

Is the NPT condemned to failure?

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The main aim of the NPT since 1970 was prevention of further spread of nuclear weapons based on two conditions, nondevelopment of its own nuclear weapons and availability of nuclear technology for non-military use. Two issues were critical at the fifth NPT conference: Middle East and general nuclear weapons. During 1995 the member states of the NPT have established a programme for nuclear disarmament which included agreement on CTBT till 1996, negotiations on the Fissile Materials Cut/Off Treaty, and determined attempts to start negotiations about systematic and progressive nuclear disarmament. The "New Agenda Coalition" marked a middle way to nuclear disarmament after the 1996 session of the International Court of Justice, introducing concepts of de-alerting, non-first use, and negative security assurances. Finally, a possible abolition of the NPT regime could only contribute to further nuclear proliferation, which calls for establishment of new structures within the NPT.

Key words: Nuclear weapons, disarmament, NPT process.

1. Introduction

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons or NPT, to which 187 states are signatories, recently held a sixth Review Conference in New York. The main objective of the NPT, which came into force in 1970, is to prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons, and is based on two assumptions. In return for not developing their own nuclear programmes, the non-nuclear states were promised (1) help from the nuclear states in the process of nuclear disarmament and (2) unhindered access to nuclear energy for non-military purposes. At this moment there are only four states not in the NPT: Cuba, which does not have its own nuclear programme, and Israel, India and Pakistan, which do.

Five years ago the NPT was indefinitely extended, which was the main aim and ambition of the western nuclear powers headed by the USA. The decision to extend the NPT was made as a packet of

decisions, including agreements about stepping up the review process, and acceptance of the document *Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament*, which functions as a yardstick to measure progress in implementing the provisions of the NPT. At the same time, the fifth Review Conference adopted a resolution on the Middle East, seeking the establishment of a zone without weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, most of all because of the concerns of the Arab countries related to the nuclear and biological programmes in Israel.

The sixth Review Conference had the chance for the first time to evaluate the suitability of the new review process of 1995, and the opportunity to provide for the maintenance of a strong and credible regime for the reduction of the nuclear threat and the prevention of the spread of nuclear arms. Unfortunately, it was not possible to overcome the differences in the stances of the opposed blocs, and the gap between the various demands of the non-aligned countries vis-à-vis the views of the West became increasingly large. More precisely, the non-aligned

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countries stand for complete nuclear disarmament under international control and with a precise timetable. The nuclear powers, and the Western group, support the continuation of bilateral efforts of the two main nuclear countries (the US and the Russian Federation), going on to multilateral negotiations when the conditions are ripe.

Two essential matters were nearly the reason for the review process coming to grief at the fifth Review Conference in 1995 – the Middle East and universal nuclear disarmament. During the 2000 review process there were additional circumstances in the concerns of China and Russia with respect to the American plans for the development of a Limited National Missile Defence or LNMD, the consequences of which for these two states would have been a considerable modification of the existing system of equilibrium of power of the accepted nuclear states (P-5) and the non-ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty or CTBT by some of the key states without which the CTBT cannot come into force.¹ And anyway, there was a reiteration of the demand of the members of the Non-Aligned nations Movement (NAM) for the starting of negotiations about universal and total nuclear disarmament and the undertaking of practical measures for the implementation of measures as defined in Article VI of the NPT. According to the NAM this implies given a clear undertaking to the non-nuclear states of the NPT that nuclear disarmament will be carried out under international control, according to a strictly defined timetable.

Also of particular importance, and a reason for concern for the future of the NPT, are the intransigent stances of India and Pakistan, and to a degree of Israel as well, with respect to the development of their own nuclear programmes, in the face of condemnation by the international community, especially after the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in 1998 and the quite blatant way in which these states are developing their nuclear doctrines and arsenals.

The sixth Review Conference was unfortunately not able to avoid the current realities, and international political relations are the context in which the NPT has to function. Positive progress achieved in the early 90s with respect to a reduction in nuclear arms gradually turned into a deterioration of the relations among the key states, particularly between the US and Russia to do with the expansion of

NATO and the intentions of the US to develop its anti-ballistic missile system, and because of the wars in Kosovo and Chechnya. In addition, relations between the US and China were strained because of the US plans to develop an anti-missile system, and because of American accusations that China was conducting nuclear espionage.

