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August 2024 Newsletter

Ploughshares Fall 2024

Keep an eye out for these key dates!

- **Wednesday, September 25th**
- **Wednesday, October 9th**
- **Wednesday, November 13th**

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CREATING A BETTER PACT FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Opinion By Mona Ali Khalil

Pass Blue

June 27th, 2024

Summary

- The UN is not on track to implement the Paris Agreement on climate change or the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.
- The SDG5 (Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender equality) and Security Council Resolution 1325 (Women, Peace, and Security) have ushered in a new millennium filled with hope for the empowerment of women, the UN is also far from achieving full gender parity by 2030.
- There has yet to be a female secretary-general and only five of the 15 permanent representatives in the Security Council are women.
- Humanity is facing three concurrent existential threats: the risk of nuclear escalation, the threat of a new, more lethal pandemic and an accelerating climate change crisis.
- While the UN has so far successfully fulfilled its aim of averting a third world war, interstate and intrastate conflicts are increasing rapidly, with civilians paying the heavy price.
- The unlawful invasion and occupation of Iraq by the United States and the United Kingdom began the unravelling of the post-WWII order, with Russia's aggression and occupation of Ukraine accelerating the erosion of international law.
- When the Security Council meet in September, member states must bridge the gap between the Charter's promise and today's reality.
- **Here are six critical elements for a better pact for a better future:**
 - **1)** The Pact for the Future must include a clear commitment to appoint a woman as the next secretary-general.
 - **2)** The pact must go much further and call upon the P5 to voluntarily refrain from exercising their veto in situations involving genocide and other mass-atrocity crimes.



CREATING A BETTER PACT FOR A BETTER FUTURE

- **3)** The pact should also confirm that the Assembly has the authority to recommend more robust measures to reflect the will of the international community. While the Assembly cannot force countries to act, it can authorize those willing to do so to impose arms embargoes and other sanctions on aggressing states as it has done in the past.
- **4)** The pact should explicitly remind member states and the Security Council of their responsibilities under all three pillars of R2P (Responsibility to Protect).
- **5)** While The latest draft of the Pact for the Future deals with existential threats, including climate change, artificial intelligence and autonomous weapons, it does not explicitly mention the prevention of pandemics. It also misses the opportunity to specifically call upon the nuclear weapon states to commit to a “no first use” policy and to urge all states to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.
- **6)** The draft also ignores the need to engage with nonstate parties to intrastate conflicts. It is impossible to resolve an armed conflict without hearing from all sides in the fighting. Giving nonstate parties a voice in the deliberations may help the Security Council make more informed decisions.

To read the full article, click [here](#).





Statement to the 2nd Preparatory Meeting for the 2026 NPT Review Conference

United Nations, Geneva

JULY 23, 2024

Delivered by Cesar Jaramillo

Project Ploughshares, Canadian Pugwash group, SEHLAC Network

Chair,

More than five decades after the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty entered into force, the world remains overshadowed by the threat of nuclear weapons. The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has laid bare the dark underbelly of nuclear deterrence and the urgent need for an alternative approach to global security.

The conflict has been marked by a persistent narrative on both sides suggesting that a decisive military victory is in the cards. This dangerously underestimates the complex dynamics of nuclear deterrence, feeds unrealistic expectations, prolongs the conflict, and results in countless casualties. Critically, it could create conditions under which nuclear weapons might be used.

The well-documented threats to use nuclear weapons in this conflict are reckless and merit strong condemnation. But let us be clear: the primary risk lies in the very existence of these weapons, which is underpinned by the doctrine of nuclear deterrence, embraced by all nuclear-armed states and their allies, including those now rightfully alarmed at the current risk.

Ukraine presents a grim reminder that nuclear deterrence does not eliminate the risk of nuclear war; it merely cloaks it under the illusion of stability.

Despite the real possibility that nuclear weapons might be used, there is a remarkable lack of political and diplomatic leadership that prioritizes diplomatic approaches over military ones. The fundamental question thus remains: what is a realistic endgame in Ukraine – one that does not heighten the risk that nuclear weapons will be used?



A frontal challenge to nuclear deterrence was issued last year in the final declaration of the Second Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW: “Far from preserving peace and security, nuclear weapons are used as instruments of policy, linked to coercion, intimidation and heightening of tensions.”

