

“Multilateral cooperation in the post-coronavirus era is a chance to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons”, Shkolnik V.

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Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for a possibility of being here. I would like to emphasize that the Pugwash committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan was established in 2017, it brought together the leading scientists and specialists of the republic who are not indifferent to the security of our future. We are making every possible effort to prevent the use of scientific and technological developments in the development of weapons of mass destruction, to reduce the global level of tension and risks associated with such weapons.

Our scientists actively supported and took part in activities to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia, alongside works on improving the methods of applying IAEA safeguards to the nuclear activities of Kazakhstani enterprises, to ensure safety in the handling of various weapons-grade nuclear materials, including spent nuclear fuel of the first in the world of the BN-350 fast neutron power reactor. Research reactors at the National Nuclear Center are being converted to low-energy nuclear fuel. A similar project has been completed in the Institute of Nuclear Physics in Almaty. The International Low-Enriched Uranium Bank was established in Kazakhstan, where the IAEA's nuclear material is located.

It is obvious that our work is proceeding in close cooperation with colleagues from other countries who adhere to the same views. Exchange of experience, ideas, joint actions - all these are integral attributes of the Pugwash movement. Of course, the spread of the pandemic makes its own adjustments in the forms of our cooperation. But today's webinar illustrates well the possibilities of online work.

In addition to technical issues, we pay great attention to creating a legal framework for the containment of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament. Kazakhstan signed the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty in 2018. We understand that without the participation of the nuclear-weapon states, the Treaty will have limited effect. But the important thing is that this Treaty clearly outlaws

nuclear weapons. After its entry into force, legal speculation will be impossible to justify the threat of the use of such weapons by anyone. In this aspect, it is worth mentioning the ambiguous provision of paragraph 4 of article 4 of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, where the legality of the use of nuclear weapons by states can be latently assumed.

Unfortunately, there is still no progress on the development of a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices, which would become an effective component of the international legal system for curbing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and would contribute to nuclear disarmament. It seems that the Pugwash Movement can contribute to the promotion of both this Treaty and the improvement of other legal instruments in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Thus, improving the international legal infrastructure can be an important area of work in the post-pandemic period.

Such question of whether to wait for the right moment to end the existence of nuclear weapons has an unambiguous answer - of course not. The work must continue, and all efforts of honest scientists and specialists must be aimed at preventing further escalation of global risks associated with the presence and improvement of weapons of mass destruction – regardless of the official policy of their states.

In addition, scientists can and should contribute to the development of the peaceful use of atomic energy and its application for civilian purposes.

It is important to note that the Republic of Kazakhstan contributes to the development of nuclear power technologies. The country is carrying out research work aimed at improving the safety of nuclear energy facilities.

Experimental studies are being carried out, the results of which form the basis for safe and economical projects of new generation nuclear reactors.

In Kazakhstan, a project is being implemented to create a materials science tokamak KTM in support of the program for creating an international thermonuclear experimental reactor ITER.

It is the world's first specialized tokamak designed to test the functional and structural materials for future thermonuclear power engineering.

To conclude, I believe that expanding international collaboration in this area is a feasible and promising task for the Pugwash.

Despite temporary difficulties, work to strengthen international relations continues, the active work of the Pugwash Committee of Kazakhstan brings its results in the form of expanding interaction between scientists, which, in turn, leads to the initiation and implementation of new joint scientific projects, obtaining science results which are significant to science worldwide.

Thank you very much.