



Report of the APLN New Members Strategy Meeting in Kuala Lumpur

Summary

In accordance with our strategy to broaden the reach of the Asia Pacific Leadership Network our membership has grown from just over 50 members at the start of 2016 to the current count of 86 from some 15 countries. The meeting with new members was designed to forge a common understanding of how the network might best achieve its aims of informing and energizing public opinion, especially high-level policymakers, to take seriously the very real threats posed by nuclear weapons, and to do everything possible to achieve a world in which they are contained, diminished and eventually eliminated.

This report covers the following aspects of the meeting:

1. Background
2. Functioning of the APLN
3. Special Public Briefing: “Terror Unleashed: An assessment of global and national impacts of a nuclear terrorist attack” – Irma Argüello, Latin American and Caribbean Leadership Network (LALN) Head of Secretariat
4. “Reflections on DPRK: Human Rights and Nuclear Weapons” - Conference Dinner presentation by the Michael Kirby, APLN Member
5. The 2nd Nuclear Age: The geopolitical Context (Introductory remarks by Ramesh Thakur, APLN Co-Convenor
6. A Nuclear Ban Treaty: Asia-Pacific Voices and Perspectives (introductory remarks by Tong Zhao, APLN Member)
7. The NPT and the Review Process (Introductory remarks by Toshio Sano and Siddharth Varadarajan, APLN Members)
8. Network Operations and Concluding Remarks.

Content



1. Background

The meeting was chaired by Co-convenor Ramesh Thakur and ISIS Chairman Tan Sri Rastam Mohd Isa, and involved some 20 APLN members, of which 16 new members, plus several ISIS experts, and a special guest presenter, Dr Irma Argüello, head of our counterpart organisation, the Latin American and Caribbean Leadership Network for Nuclear Disarmament and Non-proliferation (LALN). See full list of participants below, together with the program of the meeting. Unless otherwise indicated the meeting was conducted under the Chatham House rule.

2. Functioning of the APLN

As a major focus of the meeting was to meet and induct new members to the ways of the APLN a good part of the first day was devoted to these practical ends. The new members were invited to brief the meeting on their interests in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and the activities they have been undertaking which might be harnessed to the APLN cause.

Co-convenor Thakur outlined the origins and development of the APLN. The network – one in a cluster of regional leadership networks – developed out of the work of the International Commission on Non-proliferation and Disarmament, an independent initiative led by former foreign ministers Gareth Evans of Australia and Yoriko Kawaguchi of Japan. That Commission had been sponsored by the Governments of Australia and Japan, and its report, background research and operational detail are at <http://icnnd.org/Pages/default.aspx> or http://ycsg.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/ICNND_Report-EliminatingNuclearThreats.pdf.

Launched in May 2011, the Network initially comprised thirty former senior political, diplomatic and military leaders from thirteen countries around the region including nuclear weapons possessing states China, India and Pakistan. In arrangements agreed at the 2015 meeting of the APLN in Hiroshima in August 2015 Professors Chung-in Moon and Ramesh Thakur took over day to day leadership of APLN as Co-Convenors, with our founder, and former Foreign Minister of Australia Gareth Evans continuing both as an APLN Member and as Patron and Emeritus Convenor. Under these arrangements the Secretariat was transferred from the Centre for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (CNND) at the Australian National University in Canberra to the East Asia Foundation in Seoul, Republic of Korea. The APLN has adapted strategies successfully trialled by our partner network the European Leadership Network (ELN) to the Asian context, expanding membership, commissioning and publishing research and policy papers, partnering with existing institutions active in security debates, especially with a nuclear focus, organising sub-regional meetings, and in other ways building on the existing track record of the Network as a reputed platform for a nuclear policy-related contest of ideas. The East

Asia Foundation has taken over responsibility for the maintenance of a dedicated and active website (www.a-pln.org), and for administration of APLN funding which primarily is a grant from the high-profile Washington-based Nuclear Threat Initiative, whose CEO and Co-Chairman is Sam Nunn, with Ted Turner the other Co-Chairman.

