

1999 Olof Palme Memorial Lecture

A Future Arms Control and Disarmament Agenda

By

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Introduction

Thirteen years have passed since Olof Palme's lifelong quest for a more peaceful, just, and prosperous world came to an abrupt halt on a street in Stockholm. Though the motives for his murder remain a mystery, his public service survives as an inspiration to us all. It is in this spirit that I wish to examine the legacy of this pragmatic visionary.

Sweden's efforts on behalf of such enlightened goals have not, of course, been limited to the work of only one of its leaders. Its steadfast support for the United Nations and the principles of its Charter has become as much a part of the Swedish national character as Dag Hammarskjöld's legacy has become an integral part of the United Nations. This commitment is reflected in the work of SIPRI, a state-sponsored but independent institution whose research has provided the foundation for many arms control and disarmament efforts throughout the world. Sweden's work in the New Agenda Coalition is only the most recent illustration of its firm commitment to reform what Nobel Laureate Alva Myrdal termed the "game

of disarmament."

My distinguished predecessors on this platform have identified themselves with the life and work of Olof Palme. I do so myself -- both as an international civil servant and as a son of the South. Olof Palme's belief in the United Nations and his instinctive responses to the needs of the South will remain a source of inspiration for many years to come. I do so also as a member of the Canberra Commission -- very much a successor to the Palme Commission in the search for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

My remarks today will therefore underscore the profound relevance of Olof Palme's efforts particularly in the field of nuclear arms control and disarmament. The insights he offered about these and other problems on the international security agenda -- as well as the prescriptions he proposed to address these problems -- remain as timely and relevant as ever to all countries.

Palme's Diagnosis and Prescription for Disarmament

It is of course a truism to say that the international security environment that Olof Palme faced early in the 1980s differed in many ways from the one we face on the eve of the new millennium. After all, the international security agenda is no longer driven by the Cold War. Upon closer examination, however, many of the differences may be more apparent than real.

Consider, for example, the circumstances facing the members of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, organized under Olof Palme's chairmanship in 1980. In its report two years later, the Palme Commission offered a "blueprint for survival" in a world of growing military expenditures, with an expanding arms trade, alarming national races to improve both weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons, new risks of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, new pressures for the weaponization of outer space, the growing lethality of conventional wars, the escalating economic and social costs of armament, and expanding public awareness of the environmental consequences both of nuclear war and the production of nuclear weapons.

Our world today contains many apparent contrasts. From a purely statistical standpoint -- and based on data diligently gathered over the years by SIPRI -- the global trend over the last decade or so has been one of declining military expenditures, declining arms sales, declining investments in military research and development, and declining aggregate numbers of certain weapons of mass destruction. These trends, in short, have for many years been going precisely in the direction that Olof Palme would have wished.

Yet not all of these trends can be legitimately projected into the future. While the trend in arms exports has been down for many years, the globalization of the arms industry -- through licensing arrangements, transfers of production technology, and mergers and acquisitions -- is laying the foundation for an expanding arms market, fuelled both by chronic conflicts and military modernization programmes aggressively marketed by military-industrial complexes. Contrary to the global trend, military spending has been rising over the last decade in certain regions, especially South Asia, East Asia, and the Middle

East -- while published budgetary plans envisage major increases in US defence spending well into the next decade. SIPRI's most recent estimate of \$745 billion in global military expenditures in 1998 remains an alarming figure relative to the innumerable alternative social and economic uses to which even a fraction of that sum could be productively allocated.

So much for weapons and so little for disarmament. The annual budget of the UN's Department of Disarmament Affairs is roughly half the value of one fighter plane. There has nevertheless been some notable progress in this field since the publication of the Palme report.

