



SESIÓN ESPECIAL DEL CONSEJO DEL OPANAL

México D.F., 10 de septiembre de 2009

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In 2005, I was privileged to be selected as the voice of civil society in the First Conference of Nuclear Weapons Free Zones. I know some of you were present for its Opening Ceremony. On Friday, I have the honor of giving the "Call to Action" in the Closing Ceremony of the Annual UN DPI/NGO Conference "For Peace and Development Disarm Now!" I do not need to tell you about the pivotal role the Mexican Foreign Ministry has played in both these meetings; but I do need to thank them for allowing me to play a small part in each.

These meetings were convened with an eye on upcoming NPT Review Conferences. And the Second Conference of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones will take place in New York just before the 2010 Review.

The 2005 Review was – to put it bluntly – a failure. The Obama Administration has changed the disarmament climate, and the whole world now seems determined to prevent another failure in 2010, but we have inherited a poisonous set of double standards. India, not an adherent to the NPT and an open proliferator since 1998, gets more lenient trade terms than certain faithful states parties; in the middle East, Israel, another non-adherent, is under virtually no pressure to open up its nuclear program, while Iran is under sanctions ostensibly for violations committed nearly a decade ago. In my part of the world, North Korea has twice tested nuclear weapons. And globally, we have the persistence of the double standards of the haves and the have-nots. All of this raises serious questions about the meaning and effectiveness of the non-proliferation regime itself.

The world is deciding now whether proliferation will spread essentially unchecked, or whether proliferation will be rolled back – all the way back to 1945. This is the challenge the 2010 NPT Review Conference faces. If it cannot rise to that challenge, it will fail once again. If it can rise to the challenge, it will go down in history as the most important conference since the beginning of the Nuclear Age.

The members of OPANAL have a historic role to play. Last April in Prague, President Obama signaled his hand as clearly as any American President could ever do. He equated the collapse of communism in the 20th century and the elimination of the nuclear threat in the 21st century. Coming from an American politician, that's a profoundly meaningful equation. What he is saying is that those who would perpetuate the nuclear threat are no better than those who perpetuated totalitarianism. He did not mince words, calling them 'dangerous' and 'cowardly'. And then he went further, calling for non-violent resistance, citing the Czechs' Velvet Revolution.

I do not know what fabric or color we should adopt for our revolution against the nuclear threat, -- I am open to suggestions -- but we do need a revolution. President Obama knows we need a revolution – that's why he invited it. In this light, I am glad to report to you that a revolution is already spreading among the cities of the world. Since the last NPT Review, over 2000 cities have joined Mayors for Peace. Our 3000-plus cities represent over six

hundred million people. Directly after this meeting I am going to meet Mayor Ebrard, who will sign up Mexico City, adding eighteen million to our growing total.

But this is just the beginning. Our General Conference in Nagasaki last month decided it was time to do the impossible, recruit 2000 more cities in the eight short months remaining before the May NPT Review Conference. How are we going to do it? There are no secrets or shortcuts. We need everybody to pitch in! I mean everyone. [Look around the room.] Yes, you, too! You all live in cities. Many of you know your mayor and city councilors. Please visit them, take them our materials, and sign them up. Then, encourage them to sign up neighboring cities and towns and sister cities. If you play your part, we will make it.

We are counting on Latin America – where our membership is disproportionately low now – to come through with flying colors. One of our top organizers, Pol D’Huyvetter is with us to today; he will be working out of Rio de Janeiro. Let’s aim for a thousand cities joining from Tierra del Fuego to the Rio Grande. Does that sound like too many? Our goal in tiny Japan is 1000 cities. Surely Latin America can do better than Japan.

Mayors north of Rio Grande are also rallying to Mayors for Peace. The United States Conference of Mayors has been a leading force in our 2020 Vision Campaign. In 2004 they adopted a resolution that became the basis of our international petition to the 2005 NPT Review Conference. Senor Duarte, President of that Conference, will remember that well. It was handed to him by the late Mayor Itoh of Nagasaki and included the signatures of 575 mayors. As High Commissioner for Disarmament Affairs, he has graciously received even more signatures in support of the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol.

