

12<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2010.

International League Human Rights, (Germany) awards the  
Carl-von-Ossietzky Medal to Mordechai Vanunu and campaign for  
His freedom from Israel to come to Berlin to receive this prize

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Speech: CRIMINALITY OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND DETERRENCE  
By Mairead Maguire (Nobel Peace Laureate) Berlin. 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2010.

My Dear Friends,

I am happy to be visiting the very beautiful City of Berlin. I was here in 2009 when I had the joy of attending the opening of the Berlin Centre for Nonkilling. This gave me great hope that indeed our 'thinking' is changing from the myth that force or the threat of force, violence, nuclear weapons, militarism and war, can solve any problems or bring Human security. Today, we are becoming increasingly aware that Human and Environmental security does not come from violence, but must be based on the practise of truth and love, and the implementation of Human Rights and International Law. We are increasing aware too that killing and threats to kill underlie all other threats to the survival and wellbeing of humanity, and it was with this in mind that the Nobel Peace Laureates' Charter for a world without violence in its Article 13 states 'We each have a right not to be killed and a responsibility not to kill others'.

Starting from this fundamental principle I believe we can each do our part to end the greatest threats to human survival i.e., militarism, nuclear weapons and war, and replace them with International and Humanitarian Laws.

I am therefore very happy to be returning to Berlin at the invitation of the International League of Human Rights (Germany) to participate in the bestowal of the Carl-von-Ossietzky award to Mordechai Vanunu, the Israeli Nuclear Whistle Blower. Vanunu, a man who recognized the dangers of nuclear genocidal weapons and his personal responsibility to do what he could to protect the lives of others against these Weapons of mass destruction. I would like to offer my congratulations to Mordechai Vanunu, on being awarded this important award. Karl-von-Ossietzky was a man of courage who suffered and died in a concentration camp for his principled opposition to the Nazi Regime. Mordechai Vanunu suffered, for his principled opposition to Nuclear weapons, when he was convicted and spent 18 years in an Israeli prison (12 in solitary) for telling the world Israel has a nuclear weapon programme. Twenty-four years later he continues to suffer as he is denied, by Israel, his basic human rights of freedom of speech, and freedom to leave Israel, which he wants to do. **It is fitting that Vanunu be awarded this K-V-O medal, as both men shared a passion for Human Rights and human dignity and were willing to pay the price of suffering for being truth tellers in order to protect humanity.** When the ILHR decided to award the Prize to Vanunu, they also, together with IALANA (International Ass. Of Lawyers against Nuclear arms (Germany) and IPPNW (International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (Germany) launched a campaign asking the Israeli Government to allow Vanunu to come to Berlin to accept his prize. It is shameful that the Israeli Government has, yet again, refused to allow Vanunu to leave Israel and continues to break International Law by denying Vanunu his freedom. This

behaviour by Israel is not acceptable to the International Community. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights codified in Article 12 the fundamental right to be free in leaving any country, including ones own. We therefore call upon the Israeli Government to uphold its obligations as a member of the UN and International Community, and free Vanunu. We call upon Germany and all other National Governments, the UN, EU Human Rights Commission, and International community, to take action to insist the Israel Government behave according to HR and International Law, and frees Vanunu immediately.

We, the International community, are not powerless in the face of Israeli illegality; we will continue to campaign until Vanunu is free so he can come to Berlin to receive his prize which the ILHR (Germany) will hold for him.

We can also continue to work for what Mordechai Vanunu passionately believes in, A Nuclear free Middle East, and a World without Nuclear Weapons. The whole world knows Israel has Nuclear Weapons (this was conceded by former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert in 2006 during a visit to Germany) and is the third largest nuclear power in the world. We therefore call on them to sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation treaty, open its Dimona Nuclear plant to inspection, move to abolish their nuclear weapons and participate in Secretary General, UN's future conference on a Nuclear Free Middle East. By taking such action Israel would give real leadership for peace in Middle East and help end the danger of nuclear proliferation.