2. Duma ratified CTBT and START II

From what has been said it can be concluded that the review process is not functioning above all because of deep differences in the thinking and interests of the leading powers, both among the recognised nuclear powers themselves, and between the nuclear and the non-nuclear powers. Most states that have signed the NPT want the review process to function better, so that the intention of the NPT can be implemented in a practical way, the objective being to step up the non-proliferation regime through the development of better mechanisms to enable the full application of, and responsibility to, the NPT. The nuclear powers tend towards a minimalist approach, to such an extent that it is sometimes clear from the approach of some of the nuclear states that they regret they ever agreed to the document *Principles and Intentions for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and for Disarmament*, the implementation of which is the constant aim of the non-nuclear states. The question that we have to ask is whether the NPT can survive in the new mood of international relations, or if it is condemned to failure, with the simultaneous growth in the number of nuclear states.

During 1995 the State Parties of the NPT set up a programme for nuclear disarmament including: 1) drawing up the CTBT by 1996, 2) negotiations about the Fissile Materials Cut-Off Treaty – FMCT and 3) determined endeavours to set in motion systematic and progressive nuclear disarmament. Although the CTBT was ready for ratification in 1997, it had to go through many trials before it was ready to come into force, including the accession of all the nuclear-capable states. The non-ratification of the CTBT by the American Senate at the end of 1999 must be counted one of the trump cards for not joining the treaty by those countries that were developing nuclear arms. At the same time, however, ratifi-

cation of the CTBT by the Russian Duma and the so-called ratification of Start II can only strengthen right-wing tendencies in the American Congress, or those who advocate a strengthening of the American nuclear doctrine, or defence policy.

We should recall that the Duma ratified not only the CTBT (21 April 2000) but, after seven years of procrastination, START II as well (19 April 2000). By ratifying START II Russia, like the US, obligated itself to reduce its nuclear arsenal to a ceiling of about 3,500 nuclear warheads by the year 2007. The only controversial thing is the fact that in the protocol about the ratification of START II the Duma reserved for itself the right to withdraw from START II should the USA stick to its intention of developing a limited anti-missile defence system.²

Many analysts consider that by ratifying these two treaties, Russia wants to move the nuclear ball into America's court, that is, free itself of any blame in the event of further non-proliferation negotiations coming to nothing. For START II to come into power, the American Senate, which ratified the Treaty itself in 1997, has to ratify Russian amendments to it, which include the Russian provision about quitting START II should the ABM Treaty of 1972 be changed. But if the Senate is incapable of ratifying the amendments to the START II Treaty, it can be assumed that in return it will put off ratification of CTBT indefinitely.

The non-nuclear states sent unambiguous messages to the nuclear states during the sixth Review Conference that without implementation of the nuclear disarmament process, the heart of the non-proliferation programme would be discredited. To support their attitudes, the non-nuclear states drew attention to the stagnation of the START II process between the USA and Russia, and sought renewed confirmation by NATO in April 1999 that nuclear arms would continue to play a key role in the Alliance's Strategic Concept and in the newly made National Security Concept announced in January 2000 by the Russian Federation.

3. The New Agenda Coalition

The central approach to nuclear disarmament appeared at the time after the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice in July 1996 with

respect to the (un)lawfulness of using nuclear weapons and was entitled the *New Agenda Coalition*.³ One of the main proposals of the Coalition was to set up a subsidiary body within the NPT the task of which would be to discuss practical measures to reduce the nuclear threat and reduce the importance of the role of nuclear weapons in defence strategies. Possible topics for debate were: greater transparency and a system of control for nuclear arsenals and nuclear material stockpiles; de-alerting of nuclear weapons, and taking the warheads off rocket systems; reduction of dependence on tactical nuclear weapons, including their abolition; no-first-use guarantees by individual nuclear states, and the initiation of talks for the drawing up of a legal instrument that would guarantee the non-nuclear states that nuclear weapons would not be used against them, and that no threat to use nuclear weapons against them would be made (negative security assurances); the halting of the modernisation of nuclear weapons, the prevention of an arms race in space through stepping up control of the proliferation of rocket systems, and the multilateralisation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972.

