

ELIMINATING NUCLEAR THREATS

A PRACTICAL AGENDA FOR
GLOBAL POLICYMAKERS

GARETH EVANS and **YORIKO KAWAGUCHI** CO-CHAIRS



REPORT OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON
**Nuclear Non-proliferation
and Disarmament**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Co-chairs' Preface	ix
Synopsis: A Comprehensive Action Agenda	xv
Abbreviations.....	xxi
PART I: SEIZING THE MOMENT	1
1. Why This Report, and Why Now	3
The Problem: A Global Threat Defying Complacency	3
The Opportunity: Renewing the Momentum for Action	5
This Commission's Role: A Comprehensive Action Agenda.....	8
PART II: ASSESSING NUCLEAR THREATS AND RISKS.....	11
2. The Risks from Existing Nuclear-Armed States	13
The Destructive Capabilities of Existing Weapons	13
Numbers and Classes of Existing Weapons	15
Missiles and Missile Defence	23
Alert Status of Existing Weapons	26
System Vulnerabilities	28
Attitudes to Using Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament.....	29
3. The Risks from New Nuclear-Armed States	31
Why Non-Proliferation Matters	31
The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Under Strain.....	32
Risks of a Proliferation Surge	36
4. The Threat of Nuclear Terrorism	39
Possible State and Non-State Actors	39
Availability of Weapons and Material	40
Assessing the Risk of Nuclear Terrorist Attack.....	46
5. The Risks Associated with Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy.....	48
Likely Scale of the Civil Nuclear Energy Renaissance	48
Assessing the Proliferation Risks of Nuclear Energy Expansion.....	50

PART III: FORMULATING POLICY RESPONSES	57
6. Disarmament: Making Zero Thinkable	59
Delegitimizing Nuclear Weapons	59
Rethinking Deterrence	61
Rethinking Other Justifications for Retaining Nuclear Weapons....	68
7. Disarmament: A Two-Phase Strategy for Getting to Zero	72
Why a Two-Phase Approach is Necessary	72
The Minimization Phase	73
The Elimination Phase	76
8. Non-Proliferation: Constraining Demand and Supply	78
Limiting the Demand for Nuclear Weapons	78
Limiting the Supply of Weapons, Materials and Technology	81
9. Strengthening the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty	83
Improving Safeguards and Verification	83
Improving Compliance and Enforcement.....	87
Strengthening the International Atomic Energy Agency	90
10. Strengthening Non-Proliferation Disciplines Outside the NPT ...	93
Non-NPT Treaties and Mechanisms	93
Applying Equivalent Obligations to States now Outside the NPT	98
11. Banning Nuclear Testing	101
Importance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty	101
Addressing Verification and Stockpile Reliability Concerns	103
12. Limiting the Availability of Fissile Material	107
The Proposed Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty	107
Pre-Existing Stocks	110
Fissile Material in Civil Programs	111
13. Sustaining an Effective Counter-Terrorism Strategy	114
Counter-Terrorism Strategy Generally.....	114
Securing Loose Weapons and Material	116
“Dirty Bombs”: Improved Control of Radioactive Material.....	119
Nuclear Forensics	121

