



Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space

Report to Abolition 2000 AGM

July 2022

Like most groups during the 'age of Covid' we have had to change the way we do our peace and justice work. Extensive travel and in-person meetings are few and far apart. Zoom has become for most of us the way we do presentations and hold meeting these days.

Just since January of 2022 I have been involved in more than 60 Zoom events on behalf of the Global Network (GN). Many of them have been due to invitations to speak about the militarization/nuclearization of space or about the war in Ukraine.

Outdoor vigils are increasingly back on track and due to the war in Ukraine I have been regularly on the street. Again, since the start of 2022 I have attended 39 vigils. Two 'No war with Russia' vigils a week in my community of Brunswick, Maine keep me busy.

During the past year we have published two editions of our newsletter *Space Alert*. We've also begun our own podcast that we also call *Space Alert* and have recorded 11 of these shows.

In addition we have hired two part-time social media workers for the GN. One of them works on Twitter-Instagram-Facebook and the other produces a monthly space issues video and does the tech work on our podcast.

One of our board members in India is organizing her second nationwide 'peace in space conference' this coming October. In 2019 she successfully brought together 200 students/faculty from 20 Indian law schools to discuss space law issues.

A second new board member from India, also a space law professor, early in 2022 organized a large Zoom-type event for hundreds of law students to hear talks by many experts – including from three GN leaders.

The passing away (due to Covid) of one of our most energetic and effective board members J. Narayana Rao has hit us hard. But all the current activity going on throughout India on the space issue is largely due to his efforts.

Several of our GN board members have been increasingly active trying to help build resistance across the Asia-Pacific to growing US-NATO attempts to escalate tensions in the region against China.

Similarly GN board members from Sweden, Russia, Canada and the US have been heavily involved in building opposition to US-UK-NATO escalation of conflict in Ukraine and beyond aimed at Russia.

In 2019 the GN organized a study tour to Russia. Since that time our connections to Russian and Ukrainian activists have widened and we continue to work with these people in our efforts to help prevent WW III.

All across the globe we are finding major expansion of rocket launch facilities. Often sold as 'civilian' launch sites we are finding they quickly come under the control of corporations like Lockheed Martin and begin launching military missions. So increasingly we are tracking these sites, making contact with local populations where possible, and are attempting to widen public education about these facilities.

In the UK there is a major thrust to build more launch sites and our GN board convener Dave Webb is working on this issue and recently co-authored a study entitled *For Heaven's Sake: Examining the UK's Militarisation of Space*.

These efforts around rocket launch facilities has also helped us to better amplify the environmental impacts of space launches. Leaking rocket fuels, launch exhaust pollution and further depletion of the Earth's ozone layer from launch discharges all confirm the need for greater attention of these concerns. At the same time increasingly crowded orbits are becoming problematic as the 'parking spaces' in orbits around our planet are dangerously congested.

Like most peace groups across the west our memberships are aging and our active numbers are reducing. Our hope is thru our efforts to increase our social media presence that we will be able to at least reach younger people with our work. So far we have seen a marginal increase at best. But these kinds of generational changes take time to develop so we persist in our efforts.

Best wishes to all.

~ Bruce K. Gagnon is coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space