

A New Moment for Nuclear Disarmament

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**PAX CHRISTI
USA**

A New Moment for Nuclear Disarmament

SPECIAL EDITION: OCTOBER 2008

PAX CHRISTI USA: NATIONAL CATHOLIC PEACE MOVEMENT



A pro-nuclear weapons U.S. Senate and a lack of vision by successive U.S. Administrations since 1994 have effectively stymied the prospects for nuclear disarmament in the United States and at the United Nations' Conference on Disarmament. Additionally, the Bush Administration's pursuit of a \$150 billion "Complex Transformation" has posed the greatest risk of igniting a new nuclear arms race since the end of the Cold War.

The upcoming presidential transition opens real prospects for dramatic and fundamental changes in U.S. nuclear weapons policies, but this will require a focused strategy of organizing and advocacy at both national and local levels. To seize the opportunity, Pax Christi USA is launching an initiative entitled *A New Moment for Nuclear Disarmament*. It aims to strengthen our regional and local advocates' (including bishops, heads of religious communities, university presidents, and other Catholic leaders) capacities and to engage our broad base of local groups and members in public awareness and mobilization efforts to influence the debate and policy formation on U.S. nuclear weapons during the ripe presidential transition period and beyond.

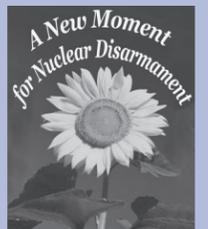
The long-sought goals of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, taking deployed nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert status, negotiating a fissile materials cut-off

treaty, and amending the Moscow Treaty to make its proposed cuts in U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals real and irreversible are all within the reach of a new Administration and Senate. Each of these goals, if achieved, would provide a measure of progress and badly needed political momentum toward revitalizing international efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons once and for all. Pax Christi USA's Initiative seeks to promote these goals during the presidential transition. At the same time, the Initiative will build a strong and vibrant constituency with focused opposition to current U.S. policies, including preventive war, nonproliferation based on the use of force, and the renewed nuclear arms race envisioned in "Complex Transformation." It will help build bridges between grassroots activists and Catholic institutional leaders at Pax Christi USA's local and regional levels and in national policy circles with the goal of impacting U.S. nuclear weapons policy.

This Special Edition of PCUSA's membership newsletter is the first in a series of resources for the Pax Christi USA initiative: A New Moment for Nuclear Disarmament. Return the sign-up form on the back cover to receive further resources, updates, action suggestions, and more.

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PEACEMAKING quote

"No weapon so threatens the longed-for peace of the 21st century as the nuclear. Let not the immensity of this task dissuade us from the efforts needed to free humanity from such a scourge."

- Archbishop Renato Martino,
L'Osservatore Romano,
October 15, 1997

Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) bans all nuclear explosions. It opened for signature on September 24, 1996, when it was signed by 71 states, including the five nuclear-weapon states. There are currently 178 signatories.

Tasked with carrying out the necessary preparations for effectively implementing the Treaty, the states' signatories to the Treaty established the CTBTO Preparatory Commission on November 19, 1996. The Commission's main task is establishing the International Monitoring System (IMS) and the International Data Centre (IDC) and developing operational manuals, including for on-site inspections. In October 2006, with less than two-thirds of the facilities operating, the IMS recorded the location and magnitude of North Korea's nuclear test. Since then, nearly fifty new stations have been integrated into the system and are providing data.

The CTBT will enter into force 180 days after it has been ratified by the forty-four states listed in its Annex 2. These include all who formally participated in the 1996 session of the Conference on Disarmament and possess either nuclear power or research reactors.

Of these Annex 2 states, forty-one have signed and thirty-five have ratified the Treaty. Colombia's recent ratification leaves China, North Korea, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Pakistan, and the United States as the last hold-outs. Of the Annex 2 States, only North Korea, India, and Pakistan have neither signed nor ratified the Treaty.