14. Responsible Nuclear Energy Management	124
Sharing the Benefits of Nuclear Energy	124
The Three Ss: Managing Safeguards, Security and Safety	125
Prospects for Proliferation-Resistant Technology	126
Industry as a Non-Proliferation Partner.....	128
15. Multilateralizing the Nuclear Fuel Cycle	132
The Argument for Multilateralization.....	132
Assurance of Supply Proposals	134
Fuel Bank Proposals.....	137
Multilateral Facility Proposals.....	138
The Way Forward	142
PART IV: FROM POLICY TO ACTION:	
A COMPREHENSIVE AGENDA	147
16. A Package for the 2010 NPT Review Conference	149
The Importance of the Review Conference	149
Updating the “Thirteen Practical Steps” on Disarmament	150
Specific Measures to Strengthen the NPT and IAEA	156
The Middle East and Nuclear Weapon Free Zones.....	156
17. Short Term Action Agenda: To 2012 -	
Achieving Initial Benchmarks	161
Defining Short Term Objectives	163
Reducing Weapon Numbers: U.S. and Russian Leadership.....	165
Multilateral Disarmament: Preparing the Ground	167
Nuclear Doctrine: Beginning to Limit the Role of	
Nuclear Weapons.....	172
Force Postures: Movement on De-alerting and Deployment.....	178
North Korea and Iran	182
18. Medium Term Action Agenda: To 2025 - Getting to the	
Minimization Point	186
Defining Medium Term Objectives.....	187
Reducing Weapon Numbers	189
Parallel Security Issues: Missiles, Space, Biological and	
Conventional Weapons.....	195
Nuclear Doctrine and Force Postures: Consolidating Change.....	199
Other Elements in the Non-Proliferation and	
Disarmament Agenda.....	200

19. Longer Term Action Agenda: Beyond 2025 – Getting to Zero	203
Defining “Zero”: The Nature of the Task	204
General Conditions for Moving from Minimization to Elimination.....	205
Overcoming Specific Concerns of Particular States	209
20. Mobilizing and Sustaining Political Will	213
The Elements of Political Will: Leadership, Knowledge, Strategy and Process.....	213
Identifying the Key Actors	219
Focusing the Campaign: A Nuclear Weapons Convention?	222
Sustaining the Momentum: An Ongoing Monitoring Mechanism.....	228
Notes and Sources	233
ANNEX A: Commission Recommendations	251
ANNEX B: Members of the Commission	265
ANNEX C: How the Commission Worked	273
Index	283

BOXES

2-1	Impact of Strategic Nuclear Bombs on London and Mumbai	14
2-2	Nuclear Arsenals 2009.....	20
3-1	Key Elements of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.....	33
4-1	Basic Nuclear Weapon Designs: "Gun" and "Implosion"	41
4-2	Impact of Terrorist Nuclear Explosions in London and Mumbai	43
5-1	Reactors Planned, Proposed and Under Construction 2009	49
5-2	The Nuclear Fuel Cycle: Basic Terminology Non-Specialists Need to Know.....	53
7-1	The Comprehensive Action Agenda: Timelines.....	73
10-1	Major Non-Proliferation Measures Complementing the NPT	95
13-1	Priority Issues for the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit.....	115
16-1	“A New International Consensus on Action for Nuclear Disarmament”	153
16-2	Nuclear Weapon Free Zones.....	157
17-1	The Short Term Action Agenda – To 2012.....	161
18-1	The Medium Term Action Agenda – To 2025.....	186
19-1	The Longer Term Action Agenda – Beyond 2025.....	203

CO-CHAIRS' PREFACE

Eliminating nuclear weapons, and all the other security threats and risks associated with the use and misuse of nuclear energy, is as daunting a policy challenge as it is possible to imagine. Showing how to destroy the curse but retain the blessing of nuclear energy is not the easiest task that we, or our fellow Commissioners, have ever undertaken.

The nuclear problems the world has to address are immensely large, complex and difficult. Every state with nuclear weapons has to be persuaded to give them up. States without nuclear weapons have to neither want nor be able to acquire them. Terrorists have to be stopped from buying, stealing, building or using them. And in a world where, for good reason, the number of power reactors may double in the next twenty years, the risks associated with purely peaceful uses of nuclear energy have to be effectively countered.

Sceptics abound, telling us that nuclear disarmament, in particular, would be so hard to achieve it is pointless even to try. More troublingly, there are still voices saying that it is *dangerous* to try, because a world without nuclear weapons would be less safe than the one we have now. And with governments, high-level panels and commissions, think tanks and researchers working over these issues since the dawn of the nuclear age, we know that brand new ideas and approaches are in short supply.

But try to tackle these issues we must. No weapon ever conceived is as terribly indiscriminate and inhumane in its impact as an atomic or hydrogen bomb: no one listening, as we have, to the harrowing testimony of the *hibakusha* – the surviving victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – could ever want to see their experience repeated. And nuclear weapons are the only ones ever invented that have the capacity to wholly destroy life on this planet.

