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**From a Cold War to a Cold Peace. Time for a Revival of Disarmament
- Presented by Dr. Hans Blix**

**To the New Zealand Institute of International Affairs Annual Foreign Policy Lecture,
The Grand Hall, Parliament Building, Wellington 31 August 2007**

Mr. President, Minister Phil Goff, Ladies and Gentlemen

- Appreciate invitation by New Zealand Institute of International Affairs and the UN Association of New Zealand.
- It is an honour to give the Sixth Annual Foreign Policy Lecture and to have an opportunity to speak to a NZ audience about vital global challenges – peace, disarmament and the role of the UN.
- New Zealand has a long played a highly constructive role on these issues and I have had the good fortune to work together with extremely capable colleagues from NZ on them:
 - Kenneth Keith, who is now a Judge on the International Court of Justice at the Hague, was one of the leading delegates at the Conferences that produced the 1977 protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions.
 - Don McIver was in charge of intelligence in the UN inspection Commission for Iraq that I headed in New York. He stood for professionalism and good judgment and the world might have been different today if his colleagues in all capitals had done the same...
 - Don McKay, now NZ ambassador in Geneva, was Permanent Representative of NZ in New York when I was in a hot seat. He was a wise and helpful friend to me during the critical time when we had UN inspectors in Iraq.
- It is said that **diplomats** are people who think twice before saying nothing. Well, it might be better than not thinking at all and say something unwise. In any case, I am now neither a diplomat nor a UN official. So I can say – almost – anything...
- Many of you might have seen me on TV in the beginning of 2003 – during the months before the invasion of Iraq.
 - I shall therefore start by some comments about **Iraq**.
 - I propose thereafter to talk about the efforts to restrict and prohibit the use of armed force between states, including the UN Charter rules; and
 - I shall conclude with a discussion about the need to revive **disarmament**.

1. INSPECTIONS in IRAQ

- Sometimes UNMOVIC – and the IAEA – are credited for having said that there were no WMD. I want the record to be correct. We did not assert that there were no WMD. To prove the negative is mostly not possible. There were a great many relevant items ‘unaccounted for and we listed them. However, while officials of the governments that launched the invasion simply claimed that these items must be hidden inspectors warned that you cannot jump to such conclusion. The items might or might not exist. We now know they did not exist.
- What the inspectors did was – to inspect and report. In the course of three and a half months UNMOVIC – the name of the UN inspection unit – carried out some 700 inspections in about 500 different sites in Iraq. We reported that we found no WMD, only some debris from past programs.
- Most significant was that we went to some **three dozen sites** offered to us by intelligence agencies in various countries. In only a few cases did we find anything at all on such sites and it did not relate to WMD. The intelligence agencies should have concluded that their sources – in many cases defectors – were not very good. They told us that the sites they gave us were the best. I wondered what was the rest...
- The IAEA, in charge of nuclear inspections, was able to conclude that the alleged contract for the import of uranium oxide – **yellow cake** – from Niger to Iraq was a forgery and that **aluminium tubes** alleged to be imported to make centrifuges were, in fact, for rockets. A problem with preventive military action is that it must be based on intelligence – which may be good or bad. In the case of Iraq governments often replaced the question marks by exclamation marks. (Digression: Reminds me of a Swedish story...)
- **Had verification continued** for a few months more which many states in the Security Council wanted we would have been able to go to all sites suspected by intelligence. As there were no weapons they – and the Council – would have learnt that. It would have been harder to start the war.
- The UN inspection unit that I led did by no means see itself as a group of heroes that stood up against an aggressive US. Rather we saw ourselves as international civil servants who sought to the best of their ability to fulfil the task that the Security Council had laid upon them to inspect professionally and to report their findings correctly.
- We did not claim to be smarter than the experts of governments but I could sincerely assure all that we were in any case in nobody’s pocket.
- I am sometimes asked how I felt being bugged. My first response is that I have no evidence I was though I find it very likely. My second response is that if I was, I wish they had at least listened better to what I said.
- Four years after the war I see the armed intervention and its consequences not only as shocking and as a tragedy but also as a sad breaking of a global development toward détente.
- First the tragedy. The Invasion failed the aims it had declared:
 - No WMD could be eliminated because they did not exist

- Al Qaeda could not be eradicated because it was not in Iraq. However, through the invasion Iraq became a fertile ground for Al Qaeda and terrorism.
- Democracy has not been created and spread. So far chiefly terror.
- One success is to be recorded: Saddam Hussein was ousted.
- Whether the US will be able to keep troops long term in Iraq to protect oil resources and transports – which most probably was an aim – remains to be seen.

