



## **APPENDIX**

**November 2021**

**Letter to Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly**

**From: Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (CNWC)**

### **Canada and the Stockholm Initiative**

*Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention<sup>1</sup> welcomes Canada's participation in the 16-nation Stockholm Initiative<sup>2</sup> (SI). The initiative's recommendations, in the form of a series of "stepping stones,"<sup>3</sup> have the important virtue of being well-established, practical, and doable – and all the measures advanced are still urgently needed actions to pull our planet back from the precipice of nuclear catastrophe. To be sure, much more is required, but the SI affords Canada an important opportunity, as part of its multilateral engagement with like-minded states, to elevate attention to nuclear arms control and disarmament internationally, and to pursue it as a clear national priority.*

One sign that the new Government and Foreign Minister see action on nuclear disarmament as an urgent security priority will be a decision to participate in the Stockholm Initiative at the ministerial level, as do its SI partners. Indeed, Canada should go a step further and offer to host a meeting of the group to collectively prepare for coordinated engagement at the forthcoming Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).<sup>4</sup> The SI "stepping stones," along with its "Nuclear Risk Reduction Package," have already been submitted by the group to the 10<sup>th</sup> NPT Review Conference.<sup>5</sup> The challenge now is to persuade nuclear weapon states to heed their proposals. Canada has already made one positive move in joining the Foreign Ministers of Sweden and Germany in writing to US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, "encouraging the new administration to seriously consider the 22 stepping stone proposals to advance nuclear disarmament."<sup>6</sup>

In recent letters to Government,<sup>7</sup> CNWC has stressed the escalating danger in the combination of nuclear arsenal "modernization" programs, a fragile and badly fractured disarmament/arms control architecture, and serious tensions and instability in relations among the major powers. Added to that are the dangers inherent in the nuclear weaponization of chronic regional conflicts in the Middle East, South Asia, and North Asia.

The SI documents submitted to the forthcoming NPT Review Conference, which address similar themes, have the concurrence of Canada (along with four other NATO members) in calling for “urgent action” to address:

- the “deteriorated international security environment,
- “great power strategic competition,
- “stress on the nuclear arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation architecture,
- “...regional tensions,” and
- “the potentially destabilizing implications of several technological developments” (Risk Reduction, para 2).<sup>8</sup>

The following addresses a selection of issues raised by the SI for attention and action, with proposals for ways in which Canada can pursue concrete action on measures it has called for through the Stockholm Initiative.

### **1. Promote strategic dialogue**

The SI’s call for “regular, in-depth, structured dialogues among nuclear-weapon States” (Risk Reduction para 5) on strategic stability is critically important, as is the call for the perspectives of non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS) to be included. Canada and the 15 other states in the SI can play a key role in helping to reduce East-West tensions and rebuild the kind of trust that is needed to address the global nuclear weapons challenge. Canada and its SI and NATO partners could and should help initiate strategic sessions that include NNWS, offer services and venues to facilitate them, and monitor their progress, as well as monitoring the progress of the direct talks between the major powers. Canada and SI participants could make a special contribution to such dialogue by encouraging and funding parallel Track II dialogue sessions to ensure constructive engagement and bridge-building among and between relevant experts, academics, and civil society representatives from NWS and NNWS states across the East-West divide.

### **2. Reduce the role of nuclear weapons in defence policies**

One important theme in the SI documents, the call on states with nuclear weapons to “take practical measures to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their policies and doctrines” (Risk Reduction para 8.d.i) obviously echoes the call in the 64-point action plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.<sup>9</sup> The NPT document calls on NWS “to further diminish the role and significance of nuclear weapons in all military and security concepts, doctrines and policies.” The urgency of that call is demonstrated by the explicit, and rather audacious, rejection of such a diminished role for nuclear weapons in recent statements by the head of US Strategic Command, Adm. Charles A. Richard. As reported in *Air Force Magazine*, Adm. Richard insists that “every operational plan in the Department of Defense, and every other capability we have in DOD, rests on the assumption that strategic deterrence, and in particular nuclear deterrence, ... is holding right” (emphasis added). Take nuclear deterrence out of that equation, he warned, and “nothing else in the Department of Defense is going to work the way it was designed.”<sup>10</sup>

Canada, bilaterally and in common with SI partners, should urgently seek clarification from US Secretary of State Antony Blinken regarding US nuclear strategic policy in light of US Strategic Command's obvious contradiction of the Biden Administration's formal commitment, in the March 2021 *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance*,<sup>11</sup> to "take steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy," and the US Government's support of the NPT's 64-point action plan.

