

FOR A WORLD OF PEACE:

A WORLD FREE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

An Ecumenical Call from Hwacheon

October 21~25, 2010

A group of persons active in the ecumenical movement from, Canada, Fiji, Korea, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines and the USA, committed to building a world of peace, a world free of nuclear weapons, came together from 4 to 6 December 2009, in Hwacheon, Republic of Korea, seeking ways to strengthen the ecumenical movement for urgent action on nuclear disarmament (possibly in cooperation with interfaith movements).

The Conference was organized jointly by the Asia Pacific Graduate School, Seoul and the Korean YMCA with the support of the National Council of Churches in Korea, Presbyterian Church in Korea, the Christian Conference of Asia and the World Council of Churches. The Conference was hosted by the Hwacheon County located near the Demilitarized Zone (DM Z) in the Korean peninsula. The County had opened the Bell Park for World Peace on 26 May 2009 where in his keynote address Mikhail Gorbachev, former President of the Soviet Union gave a call for a nuclear-weapon free world.

The Conference was held with the objectives of working towards a nuclear weapon free Korean peninsula, analyzing the state of nuclear affairs in North-East Asia and understanding the implications of these for a world

without nuclear weapons. It also aimed at strengthening the ecumenical movement to face the new challenges posed by nuclear developments and to work towards a world of peace, a world free of nuclear weapons.

As a follow-up of the Conference in 2009, an international ecumenical group met in Hwacheon from 22nd to 25th October, 2010 to consider new developments in the area of nuclear disarmament and to renew the Ecumenical Call from Hwacheon. The analysis has been updated and the Call reaffirmed.

A New Hope for Nuclear Disarmament?

The Conference noted there could be a new hope for and possibly a new movement towards nuclear disarmament today. This emerged prominently on the agenda of international affairs, with President Barack Obama's Prague call for a nuclear weapon free world followed by the resolution of the UN Security Council's Special Session and statements by a number of prominent persons.

The current discourse on a nuclear weapon-free world is characterized by a confusion of thought on what is really meant by nuclear disarmament. Several questions are being raised. Are the nuclear weapon states (NWS) ready to reduce and eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in their strategy? Or are they showing interest in nuclear disarmament motivated by vested short-term interests? Most NWS are unable to envision a situation with no nuclear weapons and seem to be seeking only reduction in the number of weapons.

People who want a world without nuclear weapons should not fall into the trap of the rhetoric of the establishment on this but re-claim and re-appropriate the goal of a world without nuclear weapons with its full meaning and total demands.

Obstacles to Nuclear Disarmament

There is disquieting complacency on the part of most people on the nuclear catastrophe that is waiting to happen if action is not taken urgently. There are a number of reasons. One is the deteriorating moral environment in which people are conditioned to accept the use of military force. There is a climate of fear most of which is generated deliberately, in which the ultimate weapon is presented as the guarantee of security. The miniaturization of nuclear weapons, the use of depleted uranium in conventional weapons and the technological advances in conventional weapons have blurred the distinction between conventional and nuclear and created the impression that nuclear weapon is just another weapon.

There are a number of major institutional and political obstacles on the road to nuclear disarmament. Without effective international disarmament machinery, the international community will not muster the confidence needed to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. Few developments would be as devastating to disarmament hopes as would a pervasive and deep-rooted suspicion that the non-proliferation regime is neither reliable nor effective.

Disarmament also requires that the secrecy and obfuscation in nuclear

affairs be replaced by a culture of transparency and accountability. Openness, amongst nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states is essential ingredient for verification. And verification, both with regard to disarmament and to the non-diversion of nuclear materials and technologies from peaceful to military uses, must be consistent and strict.

The Myth of Deterrence

Deterrence is a threat to peace. The myth that it provides security has to be exposed. Deterrence feeds on fear and suspicion and has the effect of eroding trust and confidence. Security is invoked only as a camouflage to mobilize and maintain popular support for nuclear weapons. As the WCC's Vancouver Assembly (1983) stated, "The concept of deterrence, the credibility of which depends on the possible use of nuclear weapons, is to be rejected as morally unacceptable and incapable of safeguarding peace and security."

The issues of nuclear sharing and extended deterrence deserve serious consideration. Both ostensibly claim to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons but actually promote proliferation by other names. NATO can station US nuclear weapons in any of its member countries. Some of these countries get nuclear weapons released for delivery by their air forces in time of war. They thus become states with nuclear deterrent. This kind of nuclear sharing is a clear violation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which explicitly prohibits the transfer and receiving of nuclear weapons.