U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) requires 67 votes in favor in the Senate. On October 13, 1999, the Senate failed to ratify the CTBT in a vote of 51-48. This was the first security-related treaty in eighty years that the Senate did not ratify.

According to a poll released by the University of Maryland's Center for International and Security Studies and its Program on International Policy Attitudes, 80 percent of those in the United States and 79 percent of Russians think their country "should participate in the treaty that

would prohibit nuclear test explosions worldwide" (e.g., the CTBT).

Only 18 percent here and 10 percent of Russians oppose the Treaty. In the United States, 73 percent of Republicans support CTBT participation, as do 78 percent of Independents and 86 percent of Democrats.

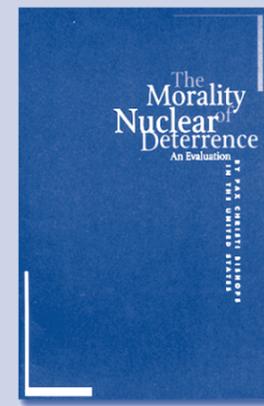
U.S. public support for the CTBT has been constant. When asked by the Chicago Council in 2004 and 2002, 87 percent and 81 percent, respectively, said the United States should participate in the CTBT. In 1999 (the year the U.S. Senate voted against ratification) a poll by Mellman/Wirthlin found that 82 percent said the Senate should approve it.

In their now-famous series of *Wall Street Journal* op-eds, George Shultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger, and Sam Nunn advocated "a bipartisan process with the Senate, including understandings to increase confidence and provide for periodic review, to achieve ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, taking advantage of recent technical advances, and working to secure ratification by other key states."

Multiple pieces of legislation have been recently introduced in Congress in support of the CTBT. In the House, this includes a resolution (H.Res. 882) introduced by Rep. Ellen Tauscher (D-CA) and co-sponsored by thirty-nine others, "Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Senate should initiate a bipartisan process to give its advice and consent to ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty." The bill, however, is stuck in the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and is not likely to see action in 2008. In the Senate, the Armed Services Committee adopted a non-binding provision in its 2008 Defense Authorization bill that stated that "The Senate should ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty." Senator Jon Kyl (R-AZ) spearheaded opposing this language; the provision was removed from the text that reached the full Senate and eventually became law.

Adapted from the Center for Arms Control and Nonproliferation's CTBT Fact Sheets by Jeff Lindemyer. Published April 15, 2008.

Catholic Social Teaching and Nuclear Deterrence



On this 15th anniversary of The Challenge of Peace, the time has come for concrete action for nuclear disarmament. On the eve of the Third Millennium may our world rid itself of these terrible weapons of mass destruction and the constant threat they pose. We cannot delay any longer. Nuclear deterrence as a national policy must be condemned as morally abhorrent because it is the excuse and justification for the continued possession and further development of these horrendous weapons. We urge all to join in taking up the challenge to begin the effort to eliminate nuclear weapons now, rather than relying on them indefinitely.

~"The Morality of Nuclear Deterrence:
An Evaluation by Pax Christi Bishops in the United States,"
October 1998.

When the Holy See expressed its limited acceptance of nuclear deterrence during the Cold War, it was with the clearly stated condition that deterrence was only a step on the way towards progressive nuclear disarmament. The Holy See has never countenanced nuclear deterrence as a permanent measure, nor does it today when it is evident that nuclear deterrence drives the development of ever newer nuclear arms, thus preventing genuine nuclear disarmament.

Nuclear weapons assault life on the planet, they assault the planet itself, and in so doing they assault the process of the continuing development of the planet. The preservation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty demands an unequivocal commitment to genuine nuclear disarmament.

~Statement by Archbishop Celestino Migliore,
permanent observer of the Holy See to the United Nations,
delivered to the 7th Review Conference of the States Parties
to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), 2005.

Sign up!

Be sure to send in the form on page 12 of this newsletter to receive information, including action alerts, from Pax Christi USA's "A New Moment for Nuclear Disarmament" Initiative. Everyone's voice and hands are needed!