Areas of Significant Progress

- With respect to nuclear arms, the total number of such weapons in the world today -- about 36,000 -- is almost half the 58,000 that reportedly existed in 1982, a reduction that largely reflects progress in implementing the first Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty (START I). The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty eliminated an entire class of nuclear missiles in 1987, the same year that the United States and the former Soviet Union signed an agreement establishing nuclear risk reduction centres. A Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has now been signed by 154 countries and ratified by 47. Meanwhile, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus have become non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This treaty -- with its 187 States Parties -- was extended indefinitely in 1995 and has now become the most universally-recognized international security treaty in history. Brazil and Argentina also joined, as did South Africa after destroying its small stockpile of nuclear weapons. China and France acceded to the treaty as nuclear-weapon States Parties in 1992. Another major achievement was the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the South Pacific, Africa, and Southeast Asia as a result of the Rarotonga, Pelindaba, and Bangkok treaties, respectively.
- With respect to chemical and biological weapons -- a Chemical Weapons Convention has finally been negotiated, ratified by 126 countries, signed by an additional 44, and entered into force in 1997. Meanwhile, the Biological Weapons Convention now has 141 States Parties and an additional 17 have signed. International efforts are underway to strengthen this treaty through the elaboration of verification and confidence-building measures.
- With respect to conventional arms, the Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe reached agreement here in Stockholm -- just months after Palme's death -- on a set of measures to reduce the risk of military confrontation in Europe. The Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe followed in 1990, one of the most significant arms reduction agreements ever. Also, the world is now closer to achieving a universal ban on anti-personnel landmines, thanks to the signing and entry into force of the Ottawa Convention and the Amended Protocol II of the Certain Conventional Weapons Convention (CCWC). Protocol IV of

the CCWC, which outlaws blinding laser weapons, has also entered into force. Furthermore, preparations are underway for a major international conference in 2001 on the illicit trafficking in small arms in all its aspects.

These are but a few of the positive developments that have followed the report of the Palme Commission in 1982, a report whose theme of "common security" embodies many of the most fundamental principles enshrined in the UN Charter. Yet despite this progress, much of the Palme disarmament agenda remains only partially fulfilled.

Partial Successes

Two of Palme's most important goals were universal membership in the NPT and the entry into force of a CTBT. Yet the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in May 1998, which were deplored throughout the world community, undoubtedly set back the achievement of both goals. Both countries have not yet joined the CTBT. And both countries -- along with Cuba and Israel -- remain outside the NPT. Nevertheless, hope remains that India and Pakistan will follow through on their promises to join the CTBT and that the only four countries that remain outside the NPT will reconsider their opposition to the treaty. Only 23 of the 44 countries required to bring the CTBT into force have ratified the treaty -- China, the Russian Federation, the United States, and 18 additional countries have yet to ratify.

One could also describe the case of Iraq a "partial success" given that the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency have destroyed the bulk of Iraq's weapons facilities and related equipment, as authorized by the UN Security Council. Questions remain, however, about the implementation of certain Iraqi disarmament obligations -- and Iraq continues to prohibit weapons inspections, which were halted last December. Further delays in fulfilling these responsibilities will only lead to new international concerns over Iraq's weapons capabilities and intentions, and, regrettably, continued hardships for the people of Iraq.

It is gratifying that many countries are beginning to take the weapons proliferation threat seriously, as seen in recent IAEA efforts to enhance nuclear safeguards and verification procedures. Yet not all of the responses to this threat necessarily bode well for future international peace and security. Certain aspects of the new doctrine of "counter-proliferation," for example, at times imply the wholesale militarization of nonproliferation policy, a development that would likely generate new global security risks. An impression persists that the deeper roots of proliferation are being neglected in the rush to develop and deploy technical fixes or exclusively military means to halt proliferation through the use -- or threat of use -- of force, rather than by peaceful diplomatic means, such as those being proposed with respect to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This is quite apart from the more fundamental substitution of non-proliferation policies for genuine disarmament.

None of these trends bodes well for the full implementation of the disarmament responsibilities of the nuclear-weapons states under Article VI of the NPT. Deeper arms reductions await the entry into force of START II, a condition that is being insisted upon for the commencement of negotiations on START

III. Last February, the Director of the US Defense Intelligence Agency testified in the US Senate that over the next two decades several additional states are likely to obtain nuclear weapons and that -- in his words -- "existing nuclear states will increase their inventories."

The theme stressed in the Palme report that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought has been echoed repeatedly by US and Russian officials. Yet here too the success has been only partial. Some countries continue to maintain first-use nuclear doctrines -- another stance that Olof Palme long opposed, along with his resolute opposition to the very idea of "limited nuclear war."

The further propagation of nuclear-use doctrines, further explosive tests of nuclear devices (with or without nuclear yields), further development and deployment of new delivery vehicles, further risks to strategic stability, and further delays in achieving deeper reductions in nuclear weapons stockpiles will unquestionably generate further instability, further waste of scarce national resources, further proliferation, and further movement on the road to a global catastrophe. Ironically, some observers have concluded that these new threats require even more nuclear weapons -- and some also object to the treaties that limit the development of nuclear weapons.