Unfortunately, the nuclear states look upon the Coalition with greater distrust than they do the demands of the non-aligned countries, mostly because the Coalition is above all seeking the application of what the nuclear powers have, at least in principle, agreed to. It is significant that more and more countries of the West (and the EU) are supporting or at least not opposing the demands of the Coalition. This became clear with the support obtained by Resolution 54 of the UN General Assembly about the New Agenda.⁴ According to the interventions of representatives of the nuclear powers at the first committee of the General Assembly of the UN it is clear that they understand the main intent of the resolution to interfere in their bilateral and multilateral talks about nuclear disarmament, which they consider counter-productive. They are against not just the substance of the New Agenda, but the very idea behind the initiative. In other words, the nuclear powers consider that they are exclusively competent to deal with their own programmes for nuclear disarmament, and that in the current circumstances they need no help from outside.

Here it would be a good idea to give a brief review of the current situation of the American nu-

clear disarmament programme, primarily because of the US's role as the leading nuclear power, and because of the undoubted influence of the US on the non-proliferation process world-wide. It is a fact that since 1970 the US has reduced the number of strategic and non-strategic nuclear forces, destroyed whole generations of nuclear weapons, and started off and successfully concluded the SALT and START talks with the USSR, later with Russia. Without releasing precise numbers, which the US considers a military secret, the US announced that they have eliminated 80% of their non-strategic nuclear forces, reduced their nuclear forces in Europe by 90%, will reduce their strategic nuclear forces by 66% when START II is implemented, and by 80% when START III comes into force. Several branches of the armed forces no longer have nuclear capacity (the army, the marines, and the navy, excluding the tactical submarine fleet, which can fire nuclear rockets only at the order of the president). We should recall that when the obligations undertaken in START II have been fulfilled, the Russia and US should have at their disposal not more than 3,000 to 3,500 warheads.

The US unilaterally abandoned several systems of nuclear weaponry, thus showing that they did not wish to modernise or replace several kinds of obsolescent arms. The US claims that its nuclear forces are no longer on alert and that they no longer have any target plan. The state of readiness of the nuclear forces can be measured in days now, in some cases in weeks, unlike the earlier minutes. The US earmarked \$3.2 billion to help Russia, the Ukraine and other ex-Soviet states to destroy nuclear warheads and other equipment, such as submarines, bombers and ICMB silos. For example, with American help, since 1992 some 4,890 strategic nuclear warheads have been deactivated in Russia and the Ukraine. Since 1960 the US has not produced uranium or plutonium for nuclear weapons. All 14 plutonium production reactors in the US have been closed down for good since 1989. Since 1993, the US has pronounced 226 tons of fission material surpluses to defence needs, and it will be endeavoured to include this material in the IAEA Safeguards Programme. The USA has a big programme for looking after its fission material. Since the US has pronounced a moratorium on the production of this material, and since fission material can change its

chemical properties in time, the safeguarding programme requires careful monitoring.

Since reduction in the number of warheads is not the same as nuclear disarmament, we might wonder why the US refuses to take part in talks leading to nuclear disarmament, as required by Article VI of the NPT. By way of answer, the US stresses that it is important to go on step by step, so that after successful bilateral talks, or the reduction of nuclear forces, they would arrive at a situation in which multilateral talks with other nuclear and with non-nuclear states would have some sense. The US say that any talks including several countries would be sure to become deadlocked, and that the country first wants to build up bilateral successes, then bring other nuclear powers into the process, only later including other countries as well. Although deadlines are not mentioned, the representatives of the US hint that multilateral talks could start only after the implementation of START III, when the Russia and US would own approximately 2,000 to 2,500 warheads.

