

**Abolishing All Nuclear Weapons:
Necessary, feasible and increasingly urgent**

Third Dr John Gee Memorial Lecture by The Right Hon. Malcolm Fraser, Former Prime
Minister, Australian National University, Canberra, 28 October 2009

I am honoured to be asked to give this third John Gee Memorial Lecture. John Gee had a most distinguished career. His main contribution was playing a major role in the convention banning chemical weapons, leading to the destruction of weapons and production capacity but he was also very much concerned with nuclear arms and the need for a Nuclear Weapons Convention. He was a man of great courage and independence of mind. He believed that the search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq was seriously flawed and that the warnings of he and his fellow weapons inspectors were being ignored. He resigned from the Iraq survey group in 2004 because he thought that search was corrupt and there were none to find. He said the Federal Government had suppressed his resignation letter which detailed interference by the CIA and the Bush Administration in reports about the search for weapons of mass destruction. He passed these beliefs to Foreign Minister Downer.

He had a most distinguished career and leaves behind a legacy and a memory of a great Australian.

There has never been a better time to achieve total nuclear disarmament; this is necessary, feasible and increasingly urgent. We are at the crossroads of a crisis involving these worst weapons of terror, presenting both danger and opportunity.

During the Cold War, nuclear technology was more limited, nuclear proliferation had not proceeded so far and the major players, as events have proved, were determined to avoid nuclear conflict. The knowledge, the expertise and the weapons were in relatively few hands. Today that has changed. More countries have nuclear weapons, a greater number have the potential to develop nuclear weapons, the danger of world terrorism is real and the possibility that a regional nuclear conflict or a terrorist organised incident involving nuclear weapons may occur, is greater than ever before. The processes of proliferation and the dangers of nuclear terrorism will grow. The current non-proliferation regime has broken down and now the only safe path for all of us is to work for and achieve the zero option.

On the one hand, disarmament has been stalled and a major nuclear arms control Treaty, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, has been abandoned. The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva has until recently been paralysed for 13 years since it negotiated the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1996, which is yet to enter into force. The nuclear weapons states continue to develop new nuclear weapons and missiles, have threatened to use them against non-nuclear attack and even pre-emptively, and lowered the threshold for their use. Nuclear tests continue in North Korea, which has walked away from the NPT. The ambiguities and lack of transparency around Iran's nuclear program continue, with many Middle Eastern and other states scaling up ostensibly civilian nuclear programs and the proliferation potential these entail.

Brazilian Vice President Jose Alencar said recently he favors Brazil developing nuclear weapons as a deterrent to ensure security of Brazil's newly discovered vast offshore oil deposits, and to give the country greater respectability on the international stage. He claimed "Nuclear weapons as an instrument of deterrence are of great importance for a country that has 15,000 kilometers of border," and cited the example of Pakistan, which he termed a poor nation with "a seat in various international entities, precisely for having an atomic bomb."

Military budgets, estimated by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute to have reached an obscene US\$1.464 trillion in 2008, continue to grow. This is US\$217 per capita per year for every one of the world's people, while 2 billion people live on less than US\$2 per day. Despite an economic crisis, global military spending increased by 4% from 2007 to 2008, and by 45% in the decade to 2008. In 2008, the United States alone accounted for US\$607 billion in official military expenditure, 41.5% of the global total, seven times more than China and ten times more than Russia. And this sum does not even cover all of the anticipated costs for military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Carnegie Endowment researchers recently estimated the costs of the US nuclear weapons program at US \$52.4 billion in FY 2008, excluding air defense, anti-submarine warfare, classified programs, nuclear weapons intelligence programs, and care of 230,000 nuclear test veterans. This compares with US\$39.5 billion for diplomacy and overseas development assistance, and US\$33 billion for natural resources and the environment.

