ACRONYM INSTITUTE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017
prepared by Dr Rebecca Johnson, Executive Director

1. Summary

The Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy is a UK-based not-for-profit civil society organisation with international reach and UN consultative status through ECOSOC. We provide research, ideas and practical strategies to promote and strengthen humanitarian disarmament and security agreements, environmental sustainability and progress for women, peace and security.

2017 was a remarkable year for the Acronym Institute's work. The major priority was to promote the UN negotiations and ensure conclusion of a strong and effective nuclear ban treaty. Having played an early role in restructuring and leading the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), Acronym participated fully during the UN negotiations in March, June and July. As partners in ICAN’s international steering group (ISG), Executive Director Dr Rebecca Johnson and Communications Manager Clare Conboy contributed to ICAN's strategic and tactical decision-making, analyses, media and communications, as well as behind the scenes with diplomats. Acronym’s US-based director for Conventional Arms and Trade, Dr. Natalie Goldring, joined the team for the June-July negotiations, contributing her experience, insights and analysis.

The culmination of many years of work, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was concluded and overwhelmingly adopted by two-thirds of the UN General Assembly on 7 July. This ground-breaking Treaty prohibits all acts that would enable anyone (state or non-state) to acquire, manufacture, deploy, use or threaten to use nuclear weapons, and requires their total elimination. It provides two practical approaches for currently nuclear-armed states to comply, join and ensure the total elimination of their nuclear armaments and facilities. Soon after the Treaty was opened for signature by the UN Secretary-General, ICAN was awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize for the collectively effective campaign "to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons." Dr Johnson and Clare Conboy participated in the various Nobel-related events, and Dr Johnson was the principal ICAN speaker for the torchlight procession through Oslo, in recognition of her role as co-chair of the ISG (2009-2014) and founder of the Geneva office and initiative to broaden the nuclear ban campaign across Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Ms Conboy's work during 2017 focussed predominantly on ICAN's public outreach and creation of content for media, social media and archival purposes. She co-ordinated the ICAN photo & video team for the TPNW and NPT meetings in March, May, June and July and also co-ordinated the social media team. While responsible for generating a large portion of the photo and video content for immediate use, she also played a major role in messaging and promotional material that ICAN generated during the negotiations. Much of her work has been used by media, the Nobel Peace Prize concert and campaigners around the world. At
the beginning of the year, Ms Conboy gave a well-received TedX presentation on “A millennial’s view of nuclear weapons”. After the TPNW was adopted, Acronym produced and distributed a jointly written ICAN-UK briefing on the meaning of the Treaty for the UK, which was distributed to MPs and MSPs, and widely shared by ICAN partners in the UK. Acronym also arranged for ICAN in the UK spokespeople to receive professional media training.

Dr Johnson augmented her international work with the TPNW negotiations and NPT with presentations at a number of local meetings across Britain, and the International Panel on Fissile Materials meeting in the Middle East. She spoke at parliamentary meetings in Westminster and Holyrood, liaised with individual MPs, and piloted a resolution backing nuclear ban negotiations through the Global Greens Congress. Several of her articles on the Treaty were published by openDemocracy during 2017, and she provided some of the online content that was posted on the Acronym, ICAN and ICAN in the UK platforms during the TPNW negotiations and also the Preparatory Committee meeting of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in Vienna, attended by both Dr Johnson and Ms Conboy.

Though most of Acronym's resources this year were devoted to achieving the TPNW, Dr Goldring has continued to lead important work on conventional weapons. As a member of the leadership team for the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), Dr Goldring furthered international implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and worked with diplomats on IANSA priorities at the Third Conference of States Parties on the Arms Trade Treaty (CSP3) in September 2017. She was also Acronym's representative on the Control Arms, 'Rapid Response Team' for CSP3, and helped draft several Control Arms interventions before and during CSP3. Dr Johnson and Ms Conboy also participated in meetings in Geneva of the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW), for discussions on tackling explosive weapons use in populated areas.