NATO non-nuclear weapon states also have obligations, and opportunities, to diminish the role of nuclear weapons. Notably, the NNWS of NATO, like Canada and the three other NATO states in the SI, are enablers of the nuclear arms race as long as they continue to insist that nuclear weapons are the "supreme guarantee" of the security of NATO states and, in the case of some, continue to host nuclear weapons on their territories. A reformulated Strategic Concept, that NATO is now in the process of developing,<sup>12</sup> must acknowledge the reality that nuclear weapons are a supreme *threat* to the planet and to the security of NATO member states, as well as reiterate the goal of eliminating all nuclear arsenals.

An immediate opportunity for Canada and like-minded states in NATO, notably those supporting the SI, is to support those elements of the European arms control/disarmament community that are increasingly questioning NATO's "nuclear sharing" practices. They note that further arms control agreements with Russia will inevitably need to address non-strategic nuclear weapons and missile defence.<sup>13</sup> An updated iteration of NATO's Strategic Concept should be the occasion to support the return of all nuclear weapons in Western Europe to the territory of the state that owns them (the US) and thus to bring the US into compliance with Article I of the NPT, as well as bringing the NNWS in NATO that currently host US nuclear weapons within their territories into compliance with the NPT's Article II, which prohibits nonnuclear weapon states from receiving weapons from any source.

### **3. De-alerting**

The SI risk reduction paper suggests that a P5 strategic dialogue working group address measures to reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons (para 8.e). De-alerting is one of the most immediately available means of making the world much safer by removing the risks associated with launch-on-warning postures. US Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama both gave serious consideration to de-alerting US strategic forces,<sup>14</sup> and SI states are in a good position to make direct appeals to the United States and Russia to achieve this shift, bringing them into line with the current policies of China<sup>15</sup> and all other states with nuclear weapons.<sup>16</sup>

### **4. Reject "machine learning" in nuclear systems**

The SI's call, and thus Canada's call, on NWS to explore "steps to reduce the likelihood of new technologies – notably in the digital realm (cyber, artificial intelligence, machine learning) and in the area of delivery systems – leading to new nuclear risks and exacerbating existing ones" (Risk Reduction para 8.d.iii) is critically important. Such technologies figure prominently in discussions of a modernized Canada/US NORAD system. In redesigning North American defence arrangements, officials anticipate that "modern processing power will be used in conjunction with *machine learning, data analytics, and eventually*

*artificial intelligence* to look at the vast pool of data available and recognize patterns that are invisible to human analysis” (emphasis added).<sup>17</sup> This reliance on ill-defined “machine learning” and “artificial intelligence” claims must be especially questioned, especially given the specific assertion that both are to be a means of enabling pre-emptive attacks on nuclear capable weapons systems. The proposed reliance on machine learning and artificial intelligence is meant to enable attacks on “adversary launch platforms at greater range” in order to “destroy them before they release their payloads.” As it is explained:

“Engaging the archer instead of the arrow is a key component of the SHIELD approach to defense, as it is the most effective way to invert the cost curve and gain efficiencies. Shooting down twelve cruise missiles, for example, even with a perfect interceptor still takes twelve shots, but shooting down the bomber with that same interceptor will only take one, and if done at range, will preclude the need to engage each cruise missile after launch.”<sup>18</sup>

Plans for pre-emptive, or first-strike, attacks on dual capable weapons systems point directly to the kinds of “new nuclear risks” of which the SI paper warns – a warning to be heeded in the context of Canada’s own North American defence planning.

## **5. Reject Dual Capable weapons systems**

The SI paper rightly calls for attention to “the impacts on nuclear risk of developments in defensive and offensive systems,” including “dual capable long-range delivery systems...” (Risk Reduction para 8.d.iv). The SI “stepping stones” also call on NWS military planners “to take measures to reverse” the “increasing entanglement of conventional and nuclear systems” (Stepping Stone 11). Contrary to that call, however, US Strategic Command through Adm. Richard asserts that “the United States can no longer separate nuclear and conventional policies.” Nuclear, conventional, space, and cyber domains, he insists, “are all linked.”<sup>19</sup> Again, it is critically important that Canada and its SI partners call on the United States to clarify its policy, and to urge it, along with Russia, and China, to meticulously avoid the “entanglement of conventional and nuclear systems.”