4. Fissile materials cut-off the Treaty

The US believes that the only logical continuation of multilateral talks in this field would be the adoption of a Fissile Materials Cut-Off Treaty, and that only successful talks to this end would be a sign that negotiations about the question of nuclear disarmament could successfully be shifted to a multilateral forum.⁵ American representatives have at several international forums stressed that the US unambiguously supports and respects the provisions of the NPT, particularly of Article VI to do with the need for member states to start off as soon as possible negotiations in good faith about effective measures to stop the nuclear arms race and bring about nuclear disarmament, and also a treaty for general and total disarmament under strict and effective international control. However, they say that the US will accept broader multilateral talks only when the conditions for this have been reached. In the meantime the USA will go on with the bilateral talks about START III with Russia.

With respect to the Hair Trigger Alert System, the US claims that most of the nuclear forces of the US are no longer on alert and that the HTAS is

no longer necessary. The problems for the US are related to the obsolescent Russian warning system, and the US has solved this by setting up together with Russia a joint Early Warning System, so that the system of balance of powers should not be compromised. The US stresses that it is not just a question of the deactivation of nuclear warheads, because for broader deactivation, there should be a credible verification system, to make sure that the warheads are not re-activated. Otherwise we could have the situation in which the deactivation of nuclear warheads without verification might mean the destabilisation of the whole system and the compromising of the system of the balance of forces. This is why the US has not de-alerted all its nuclear warheads.

To do with the Limited National Missile Defence system, LNMD, the US say that they are heading towards the development of such a system only because certain countries are developing far-reaching rocket systems that might be a threat to the US. The world is not what it was 28 years ago, say the Americans, and the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is realistic, is growing, and is increasingly unpredictable. The US is of the opinion that although the proliferation of this technology should not have occurred, it nevertheless has, and blames those who facilitated it (China, for example), saying that they should have been aware of the consequences. In connection with this, the US representatives say that four out of the five nuclear states are carrying out their nuclear disarmament programmes in an increasingly transparent manner while the fifth, China, is going on modernising its nuclear forces, not allowing these plans to be seen, and building new missile bases at sites that give cause for concern.

Representatives of the US stresses that the possible deployment of the LNMD is aimed against some tens of nuclear warheads. The US believes that the development of this kind of defence does not go against the ABM Treaty of 1972, and does not represent any threat to the strategic stability of relations between the US and Russia. For this reason the US now says that it is talking with Russia about a modified ABM Treaty that would allow for the deployment of LNMD on both sides, and would in no way entail a cancellation of the Treaty.⁶

On the other hand, it is the strategic interest of Russia and China to start talks about the prevention of an arms race in space – PAROS. Both states eloquently warn that one of their main problems in the domain of disarmament is the insistence of the US on changes to the ABM Treaty, which these two countries consider unacceptable. China in particular thinks that in developing an anti-rocket system, the USA is continuing to put through its policy of world hegemony, and that it is using defence organisations like NATO for its own purposes, and is also interfering in the internal affairs of sovereign states. This almost openly hostile stance with respect to the US can be interpreted as a continuation of China's distrust about the spread of American influence around the world, and because of the disagreement of China with the intervention of the West in Yugoslavia (Kosovo), especially after the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade and the death of two embassy employees. Further, one should not neglect Chinese indignation about the policy of the West (the US) towards China in other areas of international relations, such as the strained talks about the entry of China into the World Trade Organisation and attempts of the US to have an anti-China resolution adopted in the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva.

5. ABM Treaty and deployment of anti-missile missiles

China and Russia recall that the ABM Treaty of 1972 bans the development, testing and deployment of anti-missile missiles or parts of them in space. Although the Treaty itself does contain provisions that enable modifications, or amendments, Russia stresses that these changes should only be directed towards an enhancement of the Treaty, and should only reinforce the deterrence policy. They say that the proposal of the US to change the ABM Treaty so as to develop and deploy a limited national system of anti-missile defence flies in the face of the fundamental provisions of Article 1 of the treaty. In other words, should the Treaty be modified so as to permit the deployment of a limited NMD system, this would be a precedent that would permit and promote the expansion of military potentials.

