

PANEL #4

TOWARD A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN NUCLEAR WEAPONS POLICY

Toward a Fundamental Change in Nuclear Weapons Policy Conference

United States Capitol Visitor Center

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Introduction

by

Kathleen Sullivan

Program Director, Hibakusha Stories

SULLIVAN: Thank you, everyone. We've gotten to the end of our day. What an extraordinary day of learning. I work with a woman out in California called Joanna Macy and she works around this idea of The Spiral of the Work that Reconnects. And we've kind of gone around that spiral starting with gratitude. I'd really like to say, thank you to SGI-USA for drawing all of us together today.

And I would like to also thank every single person in this room, because you all have come here, because you care about abolishing nuclear weapons and about the world that we live in. And you know, it's a small group, but a mighty group. And it's truly been an honor to be with you all.

And when you go from gratitude on the spiral, the next point is feeling the pain for our world. And I think that the first two panels -- we really were able to look at the reality of the nuclear problem and to also hear from Setsuko. It's such an honor to be able to work with atomic bomb survivors.

There was a question presented to her which was, you know, "what had a student said to you in the past?" "How have students interacted with you?" I've been very privilege to work with atomic bomb survivors, as Danny just mentioned, through Hibakusha Stories, the project that I work with. In the last nearly 10 years, we have brought the first-hand witness of atomic bomb survivors to more than 32,000 high school students primarily in the New York City area.

And if it's OK with Setsuko, I would just like to share very briefly a story of one student who heard your story, who was paralyzed with his own personal pain of having lived through his mother being murdered. And he was unable to experience his pain or articulate his pain until he heard Setsuko's story. He identified with the depth of her pain.

So, I think, yes, we bring Hibakusha into the classroom to share their personal testimony to engage young people and the real current reality and the real reality of nuclear war on the ground in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But they also experienced the humanity of the atomic bomb survivors who risk their personal comfort to share their testimony.

So, I think that we all are witnessing the reality of nuclear dangers and it is an exceptional time in which we are living. And I was one of those generations of kids that saw "The Day After" and watching that with my parents when I was 13 years old touched something inside of me and it started off a life of activism and scholarship and research and advocacy.

So, I think it is really important to look at how art and media can affect our lives. And also, how gratitude and recognizing who and what we love in the world can motivate us in our work for nuclear disarmament.

So, it's especially gratifying to be coming after the youth panel and also the spiritual perspectives panel. And with that in mind, before we get into the solutions panel, I would like to invite us to just do a very brief meditation together, is that OK?

OK, so I'd like to just invite you to just clear your lap of whatever you're working on and just put your feet on the ground and close your eyes. And what we're going to do is just give ourselves a couple of minutes to allow in our mind's eye to appear those people and places that we love in our life, that we love in this world. So, just relax into a few moments of silence and I'll ring the bell to begin and I'll ring the bell to end. But allow to appear in your mind those people and places that you most cherish in your life.

Thank you. I think given everything that we've heard thus far and all of the excellent presentations in today's conference. One of the most important things that we as activist and as academics, as researchers, as policymakers, one of the important things that we can impart to others, I believe, is to go from an abstraction of nuclear weapons to making this issue personal to us. Because as those of us in this room know all too well, everything and everyone that we love is threatened at this moment by nuclear weapons.

By those nuclear weapons that are on here trigger alert that Bruce spoke about earlier, by the potential for nuclear winter in whatever size that Alan and Ira spoke about. By the reality that Setsuko called forth from her memories as a 13-year-old child. We are currently in this very moment threatened by nuclear weapons that are guarded by human beings and machines that make mistakes.

So, let us go forth from this room emboldened by our love for those people, places and things in our lives as a way of working for nuclear abolition instead of being present to fear for what is the current reality at least in this country.

So, please recall those people, places and things, as you listen to this august panel of solutions people. I am very excited to hear what Barry, Daryl, and Ray all have to say.

So, like the other moderators, I'm going to refer you to the biographies that are in your program. But just to briefly set out this panel, we have Barry Blechman, who is the co-Founder of the Stimson Center. He will be speaking about nuclear deterrence -- is it a sustainable policy?

Then we will move to Daryl Kimball, who is the Director of the Arms Control Association. He will be speaking about immediate steps to reduce nuclear dangers. And lastly, we will be hearing from Ray Acheson, the Director of Reaching Critical Will of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and she will be talking about The Ban Treaty and Beyond; The Road to Nuclear Abolition.

