



Basel Peace Office

Advancing international peace and security through the abolition of nuclear weapons

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Director's Annual Report 2018

Alyn Ware

INTRODUCTION:

This is the sixth year of Basel Peace Office (BPO) operations. Despite very low funding, our programs and events have been very successful and have had impact in Switzerland and globally. We organized a number of events in Switzerland (Basel and Geneva), as well as global actions and campaigns. We also organised (or co-organised) events in Berlin, Büchel (nuclear weapons base in Germany), Bonn, the Hague, London, Madrid, New York, Ottawa, Prague, Rome, Seoul, Tokyo, Toronto and Washington DC.

STATE OF THE PLAY:

Nuclear threats, and the continuing reliance on nuclear deterrence in security doctrines, remain a very prominent factor in the international political order, so much so that the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists in January 2018 moved the Doomsday Clock even closer to midnight. It now stands at [2 minutes away from Armageddon](#). In addition, the global nuclear weapons budget to fuel the current nuclear arms race is even higher than during the Cold War.

In 2017, non-nuclear States, in frustration with the nuclear armed States for their lack of progress on nuclear disarmament, negotiated a [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#). However, the nuclear armed and allied States have all opposed the treaty, calling it counter-productive to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and have vowed not to join. This growing divide between the treaty supporters and the nuclear-reliant countries has led the Swiss government to hesitate to join the treaty - questioning whether it can influence the nuclear armed States - even though Switzerland launched the humanitarian initiative that led to the treaty.

In this context, the work of the Basel Peace Office is vitally important. We make important contributions in bridging the divide between nuclear and non-nuclear States. We identify and promote effective measures to move the nuclear armed and allied States to reduce the risk of nuclear weapons use, to phase out nuclear deterrence and to make progress toward a nuclear-weapon-free world. We build cooperation between key stakeholders including diplomats, legislators, religious leaders and civil society organisations. And we identify and promote strategies to move those with investments and vested financial interests in the nuclear arms race, to shift these financial interests away from nuclear weapons and instead toward diplomatic, social, economic and environmental need.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights for our 2018 program include:

- a) the launch of our [Move the Nuclear Weapons Money online platform](#) and other developments in this program;
- b) our [engagement in the Korean peace and denuclearization process](#) and the successes in the process to date;
- c) progress on the human rights and nuclear weapons program, including the adoption by the UN Human Rights Committee of General Comment 36 [affirming that the threat or use of nuclear weapons is a violation of the Right to Life](#);
- d) Release of [Common security for a sustainable and nuclear-weapon-free world](#), an appeal of women legislators from around the world supporting the new Disarmament Agenda launched by the UN Secretary-General on May 24;
- e) Adoption by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly of [text proposed by PNND members](#) on reducing the risk of nuclear weapons use and promoting nuclear disarmament.

PROGRAMS

- Abolition 2000

BPO serves on the coordinating committee of [Abolition 2000](#), the global network to eliminate nuclear weapons. In 2018, BPO organized the [Abolition 2000 Annual General Meeting](#) in Geneva at which we [launched an action](#) to preserve the JCPOA (Iran nuclear non-proliferation deal), and an [Abolition 2000 international nuclear abolition strategy meeting](#) in New York.

BPO co-chairs a number of [Abolition 2000 working groups](#) including the [Youth Network](#), [Inter-faith working group](#), [2018 UN High Level Conference on Nuclear Disarmament WG](#), [Nuclear Weapon Free Zones WG](#) and the [Economic Dimensions of Nuclearism Working Group](#). Through these working groups we organised a number of events, actions and programs during 2018, including side-events at the NPT Prep Com in Geneva and the UN General Assembly in New York.

In addition, we maintained the Abolition 2000 global calendar of nuclear disarmament events.



Some of the participants in the Abolition 2000 AGM in Geneva



#3D Nuclear Missile

The *#3dNukeMissile* is an interactive art piece depicting a nuclear missile about to be fired. Members of the public are invited to have their photo taken (with their cell phone or camera) while they stand on the art work holding the chains to stop the missile launching. They can then post their photo on twitter, facebook etc with the hashtag #3dNukeMissile. In 2018 we used the #3dNukeMissile at the Basel Peace Forum, the Buechel nuclear weapons base in Germany, and at public events in another 4 German cities (Stuttgart, Aalen, Cochem and Nettetal-Breyell), mostly in conjunction with Mayors for Peace Germany.



