Two Minutes to Midnight: What We Can Do to Prevent Nuclear War

A Conference Organized by Goucher Peace Studies and Prevent Nuclear War/Maryland
November 17, 2018
Goucher College

10 to 11:20 a.m. – Plenary

Welcome and goals of conference, introduction of speakers: Gwen Dubois, Seble Dawit

Daryl Kimball: “Nuclear Risks and Risk Reduction in the Age of Trump”
Ira Helfand: “The growing risk of nuclear war and what we can do about it: Back from the Brink”

11:30-12:30 First Breakout Session

(a) “Nuclear Modernization” and the New Arms Race: Who Profits? Discussant: Daryl Kimball

The U.S. is slated to spend at least $2.8 trillion to “upgrade” the nuclear weapons complex. This workshop will examine details of the so-called “modernization,” including the new types of weapons that are being developed, what the trade-offs are, who profits, and how “modernization” and the arms race make us all less safe. How can we address the “real world” arguments and what can we do to roll back this plan and abolish nuclear weapons?

(b) Uranium Trafficking: The Inextricable Link Between Nuclear Power and Nuclear Weapons
Discussant: Paul Gunter and Linda Pentz Gunter

Uranium enrichment for nuclear power, with further enrichment, creates the fissile material for nuclear weapons. We also explore the environmental injustice issues around exposure to uranium mining, weapons testing and disposing of radioactive waste from the nuclear industry.

(c) Organizing with Students Discussant: Vince Intondi

Developing youth leadership is critical to the future of the anti-nuclear weapons movement. This workshop will develop specific plans to engage youth at Goucher and other colleges in the Baltimore area in nuclear weapons abolition.

(d) Creative Organizing Discussant: Max Obuszewski

Because creativity is an essential part of being an effective activist, this workshop will include brainstorming to come up with unusual ideas and figure out how to implement them.

12:30-1:15 Lunch
1:15 - 2:20 Second Plenary Session

Vince Intondi: “The Intersection of Race and Nuclear Weapons”
Ray Acheson: “The Role of Americans in the Effort to Abolish Nuclear Weapons”

2:25 – 3:15 Work Groups: Developing our Plan for the Coming Year

(a) Congress

Examine the bills relevant to Back from the Brink that are currently in Congress and how Congress could support the Ban Treaty. We will come up with a plan to try to ensure that every Maryland senator and representative supports all of these bills and that at least two members of the delegation publicly endorse the ban treaty. [Facilitator: Charlie Cooper; resource: Paul Kawika Martin; scribe: Lucy Duff]

(b) City and County Resolutions

Explore how to get resolutions passed by county and city councils throughout Maryland. Resolutions, such as the one passed by the Baltimore City Council in August, are powerful ways to pressure members of Congress, as well as serving an educational purpose for the general public. We will develop a plan to increase the number of cities and counties in Maryland that pass such resolutions. [Facilitator: Gwen DuBois; resource: Mel Hardy, Jay Levy; scribe: Tony Langbehn]

(c) The MD General Assembly

A resolution was introduced in the Maryland General Assembly last winter addressing the president’s authority to unilaterally start a nuclear war, but the resolution was defeated in the Rules Committee. We hope for an expanded resolution to be introduced in the next legislative session. We will develop a strategy to try to ensure its passage. [Facilitator: Mike Keller; resource: Del. Pamela Queen; Samantha Blake, WAND; scribe: Richard Ochs]

3:20 – 4:00 Closing Plenary: Report Back from Work Groups– A Nuclear Abolition Plan for Maryland

Discussant: Gwen Dubois and Jean Athey


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