28 States Participate:
Inaugural “Article VI Forum”

United Nations
New York, October 3, 2005

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Appendix: “Article VI Forum”: Breaking the NPT Deadlock
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APPENDIX: "Article VI Forum": Breaking the NPT Deadlock
November 3, 2005

Dear Colleague,

The Middle Powers Initiative (MPI) was honored to inaugurate the “Article VI Forum” at the United Nations on October 3, 2005. The level of participation and the quality of presentations bodes well for its future as an ongoing contribution to international security. The Forum will continue its work of advancing the imperative to uphold the core bargain of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty relating to preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and ensuring steady progress toward their global elimination.

Sincerely,

Hon. Douglas Roche, O.C.
Chairman, Middle Powers Initiative
Summary

On October 3, 2005 at the United Nations, New York, twenty-eight states launched an “Article VI Forum” to undertake work on examining the legal, technical, and political requirements for a nuclear weapons-free world.

The Article VI Forum, sponsored by the Middle Powers Initiative, is an ongoing program to stimulate and shape effective responses to the crisis of the non-proliferation/disarmament regime manifested by the breakdown of the 2005 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

The Forum will conduct high-level meetings of diplomats, decision-makers, and experts; undertake related briefings, consultations, and missions to capitals; and produce and disseminate publications. The aim is to advance international cooperation to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and to fulfill existing commitments to achieve the reduction and elimination of nuclear arsenals. The program takes its name from the article of the Non-Proliferation Treaty requiring good faith negotiation to achieve nuclear disarmament.

The MPI Briefing Paper, “Article VI Forum: Breaking the NPT Deadlock,” is attached to this report as an Appendix.

Instead of accepting the roadblock thrown up by the nuclear weapons states, a group of like-minded states could now start work to identify the legal, political and technical requirements for the elimination of nuclear weapons. This work should start at first among like-minded non-nuclear weapon states working in a non-combative atmosphere.

– Hon. Douglas Roche –
Chairman of the Middle Powers Initiative

The participating states at the initial meeting were: Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Germany, Holy See, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Samoa, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, and Turkey.

A number of civil society representatives were also in attendance, as was Nobuyasu Abe, UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, and Amb. Choi Young-jin, Chairman of the Disarmament and International Security Committee of the 60th General Assembly, and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations.

Hon. Douglas Roche, O.C., former Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament and Chairman of MPI, explained the work ahead for the Article VI Forum: “Instead of accepting the roadblock thrown up by the nuclear weapons states, a group of like-minded states could now start work to identify the legal, political and technical requirements for the elimination of nuclear weapons. This work should start at first among like-minded non-nuclear weapon states working in a non-
combative atmosphere. The work could stimulate the deliberating and negotiating processes and thus revitalize the disarmament fora. The Article VI Forum could then follow, in subsequent meetings, a dual track consisting of informational and preparatory work for the development and implementation of the legal, political and technical elements, and the exploration of ways to start negotiations on disarmament steps leading to a nuclear weapons convention or a framework of instruments for the abolition of nuclear weapons.”

The Article VI Forum was endorsed by a number of the participating states as an excellent way to advance the nuclear disarmament agenda.

A second meeting, March 1-4, 2006 at the Clingendael Institute, The Hague, will specify steps that like-minded states could take unilaterally, bilaterally, regionally, and/or multilaterally.
New and Creative Thinking

In brief introductory remarks, Under-Secretary-General Nobuyasu Abe welcomed the Article VI Forum initiative as an example of the “new and creative thinking” on disarmament and non-proliferation called for by General Assembly President Jan Eliasson. Amb. Abe’s sense is that some states have been taking multilateralism hostage so as not to move on either disarmament or non-proliferation, and ways have to be found to overcome this roadblock.