#3D Nuke Missile at the Basel Peace Forum



#3D Nuke Missile at Büchel weapons base

Basel Peace Forum

BPO organised a pavilion at the Basel Peace Forum in January. The pavilion including the #3DNukeMissile, a competition to guess the number and deployment sites of nuclear weapons in Europe, information on banks that invest in nuclear weapons and some informational videos. The Forum occurred the day after a nuclear weapons alert sent citizens in Hawaii rushing for fall-out shelters, making our pavilion of high relevance. See [Hawaii panics about nukes. Basel takes action.](#)

Engaging Parliamentarians - PNND

BPO serves as one of the main offices for [Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament](#) (PNND). BPO Director Alyn Ware serves as the PNND Global Coordinator. We are supported by a number of part-time, voluntary PNND Coordinators and interns in Amman, Berlin, Geneva, London, New York, Paris, Prague, Seoul, Sydney and Tokyo.

PNND has about 700 parliamentarians as members, including a number of high-level parliamentarians such as: **Jacinda Arden** (Prime Minister, NZ), **Taro Kono** (Foreign Minister, Japan), **Jeremy Corbyn** (Leader of the Opposition, UK), **Saber Chowdhury** (former President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union), **Federica Mogherini** (European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and International Security), **Christine Muttonen** (Former President, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly), **Senator Ed Markey** (US Senate Foreign Affairs Committee), **Mogens Lykkesoft** (former President of the UN General Assembly), **Senator Laura Rojas** (President of the Mexican Senate Committee on External Relations), **Abdullah Ensour** (former Prime Minister of Jordan), **Francois de Rugy** (President of the National Assembly of France) and others...



PNND staff Aisulu Makhtayeva and Thies Kätow at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Berlin



Endorsers of the joint statement of women legislators

PNND work for 2018 was guided by the [Parliamentary Action Plan for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World](#) which we produced in cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

We supported our PNND members around the world who took action on a number of issues outlined in the action plan, including de-alerting, no-first-use, the Iran deal, the treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, reducing nuclear weapons spending, and promoting nuclear-weapon-free zones. To help facilitate this work we produced a PNND [electronic update](#) approximately every two weeks and distributed this to over 1000 parliamentarians and about 800 representatives of non-governmental organisations.



PNND members and volunteer staff at the release of the Parliamentary Action Plan in St Petersburg

In addition we organised a range of parliamentary actions and events including:

- **March 26:** Joint event in at the IPU Assembly in Geneva with GCSP, SCRAP and IPU on our new project on a comprehensive approach to disarmament;
- **April 23:** Side event at the NPT Prep Com in Geneva on [Parliamentary Action for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World](#).
- **May 24:** Release of [Women legislators appeal for common security for a sustainable and nuclear-weapon-free world](#) to support the UN Secretary-General's new disarmament agenda;
- **June 26:** Event in the UK Parliament to release a report on military diversification and economic conversion. See [New UK report: Trident replacement could be cancelled without losing jobs](#)
- **July 7-11:** Promotion of nuclear risk-reduction and disarmament at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Annual Session in Berlin. See [OSCE parliamentarians call for confidence building measures including no-first-use of nuclear weapons](#)
- **Sep 11:** Tokyo. PNND Japan meeting in the Japanese parliament
- **Sep 14:** PNND Korea meeting in the National Assembly of South Korea
- **Sep 27:** Round-table diplomatic event at the UN in New York on the Korea peace process, co-hosted by the Permanent Mission of South Korea to the UN.
- **October 15:** [Follow-up event](#) at the IPU Assembly on the joint project with SCRAP and GCSP.

Humanitarian impact, human rights, future generations and the law

BPO organized an event on May 1, 2018 on [Nuclear Weapons and the Law on Human Rights and Future Generations](#). The panel, which was held at the United Nations during the NPT Prep Com, followed up on the September 2017 Basel conference on [Human Rights, Future Generations and Crimes in the Nuclear Age](#). The [Basel Declaration on human rights and trans-generational crimes resulting from nuclear weapons and nuclear energy](#), which was adopted at the 2017 conference, was promoted at the UN panel and in other forums. In addition, BPO continues to be involved with the *Nuclear Free Future Award*, the 2017 award ceremony of which was held at Basel 2017 conference. Marzhan successfully nominated Karipbek Kuyukov, 2nd generation victim of nuclear tests for the [2018 Nuclear Free Future Awards](#).



Speakers at the May 1 panel on Nuclear Weapons, Law, Human Rights and Future Generations.



Alyn Ware speaking on the humanitarian impact of nuclear tests.

Human Rights Committee General Comment 36

BPO members, especially Director Alyn Ware and Board Member Daniel Rietiker, were active in the deliberations over the past three years in the UN Human Rights Committee on their new General Comment on the Right to Life, as codified in Article VI of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. This culminated in the adoption on October 30 of [General comment No. 36 \(2018\) on article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights \(ICCPR\), on the right to life](#). Paragraph 66 of the comment holds that:

'The threat or use of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, which are indiscriminate in effect and are of a nature to cause destruction of human life on a catastrophic scale is incompatible with respect for the right to life and may amount to a crime under international law. States parties must take all necessary measures to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including measures to prevent their acquisition by non-state actors, to refrain from developing, producing, testing, acquiring, stockpiling, selling, transferring and using them, to destroy existing stockpiles, and to take adequate measures of protection against accidental use, all in accordance with their international obligations.'