So, please join me in welcoming all three of our panelists.

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Is Nuclear Deterrence a Sustainable Policy?

by

Barry M. Blechman

Co-Founder, Stimson Center

BLECHMAN: Well, thank you very much. It's a pleasure to be here. I was asked to address the question, is nuclear deterrence sustainable, is it a sustainable policy? And to summarize, I'm too old to say that anything is impossible and I've worked on international affairs for more than 50 years for my sins in Washington. And during this time, after 40 years of cold war, I saw the Berlin wall fall and Soviet Union come apart and more recently believe it or not, I lived to see Donald Trump become President of the United States. So, I won't say that anything is impossible.

So, yes, it's conceivable that threats of nuclear retaliation will continue to deter nuclear attacks and nuclear war throughout my lifetime and throughout the lifetimes of the many much younger people in the audience here. And perhaps even until the year that global warming brings an end to civilization as we know it today.

However, there are so many ways in which deterrence can fail, so many things that can go wrong. So, many complications in a proliferating world that I believe to continue to rely on nuclear deterrence is an extremely dangerous policy. One fraught with risks for all nations and for people throughout the world.

Now, most of you, I'm sure were here this morning, I apologize that I had a board meeting, I needed to be to. But those of you who were here, heard I'm sure about some of the flash points around the world that could lead to nuclear war, as well as about the dangers of accidental wars due to technical failures or misperception. And of course, we don't know about the risk of nuclear terrorism.

I'd like to speak more abstractly about the requirements of deterrence and illustrate how lucky we've been that deterrence hasn't failed yet. First of all, deterrence assumes informed and rational decision makers.

To give you some examples when this was not present. In 1973 at the height of the Watergate scandal, there was a war in the Middle East and the Soviet Union had introduced tactical nuclear weapons to Egypt, Israel had surrounded an Egyptian Army, and the Russians were mobilized. The Soviets were mobilizing airborne troops to go in and rescue the Egyptian Army.

In response, the President's cabinet Kissinger, Schlesinger and others met in a situation where the President, the decision maker, was drunk. I have interviewed almost everyone who is in that situation room and it's clear, he was much of that period at the end of his administration.

And Al Haig, who is the Chief of Staff, his job was to make sure President did not come to the situation room, because they were fearful of what kinds of decisions he might make. We did put our nuclear forces on a higher state of alert and there were some negotiations and the Russians

backed down and everything ended peacefully, but it was an extremely dangerous situation for many reasons.

It was a similar situation, not quite as dangerous. With Mr. Yeltsin when he was President of Russia, there was a Norwegian rocket launched, the sounding rocket which was misinterpreted by Russian radars. And the President was told, we might be under attack and Mr. Yeltsin was as he usually was, like Nixon, drunk at the time. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed and said, "Well, if the Americans going to attack us, it's not going to be with one missile." So, that's one dangerous assumption that we're going to have rational decision makers in these situations.

Secondly, deterrence assumes realistic perceptions on both sides of the capabilities and the will of the other side. For example, U.S. military leaders at the time of the Cuban missile crisis were urging, some of them at least, most of them I believe, urging an invasion of Cuba. We did not know that Soviet tactical nuclear weapons had already been deployed in Cuba, not the intermediate range missiles which tipped off the crisis, and that the Russian commanders had the authority to use those weapons if American troops invaded the Isle. So, there was no knowledge of the situation, a very dangerous situation. If President Kennedy had not chosen a less bellicose course and committed to invasion, nuclear weapons would have been used, we would have retaliated and who knows where it would have stopped at that point.

Similarly, President Truman underestimated the determination of China at the time of the Korean war and he disregarded signals that the Chinese would enter the war if we came too close to the Chinese border. He made nuclear threats in a press conference and still the Chinese persisted. Fortunately, China did not have nuclear weapons at that time. But again, a misunderstanding, misperception of the adversaries could possibly lead to the failure of deterrence.

Thirdly, deterrence assumes that leaders of the two countries, the two sides, can communicate effectively with one another. This is a kind of funny story, but just before the outset of the First Gulf War, Secretary of State Baker met with the Iraqi Foreign Minister, Tariq Aziz to sensibly try to resolve the conflict. In fact he gave Aziz a letter from President Bush, Senior Bush, warning in kind of nuanced terms that if the Iraqis used chemical weapons, we would retaliate with nuclear weapons. He didn't take that explicitly.

