

TEGENTOP VOOR VREDE EN RECHTVAARDIGHEID

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REPORT

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Workshop: Nuclear arms in Europe



Speakers:

Sophie Bolt, Campaign on Nuclear Disarmament

Tom Sauer, Universiteit Antwerpen

Dirk Hoogenkamp, NVMP-Artsen voor vrede

Moderator:

Marianne Begemann, secretary NVMP-Artsen voor vrede

Moderator Marianne Begemann introduces the speakers



Sophie Bolt, is General Secretary of CND

Sophie has over 30 years' campaigning experience and has been part of CND's leadership for over 20 years. She has a Masters degree from Goldsmiths College, University of London.



CND campaigns non-violently to achieve British nuclear disarmament - to get rid of the Trident nuclear weapons system and stop its replacement. But CND recognize that Britain's nuclear weapons are only a small part of the problem, so they also campaign for a global nuclear weapons ban. Other campaigns include opposition to NATO and its nuclear policies and to nuclear power, and for the

prevention and cessation of wars in which nuclear weapons may be used, as well as encouraging non-military solutions to conflict.

Prof. Tom Sauer is professor of international politics at the University of Antwerp



As a professor of International Politics (University of Antwerp), Tom Sauer trains the diplomats of tomorrow. He has conducted research at the prestigious Harvard University and written books on geopolitics, missile defense and nuclear weapons. After the announcement that the EU wants to rearm itself for an additional 800 billion euros, he sneered in an opinion piece that Europe has lost its way. He has been getting worked up about the 'one-sided war discourse' in the media for some time now. Tom Sauer, professor against the tide: 'NATO should have been dismantled long ago'!

Dirk Hoogenkamp, works as doctor in geriatric medicine, he is also a board member of NVMP-Artsen voor vrede



NVMP – Doctors for Peace is the Dutch branch of the international organization International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), and was founded in 1969. The IPPNW is a worldwide organization of doctors in more than 60 countries that received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985. The NVMP campaigns for a world without nuclear weapons and other forms of violence, and is active in informing the public and stimulating action.

Sophie Bolt

The threat of nuclear weapons being used in war is accelerating. The British government is contributing to that threat. It is amongst the most hawkish of the NATO members, recklessly whipping up tensions over Ukraine to justify large increases in military spending. They were pushing the use of long-range missiles while Russia had threatened to use its nuclear missiles if these long-range missiles were used. They took the risk of getting on the edge of a nuclear war. A very dangerous situation.



This huge increase of military spending was felt in the UK by an increase of cost of living, for example the rise of energy costs. No more cheap Russian gas replaced by expensive liquid gas from the US. This caused the tide turning against a long-lasting war in Ukraine. All this spending is not so much about safety but more about cooperating with Trumps military agenda.

And this agenda is about NATO's shift towards Asia, a process that has been going on for over a decade. Over 100.000 US-troops and over 400 US-bases now encircle China. The goal is to stop China's economic development and its global influence. They see China as the only competitor of the US that can reshape international order. This was already US-foreign policy far before Trump got into office.

Britain's recently published Strategic Defense Review states a move to warfighting readiness in which using nuclear weapons is central. Whilst replacing its current nuclear submarines, it is now seeking to buy US nuclear-capable F35A jets to more closely integrate into NATO's nuclear mission. This increases the likelihood of US 'tactical' nuclear weapons, the B-61, being stationed at US air base Lakenheath. And these weapons are far more powerful than the ones used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki but are presented as weapons that could actually be used on the battlefield.

Meanwhile we have the very generous nuclear sharing proposal of French president Macron which could result in nuclear capable jets to be stationed in Poland near the Russian border.

Now we see that Trump involves in the war against Iran in order to reassure US global dominance of the Middle-East. The threat of nuclear weapons being used in the war against Iran might be even greater than in the Ukraine-war. Nuclear weapons states could be easily drawn into this conflict.

However, Trump is deeply unpopular in Britain and seen as incredibly dangerous. Britain's nuclear and military subordination to the US is creating political tensions. Growing fears of nuclear war is increasing opposition to US nuclear weapons being based in Britain. On top of this, with worsening living standards under a Labour government, there is little public support for increasing military spending at the expense of public services. This is creating greater opportunities to build an alternative to war and austerity. Given how serious the challenges are

it is vital that the peace movement unites and coordinates across Europe and globally.



