

# United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination

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## Don't Take Offence and Be Late for the Party

### Submitted by DIYNGO

#### An Introduction: Beyond the scope<sup>1</sup>

1. There are many extremely complex arguments both for and against nuclear proliferation. This Working Paper from DIYNGO will not attempt to cover these in detail since others are no doubt far better qualified to comment upon these but, more to the point, they do not really concern us. That is, DIYNGO is concerned with its operations at the forefront of climate change activism. We build social structures through community actions raising awareness of the usefulness of renewable energy to power technology principally to address issues around education, governance and healthcare.

2. However, lately our efforts have additionally had to take into account the inevitable social unrest at these front lines of climate change (1,2). We do though not actively take part in security operations, for instance. True to our original founding goals though we seek to 'champion' the issues. That is, we raise awareness of especially the interconnections between industrialisation, for instance, in some parts of the globe and resulting conflict in others. As such, it would be outside the scope of our experience to, for example, comment upon the geopolitical dimensions of interstate competition over natural resources like oil. Instead we will focus these discussions upon our own experiences.

#### Our Argument: Of Economics and Disaster

3. Certainly, it seems inappropriate that the current political climate to further bolster nuclear arsenals should perhaps be at the expense (given increasingly limited public resources) of efforts to tackle climate change. Moreover, one could possibly argue that the amelioration of a changing climate - through human impact upon this planet or otherwise - should be given a higher priority than the *apparent* peace brought about by nuclear proliferation? Again though, we are in danger of covering rather complex questions concerning the nuclear peace hypothesis (3,4). Similarly, the arguments for prioritising public spending on various facets of these institutional concerns may also be complex. Furthermore, although it is currently fashionable, especially in capitalist nation states, to reduce most arguments to matters of economic gains and losses there are much greater *humanistic* concerns to consider beyond simple monetary calculations.

4. There are currently many concerted actions being enacted around the world to try to tackle climate change. The contention herein is that by concentrating upon further

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<sup>1</sup> Simple arguments are presented for the choice of working towards solutions to the problems presented by climate change over and above the issues that nuclear proliferation pertains to address. These are set within the context of a Community Based Organisation operating at the front line of climate change in rural Kenya.

nuclear proliferation not only are we potentially creating a means for humanity to self-destruct through technological means but we are additionally not focusing upon the very real issues which additionally may be the greatest threat to planetary *sustainability*. So, whilst there are those of us who still contend that the best chance of survival for our species is to build weapons of mass destruction there is indeed a growing collection of others who postulate that the greatest path to earthly salvation will be the adoption of renewable energy and associated ways for humans to think and act.

#### **Preliminary conclusions: A Party of Hope for the Future!**

5. There was a great, popular feeling among people at the start of this new millennium of positivity (5). It felt like we were ready for a change for the better and that this period marked a kind of turning point leaving behind past misdemeanours and looking forward to a future without some of the real issues with which humanity seemed to have been grappling for so long. With hindsight perhaps this was more of a rose-tinted 'vision' than a hard won reality. However, it is never too late to reorient our thinking as a species by taking time to reflect upon what kind of future we would like to be creating for our children and, indeed, their children. In other words we need to think (and feel) beyond the present. A tall order perhaps for a species seemingly ever more caught up in instant gratification and rapid advancement leaving little time to pause for thought.

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