And this is often stated by supporters of deterrence as an example of how nuclear weapons can turn into chemical. After the second Gulf war, Tariq Aziz was interviewed extensively and was asked about this situation and he said, I never gave that letter to Hussein, he killed people that brought him news like that. So, effective communications.

And finally, deterrence and most importantly, depends on history and relative perceptions of the stakes involved in the situation. You just take some examples not from history, but potential future situations. Mr. Trump obviously does not recognize the intrinsic value of Taiwan to China illustrated by his phone call at the very outset of his administration to the Taiwanese President.

So, what if there were a crisis involving Taiwan and China. The United States has commitments to Taiwan -- will China back down if we make nuclear

threats. Taiwan is so inherent in their perception of themselves and of their role that I doubt that they would. Now it would be a situation where deterrence would be very likely to fail.

Flipping it over, the U.S. has been committed to the defense of Japan and South Korea for so many years and we've been so close militarily and economically. If there were a crisis or war, there would be a real danger of China making nuclear threats and misperceiving that we would likely ignore those threats and persist in depending our ally.

Take a third one, the Russians correctly understood that we would not go to war over Ukraine which is not a NATO member, but if the Russians were to invade a NATO country, one of the Baltic states for example, that would be a very different situation. And given our past behavior concerning Ukraine, the Russians could easily misperceive and deterrence again would be at least at great risk of failing.

So, these are all factors which determine when deterrence works and when it might fail and they're very important to keep in mind. So, yes, nuclear weapons may continue to deter nuclear attacks and nuclear war, but even without considering the risks of terrorism and technical failure, I for one believe that those who believe that deterrence cannot fail are people who are likely to believe in the tooth fairy.

Deterrence is not a scientific principle. It's not a law of nature, like gravity, it's a theory. The theory was made up in the late 40's or early 50's with the RAND corporation. The speculation about what might happen about how leaders might behave in a future situation whose details we cannot know. So, we know what happened in past situations, it's worked in some -- usually when combined with diplomatic sessions, but it could easily fail.

Those in Washington, those who argue for eliminating nuclear weapon are often labeled naive idealist. I think the shoe is on the other foot, it's those who believe in the magic of deterrence who are the naive ones. The risks of moving toward a nuclear weapons free world in my mind are probably lower than the risk associated with continuing to maintain stocks of nuclear weapon.

Indeed, with the renewed nuclear competition between the U.S. and Russia, the growing nuclear stockpiles in China, India, North Korea and Pakistan, with the residual risk of further proliferation in the Middle East, with worsening tensions in so many parts of the world, I believe the risk of nuclear deterrence failing is rising and rising precipitously. And that's why I support the ban movement and urge renewed efforts like this conference to mobilize worldwide populations in support of nuclear disarmament.

Thank you very much.

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Immediate Steps to Reduce the Danger

by

Daryl Kimball

Executive Director, Arms Control Association

KIMBALL: Thank you, Kathleen. It's an honor to be here and I want to thank the organizers for all the hard work that went into this. It's an honor to be among the great speakers that showed up for this event and to see some new and old friends.

And I think we've got to remember that as Barry pointed out, we have through the years been able to make significant progress to reduce the number of nuclear weapons, to limit the number of nuclear-armed states, force reductions in the number of nuclear weapons held by the major nuclear-armed powers, to effectively end nuclear testing by all -- not one country, and to help create an informal taboo against the use of nuclear weapons.

It's been done through the imperfect and incomplete nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation enterprise -- but we've made progress. And that progress has been the result of public pressure and activism first and foremost and the leadership and the hard work of thousands of people, but especially key diplomats, scientists, religious figures, citizen diplomats and more.

So, we've seen tough times before and we've made significant progress in reducing the nuclear danger. But today, there are, as we've heard through the course of the day, some very, very tough challenges, some of which are unprecedented and they're new, and it's going to take lot of creativity to deal with them.

So, what I just wanted to do today is I want to take us down to a very practical and I hope not too boring level, but an important level of conversation about some of the things that we need to do in the next two or three years to maintain a foundation for much more transformational progress in years ahead. And I think we've got to recognize that as we have this conversation today. As Barry was just mentioning, tensions between the world's nuclear-armed states are on the rise.

