

PROLIFERATION

Atoms for Peace

Only 18 hours after the first atomic bomb exploded over Hiroshima the US president Harry S. Truman introduced the slogan “Atoms for Peace”. Thus the “Siamese twinhood” between the military and the civil use of nuclear technology was manifested. Today the nuclear industry is promoting the renaissance of nuclear power. Uranium mining is planned in Sweden and Finland, where it has never been mined before. Since at the same time a new nuclear arms race has begun, the twinhood is becoming obvious once again.

This twinhood was perfectly described in the Bulletin of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1998 by Abel J. Gonzalez under the title “A Radiological Legacy”. He writes:

“The production of nuclear weapons involves securing quantities of enriched uranium or plutonium for fission devices and of tritium and deuterium for fusion devices. The fuel cycle for military purposes is similar to that for the peaceful programmes for nuclear electrical energy generation: uranium mining and milling, uranium enrichment, fuel fabrication, operation of material-production reactors and fuel reprocessing mainly for the separation of plutonium. A main difference, however, is that peaceful nuclear programmes have generally been under the supervision and scrutiny of independent regulatory bodies, whereas military programmes usually were not.”

One can seriously question if the peaceful nuclear programmes in fact have been under the supervision of independent regulatory bodies. But that is not my theme of today.

International Atomic Energy Agency - Non Proliferation Treaty

However, there have been efforts also to supervise the military programmes.

The International Atomic Energy Agency was founded in 1957:

The aim is according to Article II of its statutes:

“The Agency shall seek to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. It shall ensure, so far it is able, that assistance provided by it or at its request or under its supervision or control is not used in such a way as to further any military purpose.”

This has however never become more than a great, somewhat vaguely formulated aim. The Agency has not stopped Israel, India, South Africa, Pakistan or North Korea from developing nuclear weapons. According to Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International

Atomic Energy Agency, there are today - on top of the nine known nuclear weapons states - some 35 to 40 states that have the know-how to build an atomic bomb.

In 1970 the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) entered into force and has been signed by some 190 countries. It might be of interest for you to know that Finland was the first country to sign the NPT. And even more interesting is that Finland in the Western world is the first country where a new nuclear power reactor is being built since the Chernobyl accident. And in Finland foreign companies are planning uranium mining. Keeping the twinhood of nuclear technology in mind this is utmost hypocrisy.

According to the NPT the five recognized nuclear weapon states; the US, Russia, the UK, France, and China agree not to transfer nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and not in any way to assist non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS) to acquire nuclear weapons. Additionally, both Article VI and the preamble indicate that the nuclear weapons states should make up plans to reduce and liquidate their stockpiles of nuclear weapons. Article VI also calls for a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

This formal obligation has never even been considered by the NPT-recognized nuclear weapons states. Over the past three decades many proposals for a complete and universal disarmament have been rejected under one pretext or the other. The failure of the NPT-recognized nuclear weapon states to fulfill their disarmament obligations - especially after the Cold War - has caused great discontent among many signatories of the NPT. It has also served as a justification for the non-signatories to develop their own nuclear arsenals.

It is the task of the International Atomic Energy Agency to serve as a watchdog that "peaceful" nuclear energy technology is not used for producing nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. This is not an easy task since Article IV of the NPT has been interpreted by some states to grant them a right to uranium enrichment for fuel for commercial reactors. This is as a matter of fact a major loophole, since there are no significant legal barriers distinguishing between a state's capability to enrich uranium for reactor fuel and the ability to enrich uranium to a level that can be used in nuclear weapons. This is called dual-use technology. As the commercially popular light water reactor uses enriched uranium fuel, it means that states must be able either to enrich uranium or buy it on the international market.

Mohamed ElBaradei has called the spread of enrichment and reprocessing capabilities the "Achilles heel" of the nuclear nonproliferation regime. At the beginning of 2007, 13 states had enrichment capability (military/commercial: US, Russia, UK, France, China, Israel, India, Pakistan) (commercial: Germany, Holland, Japan, Australia, Brazil).

