
Failure of the UN and Nuclear Weapons

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Though the achievements of the United Nations in these twenty years have been impressive, its failures have been considerable. The most notable of them all has been in regard to disarmament. The first atom bomb was detonated by the United States of America on July 16, 1945, near Alamagardo, New Mexico. On August 6, 1945, an atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. The Soviet Union announced its first atomic blast on September 23, 1949. The United States exploded the first hydrogen bomb

on November 1, 1952. On August 12, 1953, the Soviet Union touched off its first hydrogen bomb explosion. On May 15, 1957, Britain conducted its first hydrogen bomb test in the Pacific region. On February 13, 1960, France exploded an atomic device in the Sahara desert. On October 16, 1964, the Peoples Republic of China exploded its first atomic device. They have now had the second explosion also.

We all know that if the nuclear arms race is not arrested and reversed the prospects of mankind are very grim. Some nuclear power in anger or excitement, by some miscalculation or misunderstanding, may set the world ablaze and the resulting ruin will find no distinction between the victor and the vanquished, between the Capitalist and the Communist, the Arab and the Jew.

We have to protect humanity against war. Peace is not the absence of war. It is the presence of fellow feeling and of respect for man as man regardless of his race or nation, class or creed. It is the disarmament of minds that is called for. The future is not all bleak. An old Arab proverb says, "Do not grieve that rose trees have thorns, rather rejoice that thorny bushes bear roses".

The present climate of fear, suspicion, intolerance and misunderstanding has to be changed. On October 10, 1963, a treaty banning nuclear tests, except beneath earth's surface, came into effect: it was signed by the United States of America, by the Soviet Union, by Britain and more than 100 other countries. France and China are not parties to this treaty, though they may be expected to change their minds. Scientific collaboration and co-operation in space research are increasing. We have to strengthen the United Nations, so that it can insulate dangerous situations of conflict or potential war and

bring them within the sphere of peaceful settlement. We can do so only by adhering to the principles and purposes of the Charter.

A few years ago, Jawaharlal Nehru asked us to emphasise the opportunities for understanding and cooperation and not merely those of misunderstanding and conflict. So this year is designated the Year of International Cooperation.

The path of peace is, however, thorny and difficult and the world body has passed through many crises. Even today it is faced with disagreements among member States in regard to the authorisation and financing of peace-keeping operations which are intended to maintain and restore international peace and security.

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