



Los Alamos Study Group

Nuclear Disarmament • Environmental Protection • Social Justice • Economic Sustainability

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Citizen Delegates from New Mexico Attend UN Nuclear Nonproliferation Conference

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Delegates from the Los Alamos Study Group are finding keen interest in New Mexico's nuclear weapons labs and their activities among experts and activists attending the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference opening this week at the United Nations in New York.

The nine Study Group delegates join those of nearly 50 other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attending the Review Conference along with the delegations of the 188 countries who have signed the Treaty. This Review Conference is likely to be the largest gathering of disarmament and nonproliferation experts from around the world in the past decade.

The goals of the conference are to strengthen the NPT and prevent what threatens to become, in the words of one UN review, "a cascade of [nuclear] proliferation." The Treaty has been weakened by long-standing noncompliance by the five so-called "nuclear weapon states" named in the treaty (the U.S., Russia, China, France, and the U.K.) with their Article VI requirement to enter "good faith" negotiations that lead to complete nuclear disarmament. The Treaty has also been weakened by the withdrawal of North Korea, the concealment of nuclear activities by Iran, and the treaty's lack of universality (Israel, India, and Pakistan never signed, and now North Korea has withdrawn).

The United States is downplaying the importance of the Review Conference and sometimes even of the Treaty itself, attempting to create a regime of what key countries are calling "ala carte compliance" – a strong emphasis on compliance with some parts of the treaty with no attention to others.

Underneath the seeming paralysis of governments there is a strong momentum among citizens throughout the world who are working together to hold nations to the terms of the treaty and to work towards ridding the world of nuclear weapons altogether as the treaty requires.

The U.S., which championed the treaty and ratified it 35 years ago, has all but officially abandoned the Treaty's central idea, namely that nuclear weapons are illegitimate. Polls in the U.S. and around the world, however, continue to show very strong popular support for nuclear disarmament as a necessary element in preventing nuclear holocaust.

New Mexico played a key role in building the bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Some 35 survivors of those bombings are here to testify to the horrors of those events. New Mexico is indisputably key to the future of nuclear weapons as well.

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