Russian representatives in New York and Geneva determinedly stress that in the event of the US carrying out its LNMD plans unilaterally, the ABM Treaty would be annulled as far as they are concerned. The structure of other treaties and agreements in the domain of disarmament would also fall to pieces. Russia thinks that the preservation of the Treaty is in the interests of the US, and that to destroy it would place a great question mark against all that has been achieved in the area of nuclear disarmament, the non-proliferation of nuclear arms and the control of disarmament in the last thirty years. In connection with this, Russia categorically denies rumours that it is negotiating with the US about some modification to the ABM Treaty.

China's position is similar to the Russian, with the addition that China rhetorically emphasises that attempts to set up controls in space are the expression of the aspiration of one state to establish unilateral and strategic advantages at any cost. China holds it against the US that it is making it impossible for other states to exercise their right to contribute to the use of space for peaceful purposes. China and Russia recall Resolution 54/53 of the General Assembly of the UN, which seeks the re-establishment of the Ad-hoc Committee for the prevention of the arms race in space at the CD, supported by 162 states.

China warns that in the event of changes to or revocation of the ABM Treaty there are two scenarios. One is that other states will accept the realities of this state of affairs, without at all attempting to oppose the aspirations of a state to create absolute superiority in the domain of nuclear and conventional weapons, both on land and in space. Second, other states, among which China would be counted, will take appropriate measures for self-defence, the results of which will be unpredictable. Although China is the only nuclear power that publicly supports the policy of giving the non-nuclear powers negative security assurances and no-first-use guarantees, just like the other nuclear states, at no international forum has it advocated the initiation of multilateral talks about universal nuclear disarmament under international control and with a strict timetable, as the NAM demands.

Russian nuclear doctrine was recently redefined by presidential decision N24 of January 2000, which approved a new national security concept. In

essence this expands the scenario under which Russia can resort to nuclear weapons. The national security document of 1997 contains provisions that seek the use of nuclear weapons in the event of a threat to the survival of the Russian Federation as an independent state. In the new concept, it is stated that the use of nuclear weapons is permitted for the needs of defence against armed aggression, against Russia or her allies, in the event that all other methods for crisis solving have been used and proved ineffective.⁷

Some non-nuclear states are afraid that insisting on nuclear disarmament might end up in a blind alley because the nuclear states would simply dig their heels in. Irrespective of the fact that full agreement about the agreed agenda for nuclear disarmament is perhaps unreal, the nuclear states, which are increasingly divided among themselves, will soon lack legally valid arguments for not accepting mechanisms within the NPT system for the adoption of practical measures for further activities. However, although divided, the nuclear powers are still carrying out an almost identical policy when it is a matter of their own programmes of nuclear disarmament. For example, during the Sixth Review Conference, France read out a joint statement on behalf of the five nuclear powers, in which they stressed their undoubted acceptance of the ultimate objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons and drawing up of a treaty about universal and total disarmament under strict and effective international control. However, they mentioned no kind of table, nor did they propose a model through which this would be implemented.

Further, to do with the obligations arising from Article VI of the NPT, the sixth paragraph of the Joint Statement stated that the 1995 Review Conference adopted an action programme for the implementation of Article VI, and that much had been done according to this programme at multilateral, bilateral and unilateral levels. It is significant that there is no word about further P-5 procedures with respect to their obligations under Article VI, including the total implementation of it. This statement of the nuclear powers let it be clearly understood that this was all that the state parties of the NPT could expect at that time, which in essence means that the nuclear states would still interpret their obligations under Article VI according to their own criteria, and not

according to the criteria and demands of the non-aligned movement or the New Agenda Coalition.⁸

When the NPT was indefinitely extended in 1995, the main architects of the reinforced review process, the RSA, Germany and Canada really wanted a powerful and vigorous nuclear weapons non-proliferation regime. They seriously thought and hoped that a strengthening of the stability of the NPT through its indefinite prolongation, with concrete mechanisms for the measurement of progress, and the maintenance of multilateral pressure for its implementation would thwart any weakening of the NPT process by potential nuclear states, new proliferators⁹, and be against the existing doctrines of the recognised nuclear states. For this reason, many hold that an extension of the NPT would be impossible without simultaneous acceptance of three decisions – about the strengthening of the review process, the principles and intentions of the non-proliferation of nuclear armaments, and about the Middle East. At the same time, many of the non-aligned states wanted to block an unlimited prolongation because they thought they would lose the leverage that they had had so far against the nuclear states. Now, when they have actually agreed to unlimited prolongation, many in the NAM think they no longer have any cards up their sleeves with which to force the nuclear states to respect their NPT obligations, in particular with respect to universal and total nuclear disarmament.