Catholic Church Position on Nuclear Weapons

In May of 2005 the Vatican took a dra-

matic step that signaled a sea change in Catholic moral teaching on nuclear weapons. In his address to the delegates at the Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Vatican U.N. ambassador, questioned the ongoing morality of nuclear deterrence (see p. 11).

Ever since the Second Vatican Council's unequivocal condemnation of any use of nuclear weapons, church teaching has been guided by the conflicting positions of being opposed to any use of nuclear weapons but allowing for their possession as a deterrent to ensure that they are never used. But when the Berlin Wall fell and the Soviet Union collapsed, the expectation was that nuclear disarmament would proceed and nuclear weapons would go the way of other weapons of mass destruction—biological weapons and chemical weapons—already outlawed under international agreement. Indeed, throughout the 1990s the Vatican was among the strongest voices calling for an international treaty to ban nuclear weapons. The 2005 statement by the Vatican was the first time since the early 1980s that it challenged the very morality of deterrence itself.

In 1993's *The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace*, the U.S. Catholic Church again cautioned that nuclear weapons must never be used and that possessing them could only be justified as a deterrent to the use of nuclear weapons by others. This position was clearly tempered by the uncertainty of the moment. It was not yet clear what would happen to the Soviet nuclear arsenal in the wake of the Union's demise. Five years later it was clear enough that the Cold War nuclear standoff had been relegated to history and that U.S. plans for a massive \$60 billion reinvestment in its own nuclear weapons arsenal signaled a new and enduring role for U.S. nuclear weapons that went well beyond the needs of deterrence.

More than 100 U.S. bishops belonging to Pax Christi USA seized on this moment to issue their own critique of U.S. nuclear weapons policies in

light of the strict conditions that allowed for the moral acceptance

of deterrence. In "The Morality of Nuclear Deterrence," issued in 1998, these bishops observed that U.S. deterrence policy had been expanded to confront nonnuclear threats and was itself an impediment to nuclear disarmament. They concluded, "The policy of nuclear deterrence is being institutionalized. It is no longer considered an interim policy but rather has become the very 'long-term basis for peace' that we rejected in 1983."

The Pax Christi bishops' statement proved all too prophetic. Revelations in *The Washington Post* in May 2005, carried by news outlets around the world, confirmed that the Bush Administration indeed integrated nuclear weapons into what it called its "Global Strike" option. Two months earlier, the Pentagon placed on its public Website the "Doctrine for Joint Nuclear Operations." The executive summary stated clearly that the line between nuclear and conventional attack has been obliterated and that the "integration of conventional and nuclear forces is therefore crucial to the success of any comprehensive strategy." The Pentagon's "comprehensive strategy" includes using nuclear weapons against deeply buried targets.

More than six decades ago the United States vaporized 140,000 civilians in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, actions characterized by Pope Paul VI as a "butchery of untold magnitude." As the world commemorated these anniversaries, the United States sat poised to unleash such atrocities anywhere and everywhere. The time has come for the Catholic Church in the United States to take up the Vatican's call for reexamining the whole strategy of nuclear deterrence and to directly challenge this and any future administration's plans. Indeed, that challenge confronts all Catholics and citizens of conscience.

Adapted from an article by Dave Robinson of Pax Christi USA that appeared in the National Catholic Reporter, July 29, 2005.

Catholic Social Teaching and the CTBT

The Senate vote against ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is a major defeat for arms control and a blow to U.S. moral credibility on this issue. This vote makes it more difficult for our nation to fulfill its moral responsibility as a world leader to work with other nations to promote international peace and security.

With recent popes, the U.S. Catholic Bishops have long called for a test ban treaty, and we and many in the Catholic community worked hard for its ratification. The test ban treaty is not just a political or legal instrument, but a moral commitment. It recognizes our moral predicament with nuclear weapons and the urgency of stopping nuclear testing as one essential step in escaping this moral predicament.