Also making brief remarks was Ambassador Choi Young-jin, Chairman of the First Committee. He said that the Article VI Forum is “timely and valuable.” He observed that a golden opportunity was lost at the 2005 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference to give impetus to broadly supported goals such as negotiation of a fissile materials treaty and strengthening of verification of non-proliferation. One of the major causes was the sharp, perennial division about whether the nuclear weapon states are fulfilling their disarmament obligation. This “unhealthy situation,” Amb. Choi commented, “should not hold the entire process hostage,” and there is a need to look to “new horizons.”

Paul Meyer, Canada’s Ambassador for Disarmament, was the first speaker, on the topic of “near term political strategies for reviving multilateral action.” He began by noting that the failure of the NPT Review Conference to achieve a substantive outcome “was echoed again last month when the UN Summit was unable to agree on any formulations with respect to the non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament agenda. Secretary-General Kofi Annan was justified in calling this the Summit’s greatest failing and he has appealed again for a demonstration of greater statesmanship.”

Regarding near term efforts, Amb. Meyer first observed that they can assist “in promoting a longer term transformation of political attitudes and security perceptions.” For example, “clearly it is in the interests of nuclear disarmament to ensure that the political utility of nuclear weapons is gradually seen to be the same as the military utility of nuclear weapons – i.e. something close to zero if not a negative number.”

Amb. Meyer then advised that Canada and other countries are “consulting about how we might utilize the First Committee to provide a diplomatic impetus to commence multilateral consideration” of 1) nuclear disarmament, 2) negotiation of a Fissile Materials Cutoff Treaty, 3) prevention of an arms race in outer space, and 4) assurances of non-use of nuclear weapons against states not possessing such weapons. “This will mean,” he said, “using the potential of an authoritative, but non-consensus based forum, to get out of the strait jacket that has been
imposed on the consensus-based forum of the Conference on Disarmament and which has been applied as well within the NPT context.”

Amb. Meyer explained that: “In the wake of the fiasco that was the NPT Review Conference, … the Mayors for Peace put their finger on a problem that was staring us diplomats in the face for many years already but which we were having difficulty acknowledging. That is that a handful of states were taking advantage of consensus rules to prevent, not just the result of a negotiation from being adopted, but the mere initiation of discussion of issues dear to the policy aims of the vast majority of states. Given the eight year long impasse over adoption of a program of work at the Conference on Disarmament no one can accuse us of being precipitous in looking for a way to start work on the core nuclear arms control and disarmament issues that have been long identified in that forum, but which could not formally begin due to the lack of a consensus agreement.”

Also speaking was Mohd. Radzi Abdul Rahman, Malaysia’s Alternate Permanent Representative to the United Nations, who delivered remarks prepared by Hamidon Ali, the Permanent Representative. Amb. Radzi pointed to the relevance of a working paper tabled by Malaysia and Costa Rica at the NPT Review Conference. It calls for states to continue to explore the legal, technical and political elements required for a convention or framework of instruments for the abolition of nuclear weapons, and to integrate this exploration into the development of a program for action encompassing and extending the practical disarmament steps agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. (See Appendix for further discussion of the working paper.)

Amb. Radzi also called attention to the continuing usefulness of the Model Nuclear Weapons Convention submitted by Costa Rica to the UN Secretary-General in 1997. He observed that “the draft CTBT was put on the table by Sweden long before the Conference on Disarmament had been given a negotiating mandate. The draft was useful in promoting progress on certain aspects, such as verification, and in developing the political will that led to commencement of negotiations.”

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1 On October 5, Brazil, Canada, Kenya, Mexico, New Zealand, and Sweden circulated in the First Committee a document setting forth draft elements of a General Assembly resolution establishing ad hoc committees in the areas identified by Amb. Meyer. In an October 12 statement on behalf of the group, Amb. Meyer said most responses "were seeking additional information on the implications of what such an initiative would mean for existing disarmament machinery." While the group decided not to table the resolution this year, Amb. Meyer stated that "we wish to give notice that if, for whatever reason, the Conference on Disarmament turns in another sterile year in 2006, we will retain the option of reintroducing this initiative ...."