Nuclear weapon numbers have declined from close to 70,000 to close to 23,000, but so bloated are these arsenals that the danger to the security and survival of all of us and the ecosystems on which we depend remains undiminished. The risk of use of nuclear weapons has not gone away since the end of the Cold War; it has grown.

We are at an alarming tipping point on proliferation of nuclear weapons, with increasingly widespread access to nuclear expertise, technology and materials. Smuggling of fissile materials has been extensive and for years the AQ Khan black market network, active in over

30 countries, peddled centrifuges for enriching uranium and Chinese designs for nuclear weapons suitable for missiles, the latter fitting on a single CD. More countries have nuclear weapons; more than 40 could produce nuclear weapons within a matter of months if they so chose, by either enriching uranium further from reactor to weapons grade, or extracting plutonium from used nuclear reactor fuel. They could optimise the plutonium-239 content of spent fuel simply by shortening the time the fuel spends in a reactor. The most common type of reactor generating electricity is a light water reactor of 1000 Megawatt (electrical) capacity. Each of these produces around 250 kg of plutonium per year. The Nagasaki bomb contained 6 kg of plutonium; the average weapon in the current US arsenal contains 3-4 kg of plutonium. A reprocessing plant to extract plutonium from spent nuclear fuel could be as small as 400 square meters in size and concealed.

Apart from states, international terrorists actively seek nuclear weapons, and could buy or steal existing weapons or fissile material – particularly from North Korea or Pakistan; take control of a nuclear-armed submarine, missile base or aircraft; or launch a cyberattack designed to precipitate use of nuclear weapons. Or they could attack or disrupt - such as by disabling power or cooling systems - nuclear reactors or spent fuel storage facilities, producing radioactive fallout similar to a nuclear weapon.

The rule of law we need strengthened to address the complex global problems which increasingly interconnect us all, has instead been weakened by a drift towards a nuclear law of the jungle. The disastrous invasion and occupation of Iraq, and its continuing humanitarian disaster, was justified as a pre-emptive war of non-proliferation. Concern about construction of a possible covert nuclear facility in Syria with North Korean assistance should have led to an immediate and thorough IAEA investigation, not unilateral and hazardous bombing by Israel. The IAEA was only involved 5 months later, allowing time for evidence to be removed.

Hypocrisy and double standards in relation to nuclear weapons are widespread and corrosive. In 1974, India detonated a plutonium bomb, violating agreements to use only for peaceful purposes nuclear fuel supplied by the US in a heavy water reactor supplied by Canada. This led to the establishment of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), aiming to prevent such diversion in the future. Yet last year, the 45 members of the NSG rolled over and approved a nuclear deal between the US and India which effectively rewards India's initiation of the nuclear arms race in South Asia and strikes a body blow at the already crumbling NPT. The deal trashes a founding principle of the NPT. The sharing of nuclear technology should be limited to non-nuclear weapon states which have foresworn nuclear weapons by joining the treaty. India has gained access to nuclear technology and materials which is arguably more generous than if it were a compliant member of the NPT. A more effective way to undermine the incentive for countries, without nuclear weapons, to comply with NPT obligations could hardly have been crafted.

A reason India wants access to nuclear trade is precisely to further the nuclear proliferation the NSG was established to prevent. Senior Indian military leaders have publicly said so. What is gained under the deal? Eight additional reactors, a total of 14 out of 22, will be subject to safeguards. India can determine which facilities are designated civilian and subject to safeguards. However India has not committed to make safeguards on civilian facilities or materials permanent or unconditional. If other countries suspended nuclear fuel supply, even if this was because India exploded further nuclear weapons, India could withdraw its facilities from safeguards.

Eight power reactors, all research and plutonium-fuelled breeder reactors, all enrichment and reprocessing facilities – i.e. the facilities most relevant to weapons, will not be covered. India reserves the right to classify future reactors as civilian or military. India was not required in return to undertake significant positive measures - it has made no binding nuclear disarmament commitments, has not committed to stop nuclear tests, not signed or ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, not stopped or committed to stop production of highly enriched uranium or plutonium for weapons, nor committed to full-scope safeguards.