2. PREVENTING the USE of FORCE BETWEEN STATES

- One cost of the Iraq war that has not been much discussed is the erosion that it caused in the authority of the UN and in the set back it caused in the development toward a more peaceful world order that we thought was coming after the end of the Cold War.
- If we look back in history we cannot avoid making the encouraging discovery that the **areas of peace in the world have expanded.**
- War between **Nordic states** is inconceivable since a very long time. Sweden and Norway had a ‘velvet divorce’ in 1905.
- War between members of the **European Union** is also unthinkable. The EU is conceived as a project to weave together members in such a strong mutual dependence that they cannot tear themselves apart.
- More and more people also doubt the risk of a war between the **EU and Russia** – even though relations have impaired somewhat. There is today less emphasis on territorial defense in EU countries. More soldiers are trained for service in UN operations...
- Looking outside Europe we find that war between the **US and Mexico** is unthinkable today though in the past these two states sometimes waged war.
- Similarly, in **Latin America** wars were fought in the past. No longer.
- The greater **proximity** and the increased **interdependence** between states are important reasons for this welcome and accelerating development. **China and Japan** may not be close friends but they are strongly mutually dependent and they are eager to develop this advantageous relation.
- Between the big powers – the P5 – there are evident frictions but they are about subjects like exchange rates, CO2 emissions, competition about oil and it seems improbable that they could lead to war.
- One is tempted to talk about a **globalization of peace**. However, there are reservations – about civil war, regional conflicts and some flash points (Taiwan and Kashmir).
- The international community has also developed a **more restrictive view** on what is regarded as a legal use of armed force between states.
- The **Covenant of the League of Nations** did not prohibit states to go to war.

- However, in the **UN Charter**, written in San Francisco immediately after WW II members were prohibited to use the threaten the use of force against each other. There were only two exceptions:
 - The Security Council could decide on or authorize the use of armed force when it determined that there was a threat to the peace or breach of the peace; and
 - States could use their inherent right of self-defense in the case of an armed attack
- The invasion of Iraq **could not be justified** on any one of these grounds.
- The **Security Council refused to give consent**. Members asked for more inspections.
- There was **no attack by Iraq** – neither on the US, nor on any other state. Nor an imminent attack.
- The **formal justification** presented was that Iraq had **breached many SC resolutions** and that a right to use force had long existed – even for individual members -- to uphold these resolutions. It is **hard to understand**, however, that any possible earlier authorizations by the Council could remain valid in a situation when it was **evident that the majority** of the Council did not support an invasion. And would anyone member of the UN have been entitled to intervene? Or only SC members? Or some of these?
- It would be easier to understand – but also more worrisome -- to see the armed intervention as an application of an alleged right to **pre-emptive and preventive action**.
- In August 2002 a US defense doctrine was made public that simply declared that a limitation of the right to self defense to situations of armed attacks and imminent armed attacks – i.e. the Charter rule – was too limited.
- Condoleezza Rice said that you do not have to wait to use force in self defense until a mushroom cloud has appeared.
- However, no indication has been given as to how far the right to self defense is asserted by the US administration. A ‘growing threat’ is the vague criterion that has sometimes been voiced. When Senator Kerry suggested that there should be some international standard he was ridiculed and told that the US would not ask for any ‘permission slips’ by the Security Council.
- One difficulty with the doctrine of preventive armed action is that it will be hard to prove the danger of an armed attack that has not started. The argument must necessarily build on intelligence. The US did present intelligence material in the case of Iraq – and we know how solid it was...
- Even today the US administration seems ready to ignore UN Charter article 51 and claim a right of self defense against Iran.
- A third **US air craft carrier was recently sent to the Gulf**. A statement explained that it would provide ‘navy power to counter the assertive, disruptive and coercive behavior of some countries as well as supporting U.S. soldiers and marines in Iraq and Afghanistan.’
- Are these discussions about the use of armed force legal niceties, you may ask. The UN Charter has been ignored before... Yes, but not so openly thrown over board. President

Bush senior declared after the 1991 Iraq invasion that was authorized by the Security Council that he saw ‘**a new international order**’. **The hopes that this comment evoked have not been sustained.**