In July 2017 the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT) generously provided a further two-year grant to the Acronym Institute. Together with the second year of our grant from the Polden Puckham Charitable Foundation, this made possible an increase in staff hours from August, enabling Clare Conboy to become a full time staff member. Executive director Dr Rebecca Johnson increased her paid hours to 2.5 days per week at the same time. Due to restructuring of ICAN-UK during the year with more coordination through the management team, Acronym received a 25% portion of JRCT's grant to Medact to take forward ICAN’s mission in the UK. This grant focussed mainly on strengthening ICAN’s network in the UK and social media coverage of the TPNW negotiations and outcome, with focus on the implications for Britain, Trident replacement and the risks associated with the nuclear warhead convoys (Nukes of Hazard).

There were no changes to Board membership in 2017. Due to the work pressures by Board and staff, as well as the office move out of London, it was not possible to hold a face to face meeting in 2017, and decisions were taken by email, in accordance with Acronym’s Articles of Association.

Below we provide greater detail on the range of work carried out by the Acronym Institute during this year, especially the written and audio-visual publications, meetings, media and social media work.
2. Communications, Social Media and Publications in 2017

The content produced by Acronym's communications manager Clare Conboy was used on Acronym, ICAN and ICAN-UK websites, social media platforms and archival platforms eg. Flickr. Much of our content was aimed towards four general target audiences: first, for campaigners who needed to be kept abreast of fast moving developments at the UN in ways appropriate and adaptable for them to share in their own regions; second, educational materials targeted towards the general public and consumers of social media, focussed mainly towards 21-35 year age range; third, media who would want images and footage from the negotiations but were not physically present themselves; and finally, information useful for policy makers.

As well as written and audiovisual materials for use by campaigners, UK and international parliamentarians, Acronym produced briefing materials that were co-written with other ICAN partners in the UK, most notably on the TPNW, focussing on what was agreed, and why the UK should join. In addition, Acronym produced various ICAN-branded materials for outreach, visibility and awareness raising, such as lapel pins, copies of the TPNW's text, explanatory brochures, and large pull up banners for events and meetings. Acronym oversaw the design, printing and purchase of these for use by ICAN partners in the UK, parliamentarians and others.

2.1 Audiovisual materials/videos produced by Clare Conboy for ICAN and Acronym websites

2.11 for Acronym website
Clare Conboy, 'UN #NuclearBan Treaty Negotiations - Week 1', 
https://www.facebook.com/acronymstitute96/videos/1248691931910760/, 30 March 2017

Clare Conboy, 'Gender, Nukes and Feminism'
https://www.facebook.com/acronymstitute96/videos/1308211539292132/, 6 June 2017

2.12 for ICAN-UK website
Clare Conboy, 'ICAN UK at the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty Negotiations, New York'
https://www.facebook.com/icanuk/videos/1333172916764227/, 19 April 2017

Clare Conboy, 'Dr Rebecca Johnson on the #nuclearban treaty',

Clare Conboy, 'Bill Kidd, MSP, from the UN, New York City',

Clare Conboy, 'Do nuclear weapons keep us secure? Setsuko Thurlow',
https://www.facebook.com/icanuk/videos/1420991791315672/, 6 July 2017

Clare Conboy, 'Janet Fenton from New York July 2017',

Clare Conboy, 'Dr. Ira Helfand',
https://www.facebook.com/icanuk/videos/1412859892128862/, 22 September 2017

Clare Conboy, 'Outside Downing Street, Nuclear Ban Treaty Opens',
https://www.facebook.com/icanuk/videos/1498009926947191/
Clare Conboy, edited, 'Rebecca Johnson on Al Jazeera',
https://www.facebook.com/icanuk/videos/1529483050466545/, 23 October 2017

2.13 For ICAN website
Clare Conboy & Frode Ersfjord, 'Day 1 at the Ban Treaty Negotiations!',

Clare Conboy & Frode Ersfjord, 'Day 2 at the Ban Treaty Negotiations!',

Clare Conboy & Frode Ersfjord, 'Day 3 at the Ban Treaty Negotiations!