India will be able to divert more of its own uranium to weapons. The net result of the deal will be to boost India's capability to produce fissile material for weapons.

Not surprising is the proliferative response by Pakistan, which is building two new plutonium production reactors, expanding its capacity to produce highly enriched uranium, and obstructing the work of the Conference on Disarmament towards a treaty cutting production of fissile materials for weapons. This Conference only began this year after 13 years of complete paralysis.

Another example of corrosive inconsistency is the international response to Iran's nuclear program. To be sure, Iran has violated its obligations to comprehensively report its nuclear activities to the IAEA. But there is no evidence that Iran has undertaken activities prohibited by the NPT. No other country is the subject of UN Security Council resolutions restricting activities permitted by the NPT. Uranium enrichment capacity can be used to enrich uranium to reactor-grade, or further to weapons-grade, however this applies to all uranium enrichment facilities, not just Iran's. Iran and Egypt were the first two countries to propose a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East.

While Iran has no nuclear weapons and there is no evidence it has a weapons program, Israel's nuclear arsenal, developed with assistance from the US and France at least, is outside the NPT. Israel has not been subjected to designation as a rogue state, explicit threats of regime change and pre-emptive attack, and even having developed nuclear

weapons, has not been subject to sanction by the Security Council. Would it be surprising if Iran's leaders drew from the experience of India, North Korea and neighbouring Iraq, and the failure of the nuclear-armed states to disarm, the conclusion that they would be well served by possessing nuclear weapons or at least an ambiguous nuclear program? The silent international tolerance of Israel's nuclear weapons is a powerful driver for proliferation in the Middle East, undermining the security of all, including Israel.

On the other hand, we have perhaps the best opportunity ever to abolish nuclear weapons. The current crises in disarmament, non-proliferation, the rule of law and risks of use of nuclear weapons have spawned widespread realization that nuclear business as usual, is in fact an inexorable slide towards nuclear anarchy and eventual disaster; and that nuclear weapons undermine the security of all. For the first time, a US President has been elected with a commitment to nuclear weapons abolition, echoed by other leaders. President Obama's ongoing efforts to deliver on this vision provide the world with a historic opportunity. Obama is however facing major other concurrent challenges, and significant opposition from those who will oppose whatever he does, those who profit from and have accessed huge budgets and built careers constructing and running the vast Doomsday machine, and those who fail to understand that nuclear weapons are unlike any other, and unless they are abolished their eventual use will be inevitable, with massive destruction which knows no borders. President Obama needs and deserves all the support and encouragement in the world.

We do not know how long this opportunity will last. Unlike the last one, at the end of the Cold War, it must not be squandered, and a process for getting to zero, even if in twenty years' time, should be locked in place as quickly as possible, during Obama's first term. It is time that the nuclear powers took seriously Article VI of the Non Proliferation Treaty, which commits them to nuclear disarmament. So far that legally binding clause has been ignored. An increasingly inequitable population, resource and climate-stressed world is an ever more dangerous place for nuclear weapons. We simply must not fail.

Like preventing rampant climate change, abolishing nuclear weapons is a paramount challenge for people and leaders the world over; a precondition for survival, sustainability and health for our planet and future generations. Both in the scale of the indiscriminate devastation they cause, and in their uniquely persistent, spreading, genetically damaging radioactive fallout, nuclear weapons are unlike any other 'weapons'. They cannot be used for any legitimate military purpose. Any use, or threat of use, is a violation of international humanitarian law and should be codified as a crime against humanity by the UN Security Council and the International Criminal Court.

