

**Welcome**  
**2006 International Law Symposium**  
**David Krieger, President, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation**  
**February 24, 2006**

I would like to again welcome the participants and guests to the continuation of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's 2006 International Law Symposium: "At the Nuclear Precipice: Nuclear Weapons and the Abandonment of International Law."

We appreciate very much the cooperation and partnership of Westmont College in this symposium, and we are very pleased to be on your beautiful campus.

We are gathered to grapple with what is arguably the most important issue currently confronting humanity, an issue that threatens not only humanity but most life on our planet.

In the United States and other nuclear weapons states there is often confusion between non-proliferation and disarmament. Non-proliferation is preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries, but it can also be preventing countries that already have nuclear weapons from adding more or qualitatively improving their arsenals. Disarmament is dealing with the nuclear weapons that already exist. It is unreasonable to believe that you can have one of these without the other. In other words, without disarmament, there is likely to be proliferation, and preventing proliferation is necessary for disarmament. The two are also required by international law in the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Robert McNamara was scheduled to be with us for this symposium, but he had a serious accident requiring surgery. Since he cannot be here, I'd like to share with you something that he said in his article in *Foreign Policy* entitled "Apocalypse Soon":

"We are at a critical moment in human history perhaps not as dramatic as that of the Cuban Missile Crisis, but a moment no less crucial. Neither the Bush administration, the Congress, the American people nor the people of other nations have debated the merits of alternative, long-range nuclear weapons policies for their countries or the world. They have not examined the military utility of the weapons; the risk of inadvertent or accidental use; the moral and legal considerations relating to the use or threat of use of the weapons; or the impact of current policies on proliferation. Such debates are long overdue. If they are held, I believe they will conclude, as have I and an increasing number of senior military leaders, politicians, and civilian security experts: We must move promptly toward the elimination or near elimination of all nuclear weapons. For many, there is a strong temptation to cling to the strategies of the past forty years. But to do so would be a serious mistake leading to unacceptable risks for all nations."