

The Nobel Peace Prize 2005

English

Norwegian

Presentation Speech by Professor Ole Danbolt Mjøøs, Chairman of the [Norwegian Nobel Committee](#), Oslo, December 10, 2005.

Your Majesties, Your Royal Highness, Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has decided that the Nobel Peace Prize for 2005 is to be shared, in two equal parts, between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its Director General, Mohamed ElBaradei, for their efforts to prevent nuclear energy from being used for military purposes and to ensure that nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is used in the safest possible way.

At a time when the threat of nuclear arms is again increasing, the Norwegian Nobel Committee wishes to underline that this threat must be met through the broadest possible international cooperation. This principle finds its clearest expression today in the work of the IAEA and its Director General. In the nuclear non-proliferation regime, it is the IAEA which controls that nuclear energy is not misused for military purposes, and the Director General has stood out as a bold advocate of new measures to strengthen that regime. At a time when disarmament efforts appear deadlocked, when there is a danger that nuclear arms will spread both to states and to terrorist groups, and when nuclear power again appears to be playing an increasingly significant role, this work is of incalculable importance.

The vision underlying the IAEA stems from President Dwight D. Eisenhower. In December 1953, he gave his famous "Atoms for Peace" speech at the [United Nations](#). The vision was surprisingly concrete: the nuclear powers should "make joint contributions from their stockpiles of normal uranium and fissionable materials to an International Atomic Energy Agency". The most important task for the IAEA would be "to devise methods whereby this fissionable material would be allocated to serve the peaceful pursuits of mankind". The IAEA was in other words to receive potentially military nuclear material from the nuclear powers, and then distribute it for peaceful use to the countries that were most in need of it. The IAEA was formally established on 29 July 1957, for the purpose of preventing military use and stimulating peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Implicitly in the IAEA statutes, but all the more explicitly in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1970, which was to mean so much to the IAEA, the five original nuclear powers are under an obligation "to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goals of eliminating those weapons". This important point has been repeated on a number of subsequent occasions.

Despite several arms limitation agreements, the traditional nuclear powers can by no means be said to have come much closer to this goal. Although the number of nuclear weapons deployed has been reduced, tens of thousands of them remain – about as many as when the NPT entered into force – as well as a continuing interest in the development of new weapon types. This is one main reason why further non-proliferation efforts have stalled. The nuclear powers must take their obligations under the NPT seriously. It is hypocritical to go on developing one's own nuclear weapons while doing everything in one's power to prevent others from acquiring such weapons. As ElBaradei himself has put it, it is like "some who have ... continued to dangle a cigarette from their mouth and tell everybody else not to smoke".

The number of nuclear powers in the world has risen. In addition to the USA, Russia, Great Britain, France and China, Israel, India and Pakistan have nuclear arms. Perhaps North Korea, too. This is not to say that there have been no positive developments. South Africa discontinued its program, thus becoming the first country to have developed nuclear weapons only to abandon them. All credit to South Africa! Belorussia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan renounced the nuclear weapons which the Soviet Union had left behind in their territories. Libya has reversed its policy. Argentina, Brazil, Taiwan, South Korea and Turkey have given up ambitious programs. Nevertheless, proliferation continues. It has to be stopped.

The IAEA has met with both successes and reverses in its struggle to prevent the spread of nuclear arms. Iraq illustrates both. Initially, the IAEA failed to uncover the extensive program which Saddam Hussein had developed in the 1980s. That necessitated new routines. On the other hand, in cooperation with the United Nations Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM) and the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), the IAEA then managed in the 1990s to destroy such weapons of mass destruction as did exist. In the period prior to the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the IAEA and UNMOVIC were under heavy

pressure, despite which the inspectors carried out their task in Iraq in an independent, thorough and correct manner. As the world could see after the war in Iraq, the weapons that were not found proved not to have existed.

In North Korea, the IAEA discovered that the North Koreans had lied about their nuclear program. Since then, however, it has not been given any opportunity to carry out the inspections in North Korea which are certainly necessary. With respect to Iran, too, the IAEA has had both ups and downs. Iran managed to keep its nuclear program concealed for 18 years. For the past two years, however, the IAEA has undertaken important work there with some degree of success. The tense situation in the country can only be resolved provided the IAEA is allowed to carry out the necessary inspections and its steps and resolutions are respected.

Keeping pace with the many challenges with which it has been confronted in the last few years, the IAEA has managed to tighten up the control it exercises, also by carrying out special inspections at short notice. It has done a good job in a number of difficult contexts. At a time when international organizations have been heavily criticised, the IAEA has not only maintained but even in many respects strengthened its position. Its security control enables the organization to exercise functions that were previously the preserve of national authorities. In so far as it has encroached on national sovereignty, this control has broken new ground. Complete sovereignty in the nuclear field means complete insecurity for the rest of the world.

The central figure in this strengthening of the IAEA has been Director General ElBaradei. He has himself put forward numerous proposals aimed at this objective. He is an active participant in debates on the future of the non-proliferation regime. While building on the important work of his predecessors, and of Hans Blix in particular, he has managed to strengthen still further the positions both of the Director General and of the IAEA. His recent re-election for a third term will open up new opportunities in the years ahead both for him and for the IAEA. Today's award is thus very much a tribute to Mohamet ElBaradei in person, but is also intended to recognise the 2,300 staff from 90 countries who currently work for the IAEA, as well as the many who worked there before. Many are here today. We salute you and thank you for your work.