Clare Conboy & Frode Ersfjord, 'Day 4 at the Ban Treaty Negotiations!

Clare Conboy & Frode Ersfjord, 'Day 5 at the Ban Treaty Negotiations!
https://www.facebook.com/icanw.org/videos/1768143466535898/, 31 March 2017

Clare Conboy, 'Our Resistance.'
https://www.facebook.com/icanw.org/videos/1873466839336893/, 14 June 2017

Clare Conboy, 'Loreto Castro delivers ICAN's statement 19/06/17',
https://www.facebook.com/icanw.org/videos/1883431345007109/, 19 June 2017

Clare Conboy, edited: 'Ai Wei Wei supports the ban',
https://www.facebook.com/icanw.org/videos/1892820360734874/, 26 June 2017

Clare Conboy, 'ICAN reaction to 2nd draft of treaty'
https://www.facebook.com/icanw.org/videos/1895331153817128/, 27 June 2017

Clare Conboy, 'Positive Obligations',
https://www.facebook.com/icanw.org/videos/1897154483634795/, 28 June 2017

Clare Conboy, 'Susi Snyder on military preparations for use',
https://www.facebook.com/icanw.org/videos/1898663590150551/, 29 June 2017

Clare Conboy, 'Sister Ardeth tells the story of the hundredth monkey',
https://www.facebook.com/icanw.org/videos/1900533473296896/, 30 June 2017

Clare Conboy, 'Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner',
https://www.facebook.com/icanw.org/videos/1900855036598073/, 1 July 2017

Clare Conboy, 'Nobel Laureate Jody Williams',

Clare Conboy, 'Setsuko Thurlow',

Clare Conboy & Clara Levin, 'Live Q&A',

Clare Conboy, 'Thank you Setsuko',
2.2 Publications

As developments moved rapidly on the TPNW, we focussed less on written publications in 2017 than in previous years. Instead, as listed above, Acronym put greater emphasis on providing contemporaneous news and analyses disseminated through online platforms.


Natalie Goldring, Five key issues for the 2018 Review Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, IANSI Briefing Paper, June 2017. https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3L4DWS-50KbVVloSWYxcWLTU40dGFwVU5IdF9OTUg4bU5V/view

2.3 Published Articles


Rebecca Johnson, 'Why the UK was wrong to back Trump’s envoy against UN nuclear disarmament talks', openDemocracy, 10 April 2017. https://www.opendemocracy.net/rebecca-johnson/uk-trump-un-nuclear-disarmament-talks


Rebecca Johnson, 'A giant step towards a nuclear free world is in reach – but will it be sabotaged at the last minute?' openDemocracy, 6 July 2017. https://www.opendemocracy.net/uk/rebecca-johnson/giant-step-towards-nuclear-free-world-is-in-reach-but-will-it-be-sabotaged-at-las

Rebecca Johnson, 'A new hope for a nuclear free world - but where is the UK?' openDemocracy, 21 September 2017. https://www.opendemocracy.net/uk/new-hope-for-nuclear-free-world-but-where-is-uk


2.4 Articles quoting Acronym personnel

Michael Birnbaum, 'The world has nearly 15,000 nuclear weapons. This year's Nobel Peace Prize honors the quest to abolish all of them', *Washington Post* 6 October 2017, quotes Rebecca Johnson.