Tom Sauer

Good morning. The world is in turbulence. As a result, the global nuclear arms control, nonproliferation and disarmament regime that already was in crisis before the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East is experiencing even more troubled waters. As a result, the odds are that from the beginning of 2026 when New START will expire there will be no strategic bilateral nuclear arms control treaty between the US and Russia left, something we have not experienced since the beginning of the 1970s. That means that both the US and Russia from next year onwards will be free to upload nuclear weapons with more warheads and build more nuclear weapons systems without any bilateral verification, in contrast to the past decades. Worst-case thinking and lobbying by the military industrial complex will probably lead to such a scenario. By the way, the overall

numbers of nuclear weapons in the world is already going up since a couple of years after having diminished gradually for decades; that has mainly to do with the build-up by China.



But my focus today is on Europe. Here in Europe, much will depend on the outcome of the war in Ukraine, a topic that I will talk about later on today.

As you probably know, there are 100 US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, more in particular in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy and Turkey. There are rumors that they may return to the UK after they had left the UK in 2008. The B-61 free-fall bombs in Europe are being modernized, replaced by newer, more accurate pieces. According to one source the new bombs have already arrived. In case of war, these bombs will have to be dropped by our F-16s or the new F-35s, some of which are nuclear certified. At the NATO Summit, it will be announced that the defense expenditures will rise dramatically. The US and our own air forces expect that many more F-35s will be bought in the US.

The geopolitical circumstances make that it becomes even more difficult to send these bombs back to the US. Surveys show that the percentage of our own citizens that want them to stay grows. As a result, the peace movement that already had difficulties in convincing their governments stands nowadays for an even more difficult task.

While the US was the only NWS for a long time that had nuclear weapons stationed on other state's territory, since a couple years Russia copies US policy in Belarus. So, there are now Russian tacnukes stationed in Belarus.

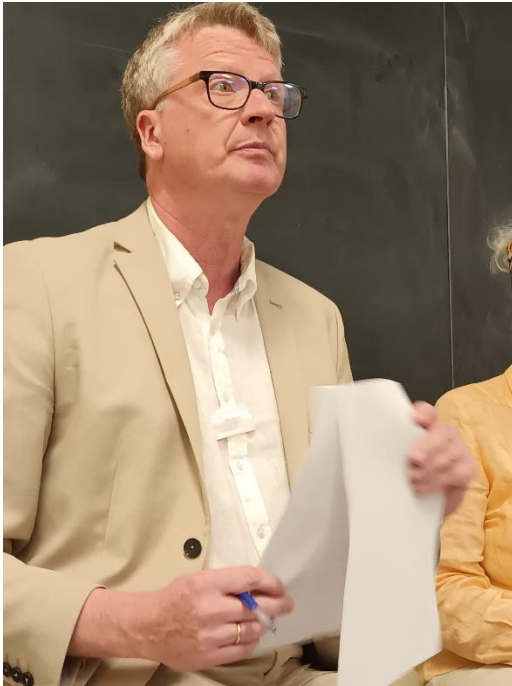
Beside the American tactical nuclear weapons in Europe and the Russian ones in Belarus there is the UK and France, which are NWS under the NPT. The UK has currently only strategic NWs on SLBMs on submarines, based in Faslane, Scotland: 225 in total. But there are rumors that it may reintroduce tactical NWs on submarines along the strategic NWs. And that it may reintroduce Dual Capable aircrafts, but both decisions have not been taken yet. The UK's arsenal is not completely independent. It relies for its missiles and submarines on the US. In exchange the British had to promise to put their NWs under NATO flag as well.

France – the only EU country with NW left - has 300 NW both on submarines and on aircraft. France's arsenal in contrast to the UK is independent; it does not rely on the US; France does neither want others to have a say in its nuclear operations, so France is the only NATO MS that is not member of NATO's Nuclear Planning Group.

The UK and France cooperate to a certain extent on this issue; apparently, there will be a new official declaration on this bilateral cooperation coming out soon. Which brings us to the debate about the Eurobomb.