They must also respect their international obligations to pursue in good faith negotiations in order to achieve the aim of nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control and to afford adequate reparation to victims whose right to life has been or is being adversely affected by the testing or use of weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with principles of international responsibility.'

This is an extremely significant achievement, bringing human rights law to bear on nuclear weapons and strengthening the customary norms against nuclear weapons. The fact that most of the nuclear armed States and their allies are parties to the ICCPR means that General Comment 36 has direct bearing on the policies and practices of these States.

For more background see [Threat and use of nuclear weapons contrary to right to life, says UN Human Rights Committee](#), by Daniel Rietiker, and [UN Human Rights Committee condemns the threat or use of nuclear weapons and other WMD](#) by Alyn Ware.

Korea peace and denuclearization process

BPO and PNND were very active on the Korea peace and denuclearization process in 2018.

This included coordinating an [Appeal from Abolition 2000 members for a diplomatic solution in North East Asia](#), organizing parliamentary events in Tokyo and Seoul, organizing a diplomatic event in New York co-sponsored by the ROK Mission to the UN, and being invited to be a keynote speaker at a number of events on the issue including the *Korea Peace Forum* in New York and at an ROK government hosted conference in Seoul on the issue (speaking after the Deputy-Foreign Minister).



BPO Director is keynote speaker at Seoul conference on peace and development in Korea

Move the Nuclear Weapons Money



Move the Nuclear Weapons Money is an international campaign to cut nuclear weapons budgets; encourage divestment from companies manufacturing nuclear weapons and their delivery systems; and reallocate these budgets and investments to meet economic, social and environmental need.

The project was launched in October 2016 by the Basel Peace Office, International Peace Bureau, World Future Council and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament.

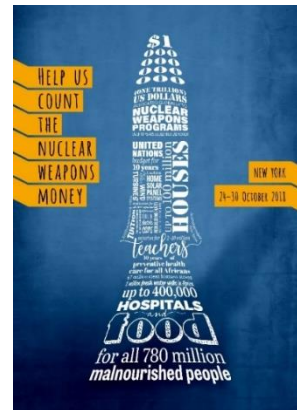
During 2018, we organised a number of actions and events including:

- **Building the online platform.** A [website](#) with [list of nuclear weapons corporations](#), [examples of legislation/policies](#), [campaign actions](#), [infographic on opportunity costs of nuclear weapons spending](#); [handbook](#) and [blog](#);
- **Securing endorsements and quotes:** See [endorsers page](#).
- **March 29:** Press conference at the UN in New York to launch the online platform and announce the [Count the Nuclear Weapons Money action](#). See [Activists lock onto nuclear weapons spending](#)
- **Consultation events on the project** in Berlin, Geneva, London, New York and Washington.
- **October 20:** Move the Nuclear Weapons Money Benefit concert in New York.

Move the nuclear weapons money (continued)



UN press conference to launch the online platform and announce *Count the Nuclear Weapons Money*



We also undertook preparatory work for the *Count the Nuclear Weapons Money* action, which was planned for New York for October 2018, but has been postponed until October 2019.

Nuclear risk reduction (Russia/NATO) and no-first-use

BPO was active on nuclear risk-reduction initiatives over the year. This included assisting PNND members with statements, resolutions and draft legislation – especially those in the United States and in NATO and OSCE countries.

We organised a number of events to inform and engage people about nuclear risks, including a side event at the IPU Assembly in St Petersburg where we invited Bruce Blair, co-founder of Global Zero and former nuclear weapons missile controller, to speak. We promoted dialogue and détente for the Trump-Putin Summit, see [Trump - Putin summit: Time for dialogue, detente and disarmament](#) and [promotion of resolutions in US congress, cities and states on nuclear risk-reduction and disarmament](#).

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

BPO participated in the negotiations of this treaty in 2017 and was active in 2018 on two key aspects:

- increasing the number of signatories to the treaty;
- assisting with ratification and national implementation.

This included promotion through the PNND network, PNND members in various countries (*including Switzerland*) working in their parliaments for signature/ratification of the treaty, organizing an event at the IPU Assembly and promotion through Abolition 2000.