Olof Palme also wrote and spoke out against nuclear terrorism and I think he would be pleased to see that a convention on this subject is being negotiated within the United Nations. Yet the international responses to this threat have so far consisted largely (but not exclusively) of actions by individual countries, despite long-standing concerns throughout the world over the security and environmental threats posed by weapons-usable materials. Speaking in 1975 before the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Palme declared that the global accumulation of plutonium was -- in his words -- "the most urgent disarmament problem facing us at present."

None of the five nuclear-weapon states in the NPT is believed to be producing plutonium for weapons use. Nevertheless, this weapons-usable material continues to accumulate in civilian stocks and in some unsafeguarded nuclear programs around the world. Though estimates vary, there are reportedly between four and five times the amount of plutonium in civilian nuclear programmes than in military inventories. All together, over 1,000 metric tonnes of plutonium exist in the world today, not all of it under safeguards or securely stored -- a sobering fact, given that less than 8 kilograms of this material can make a bomb, while a billionth of a gram can produce lung cancer.

Many in the world community are trying to address part of this problem by working on behalf of a treaty to ban the production of fissile materials for weapons use. Agreement on such a treaty would serve as a valuable stepping stone to a broader goal of eliminating the production and stockpiling of all weapons-usable nuclear material. Yet further progress on this issue has been set back by a stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament over nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space, both subjects long on the international security agenda. International safeguards and physical security standards have improved since 1982, but none of these new controls can guarantee that significant quantities of weapons-usable material will not be diverted for weapons use. Meanwhile inventories of plutonium continue to accumulate in separated form or in spent fuel around the world,

adding new risks of terrorism, proliferation, and environmental contamination.

As for chemical and biological weapons, many countries -- especially but by no means only in the Middle East -- remain outside both the CWC and BWC. And difficult challenges lie ahead in implementing the CWC and in devising a credible verification system for the BWC.

There has also been some success in achieving another major goal on the Palme agenda, namely, strengthening the role of the UN in the disarmament field. One key initiative of the "quiet revolution" of institutional reforms introduced by Secretary-General Kofi Annan was the re-establishment last year of a UN Department of Disarmament Affairs under the leadership of an Under-Secretary-General. The Department supports activities throughout the UN's disarmament machinery -- which includes the Conference on Disarmament, three regional disarmament centres, the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, the UN Disarmament Commission, the UN Institute for Disarmament Research, and the First Committee of the UN General Assembly. These activities include gathering and analyzing data on global weapons developments, sharing information with governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the public, assisting delegations at the United Nations, organizing international conferences, and serving as an advocate of disarmament.

At present, the major consensus document governing the organization and agenda of the UN in disarmament remains the Final Document of the first Special Session on Disarmament in 1978. The world community's inability to convene a fourth Special Session has only further postponed a much-needed opportunity to update and strengthen the UN's disarmament agenda and its associated machinery. The UN will adopt new functions in the disarmament field as in many others only when its Members so agree.

Areas of Little or No Progress

There are, regrettably, a few areas of the 1982 Palme Report where I think it is safe to say that there has simply been little or no significant progress.

The Report urged the creation of a "battlefield-nuclear-weapon-free zone" in Central Europe. Not only has such a zone not been created, but NATO has expanded deep into this region along with its newly re-affirmed nuclear doctrine, and Russia has re-affirmed the value of its own tactical nuclear weapons. While the risk of a nuclear war in Europe has attenuated over the years, the lure of nuclear weapons as a basis of security persists in the region and continues to limit the possibilities for nuclear disarmament both in Europe and, I believe, beyond -- thereby jeopardizing global efforts to halt nuclear proliferation.

Olof Palme was also a long-standing advocate of greater action to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor in the global economy, a theme whose importance for international security was also stressed by the Brandt Commission and countless resolutions and initiatives at the UN. Yet the most recent Human Development Report issued by the UN Development Programme has shown that this gap is widening both between and within countries. The significance of this trend for our purposes today is

seen in the diversion of resources from development to military and other non-productive purposes and in the new threats such an environment creates to international peace and security. It is difficult to imagine how world peace can rest on a foundation of growing unrest among peoples and countries about the basic fairness of the most fundamental structures and processes of international society. Olof Palme would no doubt have been disappointed by the lack of evidence of a substantial peace dividend in the post Cold-War period and impatient with the limited progress that has been achieved in defence conversion.

