

# Nuclear Abolition Day

June 25, 2011



## WHAT IS NUCLEAR ABOLITION DAY?

Nuclear Abolition Day is a day of action chosen each year for people all over the world to demonstrate our demand and determination to get negotiations on a comprehensive treaty to outlaw and eliminate all nuclear weapons. The first Nuclear Abolition Day was coordinated by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, and held on 5 June 2010 in response to the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, which had just concluded at the UN.

## WHY IS THIS YEAR'S DAY OF ACTION 25 JUNE?

At last year's Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, the five original nuclear weapon states (the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France and China) reaffirmed the unequivocal undertaking they adopted in 2000 "to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals" and agreed to "accelerate concrete progress on ... steps leading to nuclear disarmament" and to . The leaders of these five nations will meet in Paris on 29 and 30 June to discuss nuclear security as a follow-up to the Review Conference. June 25 is an opportunity to send them, and all other governments, a loud and clear message: it is time to begin work on a treaty to outlaw and eliminate all nuclear weapons.

## WHAT KINDS OF ACTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE?

On the 2010 global day of action, more than 80 actions took place in 30 countries. These included street demonstrations, benefit gigs, nuclear-free picnics, vigils, marches and education workshops. We encourage people to be as creative as possible. All actions must be non-violent. The aim is to raise public awareness about nuclear dangers and build political support for negotiations on a treaty banning nuclear weapons completely.

To schedule interview opportunities and receive material regarding 2011 Nuclear Abolition Day, please contact:

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# MEDIA KIT

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW  
-And might have never thought about-  
NUCLEAR WEAPONS



“ Nuclear abolition is the democratic wish of the world’s people, and has been our goal almost since the dawn of the atomic age. Together, we have the power to decide whether the nuclear era ends in a bang or worldwide celebration. ”

Desmond Tutu  
Nobel Prize Laureate  
ICAN supporter

## QUICK FACTS ABOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

### BAD NEWS

- **There are still more than 20,000 nuclear weapons in the world**
- Most nuclear-armed states continue to modernize or update their nuclear arsenals
- **Nine countries have the policies and capabilities to use nuclear weapons**
- Terrorist groups have tried to get nuclear weapons and components
- **The use of a small fraction of the world’s nuclear weapons would cause a global ‘nuclear winter’, massive agricultural collapse and famine that could last decades and kill billions round the world**
- Nuclear weapons programmes divert scarce resources away from health care, education, conflict prevention and other essential needs

### GOOD NEWS

- **There is political momentum and growing popular support for a total nuclear weapons ban**
- 140 states are already in favor of negotiating a comprehensive nuclear abolition treaty
- **In the past 20 years we’ve achieved effective multilateral treaties banning other indiscriminate weapons, including chemical weapons and landmines**
- UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has called for negotiations to abolish nuclear weapons
- **We CAN outlaw nuclear weapons, sooner than you think**



“ It is time for all governments to come together – with the support of civil society around the world – to chart our course to a nuclear free future by beginning the negotiation of a comprehensive treaty banning the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of nuclear weapons. Now. Not in years or decades. Now! ”

Jody Williams  
Nobel Prize Laureate  
ICAN Supporter

## A SECURITY THREAT

It is estimated that the world's nine nuclear-armed states possess nearly 22,400 nuclear warheads. While some are in storage, around 8,000 warheads are operational. Over a thousand are still on high alert status and ready to launch on short notice. Accidents and the risks of unauthorised use increase the security threats from these arsenals.

Since the U.S. and Russian arsenals constitute over 95 % of global nuclear weapons, ongoing US-Russian reductions have ensured that total numbers are still decreasing. **However this positive trend obscures the fact that the nuclear-armed states are still modernizing and upgrading their nuclear arsenals and that nuclear weapons are treated as necessary for deterrence and integral to national security policies and alliances.**

