

Science for Peace

February 25, 2022

President's Column



Dear Members,

What all of us feared might happen, has happened. It is a sad day for Ukraine and Ukrainians, for Russians who oppose the military intervention, and for the peace movement. We have all read dozens of analyses of the situation, some of us have written our own, and we know how complex the causes of this war are. A formal recognition by NATO that Ukraine would never join the alliance might have been enough, at an earlier stage, to forestall the invasion. Russia has real security concerns, though they are hardly sufficient to justify a military attack with devastating human and environmental impacts.

Science for Peace debated and published a well-balanced statement on the Ukraine crisis. Now we must contemplate the ramifications of this military action, and what lessons we can draw from the invasion and its aftermath.

SfP has spent the past month largely on organization-building. We have made progress in consultations with our marketing consultant and in reorganizing our website and preliminary planning of an event in April by the Students Against Nuclear Weapons. However, the sobering news of the Ukraine invasion saps my enthusiasm for elaborating further.

I will say that Ukraine was an ideal candidate for the civilian-based defense strategy outlined in an article listed below. There was never a chance that Ukraine could defeat Russia in a military confrontation. A well-organized nonviolent resistance would have cost fewer lives and less environmental destruction. It would have made it impossible for Russia to occupy or impose a puppet government on the country. It would have rallied even more support internationally and especially in Russia for ending the occupation. It would

have sapped the morale of the Russian troops and functionaries. You cannot dominate a people who will not be dominated, if they know how to resist nonviolently. Civilian-based defence is the new, if radical, thinking we need to ultimately demilitarize and build sustainable democracies and a habitable world.

Richard Sandbrook
*Professor Emeritus of Political Science
University of Toronto*

Upcoming Events

Students Against Nuclear Weapons Group joining Science for Peace

The board enthusiastically passed a motion to adopt SANW as an autonomous "chapter" of Science for Peace. SANW is planning an informal, community-building meeting at Wildred Laurier University (where most of the members take courses) in April, following exams. The idea is to livestream the discussion of a roundtable, mainly of students, via Instagram Live. The dangers of nuclear war and the specific issue of Canada and the TPNW will be topics of discussion.

Our Right To Know: Timelines

Science for Peace is merging with Our Right to Know. All timelines are available on our website under Analysis. The timelines document obstacles that scientists and scholars face doing their research and sharing their findings.

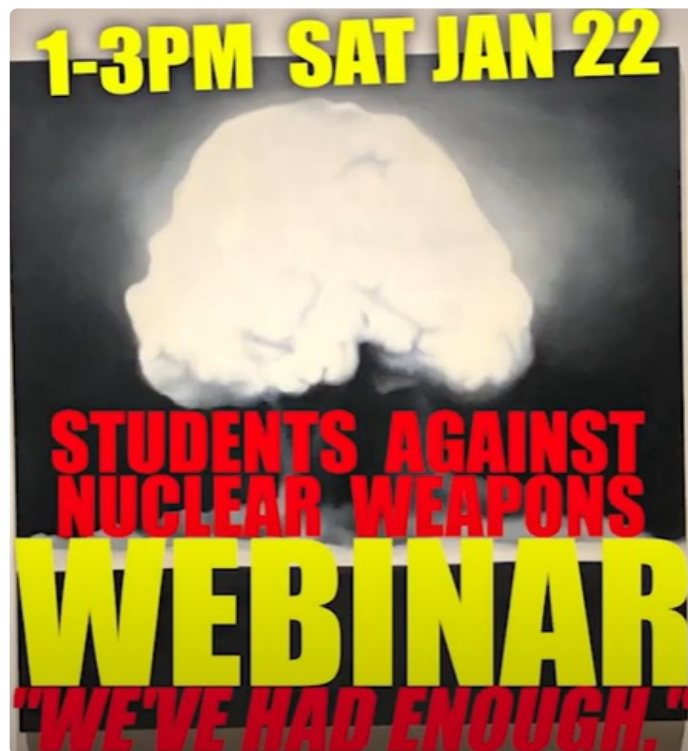
[Read more.](#)

Working Group on NATO, led by Adnan Zuberi and Tamara Lorincz.

We are delighted to announce the formation of this new working group. Please contact our coordinator Melisa Kuc if you would like to participate in its meetings.

Recent Events

Students Against Nuclear Weapons Virtual Forum



The forum focused on the humanitarian implications of the renewed nuclear-arms race and the potential of the United Nations' Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to build a world free of the menace of nuclear war, with keynote speakers Elizabeth May and Ray Acheson, and an interview with Setsuko Thurlow regarding her

experience of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima.
[VIEW FULL RECORDING HERE.](#)

Recent Articles



Richard Sandbrook: Demilitarization: Is It Time for Civilian-Based Defense?

“The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking, and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophe.”
Albert Einstein’s famous comment is more profoundly true today than when he uttered it in 1946. As the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists explained in 2015, Einstein’s understanding of this old mode of thinking still defined the prevailing national security doctrine of all major states.

[Read More](#)

Focus on Members

Lyn Adamson



Science for Peace has joined hundreds of organizations worldwide in endorsing the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty initiative.

This global treaty is an initiative by Tzeborah Berman of Stand.Earth. Tzeborah was one of the main organizers of the Clayoquot Sound blockades to protect ancient forests in BC in the 1990s. When she realized that rising temperatures would doom the forests she was working so hard to protect, she shifted her focus to climate action. When she received a substantial award for her work she launched the FFNPT (www.fossilfuel treaty.org).

Vancouver was the first city to sign on in November 2020 and Toronto signed on July 15, 2021 after a two-month campaign by local organizers with ClimateFast and the Toronto Climate Action Network. Now it's time to expand the campaign! The goal is to have Canada, and all the provinces, commit to 1) no more fossil fuel expansion, no subsidies, no permits, and 2) a plan to phase out reliance on fossil fuels as soon as possible.

Basically, if we want a living planet, we need to stop burning fossil fuels. Primary emitters are buildings (55% of emissions in Toronto, 17% across Canada) and transportation (37% in Toronto). So that means mass deep retrofits with heating converted to electricity, through air or ground source heat pumps. The total energy demand of buildings comes down to a fraction of current use, and some may even reach passive solar standards. The challenge is to do this FAST. Organizers are working with the city and the federal government to make programs easy to access, friendly for organized groups (that can join together on hiring contractors and bulk purchase of materials, to be more cost efficient), and to explore district energy systems. Subsidies for retrofits - and heat pumps - are essential to make this affordable for owners.

Electrifying transportation is a must. That means supporting and expanding transit and making it possible for people to purchase e-bikes and, if they really need a car, EVs. Funding for active transportation - safe pedestrian and bicycle routes - are essential for shifting more people off cars and onto walking, cycling, and transit. The City of Toronto TransformTO program has a goal of 75% of trips of under 5 km being taken by active transportation. In December 2021, Toronto adopted a plan for Net Zero by 2040. The challenge now is to meet it.

And we need this kind of climate target in all municipalities and around the world.

Only by drastically reducing our GHG emissions - including but not limited to CO2 - will we achieve climate stability.

This transition has been supported by the International Energy Agency. Traditionally a booster of fossil fuel supply, their May 2021 report said that 95% of all future energy development needed to be in renewables to stay under the 1.5 degree temperature rise.

However recent price increases for fossil fuels is driving their production upward - not the direction we need to see. Therefore, organization for the adoption of the Fossil Fuel Non Proliferation Treaty initiative is very important to push for a change in direction.

Lyn Adamson is a board member of Science for Peace.

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