2 “Follow-up to the ICJ Advisory Opinion on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons: Legal, technical and political elements required for the establishment and maintenance of a nuclear weapons free world.” (NPT/CONF.2005/WP.41)

3 A/C.1/52/7.
Amb. Radzi concluded that “efforts must also be made to engage nuclear weapon states in this process in order to address their concerns, as necessary, and encourage them to make progress. While they might not be ready to begin negotiations, this is the right time for us to ask them and other states to consider what would be the requirements for a nuclear weapon-free world.”

The final speaker was Luis Alfonso De Alba, Mexico’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva. Amb. De Alba said that a small group of countries has exercised a veto over work in multilateral forums and that the majority of states has been too accepting. Under his chairmanship of the First Committee in 2004, some progress was made on reform so that better use is made of time, but reform now has to get to substance; the First Committee must become a body that is seriously taking on problems.

During the Cold War, Amb. De Alba observed, many years were spent waiting for the main contending nuclear powers to come together. Now with the Cold War over, we are supposed to wait for the permanent five to come to agreement. This is not acceptable, he said. Nuclear weapons are as dangerous today as they were 60 years ago. Terrorism is not the only issue.

Governments seeking progress, Amb. De Alba emphasized, are not inventing and are not confronting; rather they are responding to a need and fulfilling their responsibility as member states that believe in the United Nations and common security.
Strong Support for Forum

Representatives of a number of states expressed their support for the Article VI Forum initiative, and some also endorsed General Assembly action to revive a multilateral approach. Among the points made:

- Business as usual is no longer acceptable.
- The time has come to stop waiting for results in other fora, whether NPT review proceedings or national elections.
- If the Conference on Disarmament stalemate continues, next year will mark the 10-year “jubilee of inactivity.”
- It is more important than ever to involve civil society.

Some concerns were raised. One diplomat, while supporting the Article VI Forum process, expressed reservations at the reference to a nuclear weapons convention, stating that a framework for abolition already exists, namely the NPT and its Article VI. Accordingly, what is important is to establish accountability for compliance with Article VI; there are accountability mechanisms for other articles of the NPT. This is not a question, he continued, of an Ottawa process on landmines; the point is not to create norms, but rather to implement them. Another diplomat said that, in contrast to the landmines campaign, it is essential to have the participation of those few states possessing nuclear weapons. A third diplomat pointed to the importance of considering the role of non-NPT states.

Representatives of non-governmental organizations and of associations of mayors and parliamentarians also participated in the discussion. A representative of a Washington-based group commented that the lessons drawn by participants in the forum regarding the failure of the NPT Review Conference and the World Summit are not those accepted in Washington. Accordingly, there is a need for effective communication. The issues need to be taken up at the level of foreign ministers and heads of state. A second comment conveyed a sense of urgency: the vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world seems to be fading while proliferation is resurgent, global rivalries emerge, and nuclear terrorism poses a threat to cities anywhere in the world. Another point made was that there is much interest among parliamentarians in starting work on non-proliferation and disarmament measures whether or not all states participate.
Conclusion: MPI Will Proceed

In brief closing remarks, Jonathan Granoff, president of the Global Security Institute, invoked the tragedy of the commons, well known to environmentalists. It occurs when one party, rationally seeking to maximize its self-interest, over extends its use of a common resource such as a fishing stock or a grazing area. The outcome is that the resource itself is injured as cooperation breaks down and all parties seek to maximize their misperceived self interests without regard for the whole. Similarly, when one group of nations claims a special interest in possessing nuclear weapons, the collective good of common security is undermined. The way to sustainable security is through cooperation, the rule of law, and global norms with coherent moral foundations. These tools of diplomacy are a far more practical route to a secure future than over reliance on military force.

Governments seeking progress are not inventing and are not confronting; rather they are responding to a need and fulfilling their responsibility as member states that believe in the United Nations and common security.

