

**A FAST TRACK TO ZERO NUCLEAR WEAPONS:**

**THE MIDDLE POWERS INITIATIVE AND THE NEW AGENDA COALITION**

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The Middle Powers Initiative is a network of international citizen organizations working to encourage the nuclear weapon states and their influential allies to move rapidly to eliminate nuclear weapons via practical steps including a Nuclear Weapons Convention. The New Agenda Coalition is a group of middle-ranking nations whose governments have also called for the early elimination of nuclear weapons via similar steps. The work of MPI and NAC at the United Nations and elsewhere is described, and their impact on NATO nuclear weapons policy discussed.

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                    Nuclear Weapons Convention              Middle Powers Initiative  
                    United Nations

**The Middle Powers Initiative**

Following the success of the World Court Project, its leading participants turned their attention to building pressure, particularly on the three NATO nuclear weapon states, to comply with the 8 July 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legal status of the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

Drawing upon the experience of both the World Court Project and "Ottawa Process" on banning anti-personnel landmines, in December 1997 Canadian Senator and former Disarmament Ambassador Douglas Roche received approval from the Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons to form a new network of leading international citizen organizations, which became known as the Middle Powers Initiative (MPI). In March 1998, the author was invited by Senator Roche to join MPI's International Steering Committee. Six months later, the author became Chair of MPI's Strategic Planning Committee, and was commissioned to write a Briefing Book called "Fast Track to Zero Nuclear Weapons".

MPI is a carefully focused campaign to encourage and educate the leaders of the nuclear weapon states to break free from their Cold War mindset, commit themselves to immediate practical steps which reduce nuclear dangers - including a no-first-use policy and de-alerting of all nuclear forces - and commence multilateral negotiations leading to the signing of a Nuclear Weapons Convention: that is, an enforceable global treaty like the widely-acclaimed one banning chemical weapons. MPI is helping to mobilize influential "middle-power" nations to achieve this goal by building the political will to achieve a nuclear weapon-free world. The education programmes of MPI include seminars, publications and consultations with governments and citizen organizations.

International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) became MPI's first and leading co-sponsor, and made available office space and shared use of equipment for a full-time MPI Coordinator in IPPNW's Cambridge, Massachusetts headquarters. MPI's other seven co-sponsors comprise: the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA), the International Network of Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility (INES), the International Peace Bureau (IPB), the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (NAPF), Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), the State of the World Forum (SOWF), and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). In addition, MPI has been endorsed by The Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs - its third Nobel Peace Prize laureate supporter. The prize was awarded to them and their president Sir Joseph Rotblat in 1995.

MPI is working to encourage these co-sponsors, plus their national affiliates, to bring to bear their influence, especially within the nuclear weapon states and leading anti-nuclear governments.

### **The New Agenda Coalition**

On 9 June 1998, the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, Slovenia, South Africa and Sweden launched a Joint Declaration called "Towards A Nuclear Weapon-Free World: The Need For A New Agenda". Known as the New Agenda Coalition (NAC), they criticised both the nuclear weapon states and the three nuclear weapons-capable states of India, Israel and Pakistan, and called on them all to agree to start work immediately on the practical steps and negotiations required for eliminating their nuclear arsenals.

Though the NAC's inception pre-dated the South Asian nuclear crisis, the timing was excellent. This historic development, bringing together eight courageous "middle-power" governments determined to act for humanity and the planet, posed a serious challenge to the nuclear weapon states which they could not ignore. The NAC - drawn from nearly every continent, and independent of the Cold War blocs - represents the overwhelming majority of states which have clearly lost patience with the lack of progress towards a nuclear weapon-free world. More than this, it consists of states which have forsworn nuclear weapons, have shown leadership on disarmament issues, and have good relations with the nuclear weapon states.

The Joint Declaration embodied a way to move gradually from the current unstable, unsustainable and discriminatory non-proliferation regime to a more secure world free of the threat of nuclear annihilation. The NAC therefore decided to incorporate its Declaration into a UN resolution, which was introduced at the 1998 UN General Assembly Disarmament Session.

### **MPI's Response**

The dramatic launch of the NAC - planning for which was completely unknown to MPI - meant that MPI's initial aim had been achieved almost a year sooner than it expected. Its immediate priority, therefore, became to help mobilise civil society and governments in support of the NAC. In early July 1998, Senator Roche led an MPI delegation to Dublin and Stockholm for consultations with officials in the Irish and Swedish Foreign Ministries, out of which came a letter establishing an informal association with MPI from the Foreign Ministers of the two leading NAC members.