The North Korean nuclear and missile program is not an urgent threat to the United States itself, but it is going to be a much more dangerous situation in the years ahead if we don't find a diplomatic solution to cap and reverse that program and to resolve some of the fundamental security tensions that underlay the problem.

We have relations between the United States and Russia almost an all-time low. And there is no current plan to maintain or to talk about maintaining the nuclear disarmament regime between these two countries that we have had in place one way or another for the last 40 plus years. And other nuclear-armed states are building up their capabilities too. So, it's a tough situation, it's not just a U.S., Russian dynamic as it was in 1982 when I was graduating from high school and getting involved in this issue. It is multi-dimensional and it is very difficult.

And so, then, if things weren't difficult enough, we have our President Donald Trump. And let me just say, a couple things about how this will complicate some of the work ahead and that we need to keep in mind. I mean, we've all seen Trump's tweets about greatly strengthening and expanding the U.S. arsenal. We've seen his comments about welcoming an arms race. We've heard him denounce the 2010 New START agreement with Russia.

Those are deeply troubling, we have to pay attention to not only what he says, but more importantly what he does. And what is coming is a comprehensive top to bottom review of U.S. nuclear weapons policy that has the potential over the next year to change some of the fundamental policies that have been very important to establishing the foundation for future progress.

And the bottom-line is that, the pillars of the international nuclear order as imperfect and cracked and shaky as it may already be, we can't take it for granted, because there could be further stresses and strains as a result of this nuclear posture review that is going to be completed probably by the end of this year.

And just to give, you know a flavor -- many of you may have heard Chris Ford, the National Security Council Senior Director for Weapons of Mass Destruction for the White House speak at the Carnegie Nuclear Non-Proliferation, Nuclear Policy Conference back in March. And he was asked whether global nuclear disarmament is a realistic goal. And he said that the administration would review whether the United States continues to support the goal of world without nuclear weapons.

Now that maybe is not a surprising comment for somebody who is involved in the review, and they're going to review everything, but it just gives you a sense that, there are some people in this new administration who don't recognize Article VI of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. It makes it a legally binding requirement to pursue nuclear disarmament and there are other statements of course in NPT context that binds the nuclear states to nuclear disarmament.

So, we have a lot of work ahead of us. And I think that we need to first of all recognize that we can't take for granted some of the important things that have been achieved over the past 40 to 50 years upon which we can build our work for transformational change.

And I would mildly disagree with a couple of the other comments made by couple of other speakers earlier that only political science students care about the nuclear danger. I think we've got to recognize that the Trump effect has its dangers, but it also presents opportunities.

You know, just one little example. My 14-year-old daughter who is of course not exactly your average kids, in a household with the Director of Arms Control Association, but she is very interested in K-Pop music, all right? And she has been listening to NPR around the house and she knows that there is the risk of war between the Koreans, so she was asking her dad, you know, what might happen to my favorite K-Pop stars.

You know, there are opportunities here. My point is to raise awareness, all right? To raise awareness in ways that you might not imagine.

And then, you know, the very important publication of the National Enquirer the other day, warns that World War III is coming. So the point is, I've got to have little humor to make light of the terrible, but the point is that, there is a growing anxiety about the global situation and the particular situation that we have with Donald Trump in-charge of 800 nuclear weapons that could be launched within 10 minutes with no congressional approval.

So, what are some of the things that we need to do. I'm going to talk about some of the more modest steps that I think are important to maintain the foundation, I'm going to leave it to Ray and others to talk about the more ambitious and inspiring things. But these are things that I think we need to keep in mind, if we're serious about making progress.

So first of all, I think, there are four categories of things that we need to be thinking about, (1) preventing new nuclear competition and eliminating access. We need to think about steps that can (2) reduce the risk of nuclear weapons use and reduce the salience of nuclear weapons. We need to think about things that can be done to (3) head off proliferation through smart diplomacy and I am thinking about North Korea in particular. And in the later stages, we need to also think about (4) engaging all the nuclear-armed states in the nuclear disarmament process, something that's not happening.

Let me talk a little about preventing new nuclear competition and I want to focus on the U.S. Russian situation. The U.S. and Russia have always led the way whether we like it or not on the nuclear disarmament front. If you're not making progress, there's not much other progress in the global nuclear disarmament realm.

