Brief report of PSR-Iran activities

(Iranian affiliate of International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War IPPNW)

2011 – 2012

Since the 20th IPPNW world congress in Basel, the PSR-Iran has organized several awareness programs, meeting with policy makers, as well as Participation in International events and conferences. Below is a brief report as of Aug 2012.

❖ June 2011: Meeting with Dr Gunnar Westberg

Report by Dr Gunnar Westberg:

Meeting with Physicians for Social Responsibility, Iran
June 14 2011.

Place: Peace Museum, Tehran. Recently expanded and renovated. Very well arranged and interesting exposition of all aspects on Chemical Warfare and the effect of chemical weapons. Also some information regarding Hiroshima and nuclear weapons.

Participants: Dr Shahriar Khateri and seven other members of PSR, all students or young doctors, all but one female. International Student Representative Leila Moein, now a doctor, was present. Also one doctor from Red Crescent (Red Cross) with experiences worldwide from catastrophes. Members of the Peace Museum staff and its leader.
**Presentation.** I gave the PowerPoint presentation of Climate consequences of a regional nuclear war. Several of the participants were relatively new to PSR and the content was new to most.

**Discussion:** How to strengthen PSR Iran?

Most members are students or young doctors. It is difficult to find support for the organization among senior doctors and faculty members. Awareness is low regarding the consequences of nuclear weapons and why this should concern medical doctors.

In order to give higher recognition to PSR Iran it was proposed that an international student congress of IPPNW should be held in Iran. If this works out right, faculty members and senior doctors could participate and speak at some part of the conference, giving them an understanding and a feeling of responsibility for nuclear abolition.

Medical student exchange, both directions, would also help.

Many PSR Iran students want to go to the Hiroshima congress next year. Financing?

It was agreed that Gunnar should ask in Europe and to some extent in other parts of the IPPNW world about the interest for such a conference among medical students, and look for financing.

Leila should, as ISR, try to find interested students in all countries.

Economy: Most stronger IPPNW affiliates should be able to support one or two students from their land. For students from weaker affiliates we must try to find support. Some but not enough might be available from IPPNW. There must be some local financing for the meeting.

One possibility was not discussed, should have been: Is there any use if a delegation from several (European?) countries come and lecture about their experiences in IPPNW? Is there an audience for such a lecture series? Could also be done with more interactive teaching, such as a field trip, trying to understand how one or a few nuclear weapons could affect a city.
November 2011: Meeting with Iranian foreign minister

PSR-Iran board members had a meeting with Dr Aliakbar Salehi, minister of foreign affairs on 24 November 2011 in the Tehran Peace Museum where the office of PSR-Iran is located.

During his two hours meeting he also had a visit to the peace museum where photos and posters regarding the Nuclear, chemical weapons and their health/Environmental impacts are displayed. In the meeting where founders and volunteers of the Peace Museum had also attended, the foreign minister listened to a report on international disarmament, ant-Nuclear weapons activities and international exchange programs of the PSR-Iran and the Peace Museum.

Dr.Salehi expressed his admiration to the survivors of chemical weapons attacks who are volunteering for the peace museum as guides to share their experience with young generation and raise awareness about danger of WMD despite their suffering and health problems, he also wished that by efforts of IPPNW, peace museums and other civil society organizations we will never witness human tragedies like atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki or chemical attacks against Iran.
December 2011: Attending IPPNW regional meeting in Ankara

Dr Leila Moein as representative of PSR-Iran attended the Middle East Regional Meeting - "Strategies for Peace and Health in the Nuclear Free Middle East" Ankara, Turkey November 26, 2011

January 2012: Meeting with Finish Under-Secretary of State for foreign and security policy Mr. Jaakko Laajava

On 16 January 2012 members of PSR-Iran, had a meeting with Finish Under-Secretary of State for foreign and security policy Mr. Jaakko Laajava who has been appointed by UN Secretary General as the facilitator for the 2012 conference on Middle East Nuclear Weapons Free Zone - MENWFZ. In this meeting which took place in the Tehran Peace Museum board members of PSR-Iran expressed their support to the Idea of MENWFZ and their interest to contribute in the coming 2012 conference in Helsinki.
They also emphasized on the role of civil society organizations in such efforts for creating nuclear weapons free zones.
February 2012: Attending the ICAN Middle East training workshop in Geneva, Switzerland – 20 to 24 February 2012

Representative of PSR-Iran Dr Leila Moein participated in ICAN Middle east training session that ICAN organized in Geneva from February 20 to February 24, 2012.

