

The Right Moves

At times it seems the world is coming apart. And then it comes together. Witness the aftermath of Asia's devastating tidal waves, and the world's resolve to help the thousands and thousands of victims. Politics and differences fall to the higher power of Earth and our shared humanity. We come together to make the right moves.

International security demands a like and unified response against common threats of our own making. Opportunities abound in 2005 — a “year of bold decision” in the words of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. In May, 189 States are called to decide directions for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), a pact they joined over the past 35 years to block the spread of nuclear bombs. In September, a world summit of leaders decides reform paths vital to cutting poverty, disease, and hunger — threats beside the bomb that too many people must overcome just to live another day.

The NPT Review Conference will show how bold and decisive the year might be. Heading into it, the treaty's parties — five countries with and 184 without known nuclear bombs — stand divided in more ways than one. This edition's distinguished authors debate contentious issues and prospects for resolving them. Most everyone agrees the Conference outcome is pivotal to the world's nuclear regime, including the IAEA's central roles. Few agree on what that outcome might be.

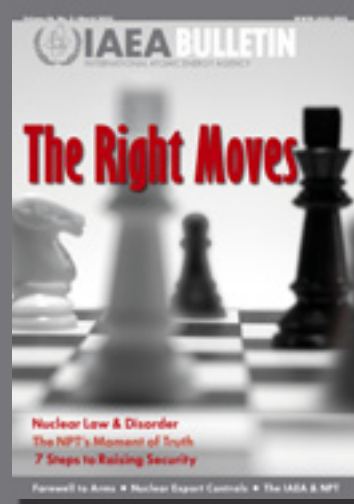
The debate today is bigger than the NPT alone, or any single piece on the complex chessboard of 21st century security strategies. Realities and repercussions of poverty, the lure and danger of nuclear arms, the spectre of nightmare terrorist attacks all complicate the security environment and search for answers.

IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei stands among leaders who see ways forward. He has proposed steps to raise the world's security, by reinforcing a collective framework better suited to curb nuclear proliferation and borderless threats. He says we can “win a race against time” if countries join forces.

The same message resounds from a high-level international panel of sixteen experienced leaders. Their report to the UN on global security threats, challenges and change — which helps set the stage of the September summit — underlines the urgency of rebuilding the world's security system on shared values, responsibilities, actions. Their 101 recommendations take the world deep into this century with actions grounded in a new understanding of human security.

We see a glimpse of the bold new vision at work in Asia — achieving a better, more secure world is less and less about “us” and “them”. It's all about “we” and our willingness to come together and make the right moves.

— *Lothar Wedekind, Editor-in-Chief*



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