Russia and the United States have recommitted to maintaining a triad of nuclear strategic forces that can be fired from land, sea and air; China is modernising, while Britain and France have recently signed a 50-year cooperation treaty to maintain and renew their nuclear weapons systems. India and Pakistan are both producing plutonium and high-enriched uranium to add to their growing nuclear arsenals. Israel is the only country in the Middle East with nuclear weapons, but Iran may soon follow. Iran has already mastered the technology to enrich uranium and build missiles, and could emulate North Korea by withdrawing from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and developing nuclear arms. Non-proliferation has not stopped these developments. Only nuclear disarmament and abolition can deal with – and end – these security threats. (1)

## AN ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT

During the Cold War, people were afraid of a US-Russian nuclear war. They understood that in addition to killing millions and causing massive radioactive contamination, the effects on the environment would be catastrophic, resulting in decades of 'nuclear winter'. When the risk of all out nuclear war receded, many stopped worrying about nuclear weapons. They were wrong. New studies by some of the world's foremost scientists have confirmed not only that the health and environmental effects of using relatively low numbers of nuclear weapons would be more severe and prolonged than previously thought, but that abrupt global cooling, unprecedented in recorded human history, would follow a regional nuclear war involving 100 Hiroshima-size nuclear weapons – just 0.4 % of current nuclear weapons arsenals.

The radioactive fallout would drastically reduce sunlight and cause sudden cooling, with disruption of agriculture, shorter growing seasons and likely reduced rainfall, by as much as 40 percent in the Asian monsoon regions. Such abrupt cooling and disruption of agriculture and fuel would cause global famine around the world over several successive years.(2)

If fewer weapons were used, there could still be climate disruption severe enough to disrupt agricultural production and trigger high prices and food hoarding, which would make food inaccessible to poor people in much of the world. It seems reasonable to conclude that few of the 800 million people who are already malnourished would survive famine on this scale would lead to major epidemics of infectious diseases. The prolonged cooling and resultant famine in illnesses,

like plague, which have not been prevalent in recent years might again become major health threats. **War and civil conflict that would be created by famine on this scale.**(3)

To schedule interviews opportunities on the medical effects of nuclear explosions with Prof. Tilmann Ruff please contact: Mr. James Norman /// Communications Coordinator /// ICAN Australia /// james@icanw.org  
To schedule interviews opportunities on the environmental effects of nuclear explosions with Prof. Ira Helfan please contact: Ms. Daniela Varano /// Campaign Communications Coordinator /// ICAN Europe-Middle East - Africa /// daniela@icanw.org /// tel: +41-78- 726 26 45

“ Prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons would enhance global security and be consistent with existing international humanitarian law, and it would also greatly diminish any perceived military benefits that a nuclear terrorist or aggressor might hope to gain. ”

Dr. Rebecca Johnson  
Executive Director & Co-founder of the Acronym Institute and editor of Disarmament Diplomacy.



## A HUMANITARIAN THREAT

When weapons cause indiscriminate, unacceptable harm, especially to non-combatants, disarmament becomes a humanitarian issue. Few issues are more appropriate for humanitarian concern than nuclear weapons.

When a nuclear weapon explodes, the initial blast and heat will kill instantly. The numbers depend on the size of the warhead and density of population. Military and political leaders may have equipped themselves with underground bunkers, leaving civilians and non-combatants most vulnerable. Fires and radioactive fallout generated by the explosions will spread the deadly effects even further, causing suffering and death for years after the initial explosion. For survivors, the immediate effects may include life-threatening burns, dehydration and diarrhoea, severe bleeding and serious infections caused by immune system suppression. If they survive these threats, they face an increased risk of developing certain cancers and of passing on genetic damage to future generations. In Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the initial fatalities increased two- to three-fold in the first five years, with cancers and birth defects continuing to harm people exposed to nuclear radiation and their families.

Although the size and destructive force of nuclear weapons escalated in the 65 years since nuclear weapons were first used in Japan, the ability of states, international agencies and medical science to deal with the radiation and health consequences of nuclear weapons have not. The ICRC has recently completed a thorough analysis of its capacity, and that of other international agencies, to bring aid to the victims of the use of nuclear, radiological, chemical or biological weapons. Despite the existence of some response capacity in certain countries, at the international level there is little such capacity and no realistic, coordinated plan. **Therefore, any use of nuclear weapons in the future would replicate and amplify the nightmare images from Hiroshima and Nagasaki.** (4).

