

*“Hasten the day.”*

# LIBERATION DAY

*– make it real –*

*– be a part of it –*

LINK 1: Liberation Day: what it is and why it must happen, the sooner the better.

LINK 2: Overcoming the key **political** obstacles to agreement on establishing a NFWF; in particular, policies that include the option of escalating from conventional to nuclear warfare.

LINK 3: Overcoming the key **technical** challenges to agreement on establishing a NFWF; in particular, the implementation of Liberation Day.

Liberation Celebration...

*“Hasta el día.”*

# EL DIA DE LIBERACION

*– hazlo realidad –*  
*– sea parte de él –*

Vínculo 1: Día de liberación: lo que es y porque debe suceder, cuanto antes mejor.

Vínculo 2: Superar los principales obstáculos **políticos** para lograr un acuerdo sobre el establecimiento de un mundo libre de armas nucleares; especialmente, políticas que incluyan la opción de escalar una guerra convencional a una guerra nuclear.

Vínculo 3: Superar los principales retos **técnicos** para lograr un acuerdo sobre el establecimiento de un mundo libre de armas nucleares; especialmente, la implementación del Día de la Liberación.

Celebración de la Liberación

## Día de Liberación: lo que es y porque debe suceder

Liberation Day: humanity's "finest hour" \*.

It will be known as the day we slayed the nuclear dragon that held us in chains for decades. The day-after celebrations will be legendary, "Free at last, thank God Almighty, free at last!" Those who took part in the Day will be looked upon as heroes, being asked to recount their stories time and again.

Liberation Day must and can come. Here is what it is all about and how you can make it happen sooner rather than later and how, starting now, you can become part of it.

From a nuclear-weapon-plagued world to a nuclear-weapon-free world

Nuclear disarmament will not occur smoothly like a jetliner gliding onto its runway. Rather, the final descent will be more like a helicopter dropping directly down on its landing pad. That final descent is Liberation Day, the day when all remaining nuclear weapons are disabled. Indeed, the actual disablement will occur at a precise moment in time agreed upon by the states which possess nuclear weapons.

Why this dramatic finale? Because of the basic nature of nuclear deterrence, the concept which underpins the nuclear policies of all states which possess nuclear weapons. Deterrence maintains that in a world in which nuclear weapons exist, the only way of 'ensuring' that they are not used is for each possessor to be able to absorb a nuclear attack yet still retain the capacity to retaliate in kind. The inevitability of retaliation is thought to be sufficient to 'deter' the potential aggressor from attacking in the first place. [\*H/N, NNWS.] Since a 'pre-emptive' attack is more likely to succeed against a small nuclear arsenal, it is general believed that there is a minimum arsenal size which must be maintained to have a 'credible' deterrent. [\*Some nuclear armed states assert that they are already at 'minimum deterrence'.]

While there is nothing to prevent a nuclear armed state from simply renouncing nuclear weapons and disarming – several have, \* it is widely believed that it would be a serious mistake to allow a situation in which only one country has nuclear arms. [\*This is why, for example, the USSR had a crash program to counter the US's post-WWII nuclear monopoly.] Some apply this 'logic' just within their region, and thus pairs of nuclear armed states arise. [\*Notable exception: the Middle East, chemical.] In short, the end state of any nuclear reduction process will most likely be several nuclear armed states – and no less than two – with 'minimum' arsenals of several hundred nuclear weapons each, or even thousands. The challenge at that point is to move from reductions to elimination, i.e. to Liberation Day.

This challenge is very rarely identified as explicitly as we have just done here. And there is essentially no work being done to prepare for it. Efforts relating to the verification of reductions

are somewhat relevant to the effort which must go into LD, but they do not touch on several key aspects of LD. The prevailing attitude seems to be, “Let’s deal with reductions, and think about what may follow later.” This attitude guarantees the delay of LD, by years, if not decades. Which, of course, means exposing the entire world to the risk of nuclear devastation significantly longer than what might otherwise be avoidable. To help shorten exposure, Zona Libre is beginning work on the LD challenge starting **now**.

If all nuclear weapon states were practicing nuclear deterrence as described above, Zona Libre would focus exclusively on the technical aspects of LD. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Some states and alliances believe that, since nuclear weapons exist, one might as well extract maximum ‘benefit’ from them. Should large-scale conventional warfare begin, the option of escalating to nuclear warfare is kept at the ready. The ‘logic’ is that the prospect of conventional war “going nuclear” will suffice to deter ones adversary from initiating a conventional war, or at least to ensure that the scope of any conflict remains quite limited.