There remains no simpler or more compelling articulation of the case for action than that first put by the Canberra Commission over a decade ago: so long as any state has nuclear weapons, others will want them; so long as any such weapons remain, it defies credibility that they will not one day be used, by accident or miscalculation or design; and any such use would be catastrophic for our world as we know it.

Nuclear threats and climate change are the two great global issues of our age, and both defy complacency. In responding to these problems, business-as-usual is simply not an option. Policies must change, and attitudes must change. Above all, there has to be tackled head-on the mindset, still

tenacious, that the clock cannot be turned back, that nuclear weapons will be around forever, and that they continue to have a unique deterrent utility that somehow outweighs their disastrous downside. A very different idea has to become equally firmly embedded in the minds of policymakers and all those in the wider community who influence them: nuclear weapons may not be able to be uninvented, but in a sane and civilized world they can, and must, be outlawed.

When we were assigned the task of leading this Commission in July 2008, we saw its task as being primarily to energize a high-level international debate – to try to reverse the sleepwalk into which international nuclear policy had largely fallen since the burst of arms control energy that accompanied and immediately followed the end of the Cold War, and in particular to try to ensure that there would be no repetition at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review (NPT) Conference scheduled for May 2010 of the failure of its predecessor in 2005, and the World Summit of that year, to agree on anything at all.

There had been the beginnings of a new debate with the publication of the Shultz-Perry-Kissinger-Nunn “gang of four” article in January 2007, arguing from a hard-headed realist perspective that nuclear weapons had outlived any usefulness they might have had, but in mid-2008 global policymakers were still not focusing. By the beginning of 2009, however, things had changed. Newly elected U.S. President Barack Obama launched a series of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and security initiatives – to which President Dmitry Medvedev of Russia, in particular, was immediately responsive – and nuclear issues were squarely back on the global agenda.

With the long-needed international debate well and truly now under way, this Commission’s role had to be more than just another call to attention. The need now is not just to identify the problems and point in the general direction of the right solutions. It is to bring all the complex, inter-related threads together; analyse in rather more detail both the opportunities and constraints that would be involved in moving forward; and try to map with rather more precision who should be doing what, when and how in responding to the whole range of nuclear threats and risks with which the world is now confronted. Central to our approach is the sense that the debate needed to focus squarely on specific action plans – short, medium and longer term – and that, above all, those plans have to be realistic. Idealistic, yes; pushing the envelope beyond most governments’ comfort zones, yes; but also pragmatic, recognizing the many obstacles – political, practical and technical – that would need to be surmounted, and adjusting time-frames and ambitions accordingly.

It will be for others to judge how well this report succeeds in meeting these objectives. Some will undoubtedly see us as not being ambitious enough; others as excessively so. What we hope will be clearly apparent to everyone is the sense of urgency we feel about the need to tackle the problems here described, and our determination to keep clearly in sight the ultimate goal. That must be not to merely reduce or minimize nuclear threats and risks, but to eliminate them completely. The international community can only rest when we have achieved a world without nuclear weapons, and be confident that it will remain that way.

The consensus text on which we have agreed reflects our shared view of what is both desirable and politically achievable in the world as we know it today and want it to be. Although participating in their personal capacity, and not as representatives of their respective governments, Commissioners naturally brought to the table many different professional, policy and national interest perspectives, and the text on which we have agreed does not necessarily reflect in every respect their preferred positions. But we knew we could not begin to expect consensus in the wider international community on these issues if we could not find it among ourselves.

Acknowledgments

That the report we now present is a unanimous one is a tribute to the commitment brought to this effort by all our fellow Commissioners. We express our deep gratitude to them for the extraordinary qualities of knowledge, experience and judgment they brought to the preparation of this report over a year of long and often gruelling meetings. One very sad moment in the life of the Commission came with the news in December 2008 of the death of our colleague Ali Alatas, and we take this opportunity to pay particular tribute to this extraordinarily gifted and influential statesman, who we know passionately shared our dedication to achieving a nuclear weapon free world.