There are two very different kinds of extended nuclear deterrence policies,

which are in effect a US commitment to use nuclear weapons: first, if necessary to defend an ally if it is attacked by an enemy who uses conventional forces, biological or chemical weapons or nuclear weapons; second, a more tailored US commitment to use nuclear weapons in retaliation only against a nuclear attack on an ally. Extended deterrence actually gives allies of USA nuclear deterrent capability and is one form of proliferation. After the end of the Cold War it has become integrated to the imperial security architecture.

The NPT Review Conference

The major international event on nuclear disarmament which took place after the Hwacheon Consultation 2009 was the NPT Review Conference in May 2010. The adoption of a final document by the Conference pulled back the Treaty from the verge of collapse where it had reached in 2005. But on the three important issues related to nuclear disarmament, - a timeframe for disarmament by NWS as legally bound by Article VI of the Treaty, steps towards a Nuclear Weapons Convention and security assurances to NNWS – the Review Conference failed. It was evident at the Conference unless the NWS reduce and eliminate the role of nuclear deterrent in their strategy, no real progress will be made with regard to disarmament.

The claim by the United States that its new nuclear posture is substantially different from the previous one is not valid. The Nuclear Posture Review of the USA 2010 established a goal of disarmament but also a commitment to retain the US triad of nuclear weapons delivery systems, life extensions for

more than one thousands nuclear weapons and the modernization of the US nuclear weapons production complex. The Posture continues to be dominated by the strategy of nuclear competition of the USA with Russia and China. The new Posture which makes just about every non-nuclear weapon state immune from US nuclear attack, carves out an exception for Iran and North Korea. The role of nuclear weapons as an important instrument of the Empire has not changed.

The issues related to the new nuclear weapon states are important in any discussion of nuclear disarmament. The new nuclear weapon states - Israel, India, Pakistan and North Korea – are all outside the NPT. They are all in Asia which is heavily armed and with large presence of foreign military forces. It is in Asia that major wars are fought today and alarming tensions are rising. Nuclear disarmament thus has emerged as the key issue of peace in Asia.

Northeast Asia

The Korean Peninsula continues to be a nuclear flashpoint. While the focus is on North Korea's recently started nuclear programme, the long history of nuclearisation of the region with the dominant role of the USA is often conveniently forgotten. . The efforts of North Korea to acquire nuclear weapons have to be seen against the background of the continuous threat the US posed to that state from early 50s and the US refusal to respond adequately to North Korea's energy crisis and its aspiration for integration into the global market. Diplomatic initiatives to deal with the situation are

welcome.

The region includes three old nuclear weapon states (US, Russia and China), the new nuclear weapon state of North Korea and a group of non-nuclear weapon states with great potential to go nuclear. In the complex and uncertain context of Northeast Asia, two sets of major nuclear issues may arise that will contribute to the shaping of the security architecture in Northeast Asia. One is the evolution of nuclear relations among the three major nuclear weapon states. The other is the possibility of further proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region.

The Pacific

The Pacific, one of the most beautiful parts of the world has been disfigured and mutilated by imperial nations testing their weapons of mass destruction. Nuclear weapons states like the USA, Great Britain and France have conducted atmospheric and underground tests in the region. Among these the French have the dubious distinction of the largest number of tests for the longest period. This is not to underestimate the damage done by the others. In spite of world-wide protests especially in the seventies and eighties, the French continued the nuclear victimization of the Pacific into the nineties.

South Asia

The nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in 1998 have created one of the most dangerous nuclear zones in the world. At a distance of seconds by

missiles, the two countries which have a history of several wars in six decades, is now engaged in a nuclear and missile race. Both have nuclear doctrines, parts of which are aggressive. Both remain outside the NPT. But both have become de-facto nuclear weapon states with the more than tacit approval of the United States. China has been a nuclear power for long. While tensions between India and Pakistan show no sign of abating, there are new tensions between India and China. The triangular relations and tensions among the three neighboring nuclear states make the situation particularly grave and disturbing.