The notion that nuclear weapons can ensure anyone's security is fundamentally flawed. Nuclear weapons most threaten those who possess them, or claim protection from them, because they become the preferred targets for others' nuclear weapons. Accepting that nuclear weapons can have a legitimate place, even if solely for 'deterrence', means being willing to accept the incineration of tens of millions of fellow humans and radioactive devastation of large areas, and is fundamentally immoral. Nuclear weapons cannot be divided into those for use and those for deterrence. Deterrence is predicated on having the demonstrated capacity and will to unleash nuclear weapons, and runs on fallible systems which have already almost failed us more than 5 times. Around 2500 nuclear weapons in Russia and the US are still on extremely high launch on warning status, involving decision times between 4 and 8 minutes and high vulnerability to technical and human failure as well as cyberattack.

As noted by the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission headed by Dr Hans Blix, "So long as any state has nuclear weapons, others will want them. So long as any such weapons remain, there is a risk that they will one day be used, by design or accident. And any such use would be catastrophic." Weapons capable of inflicting such catastrophic destruction have no place in human affairs. The only sustainable approach is one universal standard – zero nuclear weapons – for all.

Recent scientific evidence from the same state-of-the-art climate models which underpin our understanding of global warming puts the case for urgent nuclear weapons abolition beyond dispute. Even a limited regional nuclear war involving targeting cities with 100 Hiroshima-sized bombs – just 0.03% of the explosive power of the world's current nuclear arsenal - would not only kill tens of millions quickly from blast, fires and radiation, but would cause unexpectedly severe climatic consequences persisting for a decade or more. Millions of tons of black, sooty smoke would be heated by sunlight and quickly lofted high into the stratosphere, beyond rain and weather. Cooling and darkening, with killing frosts and shortened growing seasons, rainfall decline, monsoon failure, substantial increases in ultraviolet radiation, disruption of supply of seeds, fertiliser, fuel and equipment would combine to slash global food production over successive years. Globally, a cautious estimate is that over one billion people could starve. More would succumb from the disease epidemics and social and economic destruction which would inevitably follow. Global trade, transport and inputs to agriculture would be disrupted, those with food would hoard it, and further violent conflict would become likely, with risk of further use of nuclear weapons.

Even though 96% of the world's nuclear weapons are held by Russia and the US, such a war is also within the capacity of China, France, the UK, Israel or India and Pakistan. The danger of such an unprecedented global catastrophe will not be substantially ameliorated until stockpiles are reduced to single or low double digits, not hundreds and certainly not

thousands. Preventing any use of nuclear weapons and establishing an irreversible process that will get us to zero are imperative for the security of every inhabitant of our planet. It is worth noting that today we should be more worried about Pakistan than Afghanistan. The possibility that some of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal could fall into the hands of the Taliban is real and urgent concern.

The most effective and practical way to achieve and sustain the outlawing and elimination of nuclear weapons is to negotiate a comprehensive, irreversible, binding, verifiable treaty - a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC)– bringing together all the necessary aspects of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation into one phased package which provides a roadmap to zero. Such a treaty approach has been the basis for all successes to date in eliminating whole classes of weapons, from dum dum bullets over a century ago to chemical and biological weapons, landmines and, most recently, cluster munitions. And nuclear weapons are far more destructive than any of those. It is particularly fitting to consider the merits of a comprehensive nuclear abolition treaty in this lecture in honour of Dr John Gee, who contributed so much to the conclusion and then the implementation of the convention banning chemical weapons.

Negotiations on a Nuclear Weapons Convention should begin without delay, progress in good faith and without interruption until a successful conclusion is reached. It will be a long and complex process to develop the legal, institutional, technical, verification and enforcement framework required. There can be no doubt that a comprehensive treaty, or an appropriate framework of mutually reinforcing agreements which achieve the same end, will need to be codified to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. I find it difficult to understand how it can be argued to be premature to begin preparing for and negotiating the elimination and prohibition treaty that will be required. The sooner such preparations and negotiations can begin, the better.