- In 2003 there was even **open disdain** for the UN. The **Security Council** was criticized for being **impotent**. Today a great many people would rather say that the Council showed wisdom when it refused to authorize an armed action that was inconsistent with the Charter and led to a war that should never have taken place.
- Members of the US Congress also waged a **campaign** related to the **Oil for Food program** claiming that it showed that the UN was corrupt.
- With very little justification. What really had happened was that the UN program was swindled by the Iraqi regime and corporations that sold food to Iraq or imported oil from Iraq.
- The UN has a **heavy bureaucracy** but corruption is rare.
- Why was the view of the senior President Bush **abandoned** and why did the current administration **ignore the UN**?
- Let me inject here that the **negative attitude to the UN** evidently still is seen as a political plank for some in the US. In the latest issue of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Giuliani, one of the Republican candidates for the presidency writes:
 - *‘...we need to look realistically at America’s relationship with the United Nations. The organization can be useful for some humanitarian and peacekeeping functions, but we should not expect much more of it. The UN has proved irrelevant to the resolution of almost every major dispute of the last 50 years... Too often, it has been weak, indecisive, and outright corrupt...’*
 - *‘...Despite the UN’s flaws, however, the great objectives of humanity would become even more difficult to achieve without mechanisms for international discussion. History has shown that such institutions work best when the United States lead them. Yet, we cannot take for granted that they will work forever and must be prepared to look for other tools.’*
- Let me get back to the question why the attitude of President Bush Senior was abandoned.
- In the **beginning of the 90s**, when the **Soviet** armed strength **collapsed** the **US** became the world’s **only military superpower** and was increasingly inclined to **rely on its own** strength and own intelligence and correspondingly **less** inclined to trust **international agreements** and international inspection. The ‘UN moment’ of 1991 (Gulf War) was followed by the US ‘unilateral decade’.
- **This may be changing** – although one might wonder when reading Mr. Giuliani. There the Bush administration is placing a greater reliance on diplomacy, a greater interest in international agreements and in the use of the Security Council.
- After the Iraq war I think an understanding is developing that great military power is not enough – or even always helpful – to achieve change or secure non-proliferation.

2. DISARMAMENT

- **After the end of the Cold War** about 20 years ago the world expected disarmament. The enormous arsenals would be of no use.
- What in the past had caused armed conflicts – conflicts about **borders, territory and ideology** – had largely disappeared between big powers.
- A **good deal** of arms control and disarmament was, in fact, achieved.
- The Convention against **Chemical Weapons** was concluded – after some 20 years of negotiation – in 1993.
- The **Non-Proliferation Treaty** was extended in 1995 without any final date.
- Since the end of the Cold War the **number of nuclear warheads** has gone down from some 55,000 to some 27,000 and the number will continue to go down.
- However, the **negotiations** about arms control and disarmament have been **discontinued**.
- The **Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty** that was concluded in 1996 and that was signed by the Clinton administration was **rejected** by the US Senate.
- Instead of disarmament we have seen what Kofi Annan called **‘sleep walking’ into new arms races**:
 - **The UK** has decided on a continuation of the nuclear Trident submarine program.
 - **The US administration** proposes to develop a new standard nuclear weapon.
 - **China** has shot down a weather satellite of its own, demonstrating a capability for military action in space.
 - **Russia** has further developed nuclear missiles and stated that it will withdraw from the agreement on conventional armed forces in Europe. Probably in part as a response to the US plans to place elements of the missile shield in Poland and the Czech Republic.
 - **World military expenses** amounted in 2006 to about 1.3 trillion dollars – of which about half fell on the US budget.

3. IS THIS A CLIMATE for DISARMAMENT PROPOSALS? –YES

- We have to become aware that in addition to the **‘inconvenient truth’** of global warming we have **another inconvenient truth** in the **‘global rearming’**.
- An independent international commission that was financed chiefly by the Swedish Government and that I chaired presented a year ago a report with the title **‘Weapons of Terror. Freeing the World of Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Arms’** (www.wmdcommission.org)
- *Digression: (Definition of WMD.) (A cat is a weapon of mice destruction...)*
- About **half** of the report deals with **nuclear** weapons.