2.5 Media appearances


Rebecca Johnson on BBC World Service on North Korean nuclear and missile tests, 3 September 2017

Rebecca Johnson discussing security, disarmament and defence challenges (appearing as Green Party spokesperson) in RUSI Defence Debate, 22 May

Rebecca Johnson discussing security and foreign policy challenges (appearing as Green Party spokesperson) in RUSI Foreign Policy Debate, 30 May

Rebecca Johnson on ITN lunchtime News 6 October, re Nobel Peace Prize to ICAN

Rebecca Johnson on ITV News at Ten, 6 October, re Nobel Peace Prize to ICAN

Rebecca Johnson on Al Jazeera news on hour, 6 October, re Nobel Peace Prize to ICAN

Rebecca Johnson on BBC Sunday Morning Live [TV talkshow], 8 October, re ICAN, Nobel and UN's Nuclear Ban Treaty


3. Meetings and Presentations 2017

In keeping with Acronym's 2017 priorities, Rebecca Johnson, Clare Conboy and Natalie Goldring participated fully in the TPNW negotiating sessions of the UN General Assembly. Due to her Jury Service taking longer than anticipated it was necessary for Dr Johnson to cancel her participation in meetings that had been scheduled in January.

3.1 Meetings and Presentations - Rebecca Johnson

8-9 February, East London, Lush Summit bringing together lush cosmetics staff and customers with charities and grassroots organisations, spoke on 'Gender, human rights and disarmament: women's leadership in humanitarian initiatives to ban nuclear weapons'.

1 March, London, Westminster Parliament, panel speaker about impact of the UN nuclear ban developments on UK defence policy, on panel with various MPs

9 March, London, University College, spoke on 'Militarism and Violence against women and girls' at public meetings.
13-16 March, Beirut Lebanon, IPFM meeting, private meetings followed by speaking on the nuclear ban treaty at a public meeting at the University of Beirut.

23-29 March NY UN negotiations on the nuclear ban treaty
30-31 March Liverpool Global Greens, wrote and piloted through a resolution supporting the nuclear ban treaty.

6 April London Japan Foundation with Mark Fitzpatrick, discussing security and disarmament challenges for Japan, North Korea and China, including a NWFZ in the Middle East.

19 April Parliamentary CND meeting on the nuclear ban treaty negotiations and upcoming NPT Preparatory Committee Meeting (PrepCom).

29 April Skype lecture with powerpoint for Women in Black Armenia, on Women's nonviolent resistance to militarism and nuclear weapons.

1-12 May, NPT PrepCom Vienna
- 3 May, CND side event on potential impact of a nuclear ban treaty on Trident replacement and UK nuclear policies
- 4 May, Pugwash side event on INF Treaty, then and now.
22 May RUSI Defence debate, spoke on behalf of the Green Party
22 May ICAN-UK meeting on the draft TPNW
30 May RUSI Foreign Policy debate, spoke on behalf of the Green Party

15 June to 7 July UN NY Negotiations on the TPNW
12 July Parliamentary CND to explain the TPNW to MPs
6 August Brighton Hiroshima-Nagasaki commemoration
7 August London Region CND with Costa Rican ambassador and Kamila Shamsie
4-6 September, York, IPPNW-Medact conference, gave a keynote opening speech and coordinated two workshops on the TPNW and ICAN-UK campaigns including the "Nukes of Hazard" warhead convoys.
13 September, Policy Network roundtable on post Brexit security and defence options for the UK
14 September, Pontefract Peace and Faith Groups, St Nicholas Church, Pontefract, organized by Nukes of Hazard and Yorkshire CND
15 September, Leeds University public meeting on the TPNW, hosted by Yorkshire CND.
20 September Edinburgh Scottish Parliament meeting with MSPs about the TPNW being opened for signature at the UN
28 September speaker on peace and denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula at a CND rally in Whitehall.