West Asia

Discussions on and international reactions to the nuclear issue in West Asia/the Middle East are largely, if not solely, focused on Iran. This is in spite of the fact that Israel has been a nuclear weapon state for long, though this has been publicly acknowledged only recently by the United States. While those who advocate nuclear disarmament will have to oppose any new state acquiring nuclear weapons, the fact remains that unless the international community faces the issue of Israel's nuclear arms, nuclear proliferation in the region cannot be prevented. The impression has fast gained ground that America's "friends" can have nuclear weapons but its "enemies" cannot. This is what is done in the name of non-proliferation. If the United States upholds that Israel's national security is linked to possession of nuclear weapons, it is only natural that other countries like Iran also will think along those lines. The NPT Review Conference has called for the convening of a conference in 2012 "on the establishment of a

Middle East Nuclear Weapon Free Zone". It is doubtful whether the US will take any steps in the matter.

The Techno-nuclear Complex

The global nuclear regime is closely integrated into the technological and scientific regime in terms of research and development (R&D) for the weapons industry and in terms of advanced technology in the military strategy and tactics including cyber warfare. This technocracy is the inner engine of industrial, communications and governmental systems which are integrated with the global military regime. The nuclear regime is an integral part of this technocratic regime.

The highly technocratic setup that is characteristic of the management of nuclear technology and nuclear weapons has been linked with the elements of secrecy, non-transparency, and concentrated highly undemocratic decision-making power. Nuclear technology therefore strengthens and reinforces the worst tendencies in our societies which are geared toward more elite, hierarchical rule and militate against meaningful, participatory democracy.

Patriarchy and Nuclearism

The links between patriarchy and nuclearism – the latter as the epitome of military might – need to be emphasized. It is important to highlight that nuclearism is the most extreme and obscene form of a culture of militarism and such a culture has been undergirded by an ideology of

power and hyper-masculinity. The worst manifestations of patriarchal and sexist behavior are reinforced through the ideology of militarism and nuclearism.

The Great Human Cost

People of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, even after sixty five years, are suffering from the after-effects of the first ever use of nuclear bombs. This continuing tragedy should have been an eye opener for the world as the people there cried “Never Again”. But their agony, tears and cries have been ignored by nations which went on making and acquiring more and more destructive nuclear weapons.

Perhaps less known is the high human cost paid by people living in areas where nuclear tests were conducted. People were uprooted and relocated from their lands of birth and also were not given the full information of the nature of nuclear activity and its effects and were told blatant lies that their contribution would contribute positively towards humanity. The immediate effects of acute exposure in radiation led to excessive burns and increase of carcinogenic diseases. Widespread pollution and devastation on land and marine sources had forced people to move afar and reduced any chances of returning to their homelands. The governments have refused to take responsibility for their part in contributing towards health problems, displacement, pollution and “invisible contamination” passed on to future generations.

The Ecological Impact

This raises the larger issues of the ecological impact of nuclear weapons. Their use generates environmental side effects that are now judged to be far more devastating than even the disastrous consequences of the initial blast. A recent study of the impact of a regional nuclear war between India and Pakistan predicts some 20 million people dead by the bombings, followed by ten years of shortened growing season because of soot blown into the upper atmosphere. The latter would throw the populations of the region into deeper poverty and hunger. Because the climatic changes would affect every region, these would put at risk the lives of the 800 million most food-insecure people in the world.

The economics of nuclear arms

The economics of nuclear armaments is an untold story of financial profligacy. The enormous allocation of resources to the world's deadliest weapon system is unconscionable at any time and a heavy burden on coming generations. In a world of endemic hunger, disease and poverty, in a world of over-consumption, pollution and climate change, the cost of nuclear weaponry has devastating consequences in terms of true security which, basically, is social, economic and political in nature.

Some Serious Ethical Issues

There are some crucial differences between nuclear weapons and conventional weapons which raise ethical issues. The first crucial ethical difference derives from the scale of nuclear devastation, a scale out of proportion to any reasonable war aims. The second crucial difference

derives from the indiscriminate character of such weapons. The devastation of the biosphere from a nuclear war coupled with long-term effects of radiation adds a further indiscriminate element raising ethical issues again. Humanity's responsibility under God for His Creation is one of the issues at stake."