MPI then decided to focus on the following:

- \* Strengthening support for the NAC's UN resolution.
- \* Campaigning for changes to NATO's nuclear policy.
- \* Ensuring survival of the NPT.
  
- \* Facilitating strategy consultations.

### **Strengthening Support for the NAC's UN Resolution**

#### *The 1998 UN General Assembly*

In October 1998 the NAC, reduced to seven with the loss of Slovenia following NATO pressure, introduced a resolution in the UN General Assembly incorporating its agenda. Introduced by Ireland and co-sponsored by 34 states, Draft Resolution L.48/Rev.1 encapsulated the Joint Declaration. Its centrepiece was Operative Paragraph 1, which called upon the nuclear weapon states "to demonstrate an unequivocal commitment to the speedy and total elimination of their respective nuclear weapons and without delay to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to the elimination of these weapons, thereby fulfilling their obligations under Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)."

L.48, probably the most significant disarmament resolution to be adopted at the UN in 1998, succeeded in its primary aim of securing majority support. The first vote in the First (Disarmament) Committee on 13 November was carried by 97 votes to 19, with 32 abstentions and 37 not voting. In addition the resolution engaged the nuclear weapon states, although not as sympathetically as had been hoped. Most significantly, it stimulated an internal NATO debate on nuclear weapons policy.

In the UN debate the US, UK and France gave detailed responses to the resolution and the steps it proposed, indicating that they saw it as a serious initiative. However, all three plus Russia rejected the steps proposed. India and Pakistan were also opposed because the resolution called for universal adherence to the NPT.

The UK objected that the resolution was "incompatible with the maintenance of a credible minimum deterrent." NAC member Mexico boldly retorted that it was "not intended to be compatible with nuclear deterrence, as the policy of deterrence is outmoded, inconsistent with NPT obligations for nuclear disarmament, and must go." Despite significant softening of the text (including reducing reference to no-first-use to merely an examination of "further interim measures"), the core of the resolution proved to be incompatible with the continued insistence by the NATO nuclear weapon states that nuclear weapons are "essential" to their security.

In their Explanations of Vote, the US and France also cited nuclear deterrence doctrine for opposing it. The US Ambassador drew in NATO: "Along with our

allies we reviewed it (nuclear deterrence doctrine) recently and concluded that *it should remain the basis of our defense.*" He then candidly revealed the US position on the World Court Advisory Opinion when he added: "Let me be clear: you will not make nuclear disarmament occur faster by *suggesting that a fundamental basis of our national security for more than fifty years is illegitimate.*" France (calling the resolution "nefarious") stated that it called into question the principle of nuclear deterrence, which underpinned NATO doctrine and was "*fundamental to French security*" [my emphases]. Russia, driven by NATO expansion and its collapsing conventional military strength to rely increasingly on its nuclear arsenal, agreed. On the other hand, China called on the other nuclear weapon states to abandon deterrence doctrine.

Traditionally, NATO members oppose resolutions which might impact on NATO nuclear policy (an exception was the UN resolution "Follow-up to the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on the threat or use of nuclear weapons" in which Denmark, Iceland and Norway abstained). The NAC hoped that some NATO states might abstain or even support its resolution. Canada was reviewing its nuclear weapons policy in light of the World Court Advisory Opinion. Germany had just had a change in government to a coalition of Social Democrats and Greens, both of which in opposition had called for changes in nuclear policy.

The US, UK and France, fearing there might be a "break in the ranks" in the Western alliance, sent demarches to NATO capitals plus Tokyo and Canberra urging them to oppose the resolution. Initial indications were that most NATO members would remain opposed, including Germany. However, the NAC and citizen groups in the NATO states, Japan and Australia did their own intensive lobbying. The NAC engaged US-allied states in discussions on the text, softening it slightly in order to encourage NATO to review its nuclear policy, but not to pre-judge such a review. The NAC also succeeded in encouraging 27 other states to co-sponsor the resolution, which gave them more political clout. In addition, citizen groups in some NAC capitals met their foreign ministers and officials to keep them strong.