The idea to europeanize the French (and maybe British) nuclear weapons is not new; the debate goes up and goes down; my colleague Benoit Pélopidas from Paris has called it a zombie debate. Lately, it surfaced again after the infamous Oval Office incident between President Trump and President Zelenski in February of this year, which came on top of what had already been said at the security conference in Munich. The effect on the Europeans was shock. Their interpretation was that the Trump administration would halt its support for Ukraine, so that Europe would stand alone in helping Ukraine. In addition, the Trump administration was known of not being a fan of the Atlantic Alliance; there

were and still are rumors that it may withdraw all or a substantial part of the US remaining troops in Europe. While the Trump administration has never threatened to withdraw the US tacnukes, some Europeans became afraid of that scenario as well. In short, the trust of the Europeans in the US and more in particular in the Trump administration was and still is at an all time low. In short, NATO is not doing well, whatever NATO SG Rutte will say the coming days.



All that made that the idea of the Eurobomb resurfaced, and that for the first time ever high-level politicians spoke out in favor: Friedrich Merz, at that time still candidate for the office of chancellor in Germany, but also the Polish President, the Swedish Prime Minister, the Belgian Prime Minister, and more. In previous years, they did not do so, being afraid that such a debate would stimulate the Americans to withdraw the US tacnukes out of Europe. Now, this reluctance was clearly gone.

President Macron who is the main proponent of the idea of the europeanization of the French nuclear weapons, and 'strategic autonomy' in general, and who had already spoken out in favor of END in Europe before repeated his offer, although it is still not very much clear what he concretely wants to offer. In the past, he and also previous French presidents said that the French national interests cannot be regarded separately from the national interests of the other EU Member States, and that he wanted to have a so-called strategic dialogue on this issue with the Europeans. That is happening discretely behind the scenes,

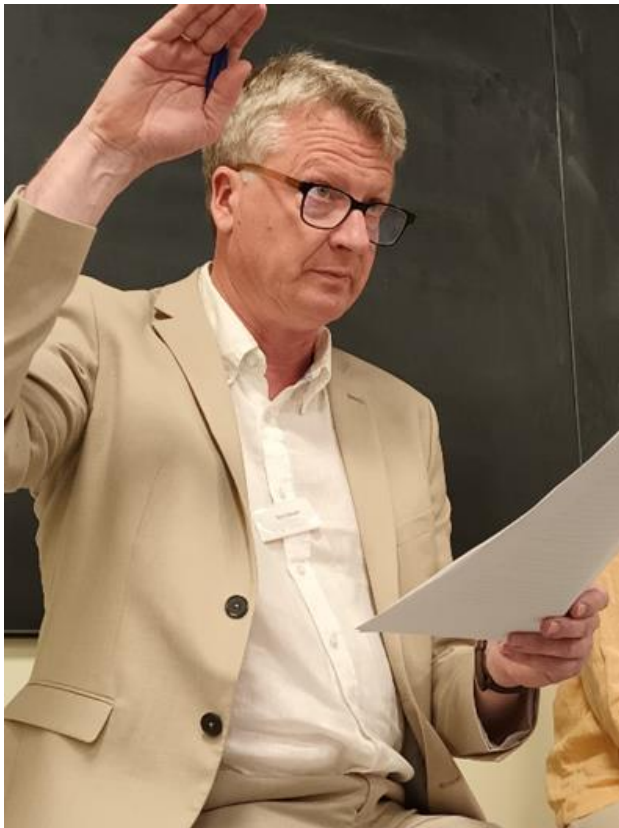
and at Track 1.5 levels, apparently. He also invited the other European states to participate in a French nuclear exercise. Italy did.

Further possible steps in the future are: placing French nuclear aircraft in other EU MS, although that seems unlikely in the short and medium term; maybe more likely is that Germany and maybe other EU MS will co-finance the French NWs, although it remains unclear to what extent they are willing to do so knowing very well that the decision to use these nuclear weapons will be taken by France alone. A complete EU bomb is extremely unlikely, except in case of the end of NATO and intensified EU defense integration.

My own assessment is that this idea of the europeanization of the French and maybe British nuclear weapons is a dangerous evolution that at least goes against the spirit of the NPT. The NWS are supposed to delegitimize and disarm their nuclear arsenals under the NPT. The NWS are more and more being criticized within the NPT framework by the Global South because of END and nuclear sharing. By europeanizing the French (and maybe British) nuclear weapons, the Europeans will attract even more criticism from the Global South, and the NPT will suffer even more.