- The Commission notes that the **Non Proliferation Treaty of 1968** had the ambition to **lead to a world without nuclear weapons** and it calls for a return to that ambition and for a large number of steps, each valuable by itself but together geared to that goal.
- The **non-nuclear weapon states** were invited in the NPT to commit themselves not to acquire nuclear weapons, and
- The then **5 nuclear weapon states** were invited by the treaty to commit themselves to negotiate toward nuclear disarmament.
- If all had adhered and all had implemented their commitments we would now live in a **nuclear weapon free world. But we live in a world of some 27.000 nuclear weapons and 9 nuclear weapon states.**
- Yet, in several respects the NPT has been a **great success:**
 - Almost all NNWS have adhered to the treaty and it is of special value that **Ukraine, Byelorussia and Kazakhstan** joined and transferred their nuclear weapons to Russia.
 - Further that **South Africa** dismantled its nuclear weapons and joined NPT.
- In some respects there have been **failures:**
 - The **DPRK, Iraq and Libya** that were parties, violated the treaty.
 - **Iran** – despite claims to the contrary – is suspected by several states to have the intention to abandon its commitment.
 - **Iraq and Libya** are back in the fold and one may hope that the talks with DPRK and Iran will lead to positive results.
- It is negative that **three states never adhered** to the treaty – **India, Israel and Pakistan** – and that they all developed nuclear weapons.
- The new **nuclear cooperation agreement between the US and India** will enable India to import uranium fuel from the US and use uranium of its own for making more bomb material – if the country were so to decide. In the absence of adherence by nuclear weapon states – including India, Pakistan and China – to a verified treaty stopping the production of fissionable material for weapons there is a risk that the new US-India agreement may lead to further stocking of nuclear weapons by the three states. From the energy point of view the agreement has merits in facilitating for India to make use of the latest nuclear power technology. This may help to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels.
- It is **dismaying that the five NWS** since a number of years **do not seem to take their commitment** to negotiate toward nuclear disarmament seriously.
- Some of the steps that should be taken without further delay and that the WMDC urges are:
 - That the US Senate reconsiders its non-ratification of the comprehensive test ban treaty (**CTBT**). No other measure could send a stronger signal in the international community that disarmament is moved back on the global agenda.

- That a US proposal for a treaty prohibiting the production of enriched uranium and plutonium for weapons (**FMCT**) should be moved into the CD conference room, where the shortcomings of the proposal can be discussed and remedied.
- That the US and Russia take initiative to a reduction (not just redeployment) of nuclear weapons.
- That nuclear weapons should be taken off hair trigger alert. I am very happy that New Zealand and my own country, Sweden, have decided to taken up this point in my commission's proposals and intend to table a resolution on it in the UN this fall.
- That nuclear weapons be **removed** from Western Europe and Western Russia to reduce tension.
- That controls and **export controls** be strengthened on radioactive and fissionable material to make it harder for terrorists to acquire such material .

What are the prospects for a revival of disarmament?

- The **most encouraging sign** is that a group of US elder statesmen – former Secretaries of State Schultz and Kissinger, Former Secretary of Defense Perry and former Senator Nunn – published an article on 4 January this year in the WSJ. The title was '**Nuclear madness**' and the authors urged that the US take the lead in an initiative with the other nuclear weapon states in order stepwise to get to nuclear disarmament.
- **During the Cold War**, they say, nuclear weapons were **necessary** for deterrent. **Today** it is not needed between the big powers and the continued arsenals may be an **incentive** for others, including terrorists, to acquire such weapons.
- It seems that the atmosphere in **Washington is changing** to be somewhat less negative to arms control. However, so far we have hardly seen any big changes. The talks with DPRK have been pursued with more flexibility, which, in my view, is more likely to get results. We do **not** really see any **similar change in the posture vis-à-vis Iran**.
- **I should** also note a remarkable and positive speech by the British Foreign Secretary, Margaret Becket, at the Carnegie Endowment in Washington on 25 June 2007. She was pleading for negotiations on nuclear disarmament.
- Let me conclude by saying that the WMDC stressed that when we want to prevent proliferation or retention of nuclear weapons we must look to the security considerations of states that have or want to acquire the weapons. **The best approach is one that make countries feel that they do not need nuclear weapons for their security**.
- This is to say that foreign, security and economic policy may be the most important. The interdependence of states is rapidly accelerating. States find it necessary to cooperate to protect the global environment, to manage the global economy and to stop viruses. Why not also cooperate to stop shooting at each other?
- **The window that opened** at the end of the Cold War has been allowed to **hang flapping** in the wind. It is **high time** that it be fully opened and lead to **a cooperative security order**.