In welcoming participants, ISIS Chairman Tan Sri Rastam Mohd Isa outlined the contributions of the Malaysian Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) to regional security studies over the last 30 years. He also highlighted the forthcoming 31st Asia-Pacific Roundtable "The Future of the Asia Pacific: Issues and Institutions in Flux", 22 - 24 May 2017 in Kuala Lumpur. This Track II security related conference is organised by ISIS Malaysia on behalf of the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies, a network of Southeast Asia's leading think-tanks. Over the last three decades, the APR has brought together great minds from around the world to ponder, reflect, debate and explore solutions to the region's strategic challenges. In recent years it has been ranked among the world's top 20 think-tank conferences. See <http://www.isis.org.my/index.php/apr31>.

Specific aspects of APLN activity were reviewed:

a) Meetings:

- Annual meeting of Members convened in Jeju, ROK: all Members invited with financial support for participation extended on a rotation basis.
- The Jeju Forum, hosted by the East Asia Foundation, a major East Asian conference on security and economic affairs modelled on the Davos World Economic Forum.
- Three regional meetings each year: South East Asia; South Asia and China; Northeast Asia.
- Ad hoc meetings and specialised task groups are envisaged.

b) Research publications and comment

- Policy Briefs: 17 new Policy Briefs have been published in the last 12 months; and 20 are planned for the current grant period 2017/18 with funds available for another year to allow for a modest honorarium for authors.
- Views were canvassed on the priorities for new policy papers and research (and suggestions are always welcomed). See <http://a-pln.org/briefings/briefings/>.
- The Nuclear Threat Monitor: the APLN blog - Members were encouraged to contribute brief articles and to use the comment facility. See <http://a-pln.org/blog/blog/>.
- The APLN website continues to evolve: and most recently a new feature has been introduced improving access to the site by mobile phone: all designed to increase the reach of our activity.
- Critical Security Incident Reporting: APLN has agreed with the Australian Strategic Policy Institute to develop a gazetteer of security incidents in Asia Pacific that could bring into play nuclear threats. The incident reporting will

provide a base for case studies and lessons learned for incident avoidance and management, with a view to reducing regional nuclear threats.

c) The Role of Members

- Our Members are our key asset and have committed to ensuring that efforts to contain and eliminate nuclear threats are a high priority for regional leaders.

3. Special Public Briefing: “Terror Unleashed: An assessment of global and national impacts of a nuclear terrorist attack”

*A presentation by **Irma Argüello**, co-coordinator of “Terror Unleashed”; Founder and Chair, the Nonproliferation for Global Security Foundation; and Head of Secretariat, Latin American and Caribbean Leadership Network (LALN), a companion regional Network to the APLN.*

The Special public presentation was Chaired by Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan and co-hosted by APLN and Malaysia ISIS. Lead discussant was Dato’ Dr Ronald McCoy, President of Malaysian Physicians for Peace and Social Responsibility.

The briefing attracted a sizable audience including several media representatives, resulting in local media exposure for APLN (English language newspaper The Star - <http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2017/03/15/expert-there-is-rising-resistance-to-nuke-option>; and in the Malay language newspaper Berita Harian - <http://www.bharian.com.my/node/259569>).

Dr Argüello explained that the report, “Terror Unleashed”, contains a systematic analysis of what would happen if a nuclear detonation by terrorists were to take place in a capital city – and the multiple negative impacts which would spread promptly around the globe. It also estimates the dimension of those impacts.

The pdf document can be freely downloaded from this link:

<http://www.laln.org/Reports/TerrorUnleashed.pdf>.

She went on to say that the report is unique in two senses. First, it puts in black and white perhaps for the first time, the negative impacts of a nuclear terrorist attack in a large capital city anywhere in the world, in terms of security and defence, economy, international relations, governance and social behaviour. Second, it goes beyond triggering an alarm, to providing clear recommendations about how to avoid such a catastrophic event, in terms of nuclear security practices. The report places a special emphasis on the role of all countries in prevention - not only of those possessing nuclear weapons-usable materials.