– Amb. Luis Alfonso De Alba –
Mexico’s Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva

Hon. Roche concluded that the meeting showed strong support for the Article VI Forum initiative. MPI will therefore go ahead with it, conscious of ongoing non-proliferation pressure points but aware of the necessity to do long-range work. A second meeting, featuring technical experts, will be held at the Clingendael Institute, The Hague, March 1-4, 2006.
Participants

Hon. Nobuyasu Abe  
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Frederic Bijou  
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H.E. Mr. Paul Meyer  
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H.E. Archbishop Celestino Migliore  
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Gizapon Pozamich  
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1 Amb. Ali was in absentia but his prepared remarks were presented by Amb. Radzi Abdul Rahman
Grzegorz Poznanski
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Permanent Mission of Poland to the UN in Geneva

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Presented a statement on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition
NGO Participants

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**Please contact MPI if there are any errors or omissions to this list so that it can be corrected in future reprints of this publication. Thank you.**
Appendix: MPI Briefing Paper

Article VI Forum
Breaking the NPT Deadlock

Summary

Despite the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference to produce anything of substance, there is a tremendous desire among governments and civil society to ensure that vigorous efforts to achieve sustainable non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament continue to define the Non-Proliferation Treaty regime. The Middle Powers Initiative, seeking to turn that desire into action, will launch an “Article VI Forum” of like-minded States with the specific goal of exploring initiatives and undertaking work on steps to implement Article VI of the Treaty.

The NPT, as it stands, is wounded. But it remains the fundamental pillar of the nuclear non-proliferation regime providing the legal basis for international verification of nuclear materials and the elimination of nuclear weapons. A failed conference is no reason to give up on the full implementation of the NPT. The Treaty is the only existing legal instrument under which States have agreed to achieve the elimination of nuclear weapons. Yet the dismal facts must be faced. Secretary General Kofi Annan said the conference has “missed a vital opportunity to strengthen our collective security against the many nuclear threats to which all States and all peoples are vulnerable.” He warned that States’ “inability to strengthen their collective efforts is bound to weaken the treaty and the broader NPT-based regime over time.” The nuclear weapons threat is urgent. Proliferation of nuclear weapons is around the corner. The Conference on Disarmament remains moribund. A new jolt of energy is desperately needed to overcome the nuclear malaise.

In this spirit, the Middle Powers Initiative will sponsor the “Article VI Forum.” The Forum is intended to specify nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament steps that could be taken unilaterally, bilaterally, regionally and/or multilaterally. In addition, it will explore and promote mechanisms and approaches to enhance security without relying on nuclear weapons. This process may well produce an outline or framework for negotiations, as called for in Article VI of the NPT and reinforced by the International Court of Justice.

While the principal aim of the Article VI Forum is to implement the disarmament obligation, it will recognize that non-proliferation and disarmament are mutually reinforcing processes - that disarmament steps inevitably place greater constraints on non-proliferation and that many non-proliferation steps contribute to nuclear disarmament. Thus the Forum will include the development of steps to support both disarmament and non-proliferation.
A. Diamonds in the Rough: Programme Elements for an Article VI Forum

1. The failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference is not proportionate to the actual course of events. While disputes over footnotes and whether chairmen’s “non-papers” could be transferred from the committees to the plenary sucked much of the life out of the conference, some States and groups of States put forward thoughtful and realistic proposals, which – if given their proper due – would do much to strengthen the treaty that all States Parties say they want to survive.

2. The United Kingdom on verification (WP.1) and Canada on strengthening the review process (WP.39) were two such papers. The European Union (WP.43) and the New Agenda countries (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden) (WP.27) presented working papers selecting key disarmament steps – often the same steps - that are both achievable in the short and medium term and would represent significant progress. The E.U. opening speech to the conference contained 43 specific recommendations covering the non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses obligations in the treaty.