Biological and chemical weapons are already banned. Anyone using such weapons would now face arrest and trial for crimes against humanity. It is an absurd anachronism that the use of nuclear weapons – the most inhumane of all – is not yet outlawed. This failure is due to power politics, not legal judgment. Recently, civil society and some governments have begun to explore initiatives aimed at getting the United Nations and bodies such as the International Criminal Court to recognise that the indiscriminate, inhumane and long-term effects of nuclear weapons mean that all uses should be outlawed and classified as crimes against humanity and war crimes.(5)

To schedule interviews opportunities on the humanitarian perspective of nuclear weapons with Dr. Rebecca Johnson please contact: Ms. Daniela Varano /// Campaign Communications Coordinator /// ICAN Europe-Middle East - Africa /// daniela@icanw.org /// tel: +41-78- 726 26 45

“ To all the people at large who are in a position to influence their leaders, I appeal to them to exercise their sanity and begin to work at dismantling and destroying all nuclear weapons. We know that in the event of a nuclear war there will be no victors, because there will be no survivors. (6) ”

His Holiness the Dalai Lama  
Nobel prize laureate  
ICAN Supporter



## THE COSTS

Nuclear weapons drain enormous human and economic resources. According to the Brookings Institution, the US alone spent \$ 5.8 trillion on nuclear weapons from the early 1940s – 1996. **No one knows how much it will cost to clean up contaminated production and testing sites or store nuclear waste for thousands of years.**

The 9 nuclear-armed states pass a shocking new milestone this year by collectively spending approximately one hundred billion dollars on their nuclear programs. That tidy sum represents about 9 percent of their total annual military spending(7) . **At this rate the nuclear-armed states will spend at least one trillion dollars on nukes over the next decade.(8)**

### THIS ROUGHLY CORRESPONDS TO:

- 2,564,102,564,000 meals for starving people;
- 285,714,286,000 blankets for refugees;
- 106,951,872,000 mosquito nets which prevent malaria;
- 31,466,331,000 child immunizations. (9)

**The opportunity cost of this expenditure is staggering. In all the nuclear weapons states, weapons programmes divert scarce funds away from health care, education and other essential services.**

	2010		2011 Est.		
	Total Military Spending <sup>†</sup>	Nuclear Weapons		Nuclear Weapons	
		Core Cost	Full Cost	Core Cost	Full Cost
US	687	30.9	55.6	34	61.3
Russia	53-86	6.8	8.7	9.8	12.5
China	90-114	5.3	6.8	5.8	7.6
France	61	4.6	5.9	4.7	6.0
United Kingdom	57	3.5	4.5	3.5	4.5
India	35	3.2	4.1	3.8	4.9
Israel	13	1.5	1.9	1.5	1.9
Pakistan	5	1.4	1.8	1.8	2.2
North Korea	~10	.5	.7	.5	.7
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1011-1068</b>	<b>57.7</b>	<b>90.0</b>	<b>65.4</b>	<b>101.6</b>

Note: figures in billions of US dollars. Core costs refer to operating, maintaining, and upgrading the nuclear arsenal and its key nuclear command-control-communications and early warning infrastructure; full costs add unpaid/deferred environmental and health costs, and missile defenses assigned to defend against nuclear weapons. (10)

# MANY THREATS

## One Solution

### A COMPREHENSIVE BAN OF ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS

#### Frequently Asked Questions about a nuclear ban

##### Q:WHAT DOES A BAN MEAN?

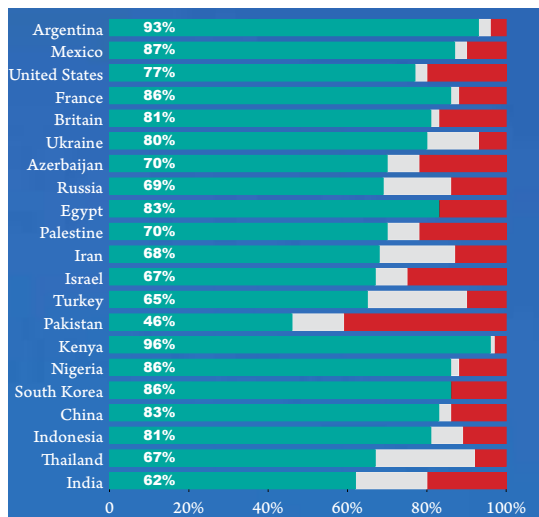
**A:** A comprehensive legal ban, sometimes generically called a 'nuclear weapons convention', would prohibit the use, development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling and transfer of all nuclear weapons and provide for their total elimination, just as Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions have done for those two types of inhumane and mass destructive armaments. It would provide stronger controls on nuclear materials, verification and legal penalties to prevent and deter governments and terrorists from acquiring nuclear devices and violating the fundamental ban on their use.