Citizen groups in US-allied states publicized the NAC resolution, encouraged parliamentarians to raise the issue in parliament and met foreign ministry officials. MPI sent delegations to Canada, Germany and the Netherlands, meeting the Canadian Prime Minister, Canadian and German Foreign Ministers, and foreign ministry officials and parliamentarians of all three countries. MPI also sent delegates to Tokyo and Canberra to encourage Japan and Australia, despite their close security links with the US, to vote for the resolution. The Japanese Foreign Ministry indicated it supported "95 per cent" of the text.

Debates took place: the European Parliament adopted a supportive resolution, while in Canberra the Senate passed a motion calling for a "Yes" vote. Also in Australia, MPI helped organise the first opinion poll on nuclear weapons for thirteen years: the result - that 92 per cent of those polled wanted Australia to help negotiate a Nuclear Weapons Convention - was communicated to the Foreign Minister the day before the first vote.

Following MPI's visit to Canada, Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy let it be known that Canada would vote "Yes" if one more NATO member would join it. It then sent demarches to nine important capitals, mostly in NATO. This led to a joint abstention strategy with the newly-elected German government, which probably swayed other NATO and US-allied states. As a result Australia, Japan and all NATO countries except the US, UK, France and Turkey abstained.

The success of the NAC resolution in the First Committee gave Germany's Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer the political support to float the idea of dropping NATO's first-use policy in a Der Spiegel interview on 21 November. It also gave political backing to Canada's Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, which on 10 December made public a report calling for Canada to "argue forcefully within NATO that the present re-examination and update as necessary of the Alliance Strategic Concept should include its nuclear component."

In the final plenary vote on 4 December 1998, the UN General Assembly adopted the NAC resolution - now designated 53/77/Y - by 114 votes to 18, with 38 abstentions. The "No" voters included all the nuclear weapon states except China (which abstained) plus India, Israel and Pakistan. Among the abstainers were US allies Japan and Australia, plus all the non-nuclear NATO states except Turkey, signalling an unprecedented call for rethinking in US-allied states. Opponents of the resolution lost one vote while supporters gained 17. Most of the nations which had been absent from the First Committee but attended the General Assembly voted in favour; and none which voted in favour in the First Committee switched votes in the plenary (Armenia was the nation which switched from "No" to abstention).

#### *The 1999 UN General Assembly*

Building on this breakthrough, MPI worked closely with the NAC to prepare for the 1999 UN General Assembly, when the NAC introduced a revised version of its resolution. From 6-13 October, an MPI delegation (including the author) visited five European NATO capitals: Oslo, Berlin/Bonn, Athens, Rome and The Hague. An Aide-Memoire plus a revised edition of the Briefing Book - printed in August - were sent to the Foreign Ministers of all 12 non-nuclear NATO member states which had abstained in 1998, and provided the basis for discussions. Taking advantage of the widespread alarm within NATO that the US Senate might vote down ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) - which it did on 13 October - the MPI delegation found that, unlike the previous year, they were welcomed in each capital by Foreign Ministry officials, and thanked for their helpful contribution. MPI also sent a delegation - led by the author, and including Robert McNamara and General Lee Butler - to Tokyo just before the First Committee vote in early November.

*The First Committee Vote on the 1999 NAC Resolution.* On 9 November 1999, the UN First Committee adopted the revised NAC resolution by 90 votes to 13, with 37 abstentions. The First Committee vote in 1998 was 97-19-32. (The smaller "Yes" vote was explained by the large number of states which were absent for the vote, including some of the co-sponsors, which numbered over 60. This means that the plenary vote in early December will show a much increased "Yes" vote.) Four of the P5 - the US, Russia, the UK and France - again voted against, while China repeated its abstention. Among the 16 non-nuclear NATO members (swelled by three since last year), Turkey and the Czech Republic moved from "No" to abstention, while Hungary and Poland voted "No". Thus 14 NATO states sent a warning signal to the P3 that NATO should present a more constructive and conciliatory approach to nuclear disarmament.

In the Explanations of Vote, the UK again said the NAC resolution was incompatible with the maintenance of credible minimum deterrence. France accused the NAC of having ulterior motives in challenging the right to self-defence. The US said it had already given a "solemn undertaking" concerning Article VI of the NPT and why should it be asked to give more? (MPI's reply is that the US is hiding behind the clause in Article VI linking nuclear

disarmament with the utopian goal of complete disarmament.) Canada, which abstained, praised the resolution but added: "The nuclear-weapon states and their partners and alliances need to be engaged if the goals of the New Agenda resolution are to be achieved." Australia, which also abstained, said it did not want to challenge the sincerity of the nuclear weapon states' commitment to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. These were tacit admissions of appeasement by the US allies, just when it had been vital to register strong concern at the irresponsible policy of the US government and its accomplices in the UK and France.