## **6. Lay the groundwork for accelerated disarmament**

The SI risk reduction paper calls for “additional research and dialogue” (para 10.b) to lay “the groundwork for disarmament measures, including measures that would contribute to security in a world without nuclear weapons” (para 10.b.i). The 19<sup>th</sup> stepping stone speaks to the need for “setting the frame for future arms control agreements and disarmament.” The central mandate of the Pugwash Canada CNWC project is to urge states to begin to systematically lay the groundwork for advancing disarmament through the development of a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention. Such a convention should indeed “set the frame for future arms control and disarmament” measures – setting timelines, establishing provisions for transparency and reporting, and outlining verification. The pursuit of such a comprehensive convention must clearly also address strategic relations and other political and security conditions essential for more credible and irreversible progress towards a world without nuclear weapons. States like Canada that advocate for such foundational research have an obligation to facilitate it, and that means funding it and entering into active engagement (dialogue) with the disarmament research and advocacy community, making it an ongoing feature of their diplomatic engagement with states.

## 7. From declaratory policy to concrete action

It is important and welcome that the SI also urges that a commitment “that nuclear weapons are never used again” be pursued “on the basis of the 1985 statement by the leaders of the United States and the Soviet Union that ‘a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought’” (Risk Reduction para 7.c). Declaratory statements are important, as acknowledged by the SI, for setting a political climate more conducive to action, and thus Canada and the SI should vigorously pursue the reiteration of such a commitment through the coming NPT Review Conference. To that end, the Biden-Putin affirmation of that principle during their June Summit<sup>20</sup> was a welcome development, and Canada should support and endorse the call by a distinguished group of global leaders<sup>21</sup> for the P5 to jointly issue the same declaration. Emphasizing the principle as “fundamental to ensuring predictability, reducing the risk of armed conflicts and the threat of nuclear war,” these leaders in global security policy call on the P5 heads of government to jointly affirm this simple but powerful formula and provide a vital demonstration of leadership that would strengthen the NPT.”<sup>22</sup> Similarly, the SI’s call for nuclear weapons states to “reaffirm the unequivocal undertaking of the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament”<sup>23</sup> is also welcome.

But, of course, the measure of public affirmations is the concrete action and changed behaviour that ensues. Declarations in the absence of action are empty gestures that add to skepticism and erode public trust, and thus ultimately undermine action. When Kissinger, Schultz, Perry, and Nunn wrote in 2007 about a world without nuclear weapons, they were explicit in linking a bold vision to concrete action:

“Without the bold vision, the actions will not be perceived as fair or urgent. Without the actions, the vision will not be perceived as realistic or possible.”<sup>24</sup>

Declaratory statements supporting the pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons are positive, but the real test of their value is the action that accompanies them. The international community has, through the NPT Review Conferences of 2000 and 2010 set out a clear nuclear disarmament agenda. The SI initiative adds important emphasis on key actions to be taken as minimum gestures towards the sustained and conclusive action that is needed. The value of the Stockholm Initiative, and Canada’s welcome involvement in it, will be measured in the actions taken.

### Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (CNWC) is a project of the Canadian Pugwash Group.

<sup>2</sup> Argentina, Canada, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of South Korea, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

<sup>3</sup> “Stepping stones for advancing nuclear disarmament,” Joint working paper submitted by Argentina, Canada, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland to the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 12 March 2020. [https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2020\\_wp.6\\_-\\_2003907e.pdf](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2020_wp.6_-_2003907e.pdf)

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<sup>4</sup> As proposed by Paul Meyer, former Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament, and Cesar Jaramillo, Executive Director of Project Ploughshares (16 September 2021), [Nuclear disarmament must be a priority for the next Canadian government - The Hill Times](#).

<sup>5</sup> See note 3 re “Stepping Stones” working paper.

“A nuclear risk reduction package,” a working paper by the Stockholm Initiative, submitted to the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 14 May 2021.

[https://vcdnp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/WorkingPaperNuclearRiskReduction\\_StockholmInitiative\\_submitted-May-11.pdf](https://vcdnp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/WorkingPaperNuclearRiskReduction_StockholmInitiative_submitted-May-11.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> “Can Disarmament Be Revived? An Interview with Swedish Foreign Minister Ann Linde,” Arms Control Association, May 2021. <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2021-05/features/disarmament-revived-interview-swedish-foreign-minister-ann-linde>

<sup>7</sup> May 26, 2021; January 25, 2021; June 8, 2020; January 23, 2020; January 24, 2019; November 9, 2018.

<sup>8</sup> “A nuclear risk reduction package” abbreviated as Risk Reduction; “Stepping stones for advancing nuclear disarmament” abbreviated as Stepping Stones.

