

**HUMANIST
PARTY**



New York City

A political party for people

who don't like politics

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Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference at the United Nations in May 2010



Today, as the citizens of this earth, and as people at risk of being obliterated by a nuclear catastrophe, we have a chance to speak up! At the beginning of May (May 3rd – 28th), New York City will host the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference at the United Nations. Using this occasion as the galvanizing point, the Humanist Party is organizing a campaign to explore and express the thoughts and feelings of the Community regarding nuclear weapons proliferation.

From its very inception, the Humanist Party has been campaigning against Nuclear Weapons. A few months ago, we helped organize the **World March for Peace and Nonviolence**, whose goals included generating support for the dismantling of entire nuclear weapons superstructure, and to sound a clarion call to end all forms of violence (not just physical, but also economic, racial, religious, cultural, sexual and psychological).

At 8:15 on August 6, 1945, the atomic bomb "Little Boy" was dropped over the center of Hiroshima City. With energy reportedly equivalent to 16 kilotons of TNT, its heat rays and blast burned and completely or partially destroyed 90% of the roughly 76,000 houses in the city. From burnt bodies, homes, and places of work, the people of Hiroshima made a new start in an utterly burnt-out plain of rubble. Lacking materials or assistance, that new beginning was filled with suffering.

(From "Hiroshima Peace Site")

But a new beginning they did make! In 1947, merely two years after experiencing one of the worst man-made disasters ever, the city held a Peace Festival – inviting the world to share in its desire for lasting peace. The first Peace Declaration, read by Mayor Shinzo Hamai proclaimed, "... *this horrible weapon brought about a 'Revolution of Thought,' which has convinced us of the necessity and the value of lasting peace. That is to say, because of the atomic bomb, the people of the world have become more aware that a global war in which atomic energy*

would be used would lead to the end of our civilization and extinction of mankind. This revolution in thinking ought to be the basis for an absolute peace, and give rise to a new life and a new world."

Fast forward to April, 2009. Our President, Barack Obama, speaking in Prague, said, "...*as the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the United States has a moral responsibility to act.*" And "...*take concrete steps towards a world without nuclear weapons."*

A cursory look at the expenses associated with nuclear weapons leaves one speechless! Since the U.S. government committed itself, in 1940, to exploring the feasibility of using atomic energy as a weapon, it has incurred costs of at least \$4 trillion for its nuclear arsenal-- more than one-quarter of all military spending since World War II and \$1 trillion more than the cost of World War II itself. For a closer-to-home comparison, these 4 trillion dollars is equivalent to 30 times the entire NY State budget (134 billion).



The United States is one of the five recognized nuclear powers under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty ("NPT"). It maintains a current arsenal of around 9,960 intact warheads, of which 5,735 are considered active or operational, and of these only a certain number are deployed at any given time. Hundreds of the B61 bombs are located at seven bases in six European NATO countries (Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Turkey and the United Kingdom.)

Indeed, a fact that is often not adequately emphasized is that the "nuclear threat" comes not just from the possibility of a country using nuclear weapons during a war, but rather from the everyday invisible and insidious spread of radiation released from every step in the nuclear weapons production cycle, plus that released in the testing of nuclear weapons. This radiation causes cancers, congenital defects, mental retardation, immune destruction, cancer, stillbirths and other health problems. In human terms, the cost has been astronomical. Biostatistician Rosalie Bertell has estimated that *"the global victims of the radiation pollution related to nuclear weapon production, testing, use and waste conservatively number 13 million."*

In 1984, the United Nations Human Rights Committee noted that "It is evident that the designing, testing, manufacture, possession, deployment and use of nuclear

weapons are among the greatest threats to the right to life which confront mankind today," and concluded that "The production, testing, possession, deployment and use of nuclear weapons should be prohibited and recognised as crimes against humanity." (From: Human Rights Committee General Comment 14(23) on Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, November 2, 1984.)

Following his April 2009 "world without nuclear weapons" speech, President Obama and the Russian president, Dmitry Medvedev, signed a preliminary agreement on July 6, 2009, to reduce the number of active nuclear weapons to between 1500 and 1675, from 2200. The new caps on nuclear arsenals would need to be fully implemented by 2012.

However, in spite of the grandiose words, the last proposed budget of the Obama administration, released on February 1, 2010, contradicts his pledge to the world by planning to boost funding for nuclear weapons production facilities by \$625 million compared to the last year. The Alliance for Nuclear Accountability (ANA) said that the Obama budget includes large increases for a new plutonium production facility in Los Alamos, New Mexico and for a new highly enriched uranium production facility near Oak Ridge, Tennessee, each estimated to cost about \$3 billion.

Join Us!

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April 30 – May 1, 2010:
NYC - International Conference

May 2, 2010:
NYC - March past the UN, Rally and Street Festival

Sign the petition!
Get involved! Find out what you can do in your own community:
www.peaceandjusticenow.org

Let the NPT conference be the time to speak out against this dual culture of fear and violence – where on one hand we expand our nuclear arsenal, while simultaneously living every day with red, orange and yellow alerts. The time has come to change the values and the methodology of actions in our society. The future is knocking on our doors – it is up to us to choose how we will respond.