Barely nine years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, NATO adopted a policy of threatening escalation to nuclear warfare in the face of potential conventional warfare with the Warsaw Pact. It is claimed that this policy was the main factor in keeping the peace in Europe during the Cold War. It is also claimed that this was done at a far lower cost, since nuclear weapons “deliver more bang for the buck” than conventional arms. While the first claim is inherently unprovable\* and the second dubious at best, they are nonetheless deeply held beliefs, so much so that NATO has retained this basic policy in the post-Cold-War era “just in case.”

Unfortunately, others have followed suit; most notably the Russian Federation after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, but also Israel, Pakistan, and North Korea. In every case, the nuclear-escalation policy has five very negative consequences:

1. First and foremost, any major crisis or violent conflict involving two nuclear armed state with such a policy automatically becomes a nuclear crisis. Each side has to worry that if they hesitate to strike first they will forfeit the ‘initiative’ to the enemy. The situation is improved considerably if even one has ruled out that option. There are no nuclear crises between states which have ruled out initiating nuclear warfare.
2. The scope of military ‘utility’ of nuclear weapons is increased and, thus, nuclear arsenals are expanded far beyond any minimum deterrence level. And this is not limited to just ‘tactical’ weapons; to make the threat of escalation credible, it is often posited that ones ‘strategic’ forces must be dominant. This leads to nuclear arms races between adversaries, in which unbridled competition overwhelms any ‘reasonable’ calculation of ‘requirements.’
3. Despite the fact that nuclear policy is based on the premise of retaliation, it is often claimed for this policy that ‘limited’ nuclear escalation will lead to conventional de-escalation, i.e. the adversary would back off rather than retaliate in kind. There is no evidence whatsoever to support this wishful thinking – and plenty to cast doubt on it – making this ‘miscalculation’ a prime candidate for how nuclear war could begin.
4. The notion that nuclear force is a ‘cost-effective’ counter to conventional force is used by advocates of nuclear weapon acquisition in non-nuclear-weapon states. Nuclear armed states that claim a ‘right’ to nuclear escalation and spend hundred of billions of dollars on

asserting it are in a weak (or at least very hypocritical) position to deny that ‘right’ and ‘savings’ to others.

5. Importantly, any state which is not prepared to deal with conventional threats solely by conventional means is not prepared to live in a nuclear-weapon-free world. To negotiate in good faith on achieving that objective, they must, at the very least, have a plan of action for arriving at the point of renouncing nuclear escalation which does not unduly delay LD.

Again, with a view to avoiding prolonged exposure to the risk of nuclear war, Zona Libre will work to terminate nuclear escalation policies without further delay. These policies and LD are not the only political obstacles and technical challenges to establishing a NFWF. In the following two sections, we will describe several of the other obstacles and challenges and explain in greater detail why we have decided to focus especially on these two and what working for their fulfillment will entail.

### Political obstacles

There are three international developments that could negate everything being advocated herein:

1. A surge in nuclear proliferation;
2. An intense nuclear arms race; and – God forbid! –
3. Nuclear weapon use, unintentional or intentional.

Fortunately, there is a broad array of NGOs and governments working assiduously to avoid these disastrous outcomes. Zone Libre supports these efforts (including links to their websites) and will, on occasion, shine a light on an important initiative. Regarding (3), the nuclear armed states have a good track record – close calls notwithstanding – regarding ‘negative control’, i.e. that absent an authorized order to proceed toward actual use no such steps are taken. For this we can all be very grateful.

‘Positive control’ – that authentic orders to use nuclear weapons are fully and swiftly executed – has never been put to the test and is only rarely discussed. Positive control is crucial to the credibility of deterrence, but – in one of the several paradoxes of nuclear deterrence – resort to positive control to the point of executing a nuclear attack implies a failure to deter, thereby vitiating the original logic of applying positive control. Thus, no matter how intensely positive control procedures are practiced and how passionately the intent to obey orders are expressed, it is essential that should an order ever be given, it must be disobeyed and thwarted by all means necessary (\*Bordne?). Zona Libre will reiterate this point whenever circumstances justify it.