~Statement issued October 14, 1999, by the Most Reverend Joseph A. Fiorenza, Bishop of Galveston-Houston, President, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, on the U.S. Senate's rejection of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

Before this Conference the Holy See wishes to express its profound conviction that the time is ripe for the nations of the world to put a definitive end to all nuclear weapons testing. . . .

We call on them whose ratification is needed to take all the necessary steps. They bear a special responsibility and the present moment is a unique occasion to show both courageous leadership and a high sense of political responsibility. Any accumulated delay inevitably increases the risk that nuclear testing will resume and non-proliferation be much harder to sustain. . . .

Mr. President, the Holy See welcomes the moratoria on testing, but such unilateral measures cannot take the place of signature and ratification of the Treaty which offers to the global community the prospect of a permanent and legally binding commitment to end nuclear testing.

~ Excerpts from the Holy See statement

at the Third Conference on Facilitating the Entry-Into-Force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, September 2003.

Further Resources on the CTBT:

www.ctbo.org: the Comprehensive Test Ban Organization, the official Website of the organization created by the states' parties to the Treaty.

<http://disarmament.un.org>: the Website of the United Nations' Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA).

www.reachingcriticalwill.org: The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom's project on nuclear disarmament brings together official documents, NGO reports, and comprehensive analysis.

www.usccb.org: The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Website has statements and official positions of the Catholic Church.

De-Alerting Nuclear Weapons

When President Bill Clinton announced in 1994 that Russian and U.S. missiles were no longer aimed at our children, he seriously misrepresented the effect of his so-called de-targeting pact with then-President Boris Yeltsin. This pact did not add a single second to the time needed to fire missiles at each other's country.

The missiles retained their wartime targets in computer memory, which can be activated in seconds by a few keystrokes. If either country's leader ordered a launch, the message would flow in seconds to launch crews. The land-based missile crews would take a few seconds to decode and validate the order, a few more to transmit a target plan to the missiles (thereby overriding the Clinton-Yeltsin pact), a few more to enable the missiles to receive a launch signal, and a few more to turn keys to fire them. Within a couple of minutes, missiles would leave their silos en masse. Submarine crews would take about ten minutes longer to process a launch order.

How many Russian and U.S. missiles remain on hair-trigger alert, poised for immediate firing? If a launch order were transmitted right now, more than 2,000 strategic warheads on each side (the equivalent of about 100,000 Hiroshima bombs) could be promptly unleashed and delivered to targets around the world in thirty minutes.

By beginning to stand down nuclear arsenals and taking all forces off alert—ideally by removing the warheads from missiles so that none could be fired on a moment's notice—the United States and Russia would send a strong and welcome message to the rest of the world. These de-alerting actions would downgrade the importance of nuclear weapons, demonstrating with deeds the commitments made in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to further reducing and eventually eliminating nuclear weapons. Such actions would not be lost on NPT reviewers who have been scouring the record of the past five years looking for signs that the nuclear pacesetters intend to meet their obligations under Article VI.

In embarking on a course leading to the full de-alerting of their arsenals, the United States and Rus-

sia would not only assume higher moral ground in their efforts to inhibit proliferation, they also would create a norm of operational safety that prohibits any country from placing or maintaining their nuclear forces in a launch-ready configuration.

Our leadership, for example, could well encourage South Asian nuclear states to refrain from crossing the next critical threshold of danger: arming missiles and bombers in the field. In accordance with this new international norm of safety set by the U.S. and Russia, countries such as India and Pakistan would keep their nuclear bombs in storage indefinitely. Configuring South Asian arsenals this way would help defuse the area's nuclear confrontation and create a large margin of safety for scenarios involving a failure in their command and control. The world community should not casually accept the dangerous alternative—that these regional adversaries mate warheads to high alert missiles under deficient control, thereby creating a higher risk of sparking a war through miscalculation or unauthorized use.