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues\\_development-enjeux\\_developpement/peace\\_security-paix\\_scurite/action\\_plan-2010-plan\\_d\\_action.aspx?lang=eng](https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/peace_security-paix_scurite/action_plan-2010-plan_d_action.aspx?lang=eng)

<sup>10</sup> Amy McCullough, “Richard Says Nuclear Deterrence Connected to All Other DOD Capabilities,” *Air Force Magazine*, 07 May 2021. <https://www.airforcemag.com/richard-says-nuclear-deterrence-connected-to-all-other-dod-capabilities/#:~:text=Richard%20Says%20Nuclear%20Deterrence%20Connected%20to%20All%20Other%20DOD%20Capabilities,-May%207%2C%202021&text=If%20strategic%20deterrence%20fails%2C%20nothing,U.S.%20Strategic%20Command%20boss%20Adm.&text=%E2%80%9CNuclear%20is%20not%20separate%20from,They%20are%20all%20linked.%E2%80%9D>

<sup>11</sup> *Renewing America’s Advantages: Interim National Security Strategic Guidance*, The White House, March 2021. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/NSC-1v2.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> “NATO Summit: Revitalizing the Transatlantic Alliance,” Fact Sheet, The White House, 13 June 2021. [FACT SHEET: NATO Summit: Revitalizing the Transatlantic Alliance | The White House](#)

<sup>13</sup> Michal Smetana, Michal Onderco, and Tom Etienne, “Do Germany and the Netherlands want to say goodbye to US nuclear weapons?” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 21 July 2021. [https://thebulletin.org/premium/2021-07/do-germany-and-the-netherlands-want-to-say-goodbye-to-us-nuclear-weapons/?utm\\_source=Newsletter&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=ThursdayNewsletter07222021&utm\\_content=NuclearRisk\\_GermanyNetherlandsFarewellNukes\\_07212021](https://thebulletin.org/premium/2021-07/do-germany-and-the-netherlands-want-to-say-goodbye-to-us-nuclear-weapons/?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=ThursdayNewsletter07222021&utm_content=NuclearRisk_GermanyNetherlandsFarewellNukes_07212021)

<sup>14</sup> “Reframing the Nuclear De-alerting Debate: Towards Maximizing Presidential Decision Time,” December 11, 2013. <https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/reframing-nuclear-de-alerting-debate-towards-maximizing-presidential-decision-time/>

<sup>15</sup> For now, “China keeps its nuclear weapons on low alert, meaning warheads and missiles are stored separately until they are paired in preparation for a strike.” “China’s Nuclear Inventory,” Center for Arms Control and Non-proliferation, April 2020. <https://armscontrolcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/China.pdf>

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<sup>16</sup> Global Zero, an international non-partisan group of world leaders dedicated to nuclear disarmament has set out a clear and urgent plan for ending the Cold War-era practice of keeping nuclear weapons on hair-trigger alert. <https://www.globalzero.org/de-alerting/>

<sup>17</sup> Terrence J. O’Shaughnessy and Peter M. Fesler, “Hardening the Shield: A Credible Deterrent & Capable Defense for North America,” The Canada Institute, The Wilson Center, September 2020. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/hardening-shield-credible-deterrent-capable-defense-north-america>

<sup>18</sup> O’Shaughnessy and Fesler, September 2020.

<sup>19</sup> Amy McCullough, 07 May 2021.

<sup>20</sup> U.S.-Russia Presidential Joint Statement on Strategic Stability, June 16, 2021. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/06/16/u-s-russia-presidential-joint-statement-on-strategic-stability/>

<sup>21</sup> Lord Des Browne (Vice Chair, Nuclear Threat Initiative; Chair of the Board of Trustees and Directors of the European Leadership Network; and former Secretary of State for Defence, United Kingdom), Ambassador Professor Wolfgang Ischinger (Chairman of the Munich Security Conference Foundation), Professor Igor Ivanov (President of the Russian International Affairs Council and Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Russia), Ernest J. Moniz (Co-Chair and CEO, Nuclear Threat Initiative and former U.S. Secretary of Energy), Sam Nunn (Co-Chair, Nuclear Threat Initiative; and former U.S. Senator), Sir Adam Thomson (Director, European Leadership Network, United Kingdom), Gareth Evans (Chair, Asia-Pacific Leadership Network; and Former Foreign Minister, Australia), Shata Shetty (Executive Director, Asia-Pacific Leadership Network, Australia), and Mary Robinson (Chair, The Elders; and former President, Ireland).

<sup>22</sup> Leadership Groups Call on China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and United States to Jointly Reaffirm: “A Nuclear War Cannot be Won and Must Never be Fought.”

<sup>23</sup> “A nuclear risk reduction package,” 2021.

<sup>24</sup> Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, William Perry, and Sam Nunn, “Vision and Steps for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons,” The Nuclear Threat Initiative, 01 November 2013. <https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/vision-and-steps-world-free-nuclear-weapons/>