

# *A carelessness from hell*



Image by Ben Heine

By Guillermo Alvarado

The Secretary General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, assured that "humanity is one miscalculation away from nuclear annihilation" due to the current crises and the dissemination of atomic arsenals all over the planet.

During the inauguration on Monday of the five-year Conference of the 191 countries that have so far adhered to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Agreement, known by the acronym TPN, the head of the highest world entity called for total disarmament.

Never, he warned, since the strongest moments of the so-called "cold war" have there been moments of such risk as nowadays, when a misunderstanding, an oversight or any fortuitous circumstance is enough to open the gates of hell and put an end to life all over the world.

Guterres pointed out that "Nearly 13,000 nuclear weapons are stored in arsenals around the world. At a time when proliferation risks are increasing and safeguards to prevent this escalation are weakening".

The NPT is the multilateral disarmament agreement with the largest number of adherents, including the five officially recognized nuclear powers, the United States, Russia, France, China and the United Kingdom.

However, other states have developed such weapons, either openly, such as India and Pakistan, or clandestinely as Israel is doing so far, where experts estimate that between one hundred and two hundred warheads are stockpiled without any control by international entities.

There is an obvious double standard in this respect, since Iran is accused without grounds of carrying out a military atomic program, although its authorities have always denied it and are open to any inspection.

Israel, on the other hand, is under no pressure whatsoever to declare its arsenals and accept the rules of the international community.

Leaving open the conference, which should have been held in 2020 but was delayed due to the covid-19 pandemic, Antonio Guterres said that we have been lucky so far, but reminded that luck is not a strategy, nor a shield to prevent tensions from unleashing a nuclear war.

So far the only power that has used the atomic bomb against another people is the United States, which reduced to ashes the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, precisely in one month of August 1945.

The Conference at the UN headquarters is an opportunity to deepen and update the NPT, as well as to ward off the specter of the final war, but political will and good judgment are needed, things that were absent at the last meeting, held in 2015.

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