

The Amherst Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Spotlight
June 2010

*The Social Justice Spotlight is a piece written monthly by individual Social Justice Committee members. This month's Spotlight comes to us from **Chad Johnson**.*

Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, New York
May 2010.

By the time you read this article, the NPT Review Conference will have completed its month-long meeting in New York. Hopefully commitments were made to take actions in five major areas of concern: 1) Reducing the role of nuclear weapons in military policy; 2) nuclear disarmament; 3) arms control measures; 4) preventing proliferation; and 5) nuclear power.

For those countries favoring concrete actions to reduce the risk posed by nuclear weapons and accelerate movement toward their elimination, most – if not all – of the following actions should have been agreed upon:

- Taking nuclear weapons off high alert and ending policies of launch on warning;
- pledging no use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states;
- pledging no first-use of nuclear weapons against other nuclear weapons states;
- negotiating reductions by the U.S. and Russia in their nuclear arsenals to below 500 nuclear weapons by 2015;
- commencing negotiations by all nuclear weapons states party to the NPT for a Nuclear Weapons Convention to be completed by 2015 for the phased, verifiable and transparent elimination of all their nuclear weapons;
- completing ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty so that it can enter into force;
- negotiating a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty to assure international control of all nuclear weapons materials;
- negotiating limits on the deployment of missile defense systems;
- peacefully resolve the existing proliferation issues with North Korea and Iran;
- taking all necessary steps to ensure that nuclear materials are not obtained or used by non-state extremist groups; and

- establishing a commission of experts to assess the impact of the expansion of nuclear power generation on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts.

This is an imposing agenda! But when we consider the catastrophic effect – far greater than Katrina or the Gulf oil spill – of nuclear detonations, there is no alternative to the vigorous pursuit of the above-noted actions.