3. A working paper submitted by six nations, led by Malaysia and Costa Rica, ventured beyond immediate disarmament steps to consider the elements required to construct a comprehensive nuclear weapons abolition regime. The paper (WP.41) sensibly reflects an understanding that key legal, political and technical issues need to be addressed to overcome security concerns of the nuclear weapons States, which are currently preventing them from commencing negotiations leading to complete nuclear disarmament. It frames its argument in terms of fulfilling the International Court of Justice’s finding in 1996 that “there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.” The paper does not attempt to place political pressure on States to take action on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation steps. Rather it attempts to identify the legal, political and technical elements that would be required for all States to confidently join a nuclear abolition regime. In this way, it takes a problem-solving and pragmatic approach rather than a prescriptive or politically-confrontational approach.

4. The Malaysia-Costa Rica paper considers the step-by-step approach to nuclear disarmament too limiting and a comprehensive approach unlikely to succeed because it is so strongly opposed by the NWS. But an “incremental-comprehensive” approach – incorporating step-by-step measures within a comprehensive framework – offers the best route to the final destination. Thus the paper builds on the Practical Steps agreed to in 2000 for systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI of the Treaty, but places these in a comprehensive framework for complete nuclear abolition.

5. The Article VI Forum will examine key legal, technical and political elements required for a nuclear weapons-free-world, including:

- Non-discriminatory general obligations prohibiting the acquisition, development, testing, production, stockpiling, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons;
- Interim control, protection and accounting of nuclear weapons and fissile material holdings;

- Phases and steps for the systematic and progressive destruction of all nuclear warheads and their delivery vehicles;

- Mechanisms for verifying the destruction of all nuclear weapons;

- Mechanisms for ensuring compliance;

- An international organization to coordinate verification, implementation and enforcement under strict and effective international control;

- Disarmament and non-proliferation education to ensure that key sectors of society understand the importance of achieving and maintaining a nuclear weapons free world and how they can contribute to this goal; and

- Mechanisms to achieve a balance between transparency and protection of sensitive information, include individual responsibility (including criminal legislation to ensure compliance by individuals), and build in societal verification to the verification mechanisms.

6. These elements would enable the development of mutual confidence by States that others would be in compliance with a nuclear abolition regime, thus eliminating certain States’ requirements for a nuclear arsenal to deter nuclear weapons possessed by others. Additional security concerns of States, and other reasons for the continuing adherence to nuclear deterrence, would need to be addressed in order to progressively diminish the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines and lead towards a nuclear weapons-free world.

7. A work programme for the Article VI Forum could include a deeper study of these elements and preparatory work on their development and implementation where possible. This would be consistent with the approach of the Malaysia/Costa Rica paper, which suggests that the best way to make progress is to follow a dual track process consisting of both informational work to further explore the elements required for a nuclear weapons-free world and the start of negotiations leading to the conclusion of a Nuclear Weapons Convention or a framework of instruments for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

8. The Malaysia/Costa Rica plan offers a framework broad enough and flexible enough to allow for integration with the E.U. and New Agenda proposals, thereby creating common ground among the three papers to initiate a substantive debate. Such an approach can help move the debate with the NWS from confrontation over whether they should abandon nuclear deterrence to a collaborative exploration of how it would be feasible to replace nuclear deterrence with abolition and alternative security mechanisms.
C. Regaining the Momentum

9. While there is obviously no shortage of proposals for ridding the NPT regime of the paralysis of the last review conference, the question remains what vehicle or vehicles can do the job. At this point, it appears progress at the NPT and CD is severely hampered by the virtual veto power of States in these fora, and from an increasing division between some NWS, which are focusing primarily on non-proliferation efforts including fuel cycle controls while maintaining their own nuclear capabilities, and some non-NWS, which are challenging the NWS to lead by example and are thus unwilling to accept non-proliferation controls. In this context, initiatives are required which can make progress unhampered by a rigid consensus procedure, combined with high-level support for sustainable non-proliferation and disarmament.