And before the end of his hopefully first term and only term, President Trump and Vladimir Putin will need to decide whether to extend the New START treaty by another four years, which they can do without Duma or Senate approval. It is due to expire on February 5, 2021 or they could decide to negotiate a follow-on agreement.

Or they could decide to chuck it and go forward without any legally binding limits on the world's two largest nuclear arsenals. Now, we may not be all that excited or enamored with the New START treaty, it was a modest agreement. But we've got to recognize that without this treaty, without the verification provision, the transparency attributes, there will be a great deal more uncertainty, worst case scenario planning, and a lot more tensions between the U.S. and Russia.

And if this is the situation and there is no New START treaty beyond 2021 or no new follow-on, the 2020 NPT review conference will be a major disaster in a number of different ways and that has ramifications in other nuclear realm.

So, I think we're going to pay attention to this, we need to think about how we can encourage members of Congress, Democrats and Republicans to support the idea of maintaining the bipartisan consensus for negotiated limits and reductions in the world's two largest nuclear arsenals. And I think that you know there is a strong tradition, Republicans and Democrats pursuing those goals.

Another thing that we can be pushing for and talking about is when Mr. Trump and Mr. Putin meet some time later this year, we don't know when or where it will be. They can take some steps and make some statements that reduce the tensions between the U.S. and Russia. And one of the things that we've been talking about and are going to try to push with the White House and also the Russians is to try to revive somehow the 1985 statement from Reagan and Gorbachev. It's very basic but very true that the nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought and then given the catastrophic effects of nuclear weapons we need to pursue the elimination of nuclear weapons.

I mean, that's a statement that perhaps Donald Trump could get behind for his own reasons and I think even Vladimir Putin. And so, these are some of the things that we should be thinking about in the near front. One of the things with the U.S. and Russian relationship that's important has been mentioned before, there are some serious differences and disputes about compliance with the 1987 intermediate nuclear forces treaty.

This is somewhat technical and obscure, but the Russians have apparently tested a system that exceeds the limits of this 1987 treaty. And so as long as this compliance dispute exist, it's going to be extremely difficult to get the two sides to sit down in a serious way and focus on other things they need to do to reduce their still excessive nuclear arsenals.

And they do need to focus on the steps to reduce their excessive arsenals. And one of the things that we should be talking about in addition to the high cost of nuclear weapons is the fact that the Pentagon itself believes the United States today has one-third more nuclear weapons than necessary to hold at risk all the targets in Russia and China and elsewhere that we would want to destroy in an exchange. And that we could reduce that number by one-third no matter what the Russians do and the Chinese do and the North Koreans do.

So, one of the things we should be asking members of Congress and raising in the press is given the catastrophic effect, why the United States continues to maintain and plans to replace and in some ways upgrade an arsenal that is one-third more than the Pentagon itself says according to its own logic which I don't necessarily agree with, but according to some logic, we need.

So, these are three things -- three or four things that I think we need to keep in mind with respect to Russia. Let me talk a little bit about North Korea. And what you need to do there.

We have a situation that is a slow-moving crisis. We have the administration coming out with a so-called new policy, it looks a lot like the old policy. And that the fundamental problem is that the administration is trying to apply greater pressure through China without a means for engagement with North Korea.

There have been successful negotiations with North Koreans that have curbed their nuclear program. We haven't seen any such negotiations in a long, long time. So, one of the things that I think we as nuclear disarmament activists and abolitionists need to be talking about are what are some of the solutions on North Korea? And how do we avoid an accidental

nuclear war? Because that's what could happen if there is any sort of high conflict across the DMZ.

So, I think we should not shy away from this issue, it's the issue that is leading the National Enquirer to put this on their cover. It's the issue that is making my daughter ask me questions about this, it's the issue that's on everyone's minds. And we need to think about how we engage on that and make sure that concerns about North Korea and ICBMs don't lead to need or support for holding on to the nuclear weapons that United States has.

Let me say a little bit about the nuclear weapons prohibition treaty, because I think this is an important way that we can talk about how we can reduce the salience of nuclear weapons and the role of deterrence in the future. And, you know, this has been an issue that has -- we've got to acknowledge, has not been a subject that people on Capitol Hill have engaged with -- that people and the American public have engaged with a lot. But we need to think about how we can talk about it in ways that they can relate to and understand and support.

