



Basel Peace Office

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

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Director's Annual Report

December 2015 – November 2016

Alyn Ware

Introduction:

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 fourth year of BPO operations, and has been even more successful than the previous year. Our programs have had impact in Switzerland and globally. We organized global actions through Chain Reaction 2016, Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament and UNFOLD ZERO, as well as specific events in Astana, Basel, Berlin, Geneva, Lusaka, New York, Prague, Sydney and Tbilisi.

A. Programs

Astana Conference

Our major event for 2016 was the [international conference](#) we organised in Astana on the topic *Building a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World*. The conference was opened by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev. It included over 200 participants from overseas (high level officials, parliamentarians, representatives of international organisations, academics, students and NGOs). Over 1000 Kazakhs (officials, parliamentarians, mayors, academics, students and media) attended the opening plenary event.

Abolition 2000 – #3DnukeMissile

BPO is a member of Abolition 2000, the global network to eliminate nuclear weapons. We manage the website and facebook pages for Abolition 2000, and we helped organize the Abolition 2000 Annual Meeting in Berlin in September. Our involvement in Abolition 2000 provides a strong connection between the civil society organisations that make up the Abolition 2000 global network, and our other constituencies. The #3DnukeMissile project we organised in conjunction with the Abolition 2000 Annual meeting was incredibly successful, with over 30,000 facebook/twitter hits.

Chain Reaction 2016

BPO initiated [Chain Reaction 2016](#) as a follow-up action to the very successful Global Wave in 2015. Civil society actions took place around the world from July 8 until October 2. For a summary of actions see the [Chain Reaction 2016 video](#).

Climate – Nuclear Nexus

We highlighted links between climate protection and nuclear disarmament at a number of events. It's also noted in the *Joint Statement of Religious Leaders, Parliamentarians and Mayors* (see Religions for Peace below) and in our publication *Moving the Nuclear Weapons Money*. In addition, together with the World Future Council we launched a new publication the [Climate-Nuclear Nexus](#).

Framework Forum

The [Framework Forum event](#) we held in Geneva in April was very successful with 22 governments participating. The topic of the event was *Issues and proposals for taking forward nuclear disarmament*. The forum provided a track two forum where governments could discuss more freely the issues and proposals

being presented to the UN Conference on Disarmament and the UN Open Ended Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations. The forum helped pave the way for a successful OEWG, and a follow-up resolution in the UN General Assembly to commence multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations in 2017.

Moving the Nuclear Weapons Money

In October we launched a new book [Moving the Nuclear Weapons Money](#), which I edited and which PNND and World Future Council published in cooperation with the International Peace Bureau. The publication reports on nuclear weapons budgets, examines the influence of nuclear weapons corporations, explores the connections between nuclear disarmament and achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, and provides examples of parliamentary actions to convert nuclear weapons industries and shift the financing of nuclear weapons to SDG implementation.

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

This was a continuation of our program from 2015. OSCE provides a forum and cooperative security framework to resolve key security issues and conflicts that are preventing progress on nuclear disarmament, such as the Ukraine conflict. BPO organised a very successful side-event at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Tbilisi, advocated successfully for one of our Co-Presidents to be elected as President of the OSCE PA, and also advocated successfully to get the OSCE PA to agree to support nuclear risk reduction and disarmament measures. See [OSCE Parliamentary Assembly calls for nuclear weapons stand-down](#).

Parliamentarians - PNND

BPO serves as the head office for [Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament](#) (PNND). We organised nuclear disarmament events and the adoption of resolutions in a range of parliaments and in inter parliamentary bodies including the Inter Parliamentary Union Assemblies in Lusaka (on [Reducing nuclear threats – the role of parliamentarians](#)) and Geneva (on [Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Regional Security](#) and on [Military expenditure v SDGs](#)) and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Tbilisi (on [Reducing nuclear tensions and supporting nuclear disarmament negotiations](#)). PNND produces an [electronic update](#) approximately every two weeks (for which I am the editor) and distributes this to over 1000 parliamentarians and about 800 representatives of non-governmental organisations.

Religions for Peace

We continued to use the [Resource Guide on Nuclear Disarmament for Religious Leaders and Communities](#). (edited by myself and published by Religions for Peace) at numerous events. In addition, we gathered additional endorsers of the [Joint Statement of Mayors, Parliamentarians and Religious Leaders](#) and presented this to the UN Open Ended Working Group in Geneva in order to support multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.

UNFOLD ZERO

[UNFOLD ZERO](#), which BPO established in partnership with several other key international NGOs, 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 main UNFOLD ZERO activities in 2016 were [promotion of the UN Open Ended Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations](#), [Chain Reaction 2016](#), organizing the UN event in Geneva for the [International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons](#), promoting the [anniversary of the 1st UN general Assembly resolution](#) and highlighting nuclear disarmament in the campaign for the next UN Secretary-General. UNFOLD ZERO also produces an [electronic update](#) (for which I am the editor) which is distributed to over 4000 representatives of civil society organisations.

Youth

Engaging youth in peace and disarmament is an important focus of BPO. We have an internship program to give university students direct experience working with parliamentarians, diplomats at the UN and other civil society organisations. We are assisting a group of students at the Basel University Seminar für Soziologie in research on nuclear disarmament and the role of Switzerland. We helped organize the [Third IPU Conference of Young Parliamentarians](#) in Lusaka which focused on peace, disarmament for sustainable development. We also worked with the Youth Future Project on a number of events and activities, including their first documentary in [Living for Change](#) series which was filmed in Basel and which focused on our work.

B. Finances and Staffing

Finances

Financially we have continued to have serious challenges. We were able to raise moderate funding for programs and events, especially for the international conference in Astana and for PNND work on the OSCE and nuclear disarmament. However, funding for staff compensation continues to be elusive. We received no funding from the Basel Canton for this financial year, and no funding for events in Basel. We continue to receive small program grants from supporting foundations in New Zealand and Canada, but very little from Europe.

Staffing and interns

In 2017, I will continue to serve as the Director and Caroline Leroy will serve as Program Director. Due to low funding, neither of these positions are fully paid. We will host a number of interns in Basel, mostly self-financed. Through our partnerships with World Future Council, Global Security Institute and PragueVision, we are also able to host interns in Prague, Geneva, New York and Washington. During 2016 we had interns from Canada, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, Russia and Switzerland.

Thanks

A note of thanks to our interns for 2016: Stella Naizot, Rachel Day, Mikhail Potapov, Caroline Schlunke, Nina Delafontaine, Fiachra Ó Raghallaigh, Mrinal Verma, Max Beech and Marzhan Nurzhan.

A special thanks to Rob van Riet, Jean-Marie Collin and Jana Jedlickova who have been actively involved in a number of the projects and co-organisers of a number of events.

And a note of deep gratitude to Andi Nidecker for being a totally hands-on President, providing guidance, support and leadership far beyond the call of duty.

Finally I would like to thank all the Board Members and partner organisations for their involvement in the program and management of the Basel Peace Office. Together we can celebrate a successful 2016 and plan for another successful year in 2017.

November 14, 2016
Alyn Ware