10. There was hope that the Summit of the U.N. General Assembly, held September 14 – 16, would launch such an initiative. A draft of the statement to be issued by the M + 5 Summit - marking both the 60th anniversary of the founding of the U.N. and the fifth anniversary of the Millennium Summit – listed the commitments of States to key issues on the international agenda, including disarmament and non-proliferation. The draft had an “appeal to all States to pursue and intensify negotiations with a view to advancing disarmament and strengthening the international non-proliferation regime,” as well as listing numerous practical steps, such as beginning negotiations on a fissile materials cut-off treaty. Nations tabled new language that either weakened or strengthened the original text. At the end of August, positions hardened between countries wanting the section to focus on disarmament and others wanting to focus on non-proliferation. The differences proved insurmountable and, as a result, the entire section was dropped from the outcome document. Commenting on the outcome document, Secretary-General Annan said, “The big item missing is non-proliferation and disarmament. This is a real disgrace. We have failed twice this year: we failed at the NPT Conference, and we failed now.”

11. The combination of the failure at the NPT Review Conference and the deliberate elimination of disarmament from the outcome document has deepened the crisis in the non-proliferation regime. This makes all the more vital the need for like-minded States to take action in a creative and constructive manner to move forward to explore legal, technical and political steps in anticipation of the day – sooner rather than later – when the whole international community, including the nuclear weapons States, can work together. We must also be mindful that the obstacles we face must not send us into paralysis; instead, the 2010 NPT Review Conference compels us to work harder. Two failures in a row will be devastating for the NPT. We must prepare the way for a strong outcome in 2010. The Article VI Forum provides that opportunity.

D. The “Article VI Forum”

12. Recognizing that the current nuclear disarmament fora are blocked and unlikely to undertake substantive work on nuclear disarmament in the current political climate, the Middle Powers Initiative will sponsor an “Article VI Forum” with the specific goal of exploring
initiatives and undertaking work on steps to implement Article VI and, in turn, help break the stalemate over nuclear disarmament.

13. MPI will invite to a consultation at the United Nations, New York on October 3, 2005, a number of like-minded, non-nuclear weapons States from all areas of the world. At a later stage in the development of the Article VI Forum, other States, including nuclear weapons States wishing to participate, could be invited to join the process.

14. It is hoped that, from this consultation, sufficient interest from a core group of countries will be generated to take the next steps. MPI is ready to organize a two-day follow-up meeting in February 2006. At that time, participating countries may decide to form task forces or sub-groups to focus on specific disarmament items and to engage appropriate experts – governmental and non-governmental.

15. MPI does not intend the Article VI Forum to be an end-run around the NPT or Conference on Disarmament, but rather an attempt to stimulate the deliberating and negotiating processes and thus revitalize the disarmament fora. It is not designed to confront the nuclear weapons States, but rather to offer them a means of fulfilling their disarmament obligations, and at the same time achieving sustainable non-proliferation, in a productive, respectful atmosphere.

16. The Article VI Forum will take as a hallmark the advice given by Ambassador Sergio Duarte, President of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, when he spoke to a forum in Hiroshima, Japan, August 3, 2005:

“It is important to stress once again the urgent need to achieve progress toward the central objectives of the NPT: to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons to new States, to promote the goal of nuclear disarmament and to further the peaceful uses of atomic energy. Progress on all three fronts must be simultaneously pursued, and progress in one direction does not preclude progress in the other. Those who attach absolute priority to one or another of those objectives must understand that they are complementary and mutually reinforcing. There is no possibility of success if each group clings to its own narrow perceptions.”

17. The Article VI Forum will recognize that, as a result of the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, Article VI of the NPT has achieved customary status under international law, thus applying universally. However, focusing on the disarmament obligations of the NPT – Article VI – should not be interpreted as ignoring the non-proliferation obligations of the Treaty. Rather, it would recognize that non-proliferation and disarmament are mutually reinforcing processes - that disarmament steps would inevitably place greater constraints on non-proliferation and that many non-proliferation steps can contribute to nuclear disarmament. As Hon. Marian Hobbs, New Zealand Minister of Disarmament, said, “If disarmament and non-proliferation are seen as two separate processes, progress will be difficult. There will continue to be a competitive tug-of-war between the NWS on the one hand calling for a focus on non-proliferation, and the NAM directing greater attention towards disarmament. An abolition approach avoids competition by shaping actions in ways that
contribute to the gradual prohibition of nuclear weapons themselves and to both non-proliferation and disarmament.”