Allow me to digress a moment for the sake of those among you who may not be familiar with the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol. This protocol is the most concise answer on the table today to the question, “If the NPT states parties wish to demonstrate their absolute determination to eliminate nuclear weapons in the shortest time possible, what should they do at the Review?” Thus, it establishes a standard against which all other proposals should be measured.

From the point of view of cities, it is criminal negligence not to do absolutely everything possible to tackle the nuclear threat decisively. So let me give you a few key details. The Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol stipulates common-sense, good-faith behavior to which no nation would object if it were serious about achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world by 2020. It eliminates the provocative discrepancy between nuclear haves and have-nots by stipulating the immediate termination of all preparations to develop, acquire, deploy or use nuclear weapons. It also stipulates an immediate start to disarmament negotiations to continue until a nuclear weapon convention or comparable framework agreement is signed no later than 2015. Finally, it sets 2020 as the date for establishment of a nuclear-world-free world.

In a sense, it is absolutely outrageous that, 45 years after the treaty’s entry into force, the part of Article VI that calls for the cessation of the nuclear arms race “AT AN EARLY

DATE” is only now being fully addressed! Surely it is not too much for the 2010 NPT review conference to set that goal for 2015.

Let me tell you why we think it is not too much to ask for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons by 2020. Did you know that the nuclear weapon states have between them the capacity to disassembly nuclear weapons at the rate of 2500 per year? The United States, for example, under Presidents Bush and Clinton, disassembled about 1000 weapons per year. These weapons were then permanently disposed of. Under President Bush the Second, fewer weapons were disassembled per year. Why? Because an almost equal proportion of the facilities’ time was taken up reassembling them!! We expect this practice to be stopped under President Obama.

But the really important fact is that if these facilities in each of the nuclear-weapon states were dedicated to disassembly, then ALL nuclear weapons could be disposed of before 2020. So when anyone questions why we are in such a ‘rush’ to get to zero, we ask them: “Why on Earth would you want to SLOW DOWN the process?”

Cities are sick and tired of being held hostage to nuclear MADness, as in Mutually Assured Destruction. But you do not have to live in a city or in a nuclear power to be a victim of a nuclear exchange. The recent studies on nuclear famine should be required reading for every head of state. In the case of a nuclear exchange, cities would generate firestorms that would loft soot high into the stratosphere. A high percentage of this soot would still be up there a decade later. During that decade, crops will have failed due to late and early killing frosts in the great bread and rice baskets of the world. Hunger would be rampant in countries that import these basic food stuffs. Starvation would be killing off the poorest in the hundreds of millions. By the end of the decade over a billion people would have perished.

When President Obama said “there is no end to what the consequences might be” he was not exaggerating.

So I turn to you. OPANAL was the first Nuclear Weapon Free Zone. OPANAL took the lead in organizing the first Conference of Nuclear Weapons Free Zones. We need you to lead that group through its second Conference and into the Eighth NPT Review Conference. I ask you to consider the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol as your guide to the future of the NPT review process. We have a version of it as a review ‘decision’ as well. Or if you prefer, take Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon’s Five Point Proposal. Whatever you do, you must insist on looking not just five but TEN years ahead. The Tenth Review can and must preside over the full realization of the original promise of the NPT: a Nuclear Weapon Free World.

The ten years between the Eighth and Tenth Reviews have been designated an International Decade for Disarmament by the UN General Assembly. Mayors for Peace and civil society at large are counting on you to ensure that this is THE decisive decade for nuclear disarmament. I assure you our full support. Let us together become the velvet revolution that wipes nuclear weapons off the face of the Earth.

Let me end with an invitation. However great the results of the 2010 NPT Review considerable work will remain to be done. To promote unity and solidarity, the City of Hiroshima and Mayors for Peace will host a meeting of national governments, local governments, and civil society in August 2010. This conference will be an opportunity for our velvet revolution to take stock and lay plans for our next accomplishments. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

Thank you!