Accordingly, ‘Terror Unleashed’ will raise awareness in governments and encourage domestic actions and international participation, to improve current nuclear security

systems and thereby complement the work of the Nuclear Security Summits.

4. Reflections on DPRK: Human Rights and Nuclear Weapons

Special Conference Dinner Presentation by the Hon Michael Kirby AC CMG, APLN Member and an international jurist, educator and former judge; and amongst other international roles, Chairman of the UN Commission of Inquiry on DPRK (2013-14).

A link to the report in all UN languages plus Korean and Japanese, and background on the conduct of the Commission of Inquiry can be found here:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/CoIDPRK/Pages/CommissionInquiryonHRInDPRK.aspx>.

Michael's remarks covered the origins and scope of the Commission of Inquiry and its main findings. The report he said was a shocking document, revealing that the DPRK leadership has no respect for the rights of its own people, or for the human rights of others. He noted that in managing and addressing the DPRK situation regional governments had to acknowledge that both the WMD and missile threats, and the human rights situation on the Korean Peninsula are extremely serious, dangerous and interrelated.

5. The 2nd Nuclear Age: The Geostrategic Context

Introductory remarks by APLN Co-Convenor Ramesh Thakur

The Chair's introductory remarks characterised the 2nd Nuclear Age as being centred on Asia-Pacific. Asia-Pacific is today the principal site of strategic nuclear rivalry; nuclear disarmament norms continue to be breached most egregiously in Asia as the only continent where warhead numbers are growing; the most serious violations of the non-proliferation norm have occurred here in the last two decades; and it is the sole region of continued nuclear testing. The APLN was uniquely positioned to ensure that these threats be acknowledged and that the countries of the Asia-Pacific act to address them.

The ensuing discussion focussed on the challenge posed by the DPRK to the security of Northeast Asia and beyond:

- The threat posed by the DPRK had initially seemed manageable and its nuclear weapon and missile technologies of limited strategic concern; but those assessments have had to be revised with evidence of increasing sophistication of both weapons and the means of their delivery.
- The issue of DPRK nuclear arms and missiles could not be dealt with in isolation: it had to be recognised that the DPRK had legitimate security concerns which would need to be addressed in reaching a peaceful and nuclear free Korean peninsula.

- A military solution to the DPRK issue was now unthinkable: the only path now to denuclearisation is dialogue.
- Questions were raised about the Six-Party Talk format – which set DPRK against five others: could a different structure be more productive?
- DPRK is unpredictable, so needed to be deterred from reckless behaviour; the eventual settlement on the Korean issue needed to take account the legitimate security concerns of others in the region; China would have a special role in this regard.
- Three US Presidents and three generation of DPRK leadership have failed to find accommodation: it was time to be creative or it would be too late; a failure of diplomacy would mean war and that was not an option.
- The link between possession of nuclear weapons and the survival of the Kim regime had to be acknowledged; nuclear weapons compensate for conventional weakness.
- How could DPRK be persuaded to work again with the IAEA?
- While the DPRK issue was of huge significance to Northeast Asia, it was of little direct concern to Southeast Asia.

In closing the discussion the chair observed that every potential solution faced serious obstacles: nevertheless the issue remained of highest importance for the APLN and a resumption of some sort of dialogue was both necessary and urgent.

6. A Nuclear Ban Treaty: Asia-Pacific Voices and Perspectives

Introductory remarks by APLN Member Tong Zhao

Under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly, negotiations are to take place in March and June 2017 to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination. In introduction, it was noted that there was still much uncertainty about the possible content of the treaty. While it seemed unlikely that the treaty would provide for verification of the undertakings, it would no doubt have strong moral force and strengthen the nuclear 'taboo'.

The negotiations might follow some previous models such as those of the Landmine Treaty and the Conventional on Cluster Munitions. Looking at the Asia-Pacific region there were strong differences of opinion. The US and its allies had opposed the start of negotiations on a ban treaty. China had been ambivalent: its public positions on nuclear weapons suggested some sympathy with the idea and China had participated in the organisational meetings preceding the negotiations. There was reason for concern lest the negotiation be used for other purposes: for example, states might seek substitute NPT obligations by participating in the new nuclear weapons ban treaty. It would be critical to ensure the linkages with the NPT were mutually reinforcing - the treaty could for example include an article insisting states in noncompliance with NPT could not join ban treaty. And to prevent the ban treaty from completely alienating NWS, a distinction could be introduced between 'no use'

and 'no first use'. This might help bring the nuclear-armed nations into the discussion.