3.2 Meetings and presentations, Natalie Goldring

Dr. Natalie Goldring and Dr. Edward Ifft, chaired by Mark Fitzpatrick, 4 August 2017 (Tape available at: http://www.iiss.org/en/events/events/archive/2017-7df9/august-4c2c/nuclear-ban-2b5c)

5 October, Conducted webinar for IANSA members on key issues as we look toward the 2018 PrepCom and RevCon 3 on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons

18 December, Conducted follow up webinar for IANSA members on preparing for the 2018 PrepCom and RevCon 3

3.3 Meetings and presentations, Clare Conboy


14 February 2017, University of Porto, Portugal, TEDx, ‘A Millennial’s View of Nuclear Weapons’, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6Pl4DualOk&t=1s,

23-31 March NY UN negotiations on the nuclear ban treaty

1-12 May, NPT PrepCom Vienna

22 May ICAN-UK meeting on the draft TPNW

15 June to 7 July UN NY Negotiations on the TPNW


4-6 September, York, IPPNW-Medact conference, contributed to Acronym, ICAN in the UK and Medact visual content for social media and media use.

4. Institutional Establishment, Staff and Board

The Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy is a non-profit company ‘limited by guarantee’. After two years of free-lance work at the UN in Geneva by Rebecca Johnson (for monitoring the CTBT negotiations and NPT meetings, among others, on behalf of a consortium of mainly US and UK NGOs, nicknamed ‘the Acronym Consortium’) she established a disarmament research organisation in England and Wales in 1996, No. 3149465. Over the next few years the name was changed to represent the organisation’s origins, educational role and journal 'Disarmament Diplomacy', becoming the Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy.

In accordance with the mission statement and objectives in our Memorandum and Articles of Association, Acronym conducts research and analysis and through meetings, publications and outreach facilitates the fuller participation of civil society and nations in developing and implementing effective measures to eliminate nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, demilitarise relations between states, promote human security and sustain a healthy environment.

Acronym is constituted to:

• conduct research and obtain, analyse and disseminate ideas and information on peace and human security, disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation, environmental sustainability, women’s security, rights and democratic participation, gender equality and international law and human rights, including international humanitarian law;
• educate or assist in the education of the public and elected representatives on all relevant aspects relating to debates, policies and negotiations on human, national and international peace and security, including the effects of weapons, security doctrines and disarmament;
• organise meetings and observe or participate in discussions, negotiations, verification and promotion of talks, solutions, negotiations, developments and implementation of agreements, resolutions and treaties in these fields; and
• distribute reports, proceedings, ideas, information and education materials, and to facilitate and assist the distribution of ideas and material collated by other researchers, scientists and activists, whether governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental, in all relevant aspects relating to human, national and international peace and security issues, as described above.

4.1 Acronym Institute Board of Directors in 2017:
David Atwood Ph.D (Chair)
Professor Christine Chinkin
David, Lord Ramsbotham, GCB, CBE
Nomi Bar-Yaacov Adv.

4.2 Staff/Personnel
Executive Director: Rebecca Johnson Ph.D
Director, Conventional Arms and Trade: Dr Natalie Goldring
Communications Manager: Clare Conboy

Due to budgetary constraints, Executive Director Dr Johnson was paid for only 2 days a week until August 2017, at which point it became possible to increase this to 2.5 days. Clare Conboy was paid 2.5 days per week for Acronym, which was increased to full time in August. Natalie Goldring, who receives an academic salary in the United States, continued to represent Acronym at UN and other meetings relating to conventional arms control and the Arms Trade Treaty.

4.3 Registered Office
24 Colvestone Crescent, London E8 2LH (until 28 July 2017)
Werks Central, 15-17 Middle Street, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 1AL (after 1 August 2017)
email: info@acronym.org.uk;
directors’ email: rej@acronym.org.uk
website www.acronym.org.uk
Auxiliary websites managed by Acronym on behalf of ICAN in the UK”
www.uk.icanw.org.uk
www.nukesofhazard.co.uk

4.4 Accountant
Simon Kingsley, AIMS Accountants for Business, 58 Montague Road, London, E8 2HW
Tel: 0207 503 1131  (mob: 0790 894 7598)

Signed on behalf of the Board

David Atwood
Director
Chair of the Board