18. Further, an open-minded inquiry into the requirements for a nuclear weapons-free world would be enhanced by an examination of sustainable alternative energy possibilities.

19. One way for the Article VI Forum to pursue its agenda could be to follow a dual track consisting of both informational work to further examine and develop the elements required for a nuclear weapons-free world and exploration of ways to start negotiations on disarmament steps, which eventually could lead to the conclusion of a Nuclear Weapons Convention or a framework of instruments for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

20. The Pugwash Council sees a value in such an approach. In its 2005 Statement, issued in Hiroshima, the Council stated:

“The Pugwash Council believes that constructive work should be started by like-minded States to identify the legal, political and technical requirements for the elimination of nuclear weapons. As recommended by the Middle Powers Initiative, these efforts would be a contribution to the NPT process and could provide the framework for eventual negotiations for a Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibiting and eliminating such weapons.”

E. Conclusion: Majority Opinion

21. While the debate continues over the future of the NPT and nuclear disarmament in general, a salient and often overlooked point needs to be repeated: the vast majority of world public opinion favors nuclear disarmament. The Non-Proliferation Treaty, the International Court of Justice, the votes of the majority of nations are all calling for the full implementation of the 1995 and 2000 commitments given by all States Parties to the Treaty towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. An “Article VI Forum” would help turn that opinion into fact by drawing together like-minded countries into an initiative that would send out a positive message to a waiting world that, despite the great obstacles we face, serious work is being done to help humanity attain a nuclear weapons-free world.
MIDDLE POWERS INITIATIVE
A program of the Global Security Institute

Through the Middle Powers Initiative, eight international non-governmental organizations work primarily with “middle power” governments to encourage and educate the nuclear weapon states to take immediate practical steps that reduce nuclear dangers, and commence negotiations to eliminate nuclear weapons. MPI is guided by an International Steering Committee chaired by Hon. Douglas Roche, O.C., former Canadian Disarmament Ambassador.

Middle power countries are politically and economically significant, internationally respected countries that have renounced the nuclear arms race, a standing that gives them significant political credibility.

MPI, which started in 1998, is widely regarded in the international arena as a highly effective leader in promoting practical steps toward the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The work of MPI includes:

a) **Delegations** to educate and influence high-level policy makers such as Foreign, Defense and Prime Ministers, and Presidents. Delegations focus on leaders who have great impact on nuclear weapon policy making, both domestically and internationally. MPI Delegations are planned to coincide with significant political events such as the NPT Review Conferences and their preparatory meetings, NATO and other summits;

b) **Strategy Consultations**, which serve as “off the record” interventions designed to provide a working environment in which ambassadors, diplomats, experts, and policy makers can come together in an informal setting at pivotal opportunities, in order to complement the ongoing treaty negotiations at various forums such as the United Nations or the European Parliament; and

c) **Publications**, such as Briefing Papers, that examine whether or not the nuclear abolition agenda is progressing and make corresponding recommendations to governments and activists. MPI Briefing Papers serve as intellectual catalysts for the MPI Delegations and MPI Strategy Consultations, and are widely read.

GLOBAL SECURITY INSTITUTE
Promoting security for all through the elimination of nuclear weapons

The Global Security Institute, founded by Senator Alan Cranston (1914-2000), has developed an exceptional team that includes former heads of state and government, distinguished diplomats, effective politicians, committed celebrities, religious leaders, Nobel Peace Laureates, and concerned citizens. This team works to achieve incremental steps that enhance security and lead to the global elimination of nuclear weapons. GSI works through four result-oriented program areas that target specific influential constituencies.