Points arising:

- On the general prospects of negotiating a ban treaty, the record to date suggested that there was a strong international will to achieve an outcome.
- Major issues to be settled include what is to be prohibited: possession and / or use etc
- Questions remain about how exactly the treaty would add to the commitments already made under the NPT - no point in disarming the disarmed all over again.
- The ban treaty could not ignore the reality that for some countries, nuclear weapons have been the great equaliser.
- The current geo-strategic environment was not at all conducive to real nuclear disarmament.
- A ban treaty could however change the burden of proof and change the dynamics of disarmament.
- If suitably drafted some US allies might eventually be of a mind to sign up.
- On the other hand what value would the ban have if it does not contribute to methodology of elimination - without the nuclear powers and its allies what is the value of a ban?
- The negotiation of a ban on nuclear weapons had to deal with the possible consequence of the lowering the threshold of war.

In concluding remarks the chair argued that it was a myth to imagine that nuclear weapons had produced peace: nuclear weapons had failed to stop conflicts or deter determined opponents. It could be argued instead that non-use was evidence that the nuclear weapons are in fact unusable. But the failure of the disarmament promise of the NPT had produced frustration. The opposition of the NWS to the ban conference confirmed that they are concerned about its consequences for further stigmatisation of nuclear weapons. One way the treaty could attract NWS is for it to become essentially a 'no first use' treaty. Those who refuse to attend will make a strategic mistake – they should be there to help shape the treaty – and to keep it within some realm of reasonableness. A failure to move on disarmament will only encourage proliferation. APLN should encourage all countries including the NWS to engage in the negotiations.

7. The NPT and the Review Process

Chaired by APLN Member Tan Sri Rastam Mohd Isa, introductory remarks by APLN Members Toshio Sano and Siddharth Varadarajan

In introducing the topic, the Chair recalled his involvement on the 2005 NPT Review Conference: the complex preparatory process of formal and informal meetings amongst governments and with civil society; the review of the three pillars – non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses; and the efforts to achieve an agreed

final document. That meeting (like 2015) had failed to agree a final document. Was it therefore a failure? Some argued 'no' – that no outcome was better than a poor outcome. Others argued the opposite. And that debate will continue in the current review process due to conclude in 2020 – marking the 50th anniversary of the NPT entering into force.

The extensive introductory comments covered a full range of the issues:

- The NPT is widely valued as the cornerstone of efforts to prevent proliferation and eliminate nuclear weapons.
- The 2015 Review process had been very dramatic: two of the three main committees had been largely uncontentious
 - o The disarmament debate had been contentious but it was the Middle East issues that led to the failure to achieve a consensus final document.
 - o As background to the current review process, it was recalled that the 1995 extension conference had agreed three elements for future reviews: a set of measures on disarmament, a revamped review process (championed by Canada), and steps relating to the proposed Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone.
 - o Considerable agreement had been reached on the disarmament package negotiated by Algerian Ambassador Farooqi, involving some compromise on the part of the NWS.
 - o But lack of progress on the Middle East issue ultimately led to the collapse of the conference – nothing is agreed unless all is agreed by consensus.
- How to close the gap? Seems unlikely that it would be now possible to delink the Review process from the situation in the Middle East.
- The way forward: continue to demonstrate the vital importance of the NPT; seek to engage support from the non-NPT nuclear powers which support the NPT in principle and benefit from it; and manage the interaction with the Nuclear Ban conference.