We have not far to look to see the horror of nuclear weapons and war. I have just returned from Hiroshima where 65 years ago the nuclear bombing of this city took place. Here too in Berlin you know the suffering of World war II, when your own city was bombed. (Both war crimes as many civilians were killed). It is to the credit of the peoples of Berlin and Hiroshima/Nagasaki, and their Governments that they learned the lessons of History, and put their energies and resources not into militarism, but into peacemaking and building up their very beautiful cities and taking care of their people needs. Both people and their countries, did not get stuck in their suffering and past, but went onto build technology and economies, and became examples of the great resilience of the human spirit. For young German people it is important you continue to celebrate the moment and look forward to the future and not get stuck in the past or feel responsible for what previous generations did which caused so much death and destruction to others. But I would encourage the Young people of Germany to learn from your history and continue to work to build peace and reject the bomb, bullet and all the techniques of violence, as ways of solving human problems. I would invite the young people of Germany to continue, and increase their efforts to end militarism, nuclear weapons and war and believe it is possible to do this, because peace is possible, and a new way of living together as the human family, is not only possible, it is imperative for our very survival and the survival of our world. Yet, even as we all dream of a nonkilling, nonviolent world and work towards it, we must be realistic and recognize the reality that we are in grave danger as we face a highly militarised, industrial complex pushing a fearful agenda of war and more sophisticated weapons of war for land, sea, air and space. The military mindset will not be easy to transform into one that accepts violence and killing human beings, has had its day, and there is a better way to solving conflict through dialogue and States complying with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law.

How difficult our task of changing military mindsets will be, can be shown by reading the following strategy which NATO adopted in November, 2010, in Portugal signed onto by Heads of 28 member NATO alliance. Whilst the Strategy affirms that the Alliance is firmly committed to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, this NATO strategy goes on to say ‘Deterrence based on an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional Capabilities, remains a core element of our overall strategy. The circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons have to be contemplated are extremely remote. As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO, will remain a nuclear alliance” and NATO will work to ‘sustain the necessary levels of defence spending so that our armed forces are sufficiently resourced. “ This means that NATO (led by USA) is fully prepared to use tactical nuclear weapons, and indeed tactical nuclear weapons have been fully integrated into US armed forces and training programme. Of course it goes without saying that the counter alliance to NATO: Russia, China and the so called Central Asia Collective Security Organization, have built nuclear weapons into their security policies and strategic planning. These Governments continue to ignore their legal obligations as under International Law the threat or use of nuclear weapons is criminal and therefore every Government must move to see these criminal weapons are dismantled. I know that the German Government has asked the US, NATO, to take its nuclear weapons out of Germany and I hope the people of Germany (and the other European states which have US/Nato nuclear weapons in them) will work to see these weapons are removed and there will be a Nuclear Free Europe soon. I believe, it is time to dismantle NATO (this should have been done when the Warsaw Pact was dismantled) and replace NATO with a Nonviolent European Common Security Community. Establish the same in other world regions, and move to establish an overall Global Nonviolent Common Security Community. Surely in an interdependent, interconnected, world and in this the 21st Century, it is time for a new start, fresh thinking, regarding our Human and Environment security?

No Government has dropped Nuclear weapons after Hiroshima and Nagasaki But the threat to use them has often been used. Many Governments have built their National Security Policies on threats of violence and militarism, and since 1943 millions of people have been slaughtered in many countries by both State and Nonstate actors in the name of progress and democracy. Increasingly Governments are using force against unarmed civilians. The US Government has committed acts of aggression against Afghanistan/Iraq/Pakistan, etc., and has authorized, armed, equipped and supplied Israel to commit acts of aggression, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing, against the Palestinian people. However, I believe Palestine is the key to peace in the Middle East, and Israel by ending the occupation and upholding Human rights and Democracy for the Palestinian people, can help bring peace to the region, both for the sake of the Israeli/Palestinians and everyone in the region.