Training session activities

The regional campaigners heard presentations from:

• Dr Rebecca Johnson (Director of Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy - ICAN Europe-Middle East-Africa President) on the ICAN strategy as well as on Middle East Geopolitics and nuclear diplomacy (two separate presentations)
• Lou Maresca (ICRC) on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons
• John Borrie (UNIDIR) on Lessons learnt from previous successful campaigns Banning Land Mines
• Felix Kirchmeier (FES Geneva) on FES activities worldwide.
• Thomas Nash (Article 36) on the strategy for a campaign - Building up to the tipping point"
• Gabriella Ister (Reaching Critical Will) on the Conference on Disarmament and the disarmament machinery as well as the NPT

The campaigners also watched the projection of the documentary film called "In my life time" by Producer Bob Frye tracing back the history of nuclear weapons from the Second World War to nowadays.

The regional campaigners further attended workshops arranged by:

• Daniela Varano (ICAN Europe-Middle East-Africa), Magnus Lovold (ICAN Norway), Baria Ahmar (ICAN Middle East Communications Coordinator) on Communication campaigning: Learn, share and brainstorm on ICAN communication
• Arielle Denis and Alexandra Reidon ((ICAN Europe-Middle East-Africa) on ICAN administrative and financial rules and procedures, evaluations and reporting guidelines
The regional campaigners had the opportunity to meet with and introduce themselves to H.E. Mr. Benno Laggner and his team, Task Force on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Directorate of Political Affairs of Switzerland.

The campaigners and the ICAN Team had also the opportunity to meet with M. Matthes Bubbe, FES Geneva Director, and during a social event and were given have an extensive vision of FES activities in the Middle East.

On the 23rd of February, a press conference was arranged at the UN to present the ICAN campaign in the Middle East to the Geneva-based journalists.

❖ March 2012: Attending Horizon 2012 meeting on peace boat March 2012

Representative of PSR-Iran, Dr Shahriar Khateri attended the Horizon 2012 meetings on 22-27 March in Civitavecchia-Italy, Onboard the Peace Boat and in Piraeus-Greece.

During the 5 days of meetings and discussion the participants created two important documents including a set of recommendation to the facilitator of the 2012 conference as well as a press release.

Representatives of Middle East countries, international organizations, UN, PNND, etc. were among the participants of the meetings.

Apart from active participation in the discussions, Dr Shahriar Khateri had presentations regarding the following topics:

- Current tensions among Iran, Israel and the US: Nuclear programs, military tensions, urgent issues to be resolved

- What would constitute a “successful” Conference and what do we want to achieve at and through the Conference? How to use the Finnish Conference to initiate the next steps of a regional process as well as international efforts to ban nuclear weapons. Possible scenarios and related activities

- Practical strategies and engagement with governments and other stakeholders, including international organizations, CSOs, parliamentarians and media, between now and the Conference in order to lay the groundwork for an effective outcome
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  Including international organizations, CSOs, parliamentarians and media, between  
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• INFORMATION SHARING: CSO engagement on the establishment 
  of the MENWMDFZ and nuclear disarmament issues

This event was a project of Peace Boat, supported by the Global Partnership for the Prevention 
  of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament 
  (PNND) and in partnership with the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons 
  (ICAN) and IKV Pax Christi.
April 2012: Memorial ceremony for Victims of Chemical Weapons


On Sunday 29 April 2012 at Tehran Peace Museum, the observance of the day of remembrance for all victims of chemical weapons was held. Many participants attended the event including survivors of chemical warfare, representatives of international organizations, Physicians and medical students, academics, journalist, etc.

The UN secretary General's message was delivered by the head of UNIC in Tehran then a Video message by the Director General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons OPCW was shown followed by a message by a survivor of chemical attacks on behalf of Iranian victims of chemical warfare.

Then another survivor of chemical weapon attacks played a piece of music by Iranian traditional instrument - Santoor - and a message by the Parliamentarian for Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation PNND was read.
Finally two olive trees were planted by the guests and 29 white doves were flown symbolizing the 29 April the day of remembrance for all victims of chemical weapons.
August 2012: Memorial ceremony for A-bomb victims

In remembrance of 67th anniversary of the Hiroshima & Nagasaki atomic bomb attack, Tehran Peace Museum will host the installation and video art: “1 second white, 1 second black”. This is an art work by Shirin Abedinirad and Alireza Amirkhajebi, which will be performed on 6th August 2012, from 8:15am to 8:15pm and will be followed on 7th and 8th August.

Side events including workshop for making paper crane, reading Sadako’s story, prayer for world peace, etc. Will be held at the Peace Museum on those days.