The relationship between NPT parties and non-parties was discussed:

- India, for one, still stings from the discriminatory design of the NPT.
- It was biased to non-proliferation at the expense of disarmament; the indefinite extension had been agreed with little achieved in return on disarmament.
- NPT states need to find a way to engage and incorporate the non-NPT states in the disarmament dialogue: possibly the Nuclear Ban negotiations could contribute to this.
- There were various initiatives that could contribute: India has pushed for a range of intermediate steps in the UN; de-alerting; a ban on first use etc.
- Need to recall that ban on nuclear cooperation and supply to non-NPT states was not part of the original NPT package; the evolution of the Nuclear Supplier Group restrictions came later.
- India has committed to negotiation of a cut-off treaty; and would not be the first to resume testing.

Other contributions:

- Any ban treaty would need to treat all 8 nuclear weapon possessing states – and be non-discriminatory and verifiable.
- Middle East issues were bound to bedevil future NPT reviews, made more complicated by the ongoing issue of Palestine.
- Nuclear weapons are an aspect of strategic reality in several parts of the world – for example South Asia: and consideration of the Asia-Pacific region could not ignore US and Russia which were also Asian powers.
- The NPT allowed stationing of nuclear weapons which was seen by many as another ‘flaw’.
- The Ban Treaty would not be just another measure to back the NPT: it would make nuclear weapons illegal; so it would aim to delegitimise, stigmatise, outlaw then eliminate nuclear weapons.
- In parallel with ban negotiations, states like India with the capacity to do so should engage in the practical work which needs to be done to make disarmament achievable- for example by being proactive collaboration and study of verification systems.
- While ‘unbalanced’ and ‘flawed’ the NPT remained vital to the security of many countries and its preservation must remain the highest priority: the Ban Treaty should strengthen and not undermine the NPT.
- Countries outside the NPT had key interest in the preservation of the non-proliferation norm and should do more to strengthen the NPT – for example by declaring they would act as if they were parties to the treaty.
- The differences between nuclear weapons and other WMD should not be glossed over: nuclear weapons are central to global balances of strategic forces – this was never the case with bio or chemical weapons which were rather seen as tactical weapons rather than the means for securing strategic balance.
- The NPT review process remains fraught in part because of increased expectations about what the NPT can achieve; there might be a case for adjusting expectations down.

In conclusion, APLN members were urged to help raise awareness of the importance of the non-proliferation regime and to encourage steps which would help strengthen the role of the NPT.

8. Network Operations and Concluding Remarks

There was a broad-ranging discussion on ways in which the APLN could work to achieve its mandate, with lessons shared on the operation of the Latin American Leadership Network. The various ideas canvassed will be considered further by the forthcoming APLN Annual meeting in Jeju in May 2017. Members were urged to

continue to advocate and promote the APLN's mandate, and wherever possible to record their activities on the APLN website.

In closing, the APLN recorded its warm thanks for the substantive contributions made by ISIS experts to the discussions, and for the efficient and friendly support provided by the ISIS Secretariat for the effective management of the meeting and comfort of all participants.

Appendix I: Program

1. Opening: Welcome Remarks and Administrative Matters

- APLN Co-convenor Ramesh Thakur
- Representing Co-convenor Chung-in Moon, EAF Secretary General Hyungtaek Hong
- Host ISIS

2. Introductions around the table

Chair: Ramesh Thakur

- Please briefly introduce yourself and outline interests in the APLN activity

3. About APLN

Chair: Ramesh Thakur

- Origins and Mission (Ramesh)
- Activities (Meetings, statements) (Hyung)
- Research; Publications; and Incident Reporting (John)
- Role of members (Ramesh) [to be continued Tuesday at #8]
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4. Public Session: “Terror Unleashed”

(A report on the impacts of a nuclear terrorist attack)

Presentation by Irma Arguello

CEO - NPSGlobal Foundation and Head of Secretariat, Latin American and Caribbean Leadership Network (LALN)

Chair: Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan

- Discussant: Dato’ Dr. Ronald McCoy
- Q&A

5. A Nuclear Policy Agenda for Asia Pacific in the Second Nuclear Age

Chair: Ramesh Thakur

- Introductory remarks (Ramesh)

6. A nuclear weapons ban treaty: Asia–Pacific voices and perspectives

Chair: Ramesh Thakur

- normative impact
- practical utility
- relationship to the NPT

Introductory remarks:

- Tong Zhao

7. The NPT and the Review Process

Chair: Tan Sri Rastam Mohd Isa

- Why did the 2015 NPT Review Conference fail to reach agreement on an outcome

document?