Furthermore, it would be ironic that France that in the past did not want to shelter under the American nuclear umbrella because it found that not “credible”, now wants the Europeans to shelter under its own umbrella. Why would that be more credible ?

Because of the general distrust in the US, some allies are even thinking about acquiring their own nuclear weapons. Allies such as South Korea, Poland and to a lesser extent Japan and Germany are trying to get better reassurances from the US and are thinking about a plan B in case these reassurances are not coming. Both South Korea and Poland would like to see American tactical nuclear weapons to be installed in their countries; if not, they may build their own nuclear weapons. If Ukraine is not allowed NATO membership (and the odds are that that is not going to happen), the risk exists that it acquires its own nuclear weapons; remember that Ukraine gave up the Soviet NW on its territory in 1994 in exchange for security guarantees mentioned in the Budapest Memorandum; the latter, the Ukrainians later found out, were not legally binding.



Which brings us back to the war in Ukraine in which nuclear rethoric by Russia has been abundant. People arund the world, but esp in Europe, were scared of nuclear war at the start of the war in Febr 2022. In Sept/Oct 2022, when Russia was losing, there was apparently talk in Russia to use a tactical NW in Ukraine. US intelligence estimated at that time that the chances were 50/50, which is more than in the Cuban missile crisis.

If Russia loses the war, I am personally convinced that a Russian attack with a tactical NW in Ukraine becomes a real risk. Luckily, although this is not the politically correct word, Russia is not losing. But if Russia start losing again, it will depend on how the West will react to such use whether the world as such survives this war. The stakes, ladies and gentlemen, are gigantic.

How to survive as an anti-nuclear movement in these turbulent times ? First of all, by being aware that this is and will remain a long struggle. It started in the 1950s, and it will end when the last nuclear weapon will be dismantled. Second, by seeing the positive signs as well. The most positive element of the last years is the conclusion and entry into force of the TPNW, which is nothing less than revolutionary. This treaty negotiated by two thirds of all states in the world make nuclear weapons for the first time illegal, at least for those that have signed. 50%

of all states in the world have signed the treaty. This number should further go up in the coming years. You can help lobbying.

But the most important variable at play is the war in Ukraine. If this war comes to an end, something that I believe is not only desirable but also feasible (and I again refer to my talk this afternoon and to my Dutch-speaking book *De Strijd voor Vrede*, of which a fourth and updated edition recently was published), then new opportunities will arise for nuclear arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation. Arms control, just like in the Cold War, can be regarded as a confidence and security building measure, helping to improve the overall political relationship.

The Russian tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus may make it easier - negotiation-wise - to get rid of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. Russia and the US can reciprocate each other.

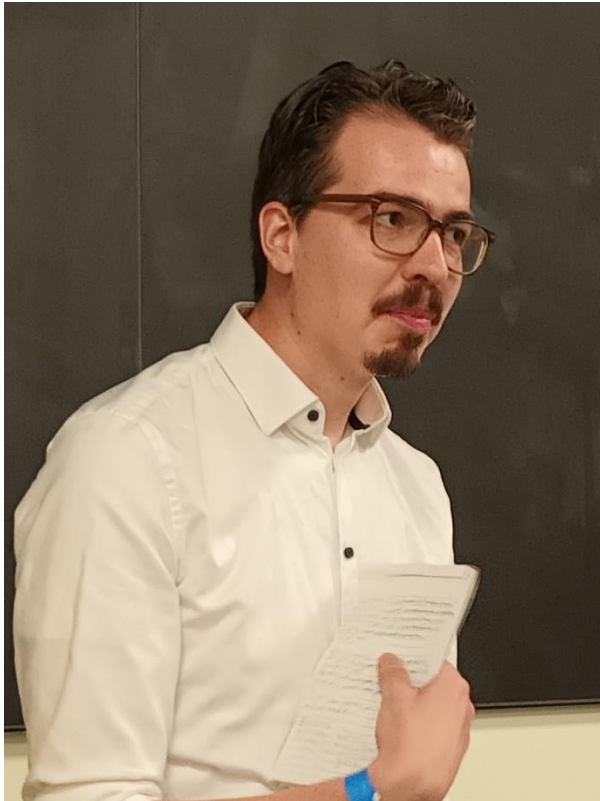
The same applies to the planned installation of US intermediate range conventional missiles in Germany from 2026 onwards, as agreed upon between the US and Germany last year. A compromise could be found whereby these missiles are not installed in exchange for moving similar Russian systems behind the Ural.