Aside from nuclear escalation (as discussed above), there are two other scenarios that could lead to nuclear weapon use. Both are despicable actions, but nonetheless both have come close to occurring during the Nuclear Age. Indeed, one could argue that the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki set a precedent for attacking countries that cannot retaliate with nuclear weapons. Saying, in the context of a conflict with a non-nuclear-weapon state, that “all options are on the table” without clarifying that one does **not** mean nuclear weapon use, is tantamount to threatening nuclear attack. The retention of this option is bad policy for many of the same reasons nuclear escalation is bad. (\*Negative security assurances.)

But even worse is the vile and disastrous policy of attempting a pre-emptive, first-strike against a nuclear armed adversary. The ‘challenge’ is to strike so hard and fast that the adversary’s supposedly credible retaliatory capacity is proven to be less than credible. Presumably some level of retaliation does occur, but the ‘responsible’ initiators of the first strike (in their cozy bunkers) consider the damage which it inflicts (upon their fellow-countrymen) to be ‘acceptable.’ Indeed, ‘Victory!’ is declared. But this is short-lived: the global climatic impact is the same no matter whose cities have burned. And the leader who struck first will be considered the greatest war criminal of all time.

Once again, there are groups that keep an eye out for developments that might tempt some military leaders to believe that a preemptive strike is a ‘viable’ option. Certain proposed weapon systems, if not stopped, could feed such an illusion. Similarly, a greatly expanded (and improved) missile defense system could be called upon not to blunt an enemy’s first strike, but to ‘mop up’ their retaliatory strike. Missile defense is not in that league yet, but there is so much hype associated with getting funding for it, that the salesman might start to believe his own pitch, and move ‘boldly’ when extreme caution is actually required.

Aside from policies that allow for escalation from conventional warfare to nuclear warfare, discussed earlier, there are three other political factors blocking the way forward to a NFWF:

1. Prestige
2. Institutional inertia
3. Exaggerated national sovereignty regarding inspections or enforcement

Again, there are NGOs and governments addressing all these points and Zona Libre lends them its support. It is a sad commentary on the human condition that these relatively petty concerns might stand in the way of such a global good as establishing a NFWF, yet they do.

(1) Nuclear arms arose in an era in which the prospects for progress fuel by scientific breakthroughs seemed unlimited. The prestige of nations was associated directly with a capacity to exploit this historic trend. When President Kennedy foresaw 25 nuclear weapon states by 1975 (\*), prestige was, arguably, the primary driving force. The NPT addressed this problem in part by offering access to nuclear energy technology in exchange for nuclear weapon abstinence. Nonetheless, even today, this continues to be factor, particularly where “punching above one’s weight” can compensate (at least in the mind of some leaders) for failure to progress sufficiently in other fields.

The new Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons should have the effect of stigmatizing nuclear weapons possession. Rather than endowing prestige, nuclear weapon acquisition and possession has become shameful. Zona Libre fully supports this fundamental shift.

(2) “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it!” is the motto of those within the nuclear weapons establishments in the post-Cold-War era. While they would not be inclined to acknowledge it, preserving nuclear deterrence (including in some cases nuclear-escalation) means preserving their livelihood and influence. In the United States, the military has deliberately spread defense contracts to virtually all Congressional districts to ensure that employment in every Representative’s district would be impacted by budget cuts. Dependence on nuclear weapons

expenditures is not quite as pervasive but the same principle applies. NGOs advocate conversion plans which would preserve jobs, but many politicians find it easier to stick with what they already have. Zona Libre supports conversion, but would also argue that some economic dislocation is a price well worth paying to establish a NFWF.

(3) In a NFWF, the international agency for monitoring the non-acquisition regime (most probably a strengthened IAEA) will need to be able to conduct short-notice, on-site inspections. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union was extremely wary of on-site inspections, convinced that they would be used as 'fishing expeditions' by their adversary's military intelligence. At a time when the West dominated the UN and the IAEA, this was perhaps an understandable concern. While there is room for improvement in the IAEA's impartiality, the fear of misuse of on-site inspections has been alleviated by years of good practice. Still paranoia is hard to dispel, especially when it wraps itself in the flag of national sovereignty.

The chief concerns in this regard are North Korea, Pakistan, and Israel. The latter two have never hosted IAEA inspectors, and the former expelled them in 2009. But, the nuclear armed states are potentially also of concern. They have special safeguards and 'Additional Protocols' that do not touch upon their military activities. While most of them have ratified the CWC, their attitude toward a CWC on-site inspections has yet to be put to the test. In many respects, the nuclear non-acquisition regime could deliver the same level of confidence with less intrusiveness than the chemical regime. But the latter is still far from universal, and universality is particularly crucial when dealing with the last of the WMDs.