Of concern to Europe and the International community, are the US Gov. threats to attack Iran (or allowing Israel to do so) on the pretext that they have a nuclear weapons programme as if indeed they do attack Iran, this would set the whole region on fire. When President Obama says he wants to see a world without nuclear weapons and says, in respect of Iran, and their alleged nuclear weapons ambitions, that ‘all option are on the table’ this is clearly a threat to use nuclear weapons, clearly a criminal threat against Iran, under the world court advisory opinion.

The Nuremberg Charter of August 8<sup>th</sup>, 1945, says the threat or use of nuclear weapons is criminal, so officials in all nine nuclear weapons states who maintain and use Nuclear Deterrence as a threat, are committing crimes and breaking International Law.

In his book 'the Criminality of Nuclear Deterrence – could the US war on terrorism go Nuclear'? (1) International Law Prof. Boyle says 'In the Advisory Opinion by the International Court of Justice on nuclear weapons the World Court ruled that the threat stands or falls on the same legal grounds as the actual use. If mass extermination of human beings is a crime, the threat to commit mass extermination is also a crime'.

If any of us threatened to kill another person we would be prosecuted and yet the leaders of nuclear weapons states are holding the threat of nuclear extermination over us all. Some Governments feel it is prestigious being in the Nuclear Weapons Club as if it were a badge of 'honour' when in reality it should be a badge of shame and dishonour for any country to have such weapons, breaking not only the Nuremberg principles, but wasting their peoples precious resources so necessary for their basic needs of food, education, health care.

I believe, we must delegitimize nuclear weapons, change our militarized mindsets of fear and violence, abolish force in International relations, replacing this was the alternative of human and environmental security based on peace, sustainable development, human rights and international Laws. Making arms and the use of force illegal and criminal, dismantling not only nuclear weapons but the entire war machine, and this will give hope to humanity.

There is much being done, and much we can all do, such as:-

Call for the ratification by the United States and Russia of the New START treaty and welcome the consensus Nuclear Disarmament Action Plan that was adopted by the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. We also need to work to strengthen the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, whose obligations are mutual and concern both non-nuclear States, which pledge to renounce nuclear weapons and the nuclear powers which commit themselves to nuclear disarmament. We can support the initiative of the UN Sec. General to start work on a universal treaty to prohibit the use, development, production, stockpiling and transfer of nuclear weapons. We can continue to point out the immorality of the World Governments wasting more than \$1.5 trillion annually on its military establishments, when just a fraction of this could be spent on meeting the Millennium Development Goals, and eliminating poverty worldwide.

The Permanent members of the UN – all Nuclear weapons states – instead of upholding the UN mandate 'to save the world from the scourge of war' are failing to engage in serious negotiations for the elimination of NW as required by N.P.T. Because these countries behave as though their power and prestige are build on these weapons, others seek to obtain them. Large Corporations are promoting nuclear energy projects as an alternative to fossil fuels and trying to make nuclear power appear to be green. However, the 4 major problems with nuclear power are yet to be

dealt with, i.e., the potential for nuclear weapons proliferation, the failure to find any reasonable solution to storing the nuclear waste, which will threaten the environment and humanity for tens of thousands of years, vulnerability to terrorism, and propensity to dangerous accidents.

The role of the civil community, especially including those marginalized voices in the past, of minority communities, youth, and women, will help bring about an end to nuclear weapons and war, as increasingly we all use nonviolence, including acts of Civil resistance, to bring about peace and disarmament.

Mairead Maguire

Berlin.

12<sup>th</sup> December, 2010.

[www.peacepeople.com](http://www.peacepeople.com)

[www.nobelwomensinitiative.com](http://www.nobelwomensinitiative.com)

1) Note: “The Criminality of Nuclear Deterrence (German edition) Pro. Francis Boyle, International Lawyer. Clarity Press, 2010).