Faith Stance and Theological Response

- 1) "The nuclear issue is in its impact and thrust to humanity a question of Christian discipline and faithfulness to the Gospel," the WCC Assembly in 1983 declared. The ecumenical process, Justice Peace and the Integrity of Creation, took up the nuclear issue as a matter of faith.
- 2) The ideology of security through nuclear armament is heretical. In light of the biblical faith that true/authentic security comes from Yahweh God, to depend on nuclear weapons for the security of nations and peoples is an expression of unfaith that does not trust God's protection and care, and is the sin of idolatry that relies on what is not God as if it is God. "If God does not protect the house, the guardians guard in vain."
- 3) Wars are against God; and there is no such a thing as just war; and all wars are evil. Nuclear weapon is idolatrous when it is elevated to an almighty position to decide upon the total destruction of all living beings. When such weapons of mass destruction are used or threatened to be used to destroy the life of all living beings that God has created and blessed for its fullness, it is blatant defiance of God.
- 4) The stories of the victims of all forms of violence and war should be told in the light of the painful memory of the passion of Jesus Christ. Every single atomic missile is an attempt to crucify him again amidst all God's people. Victims of nuclear weapons and nuclear powers are crying out to God to liberate them from suffering.

- 5) Building Ecumenical Interfaith Networks : Conscious linking up and building networks of exchanges and program cooperation with people of other faiths are demanded today. Convergence of religious faiths, philosophical convictions and cultural wisdoms give the power to resist nuclear weapons, to formulate a vision of peace and to gain wisdom to make peace, just as the power of God's Spirit frees us as individuals and churches to refuse to cooperate in any way with the waging of war. Instead, in the spirit of Jesus we wish to confront all injustice with readiness to accept conflicts and suffering, to cooperate with people of diverse gifts for peace making, in reconciliation processes and in shaping a political stance which seeks to outlaw war.
- 6) On Pentecost God's Spirit enabled us to understand each other in all our inter-confessional, intercultural and interreligious differences. Since then we have become a global community of storytelling, interpreting our different faith traditions and affirming solidarity for a life in justice and peace for the whole cosmos. In fact the household of God has many mansions.
- 7) We see the vision of peace in the Messianic feast in the story of New City of Peace, which is the garden of life for the conviviality of all living beings in which all nations participate.

The Ecumenical Response

From its inaugural assembly in 1948 till the most recent one in 2006, the WCC has called for the abolition of nuclear weapons as weapons of mass and indiscriminate destruction endangering humanity and the whole creation. It has maintained a consistent stand with regard to the elimination of nuclear weapons within the framework of a broader commitment to living

“without resort to arms” and to seeking peace with justice and with respect for the integrity of creation. The issues have been addressed by the governing bodies of the WCC and a large number of member churches from a moral, faith-based and international perspective. At times their recommendations have been prophetic for actions by governments and concerned people.

In 1954, the churches identified in viable political terms the main elements of what more than fourteen years later became the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty. In 1961, from New Delhi the WCC Assembly called for two concrete steps that still define disarmament progress - no-first-use of nuclear weapons and nuclear-weapon-free zones to enhance the security of citizens in countries without the bomb. In 1983, the Vancouver Assembly called upon churches, especially those in a Europe divided between East and West, to redouble their efforts to convince their governments to negotiate for security instead of seeking it through weapons of mass destruction. The Porto Allegro Assembly in its statement “On the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons” affirmed that all people of faith are needed in our day to expose the fallacies of nuclear doctrine.”

The WCC Assembly in 1983 in Vancouver in its statement on Peace and Justice, endorsing the conviction of the Panel on the Public Hearing on Nuclear Disarmament (1981) declared: “The nuclear issue is in its impact and thrust to humanity question of Christian discipline and faithfulness to the Gospel.” The ecumenical process Justice Peace and the Integrity of Creation took up the nuclear issue as a matter of faith. These theological

affirmations have to be reinforced by formulating clear positions on developments in the buildup of nuclear weapons and armaments including nuclear sharing and extended deterrence, new weapon systems, missile defense and war fighting postures of new nuclear doctrines including preemption.

The concept of shared human security is a reference point for ecumenical policies and programmes that address the critical transnational issues already defining the 21st century. These include climate change, the twin crises of chronic impoverishment and endemic over-consumption and the nuclear threat. Our well-being and our security are *shared* because of the evermore transnational nature of our existence, our shared responsibility for each other's well-being, and the much wider participation necessary to build genuine security today.

The Hwacheon Call

The Hwacheon Call is addressed to the ecumenical community, its worldwide and regional organizations, member churches and all those willing to cooperate in the active pursuit of a world of peace – a world free of nuclear weapons.

- i. The time has come for the churches to seek greater and stronger unity to address together the issues of nuclear weapons. This demands robust development of clear policy goals, close attention to the wisdom and values reflected in sixty years of ecumenical engagement for a world without nuclear weapons, plus disciplined pursuit by member churches, specialized ministries, church-related NGOs and Christians, active in

wider peace movements of the actions and recommendations that the ecumenical community has made over the years.