Zona Libre will consistently be a strong supporter of the IAEA, while at times offering constructive criticism, usually in conjunction with other NGOs and governments.

Why Zona Libre's focus on escalation from conventional to nuclear warfare?

The negative impact of retaining the escalation option has already been enumerated. If renunciation of this policy could actually be achieved, the positive impact would be immense. Not only would it widen the scope for further reductions, it would also eliminate the single most worrying risk of nuclear war, especially when nuclear weapon deployments are brought into line with the new policy, i.e. no longer kept on high-alert and no longer forward deployed. Some worry that this would reduce the urgency of proceeding toward elimination. But "reduced urgency" does not by any means mean "no urgency." And, most importantly, the world will have reached the mountain pass between the Valley of Death and the Promised Land. Henceforth the route to a NFWF will no longer be an uphill slog, rather a downhill course. Nations will possess nuclear weapon sole because others do. They will be ready to make the transition to a world in which they do not possess nuclear weapons because no other states does.

Zona Libre wants to be a reconnaissance scout, pointing the way toward this low passage through the difficult terrain ahead of us.

Campaigning against nuclear escalation policies

Our slogan is, “Never go nuclear!” Our strategy is to make the voices of the NWFZs of the world heard in the internal debates of the nuclear armed states and alliances. This is difficult for the NWFZ governments to do because diplomacy is a state-to-state affair in which the internal affairs of another government are considered off limits. This limitation does not apply to civil society or even to transnational city-to-city interactions. Citizens of nuclear dependent states are for the most part unaware that a majority of countries in the world have formed NWFZs. Even fewer are aware of the impact of nuclear war on the global climate and that this new knowledge has driven NWFZ countries to push for an outright prohibition on nuclear weapons. Everyone should know about these important developments.

Regarding their own country’s dependency on nuclear weapons, many are unaware that their alliance reserves the ‘right’ to escalate from conventional to nuclear warfare -- to go nuclear. This is because in most cases the policy was agreed to without any public debate whatsoever, more often than not in total secrecy. Nonetheless, in several countries, a debate on use policy is emerging. It is currently confined largely to expert circles, but the debate has great potential to reach far wider circles of people. While, at first blush, it may seem logical to resort to a ‘more powerful’ weapon when at a disadvantage in a conventional conflict, further discussion can bring out the grave dangers of a nuclear-escalation policy. Attention can then be focused on dealing with conventional conflict by conventional means and retaining nuclear weapons for the ‘sole purpose’\* of threatening to retaliate if attacked by nuclear weapons (until such time as it is agreed internationally to eliminate them all).

Most people, once informed, do not want their government or their ally to ever initiate nuclear war – go nuclear -- “on their behalf”. Within alliances, it is particularly disconcerting for the citizens of non-nuclear weapons states that the decision to escalate is in the hands of another government – one that possesses nuclear weapons. So, while the message from the NWFZs will be directed at all countries ensnared in nuclear escalation policies, it can be anticipated that the earliest positive results will come in non-nuclear states.

Zona Libre will use all variable lines of communication to send this message northward to the United States and Canada. It will reach out to sister organizations in Africa, to do likewise in Europe (with the help of Austria, Ireland, and Sweden); in Central Asia, to do likewise regarding Russia; in Southeast Asia, regarding China, India, and Pakistan; in the South Pacific regarding Australia (part of the NWFZ!), Japan and North and South Korea. The more southerly countries are not going to passively stand by as the more northerly countries bring devastation upon the entire world.

Our northward message will be:

*Nuclear weapons are WMD and like all others are now prohibited. Your country should sign and ratify the new ban treaty. If you cannot achieve that right away, then at least end the nuclear escalation policy. And if you cannot achieve that right away, then at the very least commit to a plan to end it within a few years. Only then will you be in position to fulfill your NPT obligation to “pursue in good faith and bring to conclusion” negotiations on the establishment of a NFWF.*

[The preceding needs further development.]

