



# An SOS for the Human Race

## The Case for a Nuclear Weapons Convention



**Nuclear weapons have the power to exterminate much of life on Earth. Doctors, lawyers, scientists and disarmament experts have written a roadmap to eliminate nuclear weapons – a Model Nuclear Weapons Convention**

### The Problem

There are more than 25,000 nuclear weapons in the world, thousands of them on hair trigger alert. New nations are seeking nuclear weapons and major weapons states are renewing their stockpiles. Talks at the United Nations have deadlocked over who should act first towards abolition.

### The Solution

A Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) offers a vision of what a nuclear-weapons-free world might look like and provides a road map for getting there. The model NWC outlined in the book *Securing Our Survival* (available at [www.icanw.org](http://www.icanw.org)) is based on treaties that already work to ban chemical and biological weapons.

### What does the Convention say?

The Model Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibits the development, testing, production, stockpiling, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. States possessing nuclear weapons will be required to destroy their arsenals; no one will be allowed to rebuild them or even to produce the fissile materials that could be used to build new weapons.

### How do we know it will work?

Abolition proceeds in 6 practical phases:

1. Taking nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert
2. Removing nuclear weapons from deployment
3. Separating warheads from delivery vehicles
4. Disabling warheads
5. Removing & disfiguring the “pits” (fission-triggers)
6. Placing the fissile material under international control

The Model NWC will establish an international monitoring system to ensure that no one cheats. The

necessary verification technologies already exist and have a proven track record.

### Why Call for an NWC Now?

The time is ripe: in December 2007 at the UN General Assembly, 127 governments—including nuclear-armed China, India and Pakistan—called upon states to immediately fulfil their nuclear disarmament obligations “by commencing multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention.”

A Nuclear Weapons Convention could be achieved very quickly, if countries only muster the political will to do it. The Partial Test Ban Treaty was concluded in 10 days of determined negotiation in July 1963 after years of deadlock.

**Opinion polls show that overwhelming majorities—including citizens of nuclear weapon states—want a nuclear-weapon-free future.**

### Where is the Political Will?

The leaders of the Nuclear Weapon States have held onto their nuclear weapons, despite their promises to eliminate them. Only the combined efforts of citizens and supportive non-nuclear governments will overcome this resistance to change.

To drive this critical project, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and other non-governmental organizations have launched the **International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)**.

We aim to:

- galvanize international opposition
- demonstrate the feasibility of nuclear abolition, and
- inspire our government representatives to negotiate a Nuclear Weapons Convention.

It is the will of the majority of the world's people to build a sustainable future, **securing our survival**.

**For more information, and to get involved in ICAN, visit [www.icanw.org](http://www.icanw.org)**