For the IAEA it has been and still is very important to help the poor countries of the world to participate in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Refraining from military uses should make it possible to help such countries with civilian uses. Such peaceful use has been controversial in many countries, however, and there has consequently been no increase in recent years. Nuclear energy currently accounts for about 16 per cent of global electricity production, but nearly all of this is in highly developed countries. Growth today is taking place principally in Russia, China, India and Brazil. The main reasons for the growth are energy shortages, high oil prices, the need to reduce CO₂ emissions, and enhanced operational safety. Although opinions differ on the civilian use of nuclear energy, we should all be able to agree on the importance of ensuring that the use that does take place is made as safe as possible. If we do see further growth in this sector, control arrangements will become all the more essential. This forms a major part of the work of the IAEA. Incidentally, many of us may not pause to reflect on the prominent position of nuclear energy in the health services, especially in the treatment of cancer, as well as in connection with agriculture, the environment, and industry.

The award to the IAEA and to ElBaradei is firmly founded in the history of the Peace Prize, and in Alfred Nobel's *will*, in which he mentions the "abolition or reduction of standing armies" as one of the three criteria for the award. Nobel would surely have agreed that in our day the struggle against nuclear arms must be even more urgent than opposition to "standing armies". This year's prize to the IAEA and ElBaradei links together the two principal major lines of thought that have governed selections for the award throughout its history. Again and again, the Norwegian Nobel Committee has stressed the need for a better organized world. This explains the many prizes to representatives of the Inter-Parliamentary Union before World War I, to representatives of the League of Nations in the inter-war years, and to individuals and organizations attached to the United Nations after World War II. In 2001, year of the centenary of the Nobel Prizes, it was therefore only natural to give the award to the United Nations and to its Secretary General *Kofi Annan*. This year it is 60 years since the foundation of the United Nations. The IAEA is very much a part of the UN system and consequently belongs under this most distinct of all headings in the history of the Peace Prize.

A second and almost equally prominent theme has been work for disarmament and arms control. Many Laureates have advocated disarmament and peace in general. Even in the nuclear field a number of prizes have been awarded: to [Linus Pauling](#) in 1962 for his work for a nuclear test ban agreement; to [Andrei Sakharov](#) in 1975 for campaigning for nuclear disarmament and democracy; to [Alva Myrdal](#) and [Garcia Robles](#) in 1982 for seeking non-proliferation; to [International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War](#) in 1985, working across the east-west divide; and to the [Pugwash Conferences](#) and [Joseph Rotblat](#) in 1995 for the important work they did for nuclear disarmament, especially at the expert level.

It has been claimed that every tenth year the Norwegian Nobel Committee awards the prize to someone seeking the abolition of nuclear weapons. With the awards of 1975, 1985 and 1995 in mind, it is difficult for the Committee to deny the charge. But such awards have, as you have heard, been made more frequently than once a decade. And it was not the case in 2005 that the Committee had zeroed in on this field in advance. It would be truer to say that when the Committee, after a long discussion of this year's 199 candidates, finally selected the IAEA and ElBaradei, we came to the realisation that once again the prize was going to someone who favours reducing the importance of nuclear arms in international politics.

The atom bombs fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki 60 years ago. Since then, the world has been united in the wish that nothing like that must ever happen again. Such weapons are so dreadful that they are meaningless in war. Naturally enough, memories of the atom bombs have been strongest of all in Japan, where people who survived the two atom bombs can still be found. The survivors have a special name, Hibakusha, and their own organization, Nihon Hidankyo. We salute them today. It is accordingly highly appropriate, even though it is a coincidence, that it is the Japanese ambassador to the IAEA, Yukiya Amano, who is at present the chairman of the organization's Board of Governors, and who will therefore receive the one half of the award on behalf of the IAEA.

Let us recall the story of the little girl, Sadako Sasaki, who as an infant was exposed to radiation from the Hiroshima bomb. Suffering as a twelve-year-old from deadly leukaemia, she heard the Japanese legend which tells us that if you fold one thousand cranes you can wish for anything you like. And Sadako began folding a thousand cranes, wishing to get well. According to popular legend, she died when she had folded 644 birds; her classmates folded the remaining 356. Sadako was buried with a wreath of 1,000 cranes. Her classmates and friends had a granite statue of her erected in the Peace Park in Hiroshima. The statue shows Sadako as a young girl with her arms out, and with a crane in her hand. Thousands of folded cranes are left by the statue every year.

Most of us dream of a future without nuclear weapons. We would finally be rid of the threat to mankind's very existence which the weapons represent. Those who do not dream of such a future tend to say that nuclear arms can not be uninvented, and maintain that if and when a war does break out, there will be pressure to develop nuclear arms again. The answer to this was given by Joseph Rotblat, the 1995 Laureate, for whom a memorial ceremony was held in London yesterday: Our long-term vision must be to put an end to war as such. We must banish war in the same way as the world has largely succeeded in banishing slavery, the commonest of social institutions.

Several Nobel Peace Prizes have been awarded to the many who oppose nuclear weapons. The successes have nevertheless been few and the setbacks many. Even the IAEA has had disappointments. But we can not give up. The basic challenge still confronts us. In the words of the [Russell-Einstein](#) manifesto of 1955: "Here then is the problem which we present to you, stark and dreadful, and inescapable: shall we put an end to the human race or shall we renounce war". That is the question. Shall we put an end to the human race or shall we renounce war?

Here is how the Norwegian author Nordahl Grieg put it in his poem "To Youth":

War is contempt for life.

Peace is creative.

At it with all your might:

See death defeated!

We congratulate you, Mohamed ElBaradei, and we congratulate the IAEA, on being awarded this year's Nobel Peace Prize. We thank you for what you have done, and hope for further advances in work that is so vital to us all.