I think one of the things we need to point out is that given the lack of progress by the U.S. and the Russians and then the P5 commitments to nuclear disarmament, there is growing frustration among the world's non-nuclear weapons majority about moving towards the world without nuclear weapons. And the launching of the talks is among other things an expression of frustration about the failure to fulfill these commitments.

So, therefore if the United States, if you're somebody who doesn't want to see this negotiation go forward or you don't want to see more countries join this treaty, your response should be to accelerate action on meeting U.S. commitments to reduce the number and role and salience nuclear weapons.

In addition, the prohibition treaty has been criticized as a distraction from the real work on nuclear disarmament. And I think one of the things that we need to say in response to this is that the real threat to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty is not the nuclear weapons prohibition talks, which I think in some ways reinforces and advances the NPT, but is the failure to meet the disarmament obligations in the 2010 action plan.

It's the threat to the nuclear non-proliferation system from North Korea. It's attacks on the joint conference of plan of action that has blocked Iran's possible pursuit of nuclear weapons in the future.

So, we have to acknowledge that in order to attain the world free of nuclear weapons, this is how I speak to people -- to skeptics, it will be necessary at some point to establish a legally binding norm to prohibit such weapons. And as such, the pursuit of a treaty banning development production, possession and use of nuclear weapons is a key step along the way. It's also an important way in which to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons as a military and foreign policy tool. And that's especially important at a time when the risk of nuclear use and nuclear tensions are rising.

So, these are some ways in which I think we need to talk about and think about the nuclear weapons prohibition treaty in the U.S. context and talk to people who are not familiar with it, talk to people who might be skeptical about it and who are concerned about nuclear threats facing the United States.

Let me just end on a couple of other points about the limits of the prohibition treaty and I don't think anybody here will disagree with this too much, but I think we've got to keep this in mind. Even though it can when it's completed and I think it will be completed within the next year, de-legitimize nuclear weapons in important ways. It's not a substitute for the steps that are going to be necessary to reduce the numbers to reduce risks of nuclear weapons use and to prevent proliferation, particularly in places like North Korea.

And that's going to require important, creative, new kinds of activism and pressure from all of us here in Washington across the United States, and around the world, who are concerned about the nuclear threat.

And we need to think about how we channel the energy that has been created in the context of the prohibition treaty campaign by great activist like Ray and others out here for action in these other areas. And so -- what I'm -- what I'm suggesting is a both end approach here. We need to recognize that the prohibition treaty has an immense amount of value, but there is a whole lot more that we need to accomplish in the years ahead.

So, let me end there, and I look forward to raise comments on your questions and thoughts. Thanks.

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The Ban Treaty and Beyond: The Road to Nuclear Abolition

by

Ray Acheson

Director, Reaching Critical Will (WILPF)

ACHESON: After today's interesting and sometimes depressing and occasionally humorous, but ultimately back to depressing conversation that we've had, I just want to start my remarks by saying that, "We're banning nuclear weapons!"

(APPLAUSE)

This is -- it's no longer a hypothetical possibility, it's no longer something we're just campaigning for. This is something that we've done, that is happening and that is going to have some kind of impact even if we can't predict exactly what that's going to be.

So, as we covered in today's conversation, there is a lot of bad stuff happening, when it comes to nuclear weapons, there's all the modernization and development programs. There are these rising tensions, I won't go over all of that because we've heard enough of it.

So, one of the key questions about the ban in this context is what exactly is it that we are trying to do, why does banning nuclear weapons without any of the nuclear-armed states even matter? These are the types of questions that I am sure everyone in this room has to contend with at some point or another.

The idea of course behind this entire movement to ban the bomb, is that unfortunately we can't just go to the nuclear-armed states and take away their weapons. I think we all wish we could do that, but given that we can't, the only thing left for us to do is to change every other single thing that we possibly can in relation to the context of nuclear weapons, the legal, economic, political, social context of nuclear weapons. We have to change all of those elements in every way that we can as citizens or as governments of states that do not possess nuclear weapons.

This is about stigmatizing the weapons. This is about undermining deterrence. This is about affecting the way that people perceive these weapons as legitimate tools of security and changing that back to what they really are which is suicidal, genocidal weapons of mass destruction, and terror and harm.

So, how are we doing this? Well, we've already done it. We've already done a big piece of this work and that's been through the humanitarian initiative. This has been a re-energization of the discourse around nuclear weapons as weapons that kill, that are designed to kill, that are designed to commit genocide, to wipe out entire populations.

