



INTERACTION COUNCIL

High-Level Expert Group Meeting

Chairman's Report on the High-Level Expert Group Meeting

“Preventing Nuclear Proliferation”

**Chaired by
The Right Honourable Jean Chrétien**

**7 May 2013
Kingdom of Bahrain**

The InterAction Council has advocated for nuclear disarmament since its establishment. In 2010, the Council re-affirmed this commitment in the *Hiroshima Declaration* calling again for a world with zero nuclear weapons.

In May 2013, the InterAction Council convened a High-Level Expert Group Meeting focusing on “Preventing Nuclear Proliferation” in Manama, Bahrain. The session was chaired by former Canadian Prime Minister, Jean Chrétien.

The meeting focused on three issues: in endorsing the InterAction Council’s *Hiroshima Declaration* and its previous Final Communiqués dealing with nuclear non-proliferation it discussed how best to achieve those objectives, and it addressed the nuclear proliferation challenges pertaining to the Middle East and North Korea. In particular, the group called for immediate steps to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

In 1968, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was framed as a security treaty defining five nuclear weapons states, restricting the transfer of nuclear technologies, and committing states to nuclear disarmament. For decades, it was regarded as the cornerstone of global nuclear security. Today the treaty is coming under increasing pressure from within and outside.

North Korea withdrew from the NPT in 2003. Israel remains outside the NPT but is widely recognised to possess nuclear weapons. India and Pakistan have tested nuclear weapons and yet India has benefited from a special agreement allowing nuclear technology. Egypt and many Arab states are questioning if the NPT meets their security concerns.

Iran

The ineffectiveness of the NPT is illustrated by what is presently occurring in Iran. According to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Iran has not fully implemented its obligations under the NPT Safeguards Agreement, its Additional Protocol and relevant Security Council resolutions.

Many countries believe that the NPT has not been sufficient to prevent Iran from acquiring the capability to construct a nuclear weapon from the fruits of its civilian power program. At the same time, Iran has watched Israel, India and neighboring Pakistan acquire nuclear capabilities. It is understandable that Iran would not feel confident with the existing architecture.

Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Hosseini Khamenei recently declared a fatwa in which he stated that the stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons was not in accordance with Islam and therefore illegal in Iran. There may therefore be an opportunity to reach a diplomatic solution, which would recognise Iran's rights to peaceful use of nuclear energy and to receive technical assistance. To earn the trust of the international community in Iran's peaceful ambitions with the nuclear programme, Iran will have to fully comply with its obligations.

A Nuclear Weapons Free Middle East

In 2010 the NPT Review Conference agreed in its Action Plan on the Middle East to convene a conference on the Middle East and initiate a process aimed at achieving a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the region. Regrettably, the conference has not taken place yet, although it was announced by the United Nations, United States, Russia and United Kingdom in 2012. The conference is to be hosted by Finland and facilitated by Ambassador Jaakko Laajava. In complementing Finland on its efforts to date, the meeting noted that the conference must be organised without delay, in order to reinstate trust in the NPT regime and secure its continuance.

Korean Peninsula

The North Korean nuclear weapons program remains a matter of serious concern. As North Korea defined itself as a "nuclear weapons state" in its constitution in 2012, there is no immediate prospect that it will give up its nuclear weapons programme.

North Korea has conducted three nuclear tests since 2006, the most recent on 12 February 2013. It now asserts that it has nuclear warheads, though it is not clear if these are deployable. In January 2013, North Korea issued increasingly threatening statements,

some of which focused on a future use of a nuclear device against South Korea or the United States.

North Korea is primarily concerned with its security. Its attempts to build a nuclear arsenal are more aligned with deterring a use of force than executing its recent threats. Peaceful denuclearization of North Korea remains the goal of the international community. A comprehensive diplomatic solution, rather than resorting to the use of force or other violent measures, must be sought.

Recommendations

The High-Level Expert Group Meeting proposes that the InterAction Council reaffirm its recommendations on nuclear non-proliferation as set out in the Hiroshima Declaration and the Council's previous Final Communiqués.

Recommendations to achieve a Nuclear Weapons Free Middle East

1. The Council has previously called for the establishment of a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East. In order to secure the continuation of the NPT regime, there is now an increased urgency to take immediate steps towards establishing this zone.
2. The NPT 2010 Action Plan on the Middle East must be implemented without delay, including by convening a conference on the Middle East and by triggering a process aimed at establishing a zone free from nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. All states in the region, in particular Iran and Israel, are urged to participate in the conference.
3. Complement Finland on taking upon itself to organise the conference and urge like-minded states to lend political support to Finland in its endeavour.
4. Encourage states in the region to engage in preparatory conferences to build trust and create a framework and approach that will lead to the international adoption of the Middle East as a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Recommendations to address the situation in Iran

5. Urge Iran to fully implement its Safeguards Agreement and other obligations and to engage with the IAEA to achieve concrete results on all outstanding substantive issues, as required in the binding resolutions of the IAEA Board of Governors and the mandatory Security Council resolutions.
6. The IAEA and Iran should intensify their dialogue aimed at finalising the structured approach document.
7. Encourage fact-finding missions, by members of the IAC, the IAEA, and qualified experts to travel to countries whose compliance with the non-proliferation treaty architecture is in question.

Recommendations to address the situation on the Korean Peninsula

8. The Six-Party talks must be resumed and North Korea should be induced to abandon its nuclear ambitions by a comprehensive deal with economic incentives and disincentives, and security guarantees.
9. North Korea must fully comply with its obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions, to rejoin the NPT as a nuclear weapons free state, and fully cooperate with the IAEA.
10. Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula must be based on respect and assurances and a comprehensive deal that ties in the reduction of conventional and chemical weapons, includes credible verification, and addresses humanitarian issues.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chair

1. The Rt. Hon. Jean **Chrétien**, Co-Chairman (former Prime Minister), Canada

Secretary-General

2. Dr. Thomas **Axworthy**, President and CEO, Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation (Canada)

Invited experts

3. Prof. Nobuyasu **Abe**, Director, Centre for the Promotion of Disarmament and Non-proliferation, Japan Institute of International Affairs (Japan)
4. H. E. Mr. Abdulla Abdullatif **Abdulla**, Under-Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Bahrain)
5. Dr. Rebecca **Johnson**, Executive Director, Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy (U.K.)
6. Mr. Gholamali **Khoshroo**, Special Advisor to H.E. Mr. Seyyed Mohammad Khâtami (Iran)
7. The Most Hon. Lord Michael **Lothian**, Member, House of Lords; Chairman, Global Strategy Forum (U.K.)
8. Dr. Ahmad **Moussalli**, Professor of Political Science and Public Administration, American University of Beirut (Lebanon)
9. Dr. Alexander **Zhebin**, Director, Center for Korean Studies, Institute for Far Eastern Studies (IFES) (Russia)