##### Q:WHAT A BAN WOULD ACHIEVE?

**A:** Even before such a treaty entered into force, the process of building support and negotiations will contribute to delegitimising nuclear weapons and diminishing their attractiveness for proliferators. It will strengthen norms against the use of nuclear weapons, leading to recognition that – as with chemical and biological weapons - any use of nuclear weapons would be a war crime and crime against humanity. After decades of fragmented arms control, a comprehensive treaty-making process to abolish nuclear weapons is more likely to succeed, in part because the non-nuclear countries and civil society can take the lead in changing nuclear mindsets that perpetuate nuclear reliance. It would fulfil long-held objectives such as a fissile materials production ban and complement, strengthen and fulfil existing treaties such as the NPT and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Finally, a ban will help build trust and confidence among nations by establishing much more effective systems to verify compliance.

##### Q:IS IT POSSIBLE?

**A:** Comprehensive multilateral treaties have been negotiated to outlaw other inhumane weapons such as biological weapons, chemical weapons, anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions. Nuclear weapons should not be the exception. The goal of a nuclear abolition treaty has the support of two-thirds of all governments and overwhelming endorsement from public opinion.



#### SUPPORT OF A TOTAL BAN OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Source: World Public Opinion 2008

# False myths About Nukes

## TIME TO TRASH THE NUCLEAR DOCTRINE?



### NUCLEAR WEAPONS KEEP US SAFE AND PREVENT WARS 1

Between 1945 and 1997, nuclear-armed states have been involved in more wars than non-nuclear weapons states. (11). Nuclear weapons neither prevented nor assured victory in a range of wars involving nuclear-armed states, for example in Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, the Falklands or Iraq. Nuclear weapons risks and possession intensify mistrust and can contribute to instability.

Public fears were manipulated on the issue of 'weapons of mass destruction'. Public fear of a nuclear-armed Iraq was deliberately manipulated when the possibility of Iraq retaining 'weapons of mass destruction' (WMD) was evoked to justify the 2003 war in part because Saddam had been developing nuclear weapons before the 1990-91 Gulf War. The earlier pursuit of nuclear weapons left Iraq vulnerable. Similarly, concerns about Iran's potential nuclear weapons ambitions have greatly heightened tensions over its uranium enrichment and nuclear programme.

### 2 NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE LEGITIMATE

In its 1996 Advisory Opinion on the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), -the highest court in the world on general questions of international law -stated, a "fundamental" and "intransgressible" rule under humanitarian law is that "States must never make civilians the object of attack and must consequently never use weapons that are incapable of distinguishing between civilian and military targets." The ICJ also stated that under International Humanitarian Law, the "methods and means of warfare, which would preclude any distinction between civilian and military targets, or which would result in unnecessary suffering to combatants, are prohibited. In view of the unique characteristics of nuclear weapons, ... the use of such weapons in fact seems scarcely reconcilable with respect for such requirements". Self-defence warrants "only measures which are proportional to the armed attack and necessary to respond to it".