Last October, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon proposed a five-point plan for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in which he urged “all NPT parties, in particular the nuclear-weapon states, to fulfil their obligation under the treaty to undertake negotiations on effective measures leading to nuclear disarmament” noting that they could either agree on a framework of separate, mutually reinforcing instruments, or they could “consider negotiating a nuclear weapons convention, backed by a strong verification system, as has long been proposed at the UN.” Referring to the model NWC developed by an international civil society collaboration of lawyers, physicians and scientists, Ki-Moon commended this model which he circulated to all UN members as offering “a good point of departure” for achieving total nuclear disarmament. His approach deserves wide support.

The Secretary-General also spoke of the need for entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, more credible security assurances, negotiations on a fissile materials production ban, deeper cuts in arsenals, progress in verification, and other familiar measures on the long-languishing list of unfinished nuclear disarmament business. Necessary though they are, such measures need to be part of an integrated plan and process towards the ultimate goal of abolition – a context that is visionary, politically credible and practical. Negotiations on an NWC as a way to fulfil the NPT obligations is a coherent approach to achieve all the necessary elements of a sustainable nuclear ‘grand bargain’ for the 21st century to deliver on the promise of the eroding and unfulfilled NPT deal between nuclear haves and have-nots.

The recent report of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties Inquiry into Australia’s role in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament contains some excellent recommendations. The Committee considered that through supporting incremental steps that improve nuclear security and by advocating the final vision of the complete abolition of nuclear weapons, Australia could play a leading role in the negotiation of a NWC. It recommends that the Australian Government make clear in international fora its support for the adoption of a Nuclear Weapons Convention, and allocate research and consultation resources to the development of a Nuclear Weapons Convention with a clear legal framework and enforceable verification. A welcome aspect of the report is that it was unanimously supported by all members of the Committee. Hopefully this can foreshadow a more unified and less partisan approach on these vital issues in future.

Australia should seek to build and work with a coalition of countries to advance preparations for negotiations on a NWC. The Australian Government should start with governments which have already expressed their support, including Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Austria and Costa Rica.

Incremental steps and a comprehensive treaty approach rather than competing, can be complementary and mutually reinforcing. Incremental steps can achieve important ends, demonstrate good faith, generate political momentum, fit into and support a unified framework towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Honouring previous agreements is vital. The 13 practical steps agreed at the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review conference in 2000 should be upheld, updated and implemented. They include all nuclear weapons states committing to the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals; entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; negotiations on a treaty to end production of fissile material; taking weapons off extremely hazardous high alert ‘launch on warning’ status; and negotiating deep weapons reductions.

The recent first ever UN Security Council Summit on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament chaired by President Obama and the unanimously endorsed Resolution 1887 is

an important step in reaffirming the veracity of past commitments, and details non-proliferation measures yet to be matched on the disarmament side of the coin.

But at the same time a comprehensive roadmap is needed – a vision of what the final jigsaw puzzle looks like, and a path to get there. Not only to fit the pieces together and fill the gaps, but to make unequivocal that abolition is the goal. This is the only approach that can generate the needed willingness to compromise and avoid paralysing conditionalities, trade-offs and obstructions which have been so disabling in settings requiring consensus, such as the Conference on Disarmament and NPT Review Conferences. Without the intellectual, moral and political weight of abolition as the credible and clear goal of the nuclear weapon states, and real movement on disarmament, the NPT is at risk of unravelling after next year's 5-yearly Review Conference of the Treaty, and a cascade of actual and incipient nuclear weapons proliferation could be expected to follow.

Achieving a world free of nuclear weapons will require not only existing arsenals to be progressively taken off alert, dismantled and destroyed, but will require stopping production of the fissile materials from which nuclear weapons can be built - separated plutonium and highly-enriched uranium, and existing stocks to be eliminated or placed under secure international control. All facilities which enrich uranium – which should be very few in number and can no longer be regarded as a sovereign right - should be placed under strict international control; and reprocessing and recycling of spent nuclear fuel to extract plutonium should be quickly phased out, as recommended by the International Panel on Fissile Materials. There is little doubt that continued use of nuclear power will make achieving and sustaining a world free of nuclear weapons more difficult. The nuclear industry will need substantial reorganisation to contain its inherent proliferation risks.