Changing this conversation was the most important first step to getting us on the road to banning nuclear weapons. And it's been incredibly effective already, we don't even have a ban yet and it's already been incredibly effective in changing the way that other governments also perceive this.

There was a time in the United Nations when you couldn't even use the "D-word" for a while. It was all non-proliferation. Disarmament wasn't something that was really sellable. When Obama came along and did this Prague speech and the four horsemen wrote their op-ed, then there was this little, little tiny hope that we could start talking about disarmament again.

And it lasted less than a year and then it was back to non-proliferation, non-proliferation, non-proliferation. And it was more and more money being important in nuclear arsenals, more and more stalemates over agendas at the United Nations, no movement anywhere, no traction on anything.

But the humanitarian initiative changed all of that just by changing the way that nuclear weapons are talked about and perceived. And the results of that has been governments from every country going to a series of conferences to talk about what nuclear weapons really are even though the nuclear-armed states boycotted these meetings. The P5 collectively boycotted the first meeting and even issued a statement sitting in the conference on disarmament which hasn't done anything for 20 years to say that we were distracting from real work.

And that is another thing that this process is already changed. This idea that the nuclear-armed states get to tell us what we can and can't do. This idea that if the P5 collectively oppose something, then it can't go forward.

We are already in a transformative process of the ban treaty, We've already cleared these hurdles. We've shown those to be surmountable obstacles. They were in the way for a long time, but now we can go ahead. It really smashed up the concept of what can happen at the United Nations and how it can happen.

The vote in the general assembly last October to initiate these negotiations was incredible, 123 countries pressed yes, on their little voting machines to start these negotiations. That was despite United States taking its biggest delegation ever to the general assembly to try and shut this down. The Obama administration went to its NATO allies and instructed them to vote against this. The U.S. delegation was also meeting with all of the different regional groups trying to pressure them to not participate as were the French and the U.K. delegations.

There was a lot of pressure on these countries, but they did it anyway, 123 of them said, yes, we're going to start this and we don't care, if you don't want us to. That attitude continued in March, when the negotiations first began. And what we saw there was by our account, there was over 130 governments that participated in that meeting. Japan doesn't want to be counted among them of course, but it showed up and it ran a statement so we count it as participating.

The Netherlands also of course participated, the only NATO state to defy the orders of the U.S. government to stay away from these negotiations. And the reason that that happens by the way, is civil society. Civil society mobilization in the Netherlands got in parliament an order for the government to attend. The government is being forced to attend by its parliament, it does not want to be there and so, they came and delivered one statement and they sat in the room and said, basically nothing the whole time. But they had to be there, because civil society demanded it.

This is another change, this is another change about how citizens and parliaments and other entities within states can have an impact on government policy, when it comes to nuclear weapons. They don't get to tell us what we can do. They don't get to limit our actions and the impact of our actions anymore. And that also carried forward in the ban negotiation starting in March, when we had the best interactions from civil society that we've had in the U.N. meeting on disarmament issues ever.

We had and the ability to engage with states for six hours on a panel that allowed us to answer questions from states. We also had organizations from all over the world delivering interventions and asking questions as well. This is unprecedented when it comes to disarmament, but this is exactly the kind of transformation that the ban treaty is bringing.

And like I said, all of this has happened and we don't even have a treaty yet. So, imagine, what's going to happen when we do have this treaty, what could its impacts be? We see that there is going to be a legal impact, first and foremost, very straight forward. Nuclear weapons will finally be on the same footing as chemical weapons and biological weapon.

This has an impact politically and socially and economically. If we take the economics for example to start with, the other weapon systems that have been banned chemical, biological also landmines and cluster bombs. There is so much stigma around these weapons and so much opposition to their use and their manufacture and their trade that it's extremely difficult to get away with using these weapons or making these weapons.

The United States has not signed either or has not ratified either the cluster munitions or landmine ban treaties, yet it very nearly complies with all of the obligations of state's parties in those treaties. And just last

year, the last cluster munitions producing company in the U.S. decided that it will no longer manufacture these weapons.