The technical challenges



The technical challenges are several. Here are the main ones in the order their solutions will be called upon:

1. Accounting for (tagging) all special nuclear materials prior to LD
2. LD, i.e. comprehensive disablement of nuclear weapons and pits
3. Dismantlement of weapons and disposition of special nuclear materials – IAEA
4. Monitoring a nondiscriminatory, nuclear non-acquisition regime – IAEA
5. Implementing enforcement decisions. UNSC/UNGA

(2) Liberation Day has been discussed above and will be addressed below. Zona Libre will encourage and follow work in the other four areas.

(1) and (5) depend to such a large degree on the collaboration of governments, that there will not be much room for NGOs to play a significant role. Zona Libre will join other NGOs in pressing governments to get busy on these two points. (3) and (4) have also been discussed above, in the context of overcoming the political obstacle of exaggerated national sovereignty. But there are technical challenges the IAEA will also have to address, and the question of whether they will receive adequate funding to meet those challenges. Zona Libre will work with others to ensure sufficient funding for the IAEA. Should innovative ideas relevant to any of these challenges emerge in the course of our work, Zona Libre will of course share them with appropriate governments or agencies. (\*self-tagging)

Why Zona Libre's focus on Liberation Day?

The primary reason is that no other NGO or government is giving this top priority. This lack of attention implicitly conveys the message that the establishment of a NFWF is a long way away. We want to counter this complacency.

It is none too soon to begin work on LD. It will be an unprecedented undertaking and as such unanticipated aspects of the challenge are bound to arise as effort is put into addressing it. Better to encounter those surprises and glitches now than at the last minute. We want to ensure that the world is ready to move into action when a favorable geopolitical climate arises. The favorable periods can be short and failing to take full advantage of them can, indeed, contribute to their shortness.

Another reason is that this is an excellent means of bring new people into the campaign for a NFWF. Liberation Day is an inspiring concept. The prospect of being part of such an historic occasion is highly motivating. It gives practical meaning to learning more about establishing a NFWF generally, as well as LD itself.

Furthermore, the development a large and growing roster of qualified and trained people (see outline below) will serve as a vital response to the cynicism of those within the nuclear establishments who see business as usual as 'the future.' As US President Eisenhower said to UK Prime Minister Macmillan in a radio-TV program, London, August 31, 1959:

*“Indeed, I think that people want peace so much that one of these days governments had better get out of the way and let them have it.”*

### Preliminary outline of the LD project

The LD project will proceed in phases, each involving a main activity and an area of research.

Pre-launch: Outreach for partners and advisors and development of on-line recruitment training

First phase: “Broadcast” recruitment and research on personnel/organizational structure

Second phase: “Narrowcast” (headhunter) recruitment and research on equipment/logistics

Third phase: Sponsors recruitment and research on protocol/legal issues

Fourth phase: Global Task Force (GTF) training programs and research on safety/security in the field

Fifth phase: Field exercises and evaluations

Sixth phase: Implementation

Each phase will involve activity-effectiveness training and research meetings of experts.

There is likely to be considerable overlap of the phases.

Launch of each new phase will depend upon adequate progress in the earlier phases and sufficient funding to proceed to the new phase. Obviously, the final phase will depend on a ‘green light’ from all the relevant governments.

As stated earlier, the Liberation Day project is prepared to step aside once an intergovernmental agency is charged with carrying forward the Liberation Day exercise. The governing board of the project will evaluate whether the assigned agency has the capacity to advance the work at least as rapidly and effectively as the project itself. If not, the project will continue. If so, our personnel roster will be made available to the agency as well as the research results of all the active phases. Our aim is that the project’s inputs will allow the international agency to address its assignment more rapidly and effectively than it might otherwise. From that point on, the project will serve as a civil society supporter of the agency.

### Financing

Participants in the project can earn points by successfully undertaking specific activities, such activities and their points-value having been approved and set by the board. (Those who wish to contribute their time on a strictly voluntary basis can, of course, waive their points.)

An endowment will be established for the project. Donations large and small will be accepted. Direct grants will be solicited to cover operating costs as well; sponsorships should defray the costs of specific project activities and expenditures.

Interest earned by the endowment will go toward expenses incurred in training for and implementing Liberation Day. Upon implementation of Liberation Day, the endowment will be liquidated with funds going toward reimbursement of points earned, distributed to all point holders in proportion to the points they hold.

If an agency takes over LD, interest from the endowment’s capital will go to supporting its activities. After LD, the endowment will be liquidated as already described.

Liberation Celebration ... Celebración de la Liberación

[brainstorm!]