The founding members of the nuclear club—the United States, Russia, China, Britain, and France—subscribed to the principle of equity in advancing the NPT with an article calling for total nuclear elimination. Their past nuclear indulgences—2,000 test explosions (400 in the open air) and 125,000 nuclear bombs fielded during the Cold War, among others—and double standards must be replaced by higher standards of restraint and fairness. The big five should recognize the paramount importance of standing down the world's arsenals and extending the principle equally to all nuclear states—including themselves. Developing and putting into practice a new global consensus on de-alerting would go far in inducing other nations to cooperate on the host of other vexing proliferation and safety hazards still besetting the nuclear universe.

By Dr. Bruce Blair, adapted from The Defense Monitor, Vol. 29, No. 3, published by the Center for Defense Information. 2000.

Catholic Social Teaching and the Moscow Treaty

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops welcomes the new treaty on strategic nuclear weapons, and prays that it will not be seen as an end but as one of many steps that must be taken if we are to achieve the goal of a mutual, verifiable global ban on nuclear weapons. . . .

While we welcome the new treaty and the President's stated commitment to seek ways to escape Mutual Assured Destruction, we are concerned that U.S. planning and policies keep pace with the dramatic changes in world politics since the end of the Cold War, and move away from reliance on nuclear weapons as a central part of our nation's military doctrine. . . .

We disagree with those who claim that this agreement represents the lowest level our nation can or should go in reducing its nuclear stockpiles. Even when this agreement is fully implemented ten years from now, Russia and the United States will still have thousands of deployed nuclear weapons and thousands more held in reserve for possible future use. Much deeper, more irreversible cuts, in both strategic and tactical weapons, are both possible and necessary. . . .

Given our moral assessment of nuclear weapons, we oppose the continued readiness of the United States to use nuclear weapons, especially against non-nuclear threats, and the potential development of new weapons for this purpose. . . .

-Excerpted from testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions, by Fr. Drew Christiansen, S.J., Counselor on International Affairs, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, July 23, 2002.

Further Resources on the Moscow Treaty:

www.nrdc.org: The Natural Resources Defense Council provides comprehensive resources on a wide range of nuclear issues, including a detailed analysis of the Moscow Treaty.

www.armscontrol.org: The Arms Control Association provides analysis and resources on the Moscow Treaty and other nuclear issues.

www.carnegieendowment.org: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace offers a wealth of resources, documentation, and analyses on issues related to nuclear weapons and treaties.

www.usccb.org: The official site of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops includes all statements, letters, and action alerts issued by the Bishops on nuclear weapons-related issues.

The Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions

On March 6, 2003, the U.S. Senate approved the resolution of ratification providing its advice and consent to the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, or SORT, also known as the Moscow Treaty. President George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin first signed this agreement on May 24, 2002, in Moscow. It requires both sides to reduce their deployed strategic nuclear warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200 by 2012.

However, the treaty does not reduce nuclear forces at all; it merely requires a change in their operational status. Each side can store an unlimited number of warheads. It does not require destroying or eliminating a single nuclear missile silo, submarine, missile, warhead, bomber, or bomb. It allows unlimited production and deployment of new nuclear warheads and delivery systems, both tactical and strategic. It even lacks an agreed definition between the parties of what, if anything, is being “reduced.”

Moreover, it includes no verification measures to create confidence that either country is carrying out the required changes in operational status. Finally, it provides no timeline or milestones between now and 2012, and it expires at the precise moment that its only requirement—the 1,700-2,200 limit on deployed strategic nuclear warheads—comes into force.

According to the Administration’s own “article-by-article analysis” submitted with the treaty, the effective date of the treaty’s only constraint—reducing “operationally-deployed strategic” nuclear weapons that must occur “by December 31, 2012,”—lags by a microsecond the expiration of the overall treaty, which remains in force only “until December 31, 2012.” The bottom line is that the treaty’s advertised “two-thirds” reduction in deployed strategic arsenals never enters into legal force and effect. The treaty’s only substantive provision is a sham.