And this is because of the social stigmatization, the political stigmatization and also the economic divestment that went along with these ban treaties. And one of the most interesting things for us when we started doing the don't bank on the bomb work a few years ago in ICAN was when we were calling banks or pension funds or other entities that did have divestment portfolios and had divested from cluster munitions and landmine producing companies and we asked them why don't you have a similar policy on nuclear weapons? They would tell us, it's because nuclear weapons aren't illegal.

And that was one of our first signs that, OK, well we've got to fix that. So, that was one of our motivations and all of these -- all of these come together. These legal, political, social, economic impacts of the act of stigmatization, of the act of making it very clear that these weapons are illegal, that all activities associated with them are illegal is extremely important. And like Zia said this morning, the ban is going to change the context in which future nuclear policy is made.

It's true that we don't know exactly what effects it will have, this is all hypothetical. We're working on the basis of past experience with other treaties and a little thing called logic. Jamie said today that it's an act of faith. I haven't really thought of it like that before. I think of it more as an active mass of rebellion in the United Nations to be doing this. But I think it is faith and it's also hope that we can really change things. It's not just about nuclear weapons like Setsuko said, the ban treaty is not just about banning nuclear weapons. It's about how we live, it's about how we communicate. It's about what we can build together collectively.

And the ban is already having an impact on that and it's going to have an even bigger impact once we do have it. We have been called names, Barry was saying about advocates for nuclear disarmament being called naive et cetera. I've also heard irrational, delusional, irresponsible, my personal favorite is terminally unserious. I think that might be what I call my book when I write about all this, one day.

And Daryl said that the response of these countries should be to take action on disarmament, for other policies to reduce nuclear danger or something so that it looks like they're taking care of it and we don't need to do anything. Instead, over the last few years, they've just become increasingly belligerent and they've called us all these things. The Russians once said that we had shot off to outer space or some other planet. The U.S. Ambassador to Geneva once said that the ban treaty could result in the use of nuclear weapons, because it would so destabilize the world that it will lead to nuclear war and they call us terminally unserious, I don't know.

But we're doing this, we're banning nuclear weapons and we're opening the space for disarmament that doesn't currently exist. There's a lot of paths to abolition, the nuclear-armed states could join the ban treaty and they could agree to some kind of plans to get rid of their nuclear weapons. They could unilaterally disarm because all their investments get taken away from the prohibition treaty and they can't function anymore or they make some other kind of calculation based on the stigmatization and the public pressure that they'll talk in their countries about this issue.

They could enter together and do multi-lateral agreements as they are supposed to do under Article VI of the non-proliferation treaty. There are a lot of options, these probably aren't the only options, but they're the only all options that we want on the table, really. And the ban is creating that space for any of those to be pursued and we'll hopefully help compel and facilitate moves towards disarmament that we haven't had in years.

We don't know how effective the ban is going to be, but we know it's already having an impact. And we need to mobilize publicly now in ways that we haven't yet around the ban treaty negotiations, need to amplify what's going on inside the U.N. to the outside. There is a lot going on in the world, there is a lot going on in this country and there is marches all the time and there are a lot of issues that people care about.

And I think one of the really key things about promoting the ban treaty is connecting how all of those different social justice issues that we're all working on in our lives connect when it comes to nuclear weapons. Whether that's because of the threat of nuclear weapons or whether that's because of history of opposition to nuclear weapons being extremely intersectional and dynamic.

But there is a lot of ways to make these arguments about why a ban on nuclear weapons should be important to everybody regardless of ethnicity or gender, religion or race, income or any other issue that we identify with.

And one of the ways that we're doing that in the next few months is, a women's march to ban the bomb. Building off of the women's march on Washington and sister marches that happen in 600 cities around the world. So, June 17th in New York City, there is going to be a massive public demonstration in March from Bryant Park to just across the street from the United Nations. There's some post cards on the table outside, you can actually even mail them, they're quite clever, they have a little postage stamp on the back.

And so, please take as many as you want for distribution. We're also organizing sister marches and other solidarity events around the world. We already have a bunch in Australia lined up, basically every major city in Australia is hosting an event. There is going to be stuff going on in Chicago and L.A. and hopefully other U.S. cities and hopefully in Canada, hopefully in Toronto as well.

So, there's going to be a lot of action and activity around that. If you're interested in getting involved, we welcome you to join us to endorse the march to organize your own event, to help us fundraise for this one. All the information you need is at womenbanthebomb.org and we look forward to working with you on that and to secure the treaty by July 7th.

Thanks.