The UN -- a norm-based organization focused on upholding international law and global interests like common security -- is made up of Members for whom national interests are understandably an important driving force. The road ahead for integrating global norms into national laws and regulations will clearly be a long and rocky one indeed, especially in the field of disarmament. Nevertheless, the future of those norms will depend enormously upon the extent to which they are positively incorporated into the laws and policies of nation states and respected in practice. Olof Palme himself warned in 1975 that "Impediments to agreements on disarmament seem to be built into the very structure of our societies." In 1982, the Palme report similarly identified the role of "bureaucratic and corporate interests" as a stimulus to qualitative arms races.

Thus, in constructing any international security agenda, it is vitally important to treat the nation state as an indispensable partner. It is not enough for disarmament to serve the global interest. It must also serve key national security interests to achieve its full potential -- and be seen to do so in order to gather political support.

Olof Palme also fought vigorously to prevent an arms race in outer space, while recognizing the value of satellites for reconnaissance missions including treaty verification. This subject was clearly on his mind in his last days. While visiting New Delhi on 16 January 1986 to deliver the Indira Gandhi Memorial Lecture, he stated the following about proposals to place missile-defence weapons in space:

In my opinion, it is fruitless to invest large resources in a defence system in space which in all probability would never function, which instead would lead to continued and perhaps increased armaments on both sides, which would undermine valid international treaties, and which would mean a gigantic waste of resources that should be used to combat poverty in the world.

Yet today the future of the 1972 bilateral Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty remains jeopardized by a powerful combination of political pressures, technological and commercial opportunities, and fears of missile proliferation and accidental or unauthorized nuclear attacks. The United States and Russia have consistently described this treaty as a "cornerstone of strategic stability" -- if this cornerstone crumbles, we should not be surprised to see repercussions throughout the rest of the international security edifice. A similar result would arise through the deployment of anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons, which Palme also strongly opposed. Too often, deliberations over all such advanced weaponry focus narrowly on their efficiency and effectiveness, rather than their broader implications for disarmament, nonproliferation,

and international security.

Revitalizing the Disarmament and Arms Control Agenda

In the light of this brief review, it may well be appropriate to start constructing a future arms control and disarmament agenda on the foundation of the unfinished elements of the Palme agenda. Thus our foundation would have to include the following elements.

Unfinished Elements of the Palme Agenda

- We should press unrelentingly for deep cuts in existing strategic nuclear arsenals, and for the de-alerting of remaining weapons as an interim step to their total elimination, not their perpetual management or control.
- We should emphasize the need for efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space. We should therefore work to preserve the ABM Treaty and to encourage efforts to ban anti-satellite weapons.
- We should work for the elimination of battlefield nuclear weapons -- including those deployed on foreign soil -- and the doctrines that have been devised to rationalize their use. We should encourage all countries possessing nuclear weapons to endorse a no-first-use policy.
- We should strengthen international efforts to halt the production of all unsafeguarded weapons-usable nuclear materials and work toward the ultimate goal of a global ban on the production or stockpiling of all such materials by any country.
- We should promote universal membership in the NPT, CWC, BWC, and CTBT.
- We should take the relationship between "disarmament and development" seriously and work harder on bridging the gap between rich and poor both between and within countries. We should not, however, hold progress on disarmament hostage to solving all the problems of development -- or vice versa.
- We should continue our collective efforts to ensure early and effective international preventive action on behalf of the peaceful settlement of disputes and potential aggression across state borders. We need to pursue, as the UN Secretary-General has recently stated, a "culture of prevention" rather than a "culture of reaction" -- and in the case of the multitude of small arms and light weapons being used in local conflicts around the world, we need initiatives of "preventive disarmament" -- with development incentives where necessary.

- We should work to strengthen the UN's ability to contribute to international peace and security -- including the successful disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of ex-combatants in a peacekeeping environment and the protection of civilians in armed conflict.
- And we should promote greater transparency of fundamental data about military expenditures and the production and transfer of arms. We need to redouble our efforts to ensure that ongoing efforts to globalize the world's arms industry are matched by even greater efforts to globalize the principles of peace and development in the UN Charter.