The alternative, by definition, must be the establishment of common security arrangements that promote adherence to widely accepted norms and ensure a stable and predictable international order. Respect for agreements to control and limit the means of violence, including the abolition of nuclear weapons, will be crucial in this regard.

Regrettably, there is a real risk of drawing all the wrong conclusions from the Ukraine crisis. Instead of learning from the near-catastrophic risks and moving towards disarmament, the international community appears poised to engage in further militarization and nuclear proliferation. Such actions would repeat the mistakes of the past, driving the world deeper into an arms race, escalating tensions, and increasing the likelihood of future conflicts involving nuclear weapons.

Chair,

In addition to the Ukraine crisis, the failure of the 9th and 10th NPT Review Conferences serves as a stark reminder of the colossal challenges facing nuclear disarmament. The inability to agree on an outcome document at two consecutive Review Conferences is regrettable, yet it highlights the profound inadequacies and deep-seated disagreements that permeate the global nuclear disarmament regime.

By now, the pattern is familiar. As Review Conferences draw to a close, any references to specific measures, benchmarks, targets, or timelines for nuclear disarmament are systematically stripped from successive drafts of the outcome document. And we all know the reason: stiff resistance from nuclear-weapon states and their allies.

The NPT has been critical to address the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. But it has fallen woefully short of the goal of nuclear abolition. Today, the question is not just whether the world is better off with the NPT than without it, but whether this treaty will in fact lead to complete nuclear disarmament. The record is hardly promising.

Still, nuclear-weapon states remain unpersuaded to change course. They extol the value of nuclear weapons in safeguarding their national interests while expecting other states to forgo the same rationale. They demand strict compliance with non-proliferation obligations but neglect their own responsibility to disarm.

They accept the nuclear-weapons programs of their military or economic allies, even outside the NPT framework. They continue to spend billions of dollars modernizing their arsenals, disregarding their disarmament obligations and perpetuating the threat of nuclear conflict.

And it is not just the nuclear-weapon states that obstruct progress. States that participate in nuclear alliances, such as NATO, are directly complicit in keeping the nuclear threat alive. For far too long, nuclear-dependent states have been allowed to reside in two camps. When it suits, they present themselves as responsible international actors that are non-nu-

clear-weapon states under the NPT. At the same time, they are party to, and endorse, a security arrangement that runs contrary to the letter of the NPT and the broader goal of nuclear abolition.

Chair,

Sixty-nine states – the total membership of the TPNW, all of which are also parties to the NPT – declared last year that each of the United States, the Russian Federation, China, France, and the United Kingdom is in breach of their legal obligations under the NPT – a remarkable condemnation of the highest level.

They stated that the behavior of these nuclear-weapon states “unquestionably” represents “a failure to meet their legally binding obligations under Article VI” of the Treaty. Furthermore, they declared that since the First Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW, “none” of the nuclear-weapon states have made progress... in their unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the elimination of their nuclear weapons.”

Such a formal rebuke is anything but routine. The implications are profound and must reshape the discourse on nuclear abolition, prompting a reassessment of how best to respond to blatant instances of non-compliance with the NPT. This also underscores a newfound willingness among states to collectively hold NWS accountable and sets a precedent for a more assertive and unified stand on this existential issue.

Of course, the fundamental problem with nuclear weapons predates and extends beyond Ukraine. However the crisis may end, the problem of nuclear weapons will persist, implicating all nuclear-armed states and their allies who overtly support nuclear deterrence.

As has been stated by many others before me, there are no right hands for wrong weapons. We will continue to reject any narrative that frames certain nuclear-armed states as more legitimate or trustworthy than others. All nuclear-armed states, regardless of their political or ideological alignments, contribute to the global risk of nuclear war. Their reliance on nuclear deterrence as a security strategy is inherently flawed and unacceptably dangerous.

The path to global security must include the complete abolition of nuclear weapons, ensuring that no state has the ability to hold humanity hostage to the threat of total annihilation. The time for decisive action is now. And it involves everyone in this room.

Thank you.



**Statement of H.E. Archbishop Ettore Balestrero,
Apostolic Nuncio, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations and
other International Organizations in Geneva, at the Second Preparatory Committee
of the 2026 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear
Weapons
Geneva, 23 July 2024**

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, my Delegation wishes to congratulate you on your appointment and to thank you for the consultations that you have conducted in preparation for this important gathering.