Some of the rules derived from the UN Charter and the Geneva Conventions, for example, require that the use of any weapon:

- **MUST BE PROPORTIONAL TO THE INITIAL ATTACK,**
- **MUST BE NECESSARY FOR EFFECTIVE SELF-DEFENCE,**
- **MUST NOT BE DIRECTED AT CIVILIANS OR CIVILIAN OBJECTS,**
- **MUST BE USED IN A MANNER THAT MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN MILITARY TARGETS AND CIVILIAN NON-COMBATANTS,**
- **MUST NOT CAUSE UNNECESSARY OR AGGRAVATED SUFFERING TO COMBATANTS,**
- **MUST NOT AFFECT STATES THAT ARE NOT PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT, AND**
- **MUST NOT CAUSE SEVERE, WIDESPREAD OR LONG-TERM DAMAGE TO THE ENVIRONMENT.**



### **NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE NECESSARY TO OUR SECURITY**

**3**

Nuclear weapons are futile against any of today's real security threats. Nuclear weapons cannot help us deal with climate chaos, depletion of water, environmental degradation, poverty, hunger, overpopulation, pandemics such as AIDS or avian flu, failing states, non-state armed groups or terrorists, organised crime, or trafficking in drugs, people and arms.

Nuclear weapons have no value tactically because they have no battlefield utility. (12) Military commanders in Europe and the US frequently point out that nuclear weapons do not have military utility. For example, the US Defense Science Board Task Force on Future Strategic Strike Forces recommended that the nuclear capability of "forward-based, tactical, dual-capable aircraft should be eliminated because there is 'no obvious military need for these systems. (13)

### **NUCLEAR WAR COULD BE 'LIMITED'**

**↑**

Nuclear war cannot be limited - the catastrophic effects would involve the entire planet. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration Goddard Institute for Space Studies demonstrated that even a relatively small conflict involving nuclear weapons would cause profound changes in the environment that would be more long-lasting than previously thought. They based this conclusion on more accurate modelling able to represent the atmosphere up to 80 km and simulate plume rise to the middle and upper stratosphere (14).

If the immediate effects of using nuclear weapons would produce a humanitarian disaster, the indirect effects of the nuclear explosions would have devastating consequences for the planet. A total ban is the only foreseeable and feasible solution to eliminate the threat of nuclear war and a devastating nuclear winter from the Earth.

# WHAT IS ICAN?



## WHO WE ARE?

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) aims to galvanize public and government support for multilateral negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear abolition treaty. Such a treaty would outlaw the production, testing, possession and use of nuclear weapons, and establish the mechanisms needed to eliminate them within an agreed timeframe. Already, a majority of nations support this plan, as do a majority of the world's people. But we need your help to make it a reality.

## BUILDING THE MOVEMENT

ICAN was launched in a dozen countries in 2007, including at a meeting of parties to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in Vienna, Austria. Since its inception, ICAN has developed and coordinated strategies to put the objective of nuclear abolition into the public and political mainstream. We do our best to strengthen networking between national and international campaigners and build understanding of why a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons is the most realistic approach for getting rid of nuclear weapons.

To date, more than 200 organizations in 60 countries have joined the campaign, with International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War and Mayors for Peace among the first partners. Notable figures have also come on board as ICAN ambassadors — including the Dalai Lama, anti-apartheid leader Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize-winning anti-landmines advocate Jody Williams, jazz legend Herbie Hancock and cricket champion Ian Chappell. With their support, we have taken our message to new constituencies. ICAN does not want to be an organisation, so much as a strategically effective campaign, linking many autonomous groups and individuals around the world to support this key objective. Consistent with our fundamental adherence to nonviolent principles and the shared goal of a comprehensive nuclear abolition treaty, different ICAN groups or affiliates may promote different campaign messages, such as the Million Pleas viral video launched by ICAN Australia on August 6, 2010.

## OUR PLAN

Building on the unprecedented level of support for a comprehensive nuclear abolition treaty that ICAN helped to generate at the 2010 NPT review conference, we are now working to mobilise civil society and strengthen pressure on elected representatives and governments to prioritize a total ban of nuclear weapons as the next big negotiating objective of the international community.

As part of our strategy we are broadening nuclear disarmament campaigning by building links with other major international and national humanitarian, human rights, anti-war, environmental and disarmament organizations, showing how nuclear threats, proliferation and our goal of abolition are connected with their issues on a planet-wide security canvas.

ICAN develops and disseminates a range of materials in all media to inspire campaigning and explain the need for a nuclear abolition treaty to a range of audiences, from young to old, across a spectrum of regional and political interests.

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