5. Conclusion

However, although it is said that the NPT is one of the most successful treaties in history, with almost universal membership, it could very soon fall apart if a few nations retain nuclear arms as a status symbol, and if they remain loyal to their nuclear doctrines that nuclear weapons are a guarantee of world security. If a sufficient number of non-nuclear State Parties of the NPT lose confidence in the point of the NPT process, i.e., lose their trust that the nuclear countries will ever start off in good faith negotiations about nuclear disarmament or come to believe that the NPT no longer has the power to penalise proliferators and violators of the treaty, then the NPT regime might very well disappear. The lack of success of the sixth Review Conference might only con-

tribute to the further erosion of this trust, and for this reason should be looked upon as a warning to prevent the reappearance of such a situation.

Further, the stance that the NPT adopts towards the intentions of potential nuclear states in South Asia and the Middle East will very likely determine the future credibility of the NPT regime in the eyes of some important non-nuclear State Parties. In the current political circumstances, it is not realistic to expect India, Pakistan and Israel to relinquish their nuclear potentials or join the NPT in the near future. There is also no room for these countries to become recognised nuclear countries without undesirable political and legal consequences. In the meantime, if these three states are still invited to join the NPT regime, many countries will accept the practical argument that it is most essential to persuade these *de facto* nuclear states to respect the provisions and obligations of the NPT not to transfer nuclear materials and technologies to non-nuclear states, to join in CBET as soon as possible and to halt the production of fission material, to set up internal controls for the non-proliferation of nuclear materials, and to step up the mechanisms to provide credible command, communication and control systems. The only danger in this viewpoint is that the existence of the three *de facto* nuclear states be accepted, outside the framework of the NPT, which could be a very destabilising factor in South Asia and the Middle East, and might encourage major State Parties to reconsider their views and obligations to the NPT as non-nuclear parties.

It is not, however, the most important thing whether the Review Conference will adopt some new document (irrespective of the desirability of this scenario), but whether the open questions and disagreements among the State Parties, such as those addressed in this essay, are publicly and constructively discussed, and whether the NPT State Parties still have confidence in the capacity of the NPT regime to assure collective security. NPT sessions have several legitimate functions, from convening forums at which State Parties can formally or informally exchange opinions about individual matters, and can set about settling unresolved problems among themselves. Although some would like to force through their ideas at NPT meetings, the role of the NPT (as envisaged by the 1995 Review Conference) as con-

troller of collective responsibility towards the provisions of the Treaty, including the various programmes and coordination with the IAEA, is primarily to ensure better implementation of or adherence to its provisions.

Although because of the disagreements of the main world powers mentioned above the Review Conference did not manage to come to an agreement on substantial questions of nuclear disarmament, it still forces the nuclear states to take into consideration and hear out the ideas and demands of the other State Parties. And of course, the nuclear powers have to understand that they do not exist in isolation in the world, and that every country in the world will

feel any moves they make with respect to nuclear disarmament, or in the worst case scenario, armament. Cancellation of the NPT regime can only contribute to the continued appearance of nuclear proliferators, which can in turn have unpredictable and very undesirable consequences. Perhaps it is time for the NPT to propose once more some new rules for the further progress of the whole process. Perhaps the NPT needs the establishment of new structures, such as, for instance, a democratically elected executive committee or council to act on behalf of the State Parties between review conferences about these and other matters. One thing is certain: the NPT process cannot be allowed to miscarry. ■

NOTES

1 For the CTBT to come into force the signatures of all the 44 signatory states of the 1996 Conference on Disarmament, CD, are required; at this conference the CTBT was in principle agreed on, including ratification by or agreement of two countries opposed to the CTBT, India and Pakistan.