Already in 2004 Mohamed ElBaradei made a statement that clearly shows that proliferation of nuclear technology is a tremendous problem which cannot be solved by control. He said:

"The technical barriers to mastering the essential steps of uranium enrichment – and to designing nuclear weapons – have eroded over time, which inevitably leads to the conclusion that the control of technology, in and of itself, is not an adequate barrier against further proliferation".

The Non Proliferation Treaty was followed by the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty that was opened up for signatures in 1996. It has been ratified by 138 countries but it has not entered into force.

The treaty will enter into force 180 days after it is ratified by 44 specifically named countries.

(Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Romania, Republic of Korea, Russia, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, UK, USA, and Vietnam)

By February 2007 out of these 44 countries – surprise surprise – North Korea, India, Pakistan have neither signed nor ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. China, Colombia, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Israel and the US have not ratified it.

And why so? The answer is because they do not like a Treaty that forbids nuclear weapons tests. Instead they are keeping the option open for a new nuclear arms race which in fact has started already.

A New Nuclear Arms Race

Russia is at the moment renewing their long-range missiles and strategic submarines.

In England Tony Blair emphasizes that it is essential that the Trident nuclear submarine system is upgraded as soon as possible.

France is getting new long and intermediate-range missiles and new nuclear submarines. By 2010 France will develop mini-nukes. In January 2006 Jacques Chirac said France would be ready to use nuclear weapons in case of a terrorist attack or an attack made by weapons of mass destruction.

China is modernizing its long-range missile program.

The US – like France – is keeping the option open to use nuclear weapons against any state or non-state actors that according to the US government are planning to attack the US by weapons of mass destruction. In 2005 the US the Congress embraced the Reliable Replacement Warhead Program which aims at developing more “useful” nuclear weapons (smaller, more effective and more precise). The Defence Threat Reduction Agency, co-ordinating different functions within the US ministry of defence, wants to develop weapons penetrating deep into the ground.

And here we come back to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty:

In March 2006, James Tegnelia, director of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, stated:

“I don't want to sound glib here, but it is the first time in Nevada that you'll see a mushroom cloud over Las Vegas since we stopped testing nuclear weapons.”

The Divine Strake Test is a huge explosion at the Nevada Test Site planned by the Defence Threat Reduction Agency in order to test weapons to destroy hardened and deeply buried targets. The blast was originally planned for June 2006 but has been postponed due to numerous citizen, State, Tribal and Congressional protests.

On top of this the US is planning its super missile shield based on co-operation in Europe with at least the UK, Poland and the Czech Republic.

In a lecture at the London School of Economics in February (2007) Mohamed ElBaradei said:

“Other countries are told nuclear weapons are counter-productive because they do not protect your security. But when they look to the big boys, what do they see? They see increasing reliance on nuclear weapons for security, they see nuclear weapons being continually modernised.”

Baradei condemned the “unfairness” of a world in which nine countries seek to maintain their monopoly of nuclear weapons.

Talking about nuclear weapons in today’s world we should however, ask ourselves: What is the definition of nuclear weapons?

DU-weapons

In my opinion a Low Intensity Nuclear War has been going on in the world since the Golf War in 1991 where DU weapons – weapons containing depleted, but also non-depleted uranium - were used for the first time. Since then these weapons have been used in large quantities in the wars in former Yugoslavia 1995/1999, Afghanistan 2001, Iraq in 2003, and in Lebanon in 2006.

For the military DU is the magic bullet. It is used to harden bullets and in penetrators in Cruise Missiles and large bunker busting guided bombs. Since it is extremely heavy it is also used as counterweight in for instance boats and aircrafts.

