

Disarm Now! For Peace and Human Needs

INTERNATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

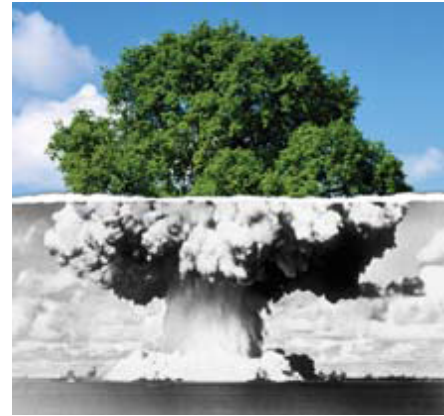
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UN TOP OFFICIAL COMING TO NUCLEAR ABOLITION CONFERENCE *Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon Speaks May 1 to Hundreds of Activists in NYC*

NEW YORK CITY – United Nations Secretary-General **Ban Ki-moon** will address hundreds of peace, justice and environmental activists **on May 1 at 7 p.m.** during a historic peace conference, organizers announced this week. The conference “For A Nuclear-Free, Peaceful, Just and Sustainable World” begins April 30, in advance of May’s Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference at the UN. The Secretary-General will speak at New York’s **Riverside Church, 490 Riverside Drive**.

The conference has been organized by the 2010 NPT Review International Planning Committee, a network of 25 leading organizations for peace and nuclear weapons abolition in the U.S., Europe, Japan and Israel. About 1,000 activists from the U.S. and more than 20 nations are attending. Thousands more will be joining a march and rally during a Day of Action on May 2 in Manhattan. Millions of petition signatures will be presented urging that talks to eliminate the world’s nuclear arsenals begin immediately.

Speaking for the network **Judith LeBlanc**, Field Organizer for Peace Action, said, “We need more than limited arms control agreements that do not adequately address the dangers of catastrophes posed by the nuclear powers. We are urging that the NPT Review Conference conclude with a commitment to begin negotiations on a treaty to completely eliminate all nuclear weapons, as provided for by the NPT.”

Joseph Gerson, Disarmament Director for the American Friends Service Committee and a conference organizer, said, “Secretary-General Ban-Ki moon’s decision to join us is signaling the critical importance of popular action to move governments to do what they must do to abolish nuclear weapons.

“Even when and if the recently negotiated New START treaty is ratified and implemented, the U.S. and Russia will have more than 3,000 thermonuclear warheads with the destructive capability of roughly 60,000 Hiroshima A-Bombs on hair trigger alert,” Gerson said.

Article VI of the NPT, which went into effect in 1970, requires the five original nuclear powers to begin “good faith negotiations” for the complete elimination of their nuclear arsenals. Such negotiations have never been initiated. Nuclear armed states India, Israel and Pakistan remain outside the NPT.

Jackie Cabasso, Executive Director of the Western States Legal Foundation, said, “In addition to the immediate dangers posed by nuclear weapons, the hypocritical refusal by the U.S. and other nuclear powers to fulfill their part of the NPT bargain jeopardizes the treaty as a whole. It encourages the nuclear

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weapons proliferation President Obama says he is working to prevent. Ban Ki-moon understands that the world is at a turning point. His ‘Five Point Plan’, like our network’s call to action, urges the nuclear powers to finally begin their promised ‘good faith negotiations’ for nuclear weapons abolition.”

The conference’s Call to Action places the abolition of nuclear weapons in a broader context. It states that “the eradication of these weapons will not only end the threat of global annihilation and [the] hierarchy of terror, but it will unlock enormous resources to address climate change and mass poverty; serve as the leading edge of the global trend towards demilitarisation, and make advances in other areas of human aspiration possible.” The Call has been endorsed by nearly 300 local, national and international organizations in 32 countries from every continent.

Included among the 25 members of the planning committee are Peace Action, the American Friends Service Committee, Western States Legal Foundation, and the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (U.S.), the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (Britain), Le Mouvement de la Paix (France,) International Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (Germany), the Japan Council against A- and H-Bomb, Gensuikyo (Japan), the Emil Touma Institute for Palestinian and Israeli Studies (Israel), and the Abolition 2000 Global Network to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons.

Other conference speakers include **Terumi Tanaka**, a Hiroshima A-Bomb survivor; **Tadatoshi Akiba**, Mayor of Hiroshima and president of Mayors for Peace; **Natalia Mironova** of the Institute for Public Policy and Law in Russia, **Socorro Gomes** of Cebrapaz in Brazil, and many others. Two dozen workshops will address interrelated issues of nuclear abolition, peace, environment/health and economic justice. For more information, visit www.peaceandjusticenow.org.

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