

# The Austrian Pledge

## Stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons

**N**uclear weapons are the only weapons of mass destruction not yet explicitly prohibited under international law. The “Austrian Pledge” is a commitment by states to fill this unacceptable “legal gap”. It offers a platform from which they can – and must – launch negotiations in 2015 on a treaty banning nuclear weapons.

### About the Austrian Pledge

Austria presented the Austrian Pledge on 9 December 2014 at the conclusion of the landmark Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, attended by 158 states. This important document provides governments with the opportunity to move beyond fact-based discussions on the effects of nuclear weapons to the start of diplomatic negotiations for a ban. Outlawing nuclear weapons is not a radical proposition: it enjoys widespread support among states, and is the logical and necessary course of action in light of the indiscriminate and catastrophic effects of any use of these weapons.

### How states can endorse it

In January 2015 Austria wrote to all states inviting them to associate themselves with the Austrian Pledge by sending a *note verbale* to the nearest Austrian mission or embassy. ICAN is confident that, over the coming months, a large number will do so. At the same time, they should signal their readiness and commitment to join negotiations in 2015 on a treaty banning nuclear weapons. As the global civil society coalition working to achieve such a treaty, ICAN stands firmly behind the pledge and will mobilize our campaigners around the world to promote it among governments, parliamentarians and members of the public. This pledge, together with the list of endorsing states, will be presented at the Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference in April and May 2015.

### AUSTRIAN PLEDGE

- “Austria calls on all states parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to renew their commitment to the urgent and full implementation of existing obligations under article VI, and to this end, to identify and pursue effective measures to **fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons**, and Austria pledges to cooperate with all stakeholders to achieve this goal.”
- “Austria pledges to cooperate with all relevant stakeholders, states, international organizations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, parliamentarians and civil society in efforts to **stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons** in light of their unacceptable humanitarian consequences and associated risks.”



Austrian foreign minister Sebastian Kurz

Read the Austrian Pledge at [hinw14vienna.at](http://hinw14vienna.at)