The Holy See is deeply concerned about the existential threat that nuclear proliferation and nuclear weapons continue to pose. This threat is further exacerbated by the tense strategic environment and the ongoing modernization and expansion of nuclear arsenals, which render the practice of nuclear deterrence less stable and increasingly worrisome. It is imperative to recognize that nuclear arsenals, as instruments of military strategy, inherently bear active disposition for use.

Pope Francis has recently reaffirmed the “immorality of manufacturing and possessing nuclear weapons”¹. It is a matter of concern that there is a continuing growth in military expenditure related to nuclear weapons and that there is an increase in rhetoric and threats about their possible use, including low-yield tactical weapons. Such threats are an affront to humanity as a whole, as a nuclear war would undoubtedly result in an irreparable and devastating impact, with unparalleled loss of human lives.

In this regard, the ongoing armed conflicts, especially the war in Ukraine, serve as a stark reminder that the search for dialogue must be relentless and that the possession of “nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction represent a multiplier of risk that offers only an illusion of peace”².

Mr. Chair,

The Holy See would like to contribute to this meeting by proposing three areas of reflection:

1. Non-proliferation and disarmament, in addition to being legal obligations, are ethical responsibilities towards all members of the human family. During his visit to the Atomic Bomb Hypocenter Park in Nagasaki, Pope Francis asserted that “Peace and international stability are incompatible with attempts to build upon the fear of mutual destruction or the threat of total annihilation. They can be achieved only on the basis of a global ethic of solidarity and cooperation in the service of a future shaped by interdependence and shared responsibility in the whole human family of today and tomorrow”³.
2. In light of the prevailing tensions and of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would be inflicted upon humanity from the use of nuclear weapons, it is urgent to resume sincere dialogue with a view to establishing binding limitations on all nuclear weapons and delivery systems on a global scale. In this regard, the Holy See calls upon all nuclear weapons

¹ Pope Francis, *Address to the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See*, 8 January 2024.

² Pope Francis, *Letter to the Bishop of Hiroshima on the occasion of the G7 Summit*, 19 May 2023.

³ Pope Francis, *Address on Nuclear Weapons, Atomic Bomb Hypocenter Park, Nagasaki*, 24 November 2019.

States to engage in negotiations with a view to reducing their stockpiles in accordance with their obligations under Art. VI. Inaction, combined with the ongoing expansion and modernization of nuclear arsenals, has the potential to increase the risks associated with proliferation.

The advancement of delivery systems and cybertechnologies has further complicated the risks posed by the possession of nuclear weapons, including towards inadvertent escalation. Such advancements (e.g. hypersonic platforms, evasive trajectories and submarine drones) result in the reduction in decision-making and response times and thereby increase the likelihood of nuclear use. The introduction of cybertechnologies into nuclear command, control, and communications systems, early warning systems and launch systems renders these systems vulnerable. This becomes particularly worrisome when autonomous components are integrated into nuclear weapons systems⁴.

3. There are enormous costs associated with nuclear weapons that affect the global common good. For example, the human and financial resources that are currently being allocated to modernization efforts could be redirected towards development projects that address the urgent and universal needs affecting the poor and most vulnerable populations. In this regard, the Holy See reiterates its long-time proposal to establish a global fund, financed with portions of the money otherwise spent on weapons and other military expenditures. This fund would aim to eradicate hunger and promote development in the most impoverished countries⁵, thus contributing to the realization of a culture of life and of peace.

Mr. Chair,

Against this bleak background, the Holy See wishes to reiterate its firm conviction that a world free of nuclear weapons is both possible and necessary. The Holy See also encourages further exploration of how the NPT and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons can be mutually reinforcing, including in the areas of nuclear disarmament verification, environmental rehabilitation, and assistance to victims.

To sustain a world without nuclear weapons, rigorous verification and compliance measures are needed, requiring sincere cooperation among all members of the human family. In this regard, the Holy See wishes to stress the valuable role of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, which for the past decade has worked to identify technical challenges and possible solutions associated with verification in a collaborative spirit between nuclear and non-nuclear weapons States.