2 This protocol includes the provision that implementation of START II by Russia will depend on whether the USA continues with its development of an anti-rocket system, which Russia and China are greatly opposed to. Russia thinks that the development of such a system is against the provisions of the ABM Treaty of 1972, and that it will destroy the existing balance of powers among the leading world powers. If the USA can defend itself against nuclear attack, that is, then there is for it no longer a nuclear threat. The US replies that this system will be a defence only against some rogue states. America is convinced that defence against a nuclear attack is impossible, which means that the development of a limited system for defence against rockets does not in any way flout the ABMTreaty of 1972.

3 The New Agenda Coalition was started by eight leading non-nuclear states (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, RSA, Mexico, New Zealand, Sweden and Slovenia, which later withdrew), which wanted to launch and encourage the whole process of nuclear disarmament through the confirmation of existing international instruments for nuclear disarmament, i.e., without the introduction of any new requirements or criteria. Of course, the nuclear states were very much against this initiative, considering it yet another attempt to shift the nuclear disarmament process into the multilateral field, i.e., to impose conditions on the nuclear powers from outside.

4 See GA Resolution 54/54G of December 1 1999. In the operative paragraphs the Resolution seeks, among other things, the implementation of Article VI of the NPT, urgent ratification of START II and the initiation of START III talks between the US and Russia, the reduction of dependence on the existing nuclear doctrine, the calling of a Disarmament Conference to set up subsidiary bodies to deal with nuclear disarmament, supporting the idea of the holding of an international conference about nuclear disarmament, and seeks ratification of the CTBT, the starting of talks with the CD about the FMCT.

5 At the end of the first part of the CD during 2000, the German delegation, on behalf of a group of Western nations, including the US, the UK and France, clearly let it be understood what the West expects in connection with further talks in the disarmament area in the CD multilateral forum: 1) the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee to do with the FMCT, see Report CD/1299; 2) the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee for negative security assurances; 3) the re-appointment of a special coordinator for the question of anti-personnel mines, which will

take into account existing instruments about mines even outside the framework of the CD; 4) the re-appointment of a special coordinator to do with disarmament transparency negotiations; and 5) the re-appointment of a special coordinator for reviewing the agenda and improving CD manner of work, as well as an increase in the membership of the Conference.

6 See the speech of the Secretary of State of the US at the general debate in 2000 at the Review Conference. Also see the strategic briefing of the principal deputy assistant of defence Frank Miller held on March 7 2000 in the UN premises, CD room. We should say that though Mr Miller's briefing was given in the CD room, it was neither a formal nor an informal CD meeting, i.e., the CD kept no minutes of the briefing, for some non-aligned countries claimed that otherwise they would have the right to put forward their view of the process of American nuclear disarmament, which the representatives of the US of course rejected.

7 It is interesting that in the new national security concept, the following are stated as fundamental world security threats to Russia: the tendencies of some states and international associations to diminish the role and value of existing mechanisms for guaranteeing international security such as the UN or the OSCE; the threat to reduce Russian political, economic and military influence in the world; the reinforcement of military political blocs and alliances, particularly the spread of NATO to the East; the possibility of military bases being opened up, and the strengthening of military presence in the vicinity of the Russian border.

8 See the joint communiqué of the French, Chinese, Russian, British and American delegations at the 2000 Review Conference in New York, May 1 2000. Although the joint statement does not have anything new to say about the nuclear policy of individual P-5 countries, one of the positive elements in the statement is found in Paragraph 10. Here the nuclear powers not only stress the importance of collaboration and trust among themselves, and the promotion of international security and stability, but openly and categorically state that the nuclear weapons in the possession of P-5 are not directed against any countries.

9 International efforts with respect to and measures against Iraq and North Korea aiming at bringing these states back under the NPT regime after they have violated their obligations to the NPT stress the weaknesses inherent to the verification mechanisms of the NPT. Although the IAEA negotiated an additional protocol regarding the safeguards defined in Article III of the NPT giving them more authority when they are investigating undeclared facilities, few states have yet signed or ratified this additional protocol.