- What were the major points on which agreement had been reached; major points of agreement?
- Main issues - how can the remaining gaps be bridged?
- What should be the priorities for the next round of PrepComs leading to the 2020 RevCon?
- With three of the world's four non-NPT nuclear armed states being in this region, and only one of the five NPT NWS, how should the NPT relate to this reality?

Introductory remarks:

- Toshio Sano
- Siddharth Varadarajan

8. Role of Members (resumed)

9. AOB

Appendix II: Participants

APLN members

Australia

Trevor Findlay (Senior Research Fellow, University of Melbourne)
Marianne Hanson (Professor, International Relations, University of Queensland, Australia)
Michael Kirby (former Chair, UNHCR Commission of Inquiry on DPRK)
Ramesh Thakur (Co-Convenor)
John Tilemann (Director of Research, APLN)

China

Fan Jishe (Deputy Director, Centre for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Studies, Institute of American Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS))
Shen Dingli (Professor and Associate Dean, Institute of International Studies, Fudan University)
Zhao Tong (Associate, Carnegie-Tsinghua Center for Global Policy)

India

Siddharth Varadarajan (Editor, The Wire)

Japan

Toshio Sano (former Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva)

South Korea

Bong-geun Jun (Professor, Department of Security and Unification Studies, Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security (IFANS), Korean National Diplomatic Academy)
Yongsoo Hwang (Principal Researcher, Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute (KAERI))

Malaysia

Hasmy Agam (former Chairman, Malaysian Commission of Human Rights)
Mohamad Jawhar Hasan (former Chairman, Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia)
Rajmah Hussain (former Ambassador)
Rastam Mohd Isa (Chairman and Chief Executive, Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia)

New Zealand

David Pine (Former Ambassador to the Philippines)

Philippines

Anne Marie Corominas (former Attorney, Office of the Solicitor General, Republic of the Philippines)

Thailand

Sawanit Kongsiri (Assistant Secretary General for External Relations, The Thai Red Cross)

Other Participants

Irma Arguello (President, NPS Global Foundation, Head of Secretariat of the Latin American and Caribbean Leadership Network for Nuclear Disarmament and Nonproliferation (LALN))

[Staff member] Hyungtaek Hong, Secretary General, APLN Secretariat

APLN and ISIS Malaysia

The **Asia Pacific Leadership Network (APLN)** comprises around eighty former senior political, diplomatic, military and other opinion leaders from fifteen countries around the region, including nuclear-weapons possessing states China, India and Pakistan. The objective of the group, founded by former Australian Foreign Minister and President Emeritus of the International Crisis Group Gareth Evans, is to inform and energize public opinion, and especially high level policy-makers, to take seriously the very real threats posed by nuclear weapons, and do everything possible to achieve a world in which they are contained, diminished and ultimately eliminated. The co-Convenors are Professors Chung-in Moon and Ramesh Thakur. The Secretariat is located at the East Asia Foundation in Seoul, Republic of Korea. See further www.a-pln.org.

The **Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS)** was established on 8 April 1983 as an autonomous, not-for-profit research organization. ISIS Malaysia has a diverse research focus which includes economics, foreign policy, security studies, nation-building, social policy, technology, innovation and environmental studies. It also undertakes research collaboration with national and international organizations in

important areas such as national development and international affairs.

ISIS Malaysia engages actively in Track Two diplomacy, and promotes the exchange of views and opinions at both the national and international levels. The Institute has also played a role in fostering closer regional integration and international cooperation through forums such as the Asia-Pacific Roundtable, the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS), the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) and the Network of East Asian Think-Tanks (NEAT). ISIS is a founding member of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) and manages the Council's Secretariat. See further <http://www.isis.org.my/>.

Funding Support

APLN gratefully acknowledge the generous support of Nuclear Threat Initiative, Washington DC.

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