



Statement for Working Group 1 - Pugwash Meeting, Halifax, 2003

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It is now more than half a century that human beings have had the power to destroy the whole future of humanity.

At the UU First Special Session of the General Assembly on Disarmament 1978, the Final Document said:

In adopting this Final Document, The States Members of the United Nations solemnly reaffirm their determination to work for general and complete disarmament and to make further collective efforts aimed at strengthening peace and international security; eliminating the threat of war, particularly nuclear war; implementing practical measures aimed at halting and reversing the arms race; strengthening the procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes; and reducing military expenditures and utilizing the resources thus released in a manner which will help to promote the well-being of all peoples.

The Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference reaffirms that the total elimination is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

With over 34,000 nuclear weapons now in the world, the outlook is not good. Could it be that it has been inadequate to focus on hardware?

Einstein, according to the editor Otto Nathan of *Einstein on Peace*, “never believed that disarmament by small stages was a practical policy against war.”

Something more is needed. Would it not be better for us to focus on the abolition of war?

On February 3, 2003, the McGill Middle East Program gave us a fine treat: a lecture by the President of Al Quds University in East Jerusalem, Dr. Sari Nusseibeh.

In calling yet again for negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, he said: “my basic demand is that the solution be based on equality.”

He talked about Jews and Palestinians as equals. He said both states had painful histories. He said if peace is not achieved, life is not worth living. And he said that Israelis and Palestinians are really allies and that there should be some final negotiations.

We need Sari Nusseibeh's advice for the whole world.