

Not another nuclear weapons supporter, like Canada, should be on the UN Security Council

Posted by Joan Russow

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Global Compliance Research Project



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In 2017, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists moved the Doomsday clock to two and one half minutes to midnight because of the threats arising from nuclear weapons and from climate change

Eva Walder, the Swedish representative to the UN's First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, declared: "Sweden's position is clear. *The only guarantee that these weapons will never be used again is their total elimination* ."

Sweden would undoubtedly agree with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom that the treaty should not only prohibit stockpiling; use and threat of use, and planning for use of nuclear weapons but also the deployment; transfer, acquisition, and stationing; development and production of these weapons—along with testing; transit and transshipment; and financing, assistance, encouragement, and inducement and an obligation for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and a framework to achieve it..

Canadians might hope that this is also the position of the Trudeau government.

BUT NO! Canada voted, in May and August 2016 at the UNGA Open-ended Working

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Group, against the drafting of a nuclear weapons ban treaty,

In October 17, prior to the next vote of the (OEWG), the US circulated a MISSIVE to NATO and its allies, (Japan Israel Australia and South Korea) on the potential negative impacts of starting negotiations for a nuclear ban treaty and declared, “for the allies, participating in the OEWG , we strongly urge you to vote no on any vote at the UN First Committee on starting negotiations for a nuclear ban treaty

Only one country disobeyed; and it was not Canada.

The US has stated that the treaty to ban nuclear weapons would be ineffective, with adverse consequences for security and would hinder the implementation of Article VI of the 1968 non-proliferation Treaty

ARTICLE VI, reads

: “Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

NATO violating article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty

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It is, rather, NATO`s nuclear policy which contravenes Article VI, as well as some of the Thirteen Steps Towards Nuclear Disarmament,

(Murray Thompson, from Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention) outlined NATO`s nuclear policy

- 1) Nuclear weapons must be maintained indefinitely**
- 2) We will improve their use and accuracy (modernize them)**
- 3) We can use them first.**
- 4) We can target non-nuclear weapons states**
- 5) We can threaten to use them**
- 6) We can keep them in Europe, as we are now doing**
- 7) We can launch some on 15 minutes warning.**
- 8) We say “they are essential for peace**

Canada has agreed to the NATO POSITION on nuclear weapons

□ In December in the UN General Assembly, there was another opportunity for Canada to take an independent position

But it did not.

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On December 23, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) approved a resolution to launch negotiations in 2017 on a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons.

The resolution was adopted by 113 UN member states voting in favour, 35 voting against and 13 abstaining.

The US appears, however, to have provided a script for the US non-nuclear weapons allies; most of them gave the reason for voting against the resolution as being, “the US nuclear weapons are essential for security and we refuse to declare that nuclear weapons should never be used”.

Perhaps `security needs to be redefined;

Dr. Ursula Franklin, internationally renowned scientist and pacifist avowed: “We must reappropriate the word “security” and not allow it to be distorted by the military”.

(Olof Palme, in his 1982 report to the UN Commission on Disarmament and Common Security affirmed that “True security exists only when all are secure, through “common security” whose objectives could be extended to include but not limited to the following:

(a) to achieve a state of peace, and disarmament; through reallocation of military expenses and delegitimization of war;

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(b) to promote and fully guarantee respect for human rights including labour rights, civil and political rights, indigenous rights, women`s rights social and cultural rights – right to food, to housing, to safe drinking water and sanitation , right to education and right to universally accessible not for profit health care system;

(c) to ensure the preservation, conservation and protection of the environment, the respect for the inherent worth of nature beyond human purpose, to reduce the ecological footprint and to move away from the current model of unsustainable and excessive overconsumption

(d) to enable socially equitable and environmentally sound employment, energy and transportationFrom March 27 -30 2017 the UN process to negotiate a binding convention banning nuclear weapons took place.

Voting patterns at the UN about the drafting a nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty

Canada had the opportunity to participate and assert an independent position from the US and NATO. Canada declined to participate.

The NGO international campaign for the abolition of nuclear Arms (ICAN) revealed the states' previous voting patterns and indicated which states were supportive, not supportive and which states abstained.

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The data, based on voting patterns, also reveals the voting patterns of the participants in the March negotiations, and indicates that there were 138 “supportive” states, one “not supportive” state (Japan), and 13 “not clear” states.

The ICAN data on voting patterns of the states that did not attend the March negotiations indicated 21 were “supportive 40 not ☐ supportive, and five states were “not clear”,` <http://www.icanw.org/>

If the 21 supportive states attend the upcoming June 15– July 7 negotiations, there will be around 159 “supportive` states” (70% of the 193 member states of the United Nations).

This would be the case, provided the US and its☐ fellow nuclear weapons states do not threaten, offer financial incentives or coerce the supportive states to claim “that nuclear weapons are essential for their ☐ security and refuse to declare that nuclear weapons should never be used”` .

When the United Nations continues its negotiations from June 15 – July 7,☐☐ There is yet another opportunity for Canada to participate and vote on an international treaty against nuclear weapons,☐

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If the non-nuclear weapons NATO states were willing to speak truth to power, then there could be another 25 supportive votes; this would mean there would be 168 supportive votes, 81% of the UN General Assembly members.

If there is a positive vote in the UNGA, the US and the four other NUCLEAR WEAPON permanent members of the UN Security Council , arguing the treaty is a matter of peace and security. They might try to block the UNGA decision by taking the decision to the UN Security Council (UNSC) and be seized of the matter.

A decision of the UN security Council requires 9 votes.

the current composition ,however, of the UNSC, the nuclear weapons permanent members will be able to get votes from only three non-permanent members: Italy, Japan and Ukraine. The other non-permanent members Bolivia Egypt, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Senegal, Sweden, and Uruguay all previously voted in favour of negotiating a treaty. For a UNSC decision, 9 votes are required The UNSC WOULD NOT HAVE THE REQUIRED VOTES TO OVERTURN THE UNGA DECISION

UNLESS Bolivia Egypt, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Senegal. Sweden OR Uruguay Would be coerced, threatened, or bribed into renouncing their former supportive positions for a treaty for the abolition of nuclear weapons. If there is no coercion etc the UNSC would fail to make a decision.

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Then there is a precedent in the 1950 “Uniting for Peace Resolution” which can be used when the UN SC fails to make a decision, the responsibility would fall on the UNGA.

The Treaty could then pass but without the nuclear weapons states`

A. Then, what!, perhaps the supportive states could use the Treaty, when ratified, to go to the International Court of Justice and take seventeen of the NATO non-nuclear states, including Canada and three nuclear weapons states (the UK, India and Pakistan); all of which recognize the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ. This could build on the 1996 advisory opinion of the ICJ that that the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law.

Preventing and Removing the Threats to the Peace

The purpose of the United Nations is the prevention and removal of threats to the peace”...

The Treaty to ban nuclear weapons would be the most effective way to remove the threats to peace.

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On the 18th of June there will be Ban the bomb rallies around the world The Fate of the Earth must not be decided by the US and its fellow nuclear weapons states and allies like Canada.