- ii. The WCC has an impressive history of dealing with the issue of nuclear disarmament. Today because of the urgency of the situation it should give the highest priority to nuclear disarmament and carry out its God-given and historic responsibility in clearly envisioning a nuclear-weapon-free world and actively working for it. This should form an important agenda of the WCC International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in Kingston in 2011 and the WCC Assembly in 2013 in South Korea.
- iii. While the theological positions of the WCC on nuclear issues have been clear, it is necessary to reformulate those positions taking into account new developments and new nuclear doctrines including preemption. The implications of nuclear sharing and extended deterrence have to be taken into account. Such reformulation is necessary to form the basis for a new commitment by churches and Christians towards nuclear disarmament especially in view of the increasing propensity to the use of force to settle disputes between nations.
- iv. The dangers posed by the nuclearization of Northeast Asia with the background of division and continuing tension in the Korean peninsula should alert the ecumenical community for focused attention on the situation and for sustained support to the Korean churches and people in their continuing struggle for peace and reunification.
- v. It is important to mobilize and consolidate latent majorities in all the churches opposed to nuclear weapons as part of the strategy. There should be coordination between international action and national level actions by the churches so that governments and inter-governmental

bodies hear the same message from the member churches and their ecumenical organizations.

- vi. The United Nations and international organizations should be called upon to ensure steps by Nuclear Weapon States for disarmament, take steps for a Nuclear Weapons Convention and security assurances to Non-Nuclear Weapon States.
- vii. In view of the increasing nuclear proliferation and nuclear tensions in the Asian region, the WCC and CCA should give high priority to the issue. In Asia the nuclear threat has never been as high as it is today stretching from West Asia through South Asia to North-East Asia. Nuclear disarmament should be treated by the WCC, CCA and member churches as a major faith concern and a test of discipleship. The 2013 WCC Assembly should be an occasion for such affirmation.
- viii. Inter-faith cooperation should be actively sought in dealing with the threat to humanity and the Creation from nuclear weapons and working for a world without nuclear weapons.

Participants in 2009 and 2010 International Consultation on “the World without Nuclear Weapons” in Hwacheon, Korea (A few participated on line)

Prof. Ninan Koshy, India
Prof. Kim Yong Bock, S. Korea
Dr. Samuel Kobia, Kenya
Prof. Park Seong Won, S. Korea
Mr. Carlos Ocampo, The Philippines/Thailand,
Dr. Ernie Regehr, Canada,
Rev. John Jones, Norway,
Prof. Volker Kuester, Germany/Netherlands
Prof. Park Kyeong Soe, S. Korea
Dr. Jonathan Frerichs, U.S.A./Switzerland,
Prof. Junaid S. Ahmad, Pakistan,
Dr. James T. Christie, Canada
Mme. Rejieli Tupou Vere, Fiji,
Prof. Samuel Lee, S. Korea,

Ms Carmencita Karagdag, The Philippines
Prof. Kinhide Mushakoji, Japan
Rev. Dr. Wolfgang Schmidt, Germany
Honorable Jinwol, S. Korea
Mr. Lee Hack Young, S. Korea
Dr. Kim Daniel Dong-Sung, S. Korea,
Prof. Bae Hyun-Joo, S. Korea,
Prof. Jeong Byung-Joon, S. Korea,
Prof. Jang Yoon-Jae, S. Korea,
Dr. Jeong Ji-Seok, S. Korea,
Prof. Jeong Won-Beom, S. Korea
Dr. Kim Seung Kuk, S. Korea,
Rev. Lee Gang-Shil, Korea,
Rev. Oh Sang-Youl, S. Korea,
Mr. Yoon Shin-Young, S. Korea,
Prof. Joung Kyeong-Ho, S. Korea
Rev. Oh Sang-Yeol, S. Korea
Prof. Jeong Won-Beom, S. Korea
Prof. Noh Jeong Sun, S. Korea
Prof. Kim Sung Eun
Prof. Kwon Jin Kwan, S. Korea
Dr. Suh Bo Hyuk, S. Korea
Dr. Lee Mu Seong, S. Korea
Rev. Choi Soo Cheol, S. Korea
Mr. Shin Ik Kyun, S. Korea
Rev. Cheon Young Chul, S. Korea
Rev. Koh Sung Gi, S. Korea
Mr. Lee Yoon-Hee, S. Korea