The end of the war will probably also lead to better relations between the US and Russia, which on its turn may facilitate the conclusion of new agreements both with respect to strategic and tactical nuclear weapons. Of course, all this requires a sustainable peace agreement between Russia and Ukraine/the West. In addition to a decent peace agreement, it will require political will, and political will require lobbying by civil society, by peace movements, by you.

Dirk Hoogenkamp

As a doctor we try to do what we do is based on evidence and knowledge. However when it comes to members of parliament we have a different situation. I'll give you some examples of the Dutch situation, but they are also similar to other European countries. Just to show you that if you are planning as a policy maker on nuclear war or war expenditure it doesn't matter that you haven't any

knowledge on the topic. There is a culture of 'not knowing' that is even promoted.



A first example that I'd like to give you is about the B61-bombs that we already talked about. They are as 'nuclear sharing' in countries like the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Italy and Turkey. They are now having a 'live-extension program'. But in fact they are not extending the life of the bombs, they are being replaced by newer models. There is a question or this is allowed under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Nuclear sharing should not be allowed, it is in fact proliferation. The new B61-bombs have more capabilities to be used under the new F-35 bombers. So herewith our country continues its long-term commitment to nuclear sharing. Article VI of the NPT tells that all members of the treaty must work to Global Zero. Long-term commitment to nuclear sharing doesn't fit to that. NATO also says that as long as there are nuclear weapons they will rely on nuclear deterrence and we will remain a nuclear alliance. So its quite simple to see that NATO is not motivated at all to work on nuclear disarmament.

There was a debate about this in Dutch parliament . There the lack of knowledge, the illiteracy when it comes to nuclear weapons, became quite clear. For example the NSC (New Social Contract party) boosted itself that the international order of law is very important, but their parliamentarian Mr. Kahraman said 'I

know the NPT is about nuclear weapons and such...but I don't know what's in it' (!) . Paternotte a member of the Democrats 66 said 'Nuclear arms are only owned to deter the others of not using their nuclear weapons. That's why only Japan was bombed....' He was trying to say: if only Japan had nuclear weapons Hiroshima and Nagasaki would not have been bombed. So in his logic the world is a safer place if every country has its own nuclear weapons. Holding guns against each other apparently creates a stable society. Off course not, having these nuclear weapons means it can go wrong any time. Not just because 'if you have them you can use them' but also because of accidents with nuclear weapons that are on high alert. And accidents happen.

The second part of this debate it moved towards Eurobomb talks. First about trying to get under the French nuclear umbrella but also if the EU would be able to make their own nuclear bomb. Off course this is not allowed under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. All this time the Dutch government has said it won't join the TPNW (Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons), the only treaty banning production and testing of nuclear weapons, because the nuclear weapon states haven't joined it yet and they are in the Non-Proliferation Treaty and we don't want anything that could harm the NPT. But suddenly we are thinking of blowing up the NPT ourselves by getting our own nuclear weapon.

A last example that I would like to give you is about the World Health Assembly , a meeting where all countries that join the World Health Organization meet together. The Netherlands was present and decided not to vote in favor of this special item on the agenda that was an update of the WHO-report on the effects of Nuclear War. Those earlier reports are from 1983 and 1987. Since then the WHO never got a mandate again to update these reports. Although there's so much new knowledge and secret documents about nuclear tests. And we also know so much more about the climate consequences of nuclear war which could lead to a nuclear winter, the starvation of billions of people and the end of humanity. All new knowledge that we have but is not brought together in a new WHO-report. Many NATO-countries voted against, or in the case of the Netherlands abstained, this update-request. When asked for an explanation why our country didn't vote in favor we only got a response that didn't say anything. So there was in fact no explanation which I think fits in this 'Agnotology', Pelopidas culture of knowing nothing, a culture where not knowing something is

promoted. Where the truth doesn't really matter, the story is more important. And science is not part of that. It creates a room for opportunist leaders who do not have any accountability. Therefore it's an important duty to us, that are being informed, that we share our knowledge. That there are nuclear weapons in the Netherlands, that there are still more than 12.000 nuclear weapons worldwide. Our battle is against this lack of knowledge and telling people about the dangers of nuclear weapons. Once you know that you live in a nuclear age it becomes quite clear what our task should be. I was in Oslo when the Nobel peace prize was awarded to Nihon Hidankyo and the survivors of the nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. By modern standards these were very small nuclear bombs.

