation, Vancouver BC, Canada,
Pascale Frémond, President, Religions for Peace, Montreal, Canada,
Barbara Birkett for ICAN-Oakville, ON Canada
Judith Deutsch, Science for Peace, Toronto, Ont, Canada,
Linda Harvey President, Physicians for Global Survival, Ottawa, Canada,
Dr Makere – Stewart Harawira, Indigenous, Environmental, and Global Studies, Edmonton,

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Hallgeir Langeland, MP, Oslo, Norway,
Bent Natvig, Chair, Pugwash Norway,

Jenny Maxwell, Secretary, Hereford Peace Council, UK,
George Farebrother, Secy, INLAP/World Court Project, UK,
John Morris, The Peace Party - Non-violence, Justice, Environment,
Titus Alexander, Charter 2020,

Bill Kidd MSP, Convenor, Scottish Parliament Cross-Party Group on Nuclear Disarmament
Edinburgh, Scotland,

Prof. Jean-Marie Matagne, Président, Action des Citoyens pour le Désarmement Nucléaire
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Saintes, France,
Dominique Lalanne, chair Abolition2000-Europe,
Dominique Lalanne, chair Armes nucléaires STOP-France

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Dirk Van der Maelen MP Belgium, Vice-president, Commission for Foreign
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Sri-Lanka,

Abdul H Nayyar, President, Pakistan Peace Coalition, Islamabad, Pakistan,
Dr Mubashir Hasan, Founder Pakistan-India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy,
Minister of Finance, Government of Pakistan 1971-1974, Founder, Independent Planning
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Sukla Sen, EKTA, (Committee for Communal Amity), Mumbai, India,
Sri Prakash, CNDP, Delhi, India,
Prof. Achin Vanaik, JNU University, Delhi, India, (Pers copy)
Dr Balakrishna Kurvey, President, Indian Institute for Peace, Disarmament, and Environmental Protection,
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Hiren Gandhi, DARSHAN, Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India,

Alan Haber The Megiddo Peace Project
Odile Hugonot Haber Co-chair U.S. Middle East committee WILPF

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Luis Gutierrez-Esparza, President, Latin American Circle of International Studies (LACIS), Mexico City, Mexico,

Commander Robert Green, Royal Navy (Ret), Co-Director, Dr Kate Dewes, Disarmament & Security Centre,
Christchurch, New Zealand'.
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Helen Caldicott, Founder PSR, NSW, Australia,
Dr. Jenny Grounds, President, Sue Wareham, Vice-President, MAPW, (Medical Association for the Prevention of War) Melb, Australia.
Kerrie Anne Garlick, Coordinator, ANAWA, Perth, W.A.,
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Irene Gale, (formerly) Australian Peace Committee, Adelaide, SA,
Leonie Ebert, Founder, Graham F. Smith Peace Foundation, Adelaide, SA,
Senator Louise Pratt, Perth, W.A.,
Ken O'Dowd, Federal Member for Flynn,
Peter Griffin, Prof Stuart Rees, (emeritus) Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Sydney University, Sydney, Aust,
Prof. Chris Hamer, Scientists for Global Responsibility Australia,
Prof. Chris Hamer, Association of World Citizens, Australia,
Prof. Robert J. Hunter, Honorary Associate Professor, Univ. Sydney, Aust,
Nick Deane, Marrickville Peace Group, Marrickville, NSW, Aust,

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Hiroshima Day Committee, Surry Hills, Sydney, NSW,