Yet as advisable as all of these initiatives would be, they would still fall short of what is needed in the complex international security environment we will be facing in the 21st century.

Meeting New Challenges

The seventeen years that have passed since the publication of the Palme report have also raised new issues onto the international security agenda. The world community must confront the problem of transnational organized crime, including the dangers that its perpetrators will engage in activities associated with weapons of mass destruction or exploit the revolution in information technology for illicit ends. The global terrorist threat remains inadequately met, not just with respect to military or police responses but also with respect to addressing the underlying causes that motivate individuals or groups to engage in such activities. And while highly desirable, improvement of the UN's ability to deal with cross-border wars in the developing world -- a major goal of the 1982 Palme Report -- would not address the fact that most wars these days are occurring within, rather than between, countries.

With respect to the various methods to deliver nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction, there are virtually no binding international legal constraints on the production, export, testing, or use of long-range ballistic or cruise missiles, nor on defensive systems against such missiles. On 15 April 1999, the Secretary-General called for the development of international norms governing such weapons systems, an effort that is long overdue. There are also no binding international legal controls over the export of long-range aircraft that are also capable of delivering such weapons.

Controls over small arms -- which have taken an extraordinary human toll in recent civil conflicts around the world -- remain virtually non-existent. With respect to other conventional arms -- including some which may someday rival weapons of mass destruction in their potential effects -- the world community has only just begun to make progress in improving the transparency of data on the export and production of such arms.

Last year, only about half of the members of the UN submitted their declarations to the UN's Conventional Arms Register, the largest number yet. In time, the scope of this register will hopefully be expanded to cover a wider range of conventional weapons and more qualitative details. Also, many more countries need to participate in the UN's standardized system for the reporting of military expenditures in order for it to reach its full potential as a transparency measure. Transparency leads to confidence

building, which in turn builds security leading to disarmament.

The world community is also poorly prepared to respond to flagrant violations of disarmament and nonproliferation norms. To the extent that sanctions have been imposed for such violations, many appear invidious and narrow in scope, while others have imposed great hardships upon civilian populations. The more customary form of response to such violations has been the ephemeral statement of regret. The world community's past experience with the League of Nations, however, of relying upon words alone without any means of international enforcement should not inspire confidence in such an approach for dealing with aggression, proliferation, or terrorism in today's thermonuclear age.

Similarly, an international consensus is lacking on the appropriate role for export controls and other measures to restrain the technological development of weapons of mass destruction.

And despite all that Olof Palme attempted to accomplish with respect to the development of global norms and institutions to nurture and implement them, I have also noticed in recent years a tendency to apply these norms selectively. The selective application of the nonproliferation norm is perhaps best illustrated by the appearance of policies targeted narrowly at a handful of countries caricatured by the expression "rogue nations." Yet actual or suspected weapons activities in three or four countries do not define the entire universe of proliferation threats. I have also observed in official statements and private commentaries a preoccupation over weapons of mass destruction falling into what are called "the wrong hands." Yet there really can be no "right hands" for weapons whose use would involve the indiscriminate deaths of countless non-combatants -- contrary to humanitarian laws of war dating back hundreds of years, including the Geneva Convention whose 50th anniversary we observed this year.

Arms control measures -- specifically norms and procedures intended to limit the qualitative characteristics of designated weapons, control their numbers or effects, or limit the risks or costs of weapons use -- are important priorities for many conventional weapons systems in the world today. But great care must be taken lest arms control displace disarmament as the proper objective with respect to weapons of mass destruction. As the 1982 Palme Report stated, "In their quest for security, nations must strive for objectives more ambitious than stability, the goal of the present system in which security is based on armaments."

We must not seek to create a world that is safe for nuclear armament, but a world that is free of all such weapons. We must not seek managed proliferation, nor what might be called "the game of arms control," but *disarmament* as the destiny for all weapons of mass destruction. More broadly, we should seek levels of armaments internationally that are sufficient to meet fundamental national defence needs with minimal costs to society, the economy, and the environment -- without nuclear weapons.

A Roadmap for the Future

Writing in 1976, Alva Myrdal observed that "Disarmament interests have nowhere had strong organizational backing." Despite the UN's recent institutional reforms, this comment remains to some

extent true at the international level but is particularly true at the level of individual governments, where both disarmament and nonproliferation goals must continually compete with numerous other goals of state policy. Major changes in this status quo will come about only from a combination of pressures from the bottom up in society, and from enlightened leadership at the top.

