

The Erice Statement

It is unprecedented in human history that mankind has accumulated such a military power to destroy, at once, all centres of civilization in the world and to affect some vital properties of the planet.

The danger of a nuclear holocaust is not the unavoidable consequence of the great development of pure Science.

In fact, Science is the study of the Fundamental Laws of Nature.

Technology is the study of how the power of mankind can be increased.

Technology can be for peace and for war. The choice between peace and war is not a scientific choice. It is a cultural one: the culture of love produces peaceful technology. The culture of hatred produces instruments of war. Love and hatred have existed forever. In the bronze and iron ages, notoriously pre-scientific, mankind invented and built tools for peace and instruments of war. In the so called “modern era” it is imperative that culture of love wins.

An enormous number of scientists share their time between pure Science research and military applications. This is a fundamental source for the arms race.

It is necessary that a new trend develops, inside the scientific community and on an international basis.

It is of vital importance to identify the basic factors needed to start an effective process to protect human life and culture from a third and unprecedented catastrophic war. To accomplish this it is necessary to change the peace movement from a unilateral action to a truly international one involving proposals based on mutual and true understanding.

Here are our proposals:

1. Scientists who wish to devote all of their time, fully, to study theoretically or experimentally the basic laws of Nature, should in no case suffer for this free choice, to do only pure Science.
2. All Governments should make every effort to reduce or eliminate restrictions on the free flow of information, ideas and people. Such restrictions add to suspicion and animosity in the world.
3. All Governments should make every effort to reduce secrecy in the technology of defense. The practice of secrecy generates hatred and distrust. To start a ban for military secrecy will create greater stability than offered by deterrence alone.
4. All Governments should continue their action to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons by additional nations or non-national groups.
5. All Governments should make every effort to reduce their nuclear weapons stockpiles.
6. All Governments should make every effort to reduce the causes of insecurity of non-nuclear powers.
7. All Governments should make every effort to ban all types of nuclear tests in war technology.