  **BAN ALL NUKES GENERATION**

Panel VI: Approaching Nuclear Disarmament From Different Angles

Intervention

Delivered by Christian N. Ciobanu, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and Ban All Nukes Generation

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Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to thank you for organizing this panel on approaching nuclear disarmament from different angles.  I am speaking on behalf of several students from Japan, Australia, Germany, and Romania who have been following the discussions in the OEWG very closely.

We believe that the debate over nuclear disarmament should not only be held within the context of military strategy and nuclear deterrence policies; instead it should also be driven by humanitarian, environmental, and economic concerns.

*Humanitarian Concerns*

We strongly contend that any use of nuclear weapons have catastrophic consequences.

The concern over the humanitarian impact has been strongly vocalized by the International Red Cross. Specifically, in November 2011, the council of delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement issued a resolution in which they were “deeply concerned about the destructive power of nuclear weapons, and the unspeakable human suffering they cause.”

If a nuclear weapon were to be detonated, no effective humanitarian response would be possible and the effects would cause suffering and deaths amongst over many years after the initial explosion.  This humanitarian harm must inform and motivate efforts to outlaw nuclear weapons.

Eliminating nuclear weapons is the only guarantee against their use. We can eliminate these nuclear weapons by ascribing to the comprehensive approach.

We further welcome the initiative of Norway for hosting the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Oslo. We urge all states to join this important discussion at the follow-up conference in Mexico.

We further appreciated the broad support among states for the statement on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, which was delivered by South Africa during the 2013 NPT PrepCom.

*Environmental Concerns*

In terms of the environmental costs, it would take less than 0.1% of the explosive yield of the current global nuclear arsenal to bring about devastating agricultural collapse and widespread famine. It would disrupt the global climate and agricultural production so severely that the lives of more than a billion people would be at risk.

The smoke and dust from fewer than 100 Hiroshima-sized nuclear explosions would rise into the stratosphere, where it would reduce sunlight for up to ten years, dropping temperatures on Earth to the lowest levels in the past 1,000 years and shortening growing seasons across the planet. The result would be crop failures and a nuclear famine, which could result in the deaths of hundreds of millions to a billion people globally.

*Economic Concerns*

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Delegates,

If states really want to protect their citizens, they must re-evaluate their priorities by divesting military expenditures to social expenditures in order to improve the health, education and welfare of their respective citizens.

The nuclear-armed nations spend in excess of US $105 billion each year maintaining and modernizing their nuclear arsenals. There are currently nine countries with a total of over 20,000 nuclear weapons, spending $105 billion annually on their nuclear arsenals and delivery systems.  That will amount to more than $1 trillion over the next decade.  The US accounts for about 60 percent of this amount.

A 1998 study by the Brookings Institution found that the United States alone had spent more than $5.5 trillion on nuclear weapons programs between 1940 and 1996. The United States continues to spend some $25-$35 billion annually on research, development and maintenance of its nuclear arsenal.

The World Bank has estimated that $40 billion to $60 billion in annual global expenditures would be sufficient to meet the eight agreed-upon United Nations Millennium Development Goals for poverty alleviation by 2015.

Meeting these goals would eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality/empowerment; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; and develop partnerships for development.

Another informative comparison is with the regular annual United Nations budget of $2.5 billion and the annual UN Peacekeeping budget of $7.3 billion.  UN and Peacekeeping expenditures total to about $10 billion, which is less than one-tenth of what is being spent by the nuclear weapon states for maintaining and improving their nuclear arsenals.

All of these misspent resources represent lost opportunities for improving the health, education and welfare of the people of the world. We must redirect money toward providing adequate welfare provisions to the citizens of the world.

Thank you, Mr. Moderator.