Each country must obviously reach its own conclusions when it comes to selecting methods of enhancing national security and no single plan or roadmap for disarmament will be suitable for use by every country. Nevertheless, I do believe that a revitalized disarmament agenda could well emerge in the years ahead as a result of initiatives along the following lines.

Disarmament Stewardship

We have heard much in recent years about the vital importance of "stockpile stewardship." We need to encourage countries that possess nuclear arms to recognize that disarmament itself requires some "stewardship." I have tried over the last year to make the case for "sustainable disarmament," which I define as a dynamic process -- sustained by deliberate action on the part of leaders throughout the world community and from civil society -- to address the combined needs of development and security through the reduction and elimination of arms. Progress in achieving disarmament depends on human will -- and human will is magnified many times over when it becomes institutionalized. If we truly wish to remedy what Alva Myrdal once called the "institutionalization of the arms race," we need to consider measures that will strengthen the institutional infrastructure of disarmament, both nationally and internationally. In short, we need a global compact to institutionalize disarmament.

Public confidence and accountability in the process of sustainable disarmament depends both upon clear goals and the availability of basic facts about the progress and setbacks in pursuing such goals. Information and education will therefore play major roles in the evolution of the institutions and policies of sustainable disarmament. If we have indices of sustainable development, we can surely have indices of sustainable disarmament. If we have results-based budgeting in our public and private institutions, we can also have results-based disarmament.

Fortunately, the community of potential allies in the quest for sustainable disarmament is formidable indeed. It potentially comprises retired government and military officials, as well as representatives of diverse NGOs including individuals from business, labour, think tanks, private foundations, academia, political parties, religious groups, the news media, public interest groups, professional societies, and numerous other groups in civil society.

We have all heard quite a bit about the "military-industrial complex" and all of its allegedly conspiratorial intrigues, but perhaps not enough about a new player in this game, namely that diverse coalition of individuals and groups who have committed themselves to converting disarmament from a dream into a reality. If we wish to take on the "nuclear weapons complex" or any other institutional bastion of support for weapons that jeopardize international peace and security, we will need to mobilize what might be called a "disarmament complex." We will need to find some enlightened leaders who can

operate on the basis of sustained political and institutional support from throughout society, and who recognize that disarmament is both an efficient and an effective means to advance national security interests.

Many of us have also heard about the new leaps that have been made in the growing lethality and accuracy of modern conventional weapons and their various support systems, the so-called "revolution in military affairs" (RMA). Technology is not, however, evolving only in the direction of accelerating arms races. There is now underway, I believe, a "revolution in disarmament affairs" involving dramatic improvements in the technology of verifying arms control and disarmament agreements. Satellites can detect smaller objects, characterize them better, and thereby lay some key technical building blocks for verifying compliance with new disarmament undertakings. Techniques are improving daily for the technical analysis of material samples needed to increase confidence in disarmament agreements. The onward march of computer technology -- while presenting its own weapons proliferation risks -- is also facilitating the analysis of data about weapons development or deployment activities, helping to improve international safeguards and physical security, and deepening our understanding of the human and environmental effects from the production and use of weapons of mass destruction.

Continued progress in disarmament requires financial support from governments, which requires political will, which in turn ultimately derives from the people. Policies, laws, and institutions to promote the stewardship of disarmament will not appear spontaneously. They will emerge only to the extent that the people wish for them to emerge, provide the means for such reforms, and develop the institutional architecture (the "disarmament complex") needed to sustain them over time and in the face of competing demands and priorities.

Post-Palme Priorities

The design of a sovereign state's disarmament complex is a matter for the people of each country to decide for themselves. But I can offer a few suggestions on some specific goals that merit urgent attention throughout the world community. None of these goals will be accomplished overnight, and all will require sustained action of the type that a disarmament complex, a disarmament stewardship policy, and a revolution in disarmament affairs can help to foster. All together, these elements offer a durable foundation for sustainable disarmament.

Ultimate Goal. The end of all disarmament efforts is not the utopian goal of the total elimination of every weapon everywhere. It must mean, however, the end of all weapons of mass destruction, everywhere and for all time -- including both existing weapons and any that may be under development. The ideas of selective possession or partial disarmament involving such weapons are fantasies, totally unsustainable as a long-term strategy for international security in the real world. If our humanitarian laws of war are to mean anything, the goal for weapons of mass destruction must be disarmament, not arms control or postures of management or containment.