We must get rid of these nuclear bombs before they get rid of us.



Discussion

Question: I have a question for Dirk Hoogenkamp I would like to know more about the effects of Depleted Uranium used in ammunition and in the shields of Abraham tanks. Which is prohibited as a crime against humanity, we know it has harmed a lot of Italian soldiers. So could you tell more about the harmful effects?

Dirk: Depleted Uranium (DU) is a waste- or byproduct of either enriching uranium or making nuclear weapons. It's been used on tips of ammunition, because it's a very heavy, dense metal so it has a very high penetrative power. You can go through armor of tanks with this kind of ammunition. The problem is that by using these bullets is that you are spreading depleted uranium through the area. But still there is much unknown about the harmful effects. We have a colleague that has done a lot of research in Iraq where depleted uranium was used a lot by the US-army. Although the report isn't finished yet there seems to be a link between the DU being used and birth defects in the local population.



Marianne: it's also a big problem if DU gets into the groundwater where it spreads even further. Most recently it was used in Ukraine where US and British DU-ammunition was used.

Question: There's a lot of talk recently about the use of AI in weaponry. What does this mean for nuclear weapons and AI? Are there any additions or support that AI could give?

Tom: AI works also in cyber and other weapon systems such as hypersonic missiles. The question is what are the effects of these new weapon systems on strategic stability? There is a consensus in the literature that these new weapon systems are de-stabilizing. That's no good news for the nuclear weapon states and the rest of the world. They know of this de-stabilizing effect and will put their, nuclear, weapons on higher alert. That means also more risks of accidents. But there is also an interesting side point, that AI and big data will have a revolutionary effect on the nuclear submarines. These submarines are seen as invulnerable and form the basis for a second strike capability. But if there is more data available and we will see that these submarines can be found in the ocean then this second strike capability is gone. If that will happen this will be revolutionary for the nuclear era. The nuclear weapon states will then have a huge problem.

I've written a piece about this some time ago where I argue to replace nuclear weapons by some of these new weapon systems, the conventional hypersonic missiles. I know it's not an ideal solution for the peace-movement but I think that anything that is not-nuclear is better. Strategic defense based on hypersonic is better than based on nuclear. Because at least the scenario of a global nuclear war is eliminated. Also this strategic conventional defense is more credible because who believes that someone would use nuclear weapons?

Marianne: in this case of nuclear deterrence you must first look at an alternative that can replace it. In choosing between two bad things it's important to choose the least worse.

Question: We would like to see the elimination of all nuclear weapons, but that will not happen tomorrow. What could be the first steps a country could take to reduce to tensions that we now see. For example would a policy of 'No first use' be a helpful step? Or further bilateral reduction treaties? We see China and a growing arsenal of nuclear weapons. Trump has always said that talks about nuclear arms reduction had to start between the US, Russia and China, are

possibilities there? What do you see as important campaign steps towards nuclear abolition?



Sophie: There is definitely a demand to go back to international frameworks where there are rules about disarmament. The threat of nuclear weapons being used is escalated. Trump is actually trashing treaties like for example the 'Iran-deal'. The gloves are off now and people really feel the threat of nuclear arms being used. We need to look at arms control-treaties again. The New Start treaty must certainly continue after 2026. How can we make this happen? I see there are shifts in public opinion and that is very important. Protests and demonstrations are also essential in this. They do have effects. What can help is the economic situations which is so dire while at the same time governments spend billions of dollars on weapons systems. When these protests get going you can go to international frameworks and treaties.

Question/remark: People don't care about nukes anymore, they think these are things that happened a long time ago. We are from Brussels and are part of a Hibakusha collective that has a Hibakusha park in Mons. Outside of Japan there are none of these parks. Every year we have a ceremony on the 9th of August to remember the Atomic bombs and what the survivors, the Hibakusha, stand for. A world without nuclear weapons. I would promote that every country would build its own Hibakusha park. A place where you'll learn about the horrors of nukes.