By coincidence, the vote occurred on the tenth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Wall fell because enough people created a force for freedom that became unstoppable. The wall of resistance to nuclear weapons abolition will also crumble when the non-nuclear allies of the US demonstrate the courage that we must give them. Already there are signs, in the speculation that US tactical nuclear weapons will be removed from seven NATO countries in Europe, that the NATO leadership is feeling this pressure. It is possible that a deal has been done to link this with no movement from abstention.

### **Campaigning for Changes to NATO's Nuclear Policy**

The vote on the 1998 NAC resolution demonstrated that NATO was no longer speaking with one voice on the question of nuclear weapons. Because of this, the NATO nuclear states agreed at NATO's Washington Summit in April 1999 to allow a review of its nuclear policy.

MPI is working with other citizen organizations, parliamentarians and government officials in non-nuclear NATO states to build support for substantive changes to NATO's nuclear posture. This is because current NATO doctrine is immoral, dangerous, irresponsible and unlawful in its affirmation of first use and nuclear deterrence theory, with no acknowledgement of its members' obligations under Article VI of the NPT. This issue has ramifications for Japan and Australia, where MPI is also promoting debate.

#### *Current NATO Policy Implications*

NATO's current policy for its non-nuclear members relies on the US, supported by France and the UK, to use their nuclear weapons to deter any attack with chemical, biological or even conventional weapons. This policy:

- \* *Threatens the survival of the NPT.* NATO's reaffirmed insistence that its nuclear weapons are "essential" is the main driving force behind the current breakdown of the non-proliferation regime.
- \* *Carries a high risk of failure.* There are growing doubts about the effectiveness of nuclear deterrence, particularly against a desperate regime, religious fundamentalists or terrorist group armed with nuclear, chemical or biological weapons.
- \* *Undermines NATO's security.* In addition to the proliferation problem, the reality is that nuclear weapons are useless to tackle the major security threats: terrorism, economic collapse, environmental disasters, lack of water, and associated famine and disease. Indeed, nuclear weapons exacerbate many of these problems by diverting funds and other resources, and generating radioactive contamination; and the risk of regional nuclear war is being provoked by the intransigence of the NATO nuclear states.

\* *Ignores the 8 July 1996 World Court Advisory Opinion, [1] which strongly suggests that the basic requirement of proportionality renders illegal the use of nuclear weapons in response to an attack with non-nuclear weapons. Even if the very survival of the state is threatened, use of nuclear weapons - like any weapon - must also not kill civilians indiscriminately, permanently endanger the environment, or seriously affect neutral states. For these reasons, there is simply no way that the use of even one nuclear weapon could be used lawfully in such circumstances.*

\* *Ignores public opinion.* In recent polls in the US, UK, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway, overwhelming majorities want their governments to help negotiate a Nuclear Weapons Convention.

It is therefore counterproductive for NATO's defence to be linked to nuclear weapons. NATO's conventional military forces are a far more effective, usable deterrent against any attack.

#### **MPI's Proposed Solution**

NATO urgently needs to promote a more realistic, responsible security policy which builds confidence among its neighbours, especially in light of its military preponderance and the increasingly unstable Russian political, economic and military situation. Central to this is to remove nuclear weapons from any potential conflict, thereby making them irrelevant to resolving the security problem instead of a primary cause. This should be combined with de-alerting all strategic nuclear forces by verified separation of warheads from delivery vehicles. Rapid progress could then be made in relative safety to expedite multilateral negotiations leading to a Nuclear Weapons Convention.

The most important objectives of such an initiative would be to:

- \* Prevent a revived nuclear arms race between NATO, Russia and China.
- \* Reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs.

Such an approach would provide an alternative to the current invidious choice, as perceived by each non-nuclear state, of either staying under the NATO "nuclear umbrella" or pursuing a nuclear arsenal. This dilemma was highlighted by the resignation in October 1999 of the newly-appointed Deputy Defence Minister, who had called for Japan to consider acquiring its own nuclear arsenal. Clearly, it would be in Japan's interests to distance itself from the increasingly irresponsible US nuclear policy, by relying solely on conventional military support from the US. This process of re-evaluation could - and should - be conducted in parallel with NATO's nuclear review.