As matters now stand, the Moscow Treaty mere-

ly provides a misleading public relations cover for a muscle-bound U.S. nuclear posture that will not reduce future nuclear risks. The combination of the treaty’s nonbinding character with the Bush Administration’s new doctrine of preemptive and preventive attacks—including tactical nuclear strikes against deeply buried and “agent defeat” targets in non-nuclear weapon states—amounts to a failure to comply with U.S. obligations under Article VI of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT).

Under the NPT’s Article VI, the United States has, in concert with other nuclear weapon states, a legally binding obligation to engage in “good faith” negotiations on, and thereby to conclude, “effective measures” relating to nuclear disarmament. Not only is the Moscow Treaty clearly not an “effective measure” within the meaning of the NPT, but the Bush review’s strong endorsement of the indefinite utility of nuclear supremacy and first-use threats amply illustrates the fact that the Bush Administration did not undertake the Moscow Treaty as a “good faith” step toward nuclear disarmament.

In his July 2002 Senate testimony on the Moscow Treaty, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld vividly exemplified the Bush Administration’s intent to ignore the United States’s NPT obligation. When called upon to explain the rationale for the thousands of nuclear weapons the Bush Administration was planning to retain, Rumsfeld offered a brief for permanent U.S. nuclear supremacy: “The U.S. nuclear arsenal . . . helps us dissuade the emergence of potential or would-be peer competitors by underscoring the futility of trying to sprint toward parity with us.”

Adapted from *The Natural Resources Defense Council’s analysis of the Moscow Treaty* by Christopher Paine, 2003, www.nrdc.org.

Catholic Social Teaching and Nuclear De-Alerting

The United States should commit itself never to use nuclear weapons first, should unequivocally reject proposals to use nuclear weapons to deter any non-nuclear threats, and should reinforce the fragile barrier against the use of these weapons. Indeed, we abhor any use of nuclear weapons.

~ *The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace*,
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, November 1993.

We oppose the continued readiness of the United States to use nuclear weapons, especially against non-nuclear threats, and the potential development of new weapons for this purpose.

~ Most Reverend Wilton D. Gregory, President,
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, May 24, 2002.

Further Resources on Nuclear De-Alerting:

www.ieer.org: The Institute for Energy and Environmental Research offers technical and non-technical analysis and commentary on key issues related to nuclear disarmament.

www.wagingpeace.org: the Website of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation offers critical analysis and resources on the de-alerting of nuclear weapons and nuclear abolition.

<http://disarmament.un.org>: the Website of the United Nations’ Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA).

www.wslfweb.org: The gold standard in nuclear weapons-related documentation, analysis, and commentary.

The Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT)

Since the signing of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), a significant issue for the disarmament and arms control community has been the continued production of fissile materials—the fuel for nuclear weapons. Many states have long called for a ban on fissile material production, and the issue has been on the proposed agenda of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) for years.

In December 1993, the UN General Assembly adopted by consensus a resolution recommending the negotiation of a non-discriminatory, multilateral, and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; it became known as a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT).

Early on, the issue of existing stocks blocked consensus on the negotiation of an FMCT. Some states, such as those belonging to the Non-Aligned Movement, believe that a cut-off level should include fissile materials already produced and stockpiled, requiring the nuclear weapon states to irreversibly downblend existing stocks of weapons-grade fissile materials so that they can never again be used for nuclear weapons. Other states, such as the United States, United Kingdom, and Japan, favor a future-production cut-off. Some states also think an FMCT should include management of fissile material, not only a ban on production.