All countries should prepare for a world free of nuclear weapons by 'walking the talk'. The Australian government should reduce the role of nuclear weapons in its security policies, as we call on nuclear weapon states to do. Ensuring that we are part of the solution and not the problem also means that the international safeguards on which we depend to ensure that our uranium does not now or in the future contribute to proliferation, need substantial strengthening and universal application. Preventing proliferation, and not commercial or other interests, should always be paramount in relation to nuclear trade.

There is much that Australia can and should do.

Australia's reliance on the 'extended nuclear deterrence' provided by the USA should be reviewed so that Australian facilities and personnel could not contribute to possible use of nuclear weapons, and we anticipate and promote by our actions a world freed from nuclear weapons, as New Zealand has done. Erstwhile reliance on 'extended nuclear deterrence' by

countries without their own nuclear weapons, like NATO members, Australia and Japan – must not be allowed to persist and become an obstacle to nuclear disarmament. There is no conceivable threat to Australia or Japan for which the extended deterrence provided by the conventional military capabilities of Australia, the United States and other allies would not be ample.

New Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada has signaled an important change in support for the US adopting a policy of no first use of nuclear weapons. This is a minimal position Australia should quickly and publicly support at this key time when the US Nuclear Posture Review is being undertaken. Both governments should follow-up by working with the US to transform their alliance relationship to one that excludes use of nuclear weapons. This would be the most powerful action that Australia and Japan could take in support and anticipation of a world free of nuclear weapons, and would be influential globally, including for NATO.

One regressive development at odds with Australia's stated support for a world free of nuclear weapons is the recent Defence White Paper. The paper projects continued reliance on extended nuclear deterrence — in practice a willingness to support possible use of nuclear weapons — at least to 2030. This at a time when Obama aims for the abolition of nuclear weapons, when the Australian and Japanese governments have established a commission to set out a road map for the abolition of nuclear weapons, and when significant figures in many countries are talking about the irrelevance of nuclear weapons to the defence of any country. Very substantial progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons, if not achieving it, is possible within this timeframe. Thus the white paper undermines Australia's stated support for complete nuclear disarmament. Achieving a world free of nuclear weapons would enhance security more than anything else, and we should be doing everything possible to prepare for it.

The paper implies that the key defence against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is America's extended deterrent. It does not address the fact that the Non-proliferation Treaty is a busted flush, and that the failure of the nuclear-armed states to begin the disarmament process is a major driver of proliferation.

Achieving a nuclear-weapons free world will be aided by reversing the staggering hemorrhage of material and human resources towards military purposes. This year, US military spending – US\$711 billion – exceeds the amount spent by the rest of the world combined. Best estimates indicate that 7% of current global military spending – roughly equivalent to what the US alone spends on nuclear weapons each year – invested annually for a decade, could allow the fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. This would enable 500 million fewer people to live in extreme poverty, 300 million to no longer be hungry, prevent 30 million under-5 deaths and 2 million deaths of mothers in childbirth.

The head of the UN Climate Change Secretariat Yvo De Boer estimated recently that the annual cost of cutting global emissions of greenhouse gases will be about US\$200 billion. It will cost another US\$100 billion per year to cope with the effects of climate change. This means that just one-fifth of annual global military spending budget could significantly reduce the scale and worldwide consequences of climate change.

Australia is part of this problem. The White Paper envisages a massive \$4.3 billion (16%) real increase in Australia's military spending – to A\$26.8 billion in the next financial year. This represents \$1230 for every Australian. Above and beyond this, 3% real increase is planned each year till 2018, and beyond that 2.2% real annual increase to 2030. What will we get for these vast sums? The shopping list is long, and includes 12 new submarines, 100 Joint Strike Fighter aircraft, new long-range sea-based land attack cruise missiles, 8 new frigates, and a major enhancement of cyber warfare capability; all unashamedly designed for high-intensity wars among the major powers and long-range operations. This is despite Australia being “one of the most physically secure countries in the world.”

