

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (SEPT26)

Written by John Hallam
Monday, 25 September 2017 16:42 -

SEPT 26 2017
PEOPLE FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT
HUMAN SURVIVAL PROJECT

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (SEPT26)

Sept 26th is the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

On this day in 1983, at half – past midnight Moscow time, the world nearly ended.

Colonel Stanislav Petrov, who would not normally have been on duty that night, having swapped his shift with someone else, was the officer on duty at Serpukhov-15, the then secret Soviet satellite ground station from which warning of a US nuclear attack was to be conveyed to the High Command.

Suddenly, sirens started wailing and lights started to flash as his computers warned of an incoming US nuclear attack. Petrov was expected to tell his superiors and colleagues in the high command that the Soviet Union was under nuclear attack from the US. They would then have initiated an unstoppable computerised sequence that would have launched up to 15,000 very large nuclear warheads at the US (and its allies including Australia), making the rubble bounce roughly sixty times over. The smoke from burning cities would then rise high into the stratosphere, initiating a period of darkness and cold in which those not immediately incinerated could well perish. It would have been the end of civilisation and possibly of humans as a species.

He didn't do it. The computers indicated only five missiles, and there was no confirmatory radar data. Instead he reported that he was 'transmitting false data'. But he wasn't by any means sure, and the next 20 minutes was the most terrifying wait a human could endure.

His decision was the right one, and its how come we are all still here. It had been the sun at exactly 180 degrees, reflecting off highly unusual vertical cloud formations directly over the US missile launch site.

Colonel Stan Petrov died 19 May. His death was unreported until September, when there was a torrent of obituaries.

Exactly 30 years later, on 26 Sept 2013, the exact 30th anniversary of his brush with the apocalypse, a high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament was held in New York.

A memo was circulated some months in advance to the whole UN General Assembly by a number of disarmament activists, (including this one) pointing out the profound significance of the date of Sept 26th 1983. The memo also dealt at length with the risks of accidental nuclear war, and the urgent need for nuclear risk reduction.

In response, the Indonesian foreign minister in his then capacity as chair of NAM, put forward

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a resolution making Sept 26th the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

That resolution also provided for regular high level meetings on nuclear disarmament on Sept 26th. The next one will be in September 2018, in exactly a year.

It is hoped that it will discuss not only practical measures toward the elimination of nuclear weapons, but the urgent and vital matter of nuclear war risk reduction measures, a matter which should be on the top of every strategic decision-makers priority list with the current terrifying spike in the danger of nuclear war with the DPRK, a war which could spread to involve Russia and China.

In the meantime, in Sydney University, we will be showing the movie 'The Man Who saved the World', in memory of Colonel Stan Petrov. The day will be marked around the world and at the UN with parliamentary resolutions, workshops and other events (See below)

The USYD event is in Room114 of the Mackie Building (Arundel St opposite the footbridge theatre), 6pm. It will be followed by a discussion between John Hallam of People for Nuclear Disarmament and the Human Survival Project and Gemma Romuld of ICAN.

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What are you doing for Nuclear Abolition Day, Sep 26?
<http://www.abolition2000.org/en/news/2017/09/24/what-are-you-doing-for-nuclear-abolition-day-september-26/>

Sep 24, 2017 | Movement News |

September 26 is the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (Nuclear Abolition Day). It was established in 2013 by the United Nations General Assembly to encourage governments and civil society to act to eliminate the risk of nuclear war and achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world.

All governments have accepted the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. Yet, today, some 15,000 nuclear weapons remain. More than half of the world's population still lives in countries that either have such weapons or are members of nuclear alliances. And rising tensions – such as between North Korea and the US, Russia and the West, India and Pakistan – are increasing the risk of a nuclear catastrophe.

This makes public action on September 26 so important.

“There are many paths to a nuclear-weapons-free world. I appeal to all states to intensify their efforts to contribute to the shared vision in their own ways.”

UN Secretary-General António Guterres

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Sep 26 High-Level Meeting at the United Nations

On September 26, the United Nations will hold a High-Level Meeting to commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. In addition to government leaders, two civil society representatives have been chosen by the President of the UN General Assembly to address the UN. They are Marzhan Nurzhan (Kazakhstan) who is the convener of the Abolition 2000 Youth Working Group, and Dennis Kucinich (United States) who is a former US mayor and member of Congress and UN Liaison for Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament.

Watch the UN High Level Meeting live on UNWebTV.

Social Media action

reach high Sep 26 update 2

UNFOLD ZERO (a coalition of a number of Abolition 2000 member organisations) has launched a social media action for Sep 26: Reach HIGH for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Take a photo of yourself, or you and others, on a high place or reaching high, or lifting a peace sign/object up high;

Post your photo on social media with the hastags #ReachHIGH2018, #Sep26dontNukeUs, #abolishnukes, and/or #YouthAgainstNukes.

Contact UNFOLD ZERO for a sample peace sign to use in your action.

Call on governments: Support UN initiatives for nuclear disarmament

On September 26, call on your government to support United Nations initiatives for nuclear disarmament. These include the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the UN High-Level Conference on Nuclear Disarmament, which is a key focus for the day.

Click here for a sample letter to governments.

Contacts for Presidents, Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers and UN Ambassadors:

Africa

Americas & Caribbean

Asia

Central and Eastern Europe

Middle East

Oceania

Western Europe

Parliamentarians and September 26

Call on your parliaments and parliamentarians to take action on September 26.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union, representing over 170 parliaments (including those of most of the nuclear-armed and allied States), has adopted a resolution by consensus calling on parliaments and parliamentarians to commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, act to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines and support a nuclear weapons convention.

For action ideas with parliaments, see the Parliamentary Action Plan for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World, released at the United Nations during the negotiations on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

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PLEASE SPREAD AROUND TO EVERYONE YOU KNOW
SEPT 26 6PM RM 114 MACKIE BLDG ARUNDEL ST OPP FOOTBRIDGE THEATRE
IN MEMORIAM COL STANISLAV PETROV, THE MAN WHO SAVED THE WORLD
SEPTEMBER 26 1983 WAS
'THE DAY THE WORLD NEARLY ENDED'.

SEPTEMBER 26 2017 IS THE
INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS
(BY UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION).

WHAT EXACTLY HAPPENED ON SEPT 26 1983?

WHERE ARE WE WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS RIGHT NOW?

CAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS STILL END CIVILISATION?

Hear Gemma Romuld from ICAN

and

John Hallam from People for Nuclear Disarmament and the Human Survival Project

See

'The Man Who Saved the World' (Documentary movie)

Council for Peace and Justice (Formerly Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies Sydney
University Mackie Bldg).

Human Survival Project (Joint Project with CPJ and PND)

People for Nuclear Disarmament

At 6pm Sept 26th in Room 114 of the Mackie Building, Sydney University (Just off Paramatta
Rd in Arundel St, opp Footbridge Theatre).

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