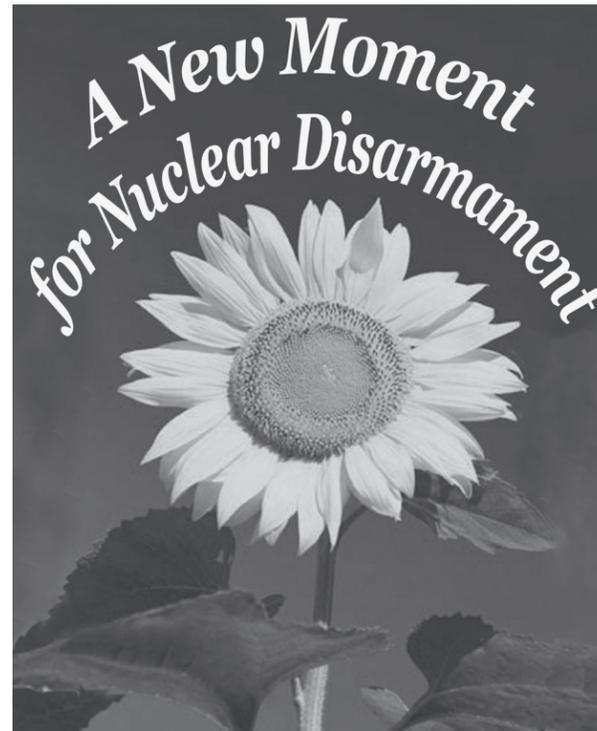
Another contentious element to an FMCT is its scope. While a treaty would ban the production of most fissionable materials, it would not include tritium, an element used to amplify the explosive

power of a nuclear weapon. Tritium is a radioactive isotope of hydrogen with a half-life of twelve years. Were it included in an FMCT, the decaying tritium in existing stocks could not be replaced, in effect limiting the weapon's destructive power. Other materials, such as depleted uranium, neptunium, natural uranium, plutonium 240 and 242, americium, curium and californium, though not fissile, are used in weapons programs.

All the states who are party to the NPT endorsed the immediate commencement and early conclusion of FMCT negotiations at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences, and negotiating an FMCT was one of the thirteen practical steps toward disarmament at the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

The United States did not announce its position on an FMCT until July 2004, when Ambassador Jackie Wolcott Sanders declared that while the United States supported negotiations on an FMCT, it did not believe that such a treaty would be verifiable. This is contrary to the UN Disarmament Commission's sixteen principles of verification published in 1988, as well as a U.S. National Academy of Sciences study in 2005, which indicated that a verifiable FMCT would be expensive but achievable. This change in U.S. policy appears more politically driven than scientifically sound. The United States also proposed a draft treaty in May 2006, which many delegations argue is far removed from the original concept of a non-discriminatory, verifiable treaty.

Adapted from Reaching Critical Will, www.reachingcriticalwill.org.



Catholic Social Teaching and the FMCT

We must reverse the spread of nuclear technologies and materials. We welcome, therefore, U.S. efforts to achieve a global ban on the production of fissionable materials for use in nuclear weapons. . . .

*~ The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace,
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, November 1993.*

A Review Conference of the NPT is therefore a time to measure the progress of the international community in achieving the goals of the Treaty. When the NPT was indefinitely extended in 1995, the nuclear weapons States joined all other parties to the Treaty in making three promises: a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty would be achieved by 1996; negotiations on a treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons would come to an "early conclusion"; and "systematic and progressive efforts globally" to eliminate nuclear weapons would be made. In 2000, all parties gave an "unequivocal undertaking" to the elimination of nuclear weapons through a programme of 13 Practical Steps. Nevertheless, the Preparatory Committee for the current Review Conference failed to achieve consensus on the documents to be adopted now, which leads to concern for the outcome of the Conference.

~ Excerpted from the "Intervention of the Holy See at the 2005 Review Conference of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty," delivered by H.E. Mons. Celestino Migliore, New York, May 4, 2005.

Further Resources on the FMCT:

www.fas.org: The Federation of American Scientists Website contains a wealth of information and analysis on a range of disarmament issues.

www.nti.org: The Nuclear Threat Initiative gathers documentation, analysis, and resources on nuclear disarmament issues.

www.fissilematerials.org: This independent, international commission (under the leadership of Hans Blix, former head of the UN Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission that investigated WMD in Iraq) seeks to reduce the danger posed by uncontrolled nuclear materials.

www.acronym.org: One of the most comprehensive disarmament organizations provides documentation, analysis, and resources from a collection of nongovernmental organizations.