Question: For Dirk, what is it about the relation between the WHO and the IAEA is there a reason why they haven't done a new report about the effects of nuclear weapons? Further for the other speakers, there have been a lot of proliferation-violations of the NPT, even under Obama, who enforces the articles of the NPT? How can we return to an era of treaties and rules when there's nobody to enforce them?

Dirk: This question needs some explanation first. In the United Nations there are certain pillars, the first committee is about safety and security, the others are about socio-economic development. The IAEA is the International Atomic Energy Agency that's been formed by the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to control that non-nuclear weapon states are not building nuclear weapons. The NPT itself has also a multiple pillar structure. The first articles are about non-proliferation and getting to global zero. But there are also articles about peaceful uses of nuclear energy. So the NPT is in fact not really a treaty but more of a 'deal'. A deal between the states that have nuclear weapons and the non-nuclear weapon states. They say 'as long as you don't get nuclear weapons you get access to our knowledge about peaceful uses of nuclear energy'. This is of course a disbalance and that is why 50 years later we do not see a decrease of nuclear weapons under the NPT.

Here you also have the problem that the IAEA has to control nuclear proliferation but has also the role of promoting nuclear energy. The IAEA is placed in the first

committee of the UN, so security issues, and therefore has a veto role in what happens is the other socio-economic committees. So when the WHO wants to have a study done the IAEA can veto it.

However in the WHO the mandate was given for this new study with an overwhelming majority. This study is broad and not only about the effects of nuclear war but also studies the effects of developing, testing and owning nuclear weapons. This constant readiness for nuclear war, the Doomsday machine, is already killing people through climate and habitat destruction.

Tom: I'd like to answer the second question on enforcement. This is a difficult one because we don't have a world-government. So rules are sometimes violated. Somebody said once 'Most rules are most of the time respected by almost all people or actors'. So it's not that everybody is all of the time violating the rules. If somebody is violating the rules it should come to the UN security council. This is de facto the world government if you like. But the problem with the security council is that it has five permanent members with a veto right. And that should be changed ideally. That's something we should think about to promote.



Marianne: We should also realize there are loopholes in the NPT where nuclear powerplants could be used to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons.

Sophie:: About the hypocrisy of nuclear weapon states, that rises to an obscene level. Britain for example allows to use nuclear weapons against countries that don't have nuclear weapons. In the case of Iran basically what they are saying is, 'we have the right to have nuclear weapons and are allowed to use them against countries that don't have them in order to stop them for getting nuclear weapons'. In fact what Israel is doing is pushing Iran to rapidly develop a nuclear bomb. To prevent this we could really use a 'Middle East nuclear weapon free treaty'. That is a treaty that everybody understands and when it comes to treaties we should move in that direction.

Question: What we see in Iran now. It's the elephant in the room. No Iran war, I'm afraid that Iran's nuclear installations will be tactical nuked. And then Iran will retaliate and we don't know how that will be. We are talking about millions of deaths. We must go out on the streets and prevent that this will happen. Now look at Israel who is not part of the NPT but capable of attacking Iran with nuclear weapons. Nuclear war will lead to the end of our planet and humanity.

Dirk: The hypocrisy you are talking about is not going unnoticed, it is very, very real. It's about these original five nuclear weapon states in the UN who also have their permanent seat and their veto. Isn't this veto about 'I have nuclear weapons and if I don't get my way I will use them' ? This hypocrisy is leading to countries developing their own nuclear weapons, just because the security guarantee that is given by nuclear weapons, see for example North-Korea. This makes the world more and more an unsafe place and is pushing other countries to have nuclear weapons.

Marianne closed the meeting with the following statements:

- It is of crucial importance to share and disseminate the medical knowledge of NVMP/IPPNW about the humanitarian and environmental impact of the effects of Nuclear weapons and that all involved organizations share their knowledge .
- She invited the participants to become a friend of Artsen voor Vrede.
<https://www.nvmp.org/>

All speakers were thanked for their excellent speeches and received a can with special Palestinian olive oil and a small bag with a special Palestinian thyme mix.