#### *US Considerations*

It would also be in the interests of the US - whose conventional military prowess means it has no need of nuclear weapons - to enhance its security by easing international tension and demonstrating its commitment to Article VI of the NPT. Moreover, this would send a powerful signal to India, Israel and Pakistan and other states intent on acquiring nuclear weapons.

This takes on added urgency in light of the reality that, if conflict is to occur among the nuclear weapon states, it is most likely to take place in Northeast Asia. The US, Russia and China all have substantial military forces in the region as well as major stakes in the area; in addition, there are many sources of potential conflict among the three and their allies within the region, including the future of the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan, and control of natural resources and territory in local seas.

#### **The Current Position on NATO's Nuclear Review**

Paragraph 32 of the Washington Summit Communique, *An Alliance for the 21st Century*, issued by NATO on 24 April 1999, stated:

"In the light of overall strategic developments and the reduced salience of nuclear weapons, the Alliance will consider options for confidence and security-building measures, verification, non-proliferation and arms control and disarmament. The Council in Permanent Session will propose a process to Ministers in December for considering such options. The responsible NATO bodies will accomplish this. We support deepening consultations with Russia in these and other areas in the Permanent Joint Council..."

At a news conference immediately after the Communique was released, Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy confirmed the willingness of NATO "to have a review initiated" of its nuclear weapon policy. Explaining that this was the thrust of the recommendations that came out of the 10 December 1998 report of Canada's Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee which reviewed Canada's nuclear weapon policy, he added: "It's a message that the (Canadian) Prime Minister took (to) certain NATO leaders... I think we have now gained an acknowledgement that such a review would be appropriate and that there would be directions to the NATO Council to start the mechanics of bringing that about." On 19 April 1999, in its response to the Parliamentary Committee's report, the Government of Canada had requested NATO to review its nuclear policy.

On the other hand, NATO's new Strategic Concept reaffirmed its commitment to maintain nuclear weapons for political reasons. Paragraph 62 stated: "They will continue to fulfil an essential role by ensuring uncertainty in the mind of any aggressor about the nature of the Allies' response to military aggression." The 1999 use of the word "essential" in reference to nuclear weapons repeated 1991 language: therefore, at first glance it appeared that NATO had not moved.

However, paragraph 40 indicated a shift on disarmament: "The Allies take seriously their distinctive role in promoting a broader, more comprehensive and more verifiable international arms control and disarmament process." Whereas in 1991 NATO had seen use of nuclear weapons as "even more remote", now use was "extremely remote" and "NATO's nuclear forces no longer target any country" (Paragraph 64). These small changes gained significance when read in the context of the Communique's commitment to start a review process. The NATO door had been opened.

This gave non-nuclear NATO member states - particularly the 12 "conscientious abstainers" on the NAC's 1998 UN General Assembly resolution - a new opportunity to press for a substantive, not just perfunctory, review. It also provided a



new opening to the NAC to work with those NATO states and other US allies on common goals - particularly supporting the 1999 NAC resolution.

Between May and October 1999, MPI was alarmed when several non-governmental delegations to NATO headquarters, including one from IPPNW, reported denials by officials that paragraph 32 had committed NATO to a review of nuclear policy. During its tour of five NATO capitals in October, MPI therefore took the opportunity to alert governments to this, and to urge them to reassert their demand for a substantive review. In most cases, MPI received assurances that paragraph 32 was understood to include nuclear weapons; and that it was expected that the Defence Ministerial meeting in December would announce the commissioning of a study to consider options.

### **Ensuring Survival of the NPT**

MPI views its work to strengthen support for the NAC's revised UN resolution and to urge changes to NATO's nuclear policy within an over-arching short-term strategy of trying to ensure that the NPT survives beyond the April-May 2000 Review Conference as an instrument for genuine nuclear disarmament. MPI is therefore working with other citizen organizations to support the NAC's efforts towards this objective.

Most of the nuclear states are not living up to their nuclear disarmament obligations in the NPT. Many non-nuclear states feel they are being taken for granted, and that the agreements they made for indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995 have not been honoured. The latest and most dramatic evidence for this was the US Senate vote against ratification of the CTBT on 13 October 1999, which broke a specific pledge made by the US at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

Growing support from governments for the NAC was evident in the 37 co-sponsors of the NAC's working paper submitted to the May 1999 preparatory meeting for the NPT 2000 Review. That meeting concluded on 21 May with an "agreement to disagree". In the arcane world of nuclear diplomacy, this was considered a step forward, since the 1998 meeting had ended in disarray. However, the 1999 outcome failed to hide the deadlock persisting between the Western nuclear weapon states plus Russia and the leading non-nuclear states. China warned the US and its NATO allies that they were "provoking the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction". Calling for the negotiation of a Nuclear Weapons Convention, it supported the work of the NAC.