For other arms, the end must be to reduce the types and numbers to the "lowest level of armaments

commensurate with legitimate self-defence and security requirements," the goal described by the Secretary-General in his report this year to the General Assembly on the Work of the UN. Though the term "commensurate with" allows for subjective judgement and is not subject to precise quantification, the general idea of reductions to these levels seems a reasonable goal, one well rooted in the world history of disarmament efforts and the laws of war over many centuries.

Interim Goals. I would begin my brief list of interim goals simply by referring back to the Palme agenda I discussed earlier -- they made sense when they were proposed 17 years ago and they remain relevant today. There are grounds for supporting a few additional approaches, however, both at the national and international levels.

Every discussion of disarmament seems to conclude that political will -- or an action-oriented decision based on shared goals -- is the missing ingredient for success. I believe it would be constructive for the heads of state of the UN Security Council to meet more often -- informally and off the record -- to discuss international peace and security issues, including disarmament directly. The last meeting of the Security Council at this level took place in 1992 and resulted in a Presidential Statement identifying the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as a threat to international peace and security. Such statements are helpful in developing and strengthening global norms. A new statement -- especially before the NPT Review Conference of 2000 -- addressing a joint commitment to global nuclear disarmament with concrete measures would constitute another step forward in this respect.

At present, such meetings are rare indeed and customarily take place bilaterally. More frequent meetings will not of course guarantee the generation of the political will to disarm, nor will even the emergence of a consensus in this group guarantee the acceptance of this goal by their domestic political systems. Yet I still think it is important for the leaders in whose trust almost all of the world's nuclear weapons rests should meet and deliberate the status and future of such weapons more frequently than they now do. Such deliberations could promote mutual understanding and help muster the collective political will needed, for example, to revitalize the Conference on Disarmament and give it a fighting chance to live up to its full potential. These leaders should also be encouraged at every appropriate opportunity to speak directly on disarmament in major policy addresses and to undertake other initiatives -- both collective and unilateral -- to advance this global norm.

Political will is not defined simply by the wills of these leaders alone. Greater dialogue must also be encouraged between legislators, the very people whose consent will be required -- according to the constitutions of many countries -- for any treaties in this field to have full legal effect. The views of these popular representatives will be heard one way or the other -- it is far preferable that they be heard early rather than too late. The Inter-Parliamentary Union will be hosting next year a gathering of the heads of legislatures around the world on the occasion of the new millennium. This may be a good place to begin a global dialogue at the level of elected legislative representatives on key issues relating to disarmament, peace, and security.

A series of non-governmental global summit meetings could also be held to address disarmament issues.

One such meeting might involve the leaders of the world's religions. Others could involve business associations, labour organizations, professional societies, veterans groups, academic associations, and regional and international organizations. The purpose would be to do something practical and creative about this unresolved problem of "political will." While such summitry might not solve this problem, it will -- I believe -- stand a better chance of being helpful than the alternatives of complacency or institutionalized cynicism.

As political will deepens, it will become easier to make progress on more specific fronts, including deeper and more rapid quantitative cuts in all nuclear weapons around the world. So too will it become easier to achieve meaningful caps on qualitative improvements in weapon systems and new progress on removing nuclear weapons from high alert status. There will be a stronger basis for future "non-armament" agreements, such as, for example, the prohibition of the development of new forms of weapons of mass destruction. Strong political will is simply essential for any significant progress in improving verification or enhancing transparency (whether of weapons or of the special materials that comprise such weapons). Political will is indispensable for the negotiation of truly meaningful new security assurances, keeping in mind that the most reliable security assurance of all would follow -- not precede -- the achievement of nuclear disarmament.

Two arguments are frequently made to resist disarmament. One is the pre-eminence of national security. The other is the cost of the disarmament. On the first, it is in the national interest to channel national investment from swords into ploughshares. Even ancient statesmen from the realist tradition, like Kautilya, recognized as clearly as the contemporary historian Paul Kennedy that the ultimate basis for national security is found less in weaponry than in the social and economic foundation of a society. On the second, it suffices to say that the costliest disarmament is cheaper than the cheapest arms build-up.