What is extremely important is that by using DU in weapons the nuclear industry almost free of charge gets rid of nuclear waste. DU is a by product of producing nuclear weapons, of producing fuel for nuclear reactors and of reprocessing spent fuel. According to some experts the US has several hundred thousand of tons of DU in store.

In the above mentioned wars DU-weapons were used by the US and its allies. Some 20 countries possess these weapons (US, Russia, UK, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, Bahrain, Egypt, South-Korea, Jordan, Greece, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi-Arabia, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, and Arab Emirates).

The results of using DU-weapons are disastrous; cancer, genetic mutations, birth defects, neurological damage, skeleton and kidney damage and so on. Inside the body uranium creates risks both as a toxic heavy metal and as a radioactive material. Robert C. Koehler, an award-winning, Chicago based journalist reported in 2004 on DU effects in Afghanistan. His headline was: “Silent Genocide”.

Uranium Mining

In Finland and Sweden uranium mining is a hot subject today. Foreign companies are eager to lay their hands on this non-renewable raw material for bombs and for fuel for commercial reactors. If uranium mining is allowed there will be no way of controlling the purpose the material is used once it has to be taken abroad to be processed.

These two former neutral countries were once known as peace and disarmament promoters. Now there are politicians in these countries ready to permit production of raw material for DU weapons and atomic bombs, ready to break the Non Proliferation Treaty.

Proliferation

The title of my presentation is proliferation. How is it possible to succeed in this difficult task when it is obvious that the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Non Proliferation Treaty and other treaties have failed?

As a new way to solve the problem the nuclear society wants to monopolize the nuclear infrastructure and technology and restrict the access to nuclear fuel. There are several initiatives being developed – of course by the leading nuclear weapon countries.

President Vladimir Putin has launched the Global Nuclear Power Infrastructure (GNPI) initiative. Angarsk in southern Siberia is to become the site of the world's first international uranium enrichment center supplying uranium fuel for countries which do not enrich uranium themselves.

The Bush administration has launched the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) which would develop a fuel service program to supply developing nations with reliable access to fuel for commercial reactors.

Instead of offering disarmament and peace the super states offer guardianship and nuclear slavery. This is not a solution – this is an extremely dangerous provocation.

Another extremely dangerous provocation is of course the way the Middle East issue is being dealt with; the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, the Iran sanctions, the axis of evil – the whole human disaster engineered by the US and its allies. Western countries condemn Iran – and condemned Iraq – for a bomb that does not exist. They do not condemn Israel that did not sign the Non Proliferation Treaty, and that has nuclear weapons. And what about Pakistan and India. Not to speak about the US itself openly working on a new generation of nuclear weapons.

But we all know it is not about nuclear weapons, it is not about democracy or any other noble values that George W. Bush is preaching. It is about OIL and it is time to put an end to the madness.

When it comes to proliferation there are only two ways to solve the problem:

- Nuclear weapons must be abolished
- Nuclear energy - that promotes technology that can also be used for military purposes - must be abolished.

In the Wall Street Journal in January this year four well-know Americans; Henry Kissinger (US secretary of state 1973 – 1977), George P. Schultz (US secretary of state 1982 – 1989), William J. Perry (US secretary of defense 1994 – 1997) and Sam Nun (former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee) called for setting the goal for a world free of nuclear weapons. In January also Mikhail Gorbachev (leader of the Soviet Union 1985 - 1991) called for a nuclear free world in the same journal.

In his State of the Union Address in January 1962 John F. Kennedy said, referring to the nuclear threat

“... the world was not meant to be a prison in which man awaits his execution.”

If we do not like the idea of being mass executed we have to find a way to break the silence of the mainstream media, to get the message through to our politicians and to ordinary people that seem to have forgotten that the nuclear threat – military and civilian - is still there - as strong as ever – if not stronger.

Two final quotes:

George Porter, Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1967:

“If sunbeams were weapons of war, we would have had solar energy centuries ago.”

Margaret Mead, American cultural anthropologist once said:

“ Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”