Building real human security – reducing extreme poverty, making major reductions in preventable disease and premature death, the massive investments urgently needed to address climate change and build a sustainable energy future – will not be possible without redirecting military resources to meet human needs and restore the environment. This kind of action and less economic and social deprivation, would lead to more stable societies, fewer drivers for conflict and, arguably, less incentive to acquire nuclear weapons.

An area in which Australia should work closely with New Zealand and other Pacific neighbours is strengthening the South Pacific Nuclear Weapons Free Zone. It is more than 20 years since the Rarotonga Treaty entered into force, and an ongoing process among the member states to review and strengthen the treaty could be developed. Measures for consideration to strengthen the treaty include extending the zone to cover all weapons of mass and indiscriminate destruction, including chemical and biological weapons; strengthening mechanisms to monitor and verify compliance with the Treaty; establishing a secretariat to support and strengthen the treaty, such as exists in Latin America; addressing environmental monitoring and clean-up of former nuclear test sites and other areas radioactively contaminated by nuclear weapons development.

Australia and New Zealand could convene a conference of signatory states to review the treaty, and lead cooperation among the existing nuclear weapons free zones in the Southern Hemisphere, with the aim of establishing a Southern Hemisphere nuclear weapons free zone. The Latin America Nuclear Free Zone Treaty was signed in 1967. This is particularly appropriate as the Treaty of Pelindaba establishing an African nuclear weapons free zone has recently entered into force.

Next year's NPT Review Conference is of great importance. If agreement is not reached on substantial disarmament and non-proliferation measures, it can be expected that a tipping point of escalating nuclear proliferation will be crossed. My priorities for decisive progress at the Review Conference include:

- A growing number of governments express their support for the concept of a comprehensive nuclear abolition treaty such as an NWC. It is reasonable to hope and expect that negotiations on such a treaty should commence prior to the next Review Conference in 2015, and be concluded by the following Review Conference in 2020;
- The nuclear weapon states should agree and state that they would not be the first to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against each other, and that they would not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons in any conflict with a non-nuclear weapon state. Such an agreement should be brought into operation as soon as possible;
- The nuclear weapon states should declare that they will not design, develop, or produce new nuclear warheads or modify existing warheads to create new military capabilities;
- All states that have not yet done so should ratify the CTBT without conditions or further delay to enable its early entry into force;
- Russia and the United States commit to verifiably reducing total nuclear weapons stockpiles below 1,000 by 2012, and, along with other nuclear-armed states, agree to engage in multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations;
- All nuclear armed states which have not yet done so should halt the production of weapons-usable fissile material pending the entry into force of a global Fissile Material Treaty;
- All relevant states which have not yet done so should permanently dismantle, clean-up and rehabilitate their nuclear test sites;
- All states which have not yet done so should conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an Additional Protocol with the IAEA; and nuclear cooperation and trade should only be conducted with states which have these agreements in place and are complying fully with both these and their disarmament obligations;
- Withdrawal from the NPT should warrant automatic sanction and referral to the UN Security Council;

- All uranium enrichment facilities should be placed under strict international control;
- All nuclear fuel reprocessing plants should be placed under strict international control pending their closure under a comprehensive treaty on fissile materials.

When Ban Ki-Moon opened the UN General Assembly last month, he urged: “Together, let us make this the year we agreed to banish the bomb.”

The first step is to make sure that everyone understands that we are in a more dangerous situation than at any time during the Cold War and that business as usual would be a most dangerous option for all of humanity.

In the words of President Barack Obama, “We must never stop until we see the day when nuclear arms have been banished from the face of the Earth. That is our task.”