

SHAME, AUSTRALIA, SHAME!

Written by John Hallam
Monday, 22 August 2016 14:24 -

AUG 20 IMMEDIATE USE
PEOPLE FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT NSW
HUMAN SURVIVAL PROJECT

SHAME, AUSTRALIA, SHAME!
AUSTRALIA URGENTLY NEEDS TO GET BEHIND NUCLEAR WEAPONS ABOLITION: ON
WRONG SIDE OF HISTORY IN GENEVA.

At the concluding session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament in Geneva, Australia has sided with the 'wrong' side of history. Australia has played a leading role in a group of states that are resisting moves by the overwhelming majority of the world's governments to commence negotiations to commence negotiations in 2017 on a multilateral 'instrument' that will make nuclear weapons illegal.

In the absence of negotiations in good faith by the 'official' Nuclear Weapons States, as well as the additional nuclear weapons possessors (India, Pakistan, Israel and the DPRK), to decisively eliminate their nuclear arsenals in spite of continual demands by the UN General Assembly that they do so, in spite of the unanimous conclusion of the ICJ (International Court of Justice) in 1996 that they are legally obliged to do so under Article VI of the NPT, and in spite of clear evidence over a number of decades that the large-scale use of nuclear weapons will destroy civilisation and put human survival itself in question, - no progress to abolition seems to have been made. Indeed, the likelihood of actual use of nuclear weapons is now higher than it has been since 1983, a year in which global thermonuclear war came close twice in a two month timeframe.

The International Peoples Tribunal on Nuclear Weapons and the Destruction of Civilisation held (7-8 July) at Sydney University, underlined that under current international humanitarian law, nuclear weapons cannot ever be legal.

http://sydney.edu.au/arts/peace_conflict/practice/HSP_Tribunal.shtml

<http://www.global-directions.com/ipt.pdf>

The need for abolition of nuclear weapons is urgent, indeed a matter of truly existential priority. Australia and a number of other nations talk about the need to take 'security considerations' into account. Yet the most truly overwhelming security consideration – the prospect of entire societies being vaporised – must lead us to abolish nuclear weapons yesterday.

Australia and the so-called 'progressive' group at the UN seem to be intent on the contrary, on stopping progress in its tracks. Australia's real security interests, as with every other member of the so-called 'progressive' group, are best served by an initiative that eliminates nuclear weapons not by hanging on to them. Members of the 'progressive' group have actually DISCOURAGED President Obama from adopting a policy of 'No First Use' that would lower the

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risk of an accidental apocalypse. This is simply folly that is in the security interests of no-one.

A nuclear weapons Ban, Convention, Framework Agreement or whatever, even if it does not have the participation of the states that have nuclear weapons, serves notice upon them that the world thinks nuclear weapons are absolutely and completely unacceptable. Arguments that the participation of the nuclear-armed states are a sine qua non for negotiations are a bit like saying that drug dealers should help frame laws to outlaw addictive drugs. Australia must stop playing silly and counterproductive games and get behind the elimination of weapons that can literally destroy the world.

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