The NAC was widely considered to have had a "good conference", building on the support for its UN resolution. Its working paper expressed "profound concern" at the lack of evidence that the nuclear states are living up to their commitments to Article VI:

"On the contrary, the continued possession of nuclear weapons has been re-rationalized. Nuclear doctrines have been reaffirmed... The indefinite extension of the NPT does not sanction the indefinite retention of nuclear weapons... It is imperative to secure a clear and unequivocal commitment to the speedy pursuit of the total elimination of these weapons..." which "will require a multilateral agreement."

A lengthy list of proposals was blended into a 61-paragraph Chairman's Paper, which echoed NAC language and went well beyond what the NATO nuclear states would accept. These included:

- \* A call for negotiations on the elimination of non-strategic nuclear weapons.
- \* De-alerting, de-targeting and de-activating all nuclear weapons and removing nuclear warheads from delivery vehicles.
- \* A call to Israel to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards "without further delay and without conditions".
- \* A legally-binding negative security assurances regime.
- \* An ad-hoc committee at the Conference on Disarmament "with a negotiating mandate to address nuclear disarmament".

Several hours of debate on the Chairman's Paper revealed once more the continuing wide split between the NATO nuclear states and the gathering forces of the non-nuclear states which are increasing their demands that the "systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally," promised in 1995, be met. Almost to the end, it appeared that absolute deadlock would again prevail. However, deft steering by the Chairman, and a general feeling on all sides that a second total collapse of the preparatory process could prove fatal for the 2000 Review, led to an agreement to submit the Chairman's Paper along with all the papers submitted by states with the notation: "The Preparatory Committee was unable to reach agreement on any substantive recommendations to the 2000 Review Conference." Given the worsening international climate, this signals a massive struggle to maintain the viability of the NPT after 2000.

#### **Facilitating Strategy Consultations**

MPI is developing a role in organizing and facilitating consultations between citizen organizations and governments to advance nuclear disarmament. In February 1999 it co-convened, with the Fourth Freedom Forum, a Strategy Consultation at the Rockefeller Foundation in New York. This brought together officials from the NAC plus several other governments and 37 representatives of organizations to develop and coordinate strategies to promote steps to strengthen the non-proliferation regime in the run up to the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Its latest example was to hold a Forum on 14 October 1999 in the United Nations to discuss the revised NAC resolution, which was attended by government representatives from the NAC and eight other nations, plus MPI's co-sponsor organizations and other leading analysts.

#### **Conclusion**

MPI's campaign is centred around the heart of the issue: the assault on humanity that nuclear weapons represent. Humanity provides our common bond. The NAC deserves and needs the degree of support from governments, the public and media given to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, which focused on the

inhumanity of landmines - and showed what can be achieved by a partnership between governments and civil society. As the World Court reminded us, only nuclear weapons can destroy all civilization and the entire ecosystem of the planet.

Highlighting the need for urgency, MPI needs help - especially from IPPNW - to raise the visibility of this reality and the indiscriminate cruelty of nuclear weapons. Their continued existence represents humanity's greatest single moral, legal and political challenge.

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#### **Note added in proof**

On 2 December 1999, the vote in Plenary session of the UN General Assembly on the NAC resolution was YES - 111 (down 3 from 1998), NO - 13 (down 5); ABSTENTIONS - 39 (up 1). Thus the majority for the NAC resolution grew by two votes. This was despite a vigorous campaign by the P3 to sustain NATO's solidarity on its nuclear policy, apparently restored at its Washington Summit in April.

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ROBERT GREEN served in the British Royal Navy from 1962-82. As a Fleet Air Arm Observer (Navigator), he flew in Buccaneer carrier-borne nuclear strike aircraft (1968-72), then in anti-submarine helicopters equipped with nuclear depth-bombs (1972-77). On promotion to Commander, he spent 1978-80 in the Ministry of Defence as Personal Staff Officer to the Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Policy), who was closely involved in the decision to replace the Polaris ballistic missile submarine force with Trident. The break-up of the USSR and the Gulf War forced him to speak out against nuclear weapons. Since then, he has worked full time to promote non-nuclear defence and security policies.