Promoting the TPNW at the IPU Assembly in St Petersburg, with Ambassador Elaine Whyte Gómez, chair of the UN negotiating conference for the TPNW

Religions for Peace and Interfaith work

BPO worked with Religions for Peace (RfP) to produce the [Nuclear Disarmament Resource Guide for Religious Leaders and Communities](#). (Also published in [Arabic](#), [French](#), [German](#), [Japanese](#) and [Spanish](#)) which continues to be used by faith-based communities around the world. During 2018, we used the publication at a number of events with faith-based organisations. BPO Board Member Jonathan Granoff was instrumental in the adoption in November 2018 by the [Parliament of the World's Religions](#) in Toronto of a powerful statement [Responding to the Unique Challenge of Nuclear Weapons: A Passionate Call From The Parliament of the World's Religions](#).

UNFOLD ZERO

[UNFOLD ZERO](#), which BPO established in partnership with several other key international NGOs, has provided a very useful platform to promote UN initiatives for nuclear disarmament and to highlight the opportunities arising from UN bodies to facilitate nuclear disarmament.

The main UNFOLD ZERO activities in 2018 were:

- Action to [highlight and implement the very first resolution of the United Nations](#), which unanimously called for the elimination of nuclear weapons and other WMD;
- Promotion of the [UN Security Council special session on Confidence Building Measures and WMD](#);
- Successful promotion of the [candidacy of WFC Council member Maria Espinosa](#) to become the President of the UN General Assembly;
- Promoting the International Day Against Nuclear Tests;
- Organising [global actions for the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons](#);
- Promoting [Securing our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament](#), the UN Secretary-General's new Disarmament Agenda.



Where the Wind Blew – premier screenings

[Where the Wind Blew](#) is a powerful documentary which tells the stories of populations in Kazakhstan and the United States who suffered, and continue to suffer from the trans-generational impact of nuclear tests, conducted by the Cold War super powers. Campaigners and victims from these two countries crossed the Iron Curtain during the Cold War to establish a people's movement that successfully closed down the nuclear test sites. Now they are cooperating to prohibit nuclear weapons globally. Since the movie was released late last year, we have organized special screenings in Vienna, Prague, Auckland, Basel, Trento, Astana, London and the Hague.

Youth

Engaging youth in peace and disarmament is an important focus of BPO. Staff member Marzhan Nurzhan convenes the [Abolition 2000 Youth Network](#), and represents BPO/PNND at international youth events and networks including the International Network of Young Parliamentarians, CTBTO Youth Group and Pugwash Youth and Students Network. She was also the keynote youth speaker for the Hague Conference in June 2018 to commemorate the 175th birthday of Bertha von Suttner, first woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. Marzhan was also an invited youth speaker at other events including a [CTBTO/Pugwash event](#) at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.



Kehkashan Basu, youth speaker for the UN High Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament

In addition, BPO successfully nominated Kehkashan Basu to be the [youth speaker for the UN High Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament](#) on September 26.

We have an internship program to give university students direct experience working with parliamentarians, diplomats, experts, NGOs and others in the field, including at events at the UN, IPU and OSCE. Due to the high costs to live in Switzerland, most of our interns are now working primarily from our other offices, especially Prague.

Finances and Staffing

Finances

For 2018 we received funding from Grassroots Foundation (for Move the Nuclear Weapons Money), World Future Council private donor (for Mover the Nuclear Weapons Money), Quaker Peace and Service New Zealand (to support the Director and for general program expenses) plus some private donors. In addition, the Basel Stadt Kanton Office of the President and Kantonslaboratorium have agreed to make small annual grants for the Basel Peace Office from the end of 2018.

The level of combined funding is still very low compared to the staffing and program needs. We are planning additional funding applications in 2019 in order to try to increase the budget.

Staffing and interns

Due to the high cost of living in Switzerland, we now have minimal staff and interns in the Basel Office, with most of our personnel now based in Prague. Through our partnerships with World Future Council, Right Livelihood Foundation and Global Security Institute, we are sometimes also able to host interns in Geneva, London and/or New York.

Thanks

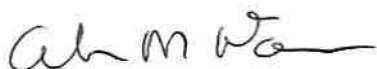
A note of deep gratitude to Andi Nidecker for being a totally hands-on President, providing guidance, support and leadership far beyond the call of duty.

Thanks to our staff and interns for 2018: Marzhan Nurzhan, Thies Kätow, Vanda Proskova, Bethan Edwards, Kristýna Chyňavová, Aisulu Makhtayeva, Kanau Koabayashi, Calvin Koenig, Nilo Castaldini, Halley McClure and Yuliia Shpodeiko.

A special thanks also to our other fabulous PNND coordinators, most of whom are worked for little or no compensation over 2018: Rob van Riet, Jean-Marie Collin, Jana Jedlickova, Julia Berghofer, Muna Makhamreh, Daisuke Yamaguchi, Alexandra Arce and Matt Robson.

Finally I would like to thank all the Board Members and partner organisations for their involvement in the program and management of the Basel Peace Office. Together we can celebrate a successful 2018 and plan for another successful year in 2019.

December 4, 2018



Alyn Ware
Director, Basel Peace Office