We have many others to thank, beginning with Australian and Japanese Prime Ministers Kevin Rudd and Yasuo Fukuda who had the vision to initiate this Commission, and the willingness to give it the ongoing support (continued by the latter's successors Taro Aso and Yukio Hatoyama) to ensure that it could really add value to the international nuclear debate. We also thank Foreign Ministers Stephen Smith, Masahiko Koumura, Hirofumi Nakasone and Katsuya Okada, for placing staff of their ministries at the Commission's disposal when so many other issues, from climate change and counter-terrorism to the global economic crisis, were demanding their attention. Japan and Australia have special interests in nuclear policy – as respectively the only country to have suffered the horror of nuclear attack, and the possessor of the world's largest reserves of uranium, the source

of nuclear fuel, which carries with it the responsibility to ensure that this resource is not misused – and it is the Commission’s hope that, with the support of the perhaps unusual combination of these two governments behind it, our report will have real and continuing traction.

The Commission could not have begun to have done its work effectively without the tireless and professional efforts of its Secretary, Ian Biggs, the Australian Secretariat he led within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and on the Japanese side Toshio Sano and his team within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The organizational demands involved in putting together multiple Commission and Regional Meetings all over the world and physically producing a report of this length, all in just over a year, were intense almost beyond measure; but our joint team rose to the challenge admirably.

The research and consultations on which this report is based, and the way in which we went about our task, are described in detail in Annex C, “How the Commission Worked”, which also identifies all the key individuals, including those in the Canberra and Tokyo Secretariats, from whose help we benefited. We profited enormously from the advice and input of the distinguished members of our Advisory Board, nearly all of whom participated in one or more of our full Commission meetings; the Associated Research Centres, which helped us greatly both in marshalling the necessary material and arguments and, where their home countries were involved, in organizing our crucial Regional Meetings; and our NGO Advisers, who ensured that we were fully alert to civil society as well as government sentiment as we went about our task. We are particularly grateful to those of our members, advisers and staff who, at our request, produced the initial drafts of different sections of the report from which we wrote the Co-chairs’ text: Commissioners Alexei Arbatov and François Heisbourg; Advisory Board members and research consultants John Carlson, George Perkovich, Nobuyasu Abe, Lawrence Freedman, Shinsuke Kondo, Martine Letts, Patricia Lewis and V.R. Raghavan; Research Coordinator Ken Berry; Secretariat staff Ian Biggs, Toshio Sano and John Tilemann; and Australian experts Malcolm Coxhead and Steve McIntosh.

The Commission was intended to build upon, and take further, the work of distinguished earlier commissions and panels, and we acknowledge particularly in this respect the important reports of the 1996 Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, the 1999 Tokyo Forum for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, the 2004 UN High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, the 2006 Blix Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, and the 2008 Zedillo Commission of Eminent Persons on the future of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Many of our Commissioners, Advisory Board members and researchers

were associated in one way or another with these earlier enterprises, and we have learned much from them.

Also deserving our warmest gratitude are all the participants in our Regional Meetings, who provided a wonderfully rich flow of information, ideas and diverse political perspectives, as well as an excellent real-world sounding board against which to test our own evolving ideas; the industry representatives who participated in our consultation in Moscow in June 2009, for enabling us to test the ground truth of our approach to the civil nuclear-energy sector; the *hibakusha*, or survivors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear bombs, who movingly and memorably, in Washington and Hiroshima, told Commissioners of their experiences; the International Crisis Group and the University of Melbourne and the Japanese Diet, for allowing each of us, respectively, to devote time to this Commission while still in their employ; and the Australian and Japanese Ambassadors, High Commissioners, Chargés d'Affaires and missions in so many capitals, for their hospitality, programming skills and contacts as the Commission has moved around the world over the last year.

We thank finally each other, and again our fellow Commissioners, for believing in a world without nuclear weapons, and working tirelessly to make it both believable and achievable for policymakers worldwide.

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November 2009