



Basel Peace Office

*Advancing international peace and security through
the abolition of nuclear weapons*

c/o Seminar für Soziologie - Universität Basel - Petersgraben 27 - 4051 Basel, Switzerland
www.baselpeaceoffice.org – Tel. +41 788 912 156 – info@baselpeaceoffice.org

Director's Annual Report

November 2014

Alyn Ware

It has been an honour and pleasure to be part of the Basel Peace Office (BPO) and to direct its programs over the past year.

This is the second year of BPO operations, and by most accounts this has been even more successful than the first year. Our programs have had impact in Switzerland and globally. And we have organized successful events in Basel, Bern, Geneva, Montenegro, Paris, Prague, New York, Tokyo and Washington.

The President's report details a number of our activities and successes. These do not need to be repeated here. Rather I will provide a few reflections on the programs and a short report on staffing and funding issues.

OSCE program

This was a high priority for BPO in 2014. BPO funding from the Basel Kanton was targeted to this program. In addition, the OSCE forums and the cooperative security framework advanced by the OSCE have become increasingly important to resolve key security issues and conflicts (such as the Ukraine conflict) that are preventing progress on nuclear disarmament. BPO was able to insert added value into the deliberations on these issues through our cross-party input into OSCE Parliamentary Assemblies, and our multi-stakeholder engagement. This helped ensure a very productive and successful Basel OSCE Forum on Cooperative Security and Nuclear Abolition.

Framework Forum

The Framework Forum events in Geneva and New York were very successful with 21 governments participating in the Geneva event, including from non-nuclear States, nuclear armed States and States under extended nuclear deterrence relationships. Even more governments participated in the NY event. However, as a side event during the UN General Assembly the time was more limited. The UN Open Ended Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations, in which BPO was very active in 2013, did not hold any sessions in 2014. Governments clearly recognize that the Framework Forum provides a valuable forum for taking forward the proposals from the OEWG.

Nuclear Abolition Forum – EU Consortium

BPO did not have funding or staff time to produce an issue of the Nuclear Abolition Forum in 2014. However, on the strength of our work on previous issues and our other academic activities, BPO was accepted as a member of the EU Nonproliferation Consortium – the network of independent non-proliferation think tanks supported by the EU. The only other Swiss institute accepted as a member is the Geneva Centre for Security Policy.

Humanitarian consequences and the law

BPO and PNND were very active in raising the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons dimension in parliaments around the world, and in key administrations. This included events and motions on humanitarian consequences in the French, UK and US legislatures; invitations to private meetings with government officials from France, UK and the US to discuss the issue; plus inclusion of the humanitarian consequences issue in the resolution adopted by the IPU Assembly (166 parliaments including those of most of the nuclear-armed States). A positive outcome is that the US has, for the first time, decided to participate in one of the international conferences on humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

BPO cooperation with the International Federation of Red Cross societies (IFRC) and with a number of national Red Cross societies on the humanitarian dimension developed considerably in 2014. This included participation of IFRC and national Red Cross society representatives in most of our events. BPO cooperation with other stakeholders has also developed. This includes with ICAN (International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons) which had in the past rejected our overtures for cooperation. BPO co-sponsored the launch of ICAN Switzerland in Heiden in October (we facilitated the participation of students from Nagasaki), and we worked with PNND on building parliamentary support for the ICAN appeal for a ban on nuclear weapons.

The case lodged in the International Court of Justice by the Marshall Islands against the nuclear-armed States is exciting, and I am honoured to have been working on the case in 2014 as both an adviser to the legal team and a partner in building support for the case from other countries – especially through interventions.

Religions for Peace

I was honoured to be invited by Religions for Peace to produce a *Resource Guide on Nuclear Disarmament for Religious Leaders and Communities*. This has provided a wonderful opportunity for BPO to link our current constituents (academics, parliamentarians, mayors, diplomats and civil society actors) with religious communities. This linking is done in the publication itself and in events relating to the publication (launch events and follow-up workshops). BPO President Dr Nidecker took advantage of this by organizing the production and launch of the German version in Basel through the Protestant Reform Church.

Abolition 2000

BPO's active involvement in Abolition 2000 provides a strong connection between the civil society organisations that make up the Abolition 2000 network, and our other constituencies. We thus have a platform for promoting our academic, parliamentary, diplomatic and religious initiatives to civil society – and to encourage these civil society organisations to support initiatives emerging from these other constituencies.

UNFOLD ZERO

UNFOLD ZERO has provided a very useful platform to promote UN initiatives for nuclear disarmament and to highlight the opportunities arising from UN bodies to facilitate nuclear disarmament. The UNFOLD ZERO activities which we co-organized in its first year of operation have been very successful. These included a global video action, commemorative events at the UN, resolutions adopted in parliaments, joint statements and more.

Finances

Financially we have continued to have serious challenges. We were only able to raise 50% of the budget adopted at the 2013 Annual Meeting. We received less than 40% of the funding that had been expected from the Basel Canton for the OSCE program. We were unsuccessful with our application to the European Union for funding. And Religions for Peace was not able to provide funding as had been hoped for our work on the Resource Guide. We received small grants from the

Simons Foundation and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. However, other the Basel Canton funds, the main funding for 2014 came from a private donor.

Staffing

As a result of low funding, Basel Peace Office was not able to offer a minimum salary for myself. Without salary, I was not able to get a work permit and I was thus not able to move from New Zealand to Switzerland. I continue to work as a New Zealand based consultant, periodically travelling to Switzerland, USA, UK and other countries for projects. I am currently investigating the possibility of moving my consultancy to Switzerland if there is no minimum income required for this.

On the basis of expected funding from the Basel Canton, we temporarily hired a part-time program officer and administrative assistant from Dec 2013 to March 2014. This did not work out as the eventual funding from Canton was insufficient and not available for salaries (it was geared instead to expenses for the OSCE Forum). I thank the President Dr Nidecker for loaning funds to pay the program and administrative assistant when the expected funding was not allocated to BPO.

Interns

We have had a number of interns working for BPO this year. A special note of thanks to Lisa Seidel, Izia Royannez, Ashaney James, Oday Uruqait and Nadja Wenger who provided wonderful assistance to our programs. A thank you also to Dr Nidecker and Dr Daniela Schlettwein-Gsell for assisting with accommodation for interns.

German language

The increased demands on my time due to unexpected fundraising and program commitments have made it necessary for me to work evenings and weekends and have made it not possible for me to have any spare time to learn German.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Andi Nidecker for being such an active and supportive president. I also thank Ueli Mader for enabling the Basel Peace Office to be hosted at the Basel University Seminar fur Soziologie, and the secretaries Victoria Jäggi and Martha Vogel for their office support.

I thank the other Board Members for their active involvement: Laurent Goetchel and Markus Ritter for their work on the executive committee and for their help in securing the funding from the Basel Canton; Jonathan Granoff for his personal and program support, including for our events in New York and Washington; and Jakob von Uexkull for his support for our cooperative programs with WFC.

And a special thanks to Rob van Riet and Jana Jedlickova who have been wonderful partners on many of the projects and especially in engaging legislators and with UNFOLD ZERO.

November 17, 2014
Alyn Ware