



## The Power and Promise of Nonproliferation Education and Training

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This paper will focus on the work of the United Nations in disarmament, and address specifically how the UN's Office for Disarmament Affairs has been working productively with the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies to advance our shared goals.

Before proceeding, I cannot help—on this occasion of your 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary—but recall the words of Oscar Wilde, who once wrote, “Most modern calendars mar the sweet simplicity of our lives by reminding us that each day that passes is the anniversary of some perfectly uninteresting event.”

Twenty years ago, when the idea came about of creating a Center for Nonproliferation Studies, I am sure there were few people on this planet who recognized this as a very, very interesting event. At that time, I was working at the Lawrence Livermore National Lab on nonproliferation issues, and had the great privilege of interacting quite frequently with Bill Potter. I recall discussing with him some of the ideas that were then germinating about establishing a center like this. And I am very proud of the professional acquaintance we had in that period and very pleased to see the consequences of what has happened since, thanks to his work.

In another paper in this collection, Linton Brooks writes, “Organizations matter, in that they tell you what people are thinking of things.” This applies to the UN as well, and we are thinking about a lot of things, and have been doing so for quite a while. The UN has been working on disarmament for sixty-four years. In that period, we have been approaching it on two tracks.

On the one hand, we have a mandate to seek the *elimination* of weapons of mass destruction—nuclear, chemical, and biological. And the second aim is the *regulation or limitation* of conventional armaments. They are like the double helix of the UN, they are intertwined, interrelated, mutually dependent, mutually reinforcing goals, and they are pursued together with equal intensity and passion. We believe you cannot approach one without the addressing the other. Nor should they be conflated, as in seeking merely to “regulate” nuclear weapons. Together these goals have been known for more than fifty years (since 1959) at the UN as “general and complete disarmament under effective international control” and this since 1978 this has been the umbrella term for the “ultimate objective” of the United Nations in this field.

In the briefest summary, our roles at the UN are essentially two-fold. Our first responsibility is advocacy: we are trying to advance constructive multilateral initiatives in WMD disarmament and conventional arms control. The second concerns the development and maintenance of

legitimate global norms. There is no other institution that does this at this level and at that scale.

Legitimacy refers to two things, one is substantive, and one is procedural. The procedural part is in the fact that the UN provides an opportunity for all states to participate in the process of developing these multilateral norms. The substantive part is that the norms themselves are fair—they are universal, are not discriminatory, and are meant to apply to all states. These are precisely the reasons why the norms that are developed there have the legitimacy they have, and that's an edge the UN has as an institution.

Now, how do we create these norms? By having a great deal of leadership and commitment from our member states, including both those that have the largest arsenals and those that do not. You have to have close engagement with civil society, because they are often a source of constructive ideas for multilateral cooperation, but also because of their ability to exercise some influence over the evolution of policies of governments.

So with this combination of political forces, which include top-down leadership from the most powerful states, outside-in advocacy by the international diplomatic community especially the middle-power states, and bottom-up pressure from civil society, this together is what really keeps the engine running in the UN in this field. Through his proposals and statements, the Secretary-General also has his own important contributions to make in establishing disarmament as a high priority.

Education is clearly the common denominator in all of this.

Let's look just for a moment at the role of CNS, specifically at the UN. I can't really overstate the importance that CNS Director, Bill Potter played during his tenure as a member of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters. Almost single-handedly, he was clearly responsible for raising nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament education on the agenda at the UN. He advanced this issue by getting the Advisory Board to endorse a recommendation for a study by the Secretary-General on this issue, which in turn led to the establishment of a group of governmental experts, and the result was a detailed report identifying concrete steps needed to advance disarmament and non-proliferation education. Specific details are available on our departmental web site, [www.un.org/disarmament](http://www.un.org/disarmament), which features a special page devoted to education, and a number of references and primary documents are available there.

In addition, CNS has played an enormously important role in the conceptualization and in the achievement—and I'm sure in the implementation—of the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. I was fortunate to have worked with Bill and others at the CNS throughout this whole process, and to watch this great initiative come to fruition. It's the first time a major populated nuclear-weapon-free zone has been established entirely north of the equator. And CNS deserves considerable credit for its work on behalf of this achievement.

On another issue, many of you here at CNS know that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) does not have a secretariat, so it is very important for there to be research institutes that conduct thorough in-depth studies and analyses of what goes on with the NPT. In some ways, CNS serves as a kind of institutional memory for the NPT treaty system, although we do this in the UN secretariat as well. But certainly from a research perspective, CNS has played an absolutely crucial role.

Before concluding, I'd like to doubly underscore the important contributions of CNS interns to our disarmament work at the UN. I've been at the United Nations for about 11 years and have had about 20 interns, from all over the world, some from here at Monterey. I have been enormously pleased and impressed with their work. It has not been a one-way flow of knowledge from us to them. It's been a very mutually reinforcing arrangement. One of my former CNS interns, Vasileios Savvidis, helped me this year with all the details of the third Preparatory Committee session for the 2010 NPT Review Conference. His assistance was indispensable. He was a friend and good colleague. I learned a lot from him, I valued his friendship, and I know that he will be a great contributor to this whole profession in the years to come.

Finally, I know that everybody at CNS is aware of the importance of the development of what has been called a "nonproliferation community." As a parallel and complementary effort, I think we are also starting to witness in this world the nurturing of a disarmament community.

Many here might not recall that in 1955, UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld referred to disarmament as a "hardy perennial" at the UN, and in 2009 that perennial finally began to bloom. We're starting to see networking of a different order between people who are sincerely interested in this, not just as an ideal, but as a practical reality. I see it also in the different forms of groups that are taking an interest in this—the sheer diversity of these groups. I am not talking just about the arms control and disarmament groups, but increasingly women's groups, environmentalists, human rights activists, development experts and many others, are also taking an interest.

The next step ahead in the development of this disarmament community is what might be called "domestication." Coming back to what Linton Brooks wrote, I agree that we need to look at what people are thinking in organizations, but frankly we need do more to get them to be thinking more about disarmament. When you look at the organization charts, the line item budgets, the policies, the laws, and regulations and you'll find there is a paucity of references specifically to disarmament, in terms of action orientation, as opposed to visions and ultimate goals.

This is I believe the trend ahead, and I am very encouraged by it, and see an absolutely essential role for CNS in moving this positive trend in the right direction. We at the United Nations very much look forward to working with you in the years ahead. Perhaps someday we will finally succeed, and put ourselves out of business, because our work will be complete. Let's get it done in our lifetimes.