Conclusion

Well over two millennia ago, Plato described in some detail a hypothetical "Republic" which would be led by the very best and brightest a community could produce. Yet time and again, we have seen countries in the years since, believing themselves to be led by such individuals, going to war and at times even destroying whole civilizations.

At the other extreme one might put the popular Reign of Terror in the early years of the French Revolution, or more recently, so-called "failed states" where the reins of governance have fallen into the hands of mobs and local war-lords. Neither seems to me to offer a desirable model for structuring a future agenda in the field of arms control and disarmament.

History teaches us how the Industrial Revolution -- underwritten by courts, police actions, and an unfettered market -- generated an extraordinary amount of wealth in a very short time. The distribution of this wealth, however, was notoriously inequitable. As living conditions deteriorated among the people, demands grew for progressive legal reforms, including basic human rights and various forms of what were called social security.

I hope that the next milestone that mankind will pass in the course of its general development will be the emergence of a society that measures "power" in ways other than by the production or display of military might. I am not speaking here of a society without all weapons, but a society that appreciates the limited role that weapons can and must play in sustaining human existence. We must cultivate a society that displays its power by demonstrating its capability to solve human problems, in particular problems relating to human security.

I would prefer to believe that mankind is closer to the start of history than its end. The agenda I have described today builds upon a deliberate programme of sustainable disarmament. Real progress in fulfilling this agenda will depend heavily, as Plato would have insisted, upon enlightened leaders at the governmental level. But it also will depend upon firm and active support from the public at large. Arms control and disarmament agendas are not self-fulfilling. They are designed and implemented by humans who understand that success will not be achieved easily.

It is a tragic irony of history that the peacemakers are often among the first to be slain. The world reduces itself to the puny stature of the assassin if we allow the principles and ideals of the peacemakers to perish with them. I regret that Olof Palme did not live to see many of his prescriptions for peace achieved. The best way to honour him is through our persistent efforts, both individually and collectively, to fulfill his unfinished agenda and to get on with all the rest of the challenges that life has to offer.

Let us continue, as he used to say, to "rouse public opinion." Let us acknowledge, as he put it in his 1982 report, that "It is very unlikely that disarmament will ever take place if it must wait for the initiatives of governments and experts. It will come about only as the expression of the political will of people in many parts of the world." And let us never forget the need for priorities, especially the priority of global nuclear disarmament in the global contracts we have with the peoples of the world.

We have come to the end of a century and another millennium in human history. In what has indisputably been the most blood-stained century it was a leader from my region of the world, Mahatma Gandhi, who espoused the cause of non-violence as a political tool. In doing so he was echoing the Buddha's philosophy of *ahimsa*, articulated two and a half millennia ago. It was Gandhi who once said that "the personality of a man changes when he acquires a weapon." I think it is similarly true that the character of a people changes when it learns to solve its most fundamental problems without the resort to threats or the use of apocalyptic weapons.

Hard-headed realists might object to the utility of *ahimsa*, citing another tradition of South Asian political philosophy dating back to Kautilya, whose crafty realism predated Machiavelli by almost two thousand years. Yet Kautilya's great treatise on statesmanship, the *Arthashastra*, also contains maxims about the importance of restraints in war, the need to protect noncombatants, and above all, the need for all foreign policy to rest upon a stable domestic foundation consisting of a contented people.

Consider the legacies of nuclear weapons -- the awful destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the potential damage to the human and natural environment from regional or global nuclear war (whether by

design or accident); the consequences of their production for the health of workers and the natural environment; and the diversion of trillions of dollars from treasuries around the world to produce and maintain them. None of these suggests that nuclear weapons offer a stable foundation for either a sound defence or wise foreign policy, whether one subscribes to the tradition of *ahimsa* or the *realpolitik* of Kautilya. The same arguments apply to conventional weapons arsenals beyond the legitimate requirements of national defence, when one considers the death and destruction of the wars fought since 1945.

One need look no further than the UN Charter to find the paths to international security and development that human society must pursue in the coming decades. The United Nations has had to traverse a long and difficult road to have people-centered development acknowledged by the world community as the key to sustainable development. With similar determination, we must now embark on a road to have people-centered disarmament accepted as the core of sustainable disarmament and national security policies. In the memory of Olof Palme and in the interests of world peace, let us now begin the journey ahead.