Mr. Chair,

In the midst of the tragedy of ongoing armed conflicts, we must regain the awareness that we are members of one and the same human family. The laudable goals of non-proliferation and of disarmament enshrined in the NPT can only be achieved through its universal and honest implementation in letter and spirit.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

⁴. Cf. Position Paper of the Holy See “Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: ethical dimensions and security challenges”, submitted to the Tenth NPT Review Conference, 27 July 2022.

⁵. Cf. Pope Paul VI, *Encyclical Letter Populorum Progressio*, n. 51.



FIGHT TONIGHT, BLIGHT TOMORROW: NATO CONSOLIDATES AMIDST CLIMATE BREAKDOWN

Andi Davis
Rethinking Security
August 5th, 2024
Summary

- The Center for Strategic Studies' (CSIS) June report, **Is NATO Ready for War?**, assesses NATO's defense efforts since Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It suggests progress in defence spending, forward defense, high-readiness forces, command and control, collective defense exercises, and Sweden-Finland integration.
- While the report concludes that NATO may be ready to “fight tonight”, it questions “whether it is ready to fight—and thereby deter—a protracted war”.
- A report titled **Climate Damage Caused by Russia’s War in Ukraine** by the Initiative on Greenhouse Gas Accounting of War (IGGAW) maps out the climate cost of the first two years of Russia’s war on Ukraine.
- The war has cost at least 175 million tonnes of carbon dioxide, a surge in emissions from direct warfare (51.6 million tonnes), landscape fires (22.9 million), rerouted flights (24 million), forced migration (3.3 million) and leaks caused by military attacks on fossil fuel infrastructure (17.2 million), as well as the future carbon cost of reconstruction (56 million). This was greater than the annual greenhouse gas emissions generated by the Netherlands.
- The IGGAW report, calculated the social cost of carbon as \$185 for every ton of greenhouse gas emissions, estimates that Russia should face a \$32 billion climate reparations bill from its first 24 months of war.
- Official reporting of military emissions is voluntary and data can be extremely patchy or non-existent due to military secrecy.
- A study by Scientists for Global Responsibility and CEOBS in 2022 found that militaries account for almost 5.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions annually, which is more than the aviation and shipping industries combined.





FIGHT TONIGHT, BLIGHT TOMORROW: NATO CONSOLIDATES AMIDST CLIMATE BREAKDOWN

- The CSIS report says that a long-term conflict with Russia would inevitably expose gaps that will require allies “to spend more, boost industrial capacity, address critical capability gaps and bolster resilience”.
- This increased demand for explosives, steel and other carbon-intensive materials will inevitably lead to more military emissions
- Despite the NATO Secretary General recently acknowledging that NATO is already “by far the strongest military force in the world”, representing “50% of the world’s military might”, this demand to further strengthen deterrence largely stems from growing concerns about real and perceived threats from Russia and China.
- Stronger deterrence is NATO’s default response since it is credited with avoiding a major East-West conflict during the Cold War. But a strategy of deterrence, and especially nuclear deterrence, is not without major risks—including the existential risk of nuclear war.
- **Here are just four ideas for moving the dial in the direction of preparing for peace:**
 - **1)** Instead of rushing towards a new nuclear arms race, existing plans to upgrade nuclear weapons need to be rethought. Negotiations to eliminate ICBMs, for example, may be the easiest and fastest way to reduce the overall danger of nuclear war, perhaps as part of mutual minimum deterrence strategies.
 - **2)** NATO should look to collaborate with China to discuss the risks of artificial intelligence (AI) and the creation of some form of global AI governance.
 - **3)** The urgency of the climate crisis makes it vital that the military emissions gap is plugged.
 - **4)** NATO member states could work together to support and shape the UN Secretary General’s ambitious, unifying ‘New Agenda for Peace’ at the United Nations.

To read the full article, click [here](#).





UPCOMING PLOUGHSHARES EVENTS

- On Wednesday, September 25th, **Ploughshares Calgary Society** will host **Madelyn McKay and Parfaite Ntahuba** at Parkdale United Church. This in-person event will start at 7:00pm. More details to come soon.
- On Wednesday, October 9th, **Ploughshares Calgary Society** will host **Relsey Gallagher**, a researcher from Project Ploughshares. This event will take place on Zoom. More details to come soon.
- On Wednesday, November 13th, **Ploughshares Calgary Society** will host **Lorraine Kinsman**. More details to come soon.

