

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Adopted by 122 states on 7 July 2017 at a United Nations (UN) diplomatic conference, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) provides a reassertion of the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. Prohibiting its parties from developing, testing, possessing, hosting, using, and threatening to use nuclear weapons, as well as assisting, encouraging, or inducing those prohibited acts, the Treaty codifies norms and actions that are needed to create and maintain a world without nuclear weapons. It also provides a yardstick against which progress towards the abolition of nuclear weapons may be measured.

The Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor measures progress related to signature, adherence, entry into force, and universalisation of the TPNW. It also evaluates the extent to which the policies and practices of all states comply with the core obligations in the TPNW. The term “compliance” is used in a broad sense to refer to the compatibility of each state’s behaviour with the prohibitions of the TPNW, regardless of whether the state in question has adhered to the TPNW. A key purpose of the report is to highlight specific activities that will need to be discontinued if the UN is to achieve its goal of creating a world without nuclear weapons.

The nine nuclear-armed states had a combined total of approximately 14,500 nuclear warheads as of June 2018. The total number of nuclear weapons in existence has been reduced dramatically since the estimated peak of approximately 70,000 warheads in 1986. But the number of nuclear weapons in the world (or in a single state’s possession) is only one dimension of the “arms race”. Other important indicators include the yield of each warhead, the size of financial investments in nuclear-weapon systems and technology, and the precision and nature of the means of delivery. All nine nuclear-armed states are currently engaged in large nuclear-weapon modernisation projects, and the last few years have seen a spike in overt nuclear threat-making. The world has on several occasions been brought to the brink of nuclear war or accidents through miscommunication, misunderstandings, and technical malfunctions. The intellectual straightjacket of nuclear deterrence has prevented states from drawing lessons from these realities and thus from pursuing sustainable political solutions.

The TPNW will enter into force 90 days after its 50th ratification or accession. As of 20 October 2018, 13 months after the Treaty opened for signature, a total of 70 states had signed or adhered to the TPNW. 69 states had signed it, of which 18 had also ratified. In addition, one state, the Cook Islands, had acceded to the TPNW. 31 more states need to adhere to the Treaty to trigger entry into force. The rate of adherence to the TPNW is faster than for any other weapons-of-mass-destruction (WMD) treaty. This indicates that the early entry into force of the TPNW is possible. On the other hand, the number of states that have signed the TPNW at 13 months after it opened for signature is low compared to the other WMD treaties.

The Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor identifies 127 states, or more than three-fifths of the world’s states, as TPNW supporters. This figure includes both the 70 states that have already signed or adhered to the TPNW, and an additional 57 states that voted in favour of adopting the TPNW at the UN in July 2017 but that have not yet signed it. Support for the TPNW is high in all regions apart from Europe. Among the non-supporters there is a mix of outspoken opponents of the Treaty and states that have not yet taken a stance.

Categorising the world’s states according to their policy on nuclear weapons, the Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor finds that nuclear-weapon-free security strategies are the norm, not the exception. Today, 157 states – four-fifths of the world’s 197 states – have rejected any role for nuclear weapons in their security policies. This includes the 127 TPNW supporters and 30 other non-nuclear-armed states. A minority of 40 states – one-fifth of the world’s states – explicitly base their security on the possession and potential use of nuclear weapons: the nine nuclear-armed states of China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPR Korea), France, India, Israel, Pakistan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States; and 31 states which the Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor refers to as “nuclear-weapon-endorsing states”.

The nuclear-weapon-endorsing states are Albania, Armenia, Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Turkey. These states have opted not to develop nuclear weapons themselves, but to rely instead on the possession and potential use of such weapons on their behalf by a nuclear-armed ally (sometimes called a “nuclear umbrella”). Basing their security on their allies’ continued retention of nuclear weapons, they function as enablers of nuclear armament and bear responsibility for the perpetuation of nuclear risks. They could therefore also be described as “hidden” nuclear-weapon states, since their role in preventing progress towards a world without nuclear weapons had not been given much attention prior to the adoption of the TPNW. In France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, increased spending on nuclear weapons is frequently justified as a means of “reassuring” allies or meeting “extended deterrence commitments”.

Looking at compliance with the TPNW, the picture is only slightly different. The Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor finds that 155 states maintain policies and practices that are compliant with all the Article 1 prohibitions of the TPNW. These are states that have already signed or adhered to the TPNW, or could do so without complications regarding Article 1 compliance. Compliance by two of the 157 states that reject any role for nuclear weapons in their security policies – Kazakhstan and the Marshall Islands – is, in our view, uncertain, in terms of their obligations under their respective nuclear-weapon-free-zone agreements as well as under the TPNW. Both states host sites where missiles specifically designed to deliver nuclear warheads are periodically tested. The two states can sign and ratify the TPNW, but may have to make changes to their policies and practices to become compliant.

The Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor finds that a minority of 40 states currently engage in behaviour that contravenes one or more of the Article 1 prohibitions. The non-compliant states are the 9 nuclear-armed states and the 31 nuclear-weapon-endorsing states. These states may also sign and ratify the TPNW, but would clearly have to change their policies and practices to become compliant. Europe is the region with the most states whose practices and policies contravene the TPNW, while Africa is the only region where all states have been found to be compliant.

The Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor sets out clear interpretations of each of the seven subparagraphs of Article 1(1). Article 1(1)(e) – which prohibits states from assisting, encouraging, or inducing other states to engage in acts prohibited by the Treaty – is the most discussed and debated of all the provisions in the TPNW. It is also the prohibition contravened by the greatest number of states. The nuclear-armed states’ retention of nuclear weapons is enabled in various ways, and mostly by European states. The Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor concludes that there is nothing in the TPNW that rules out membership in military alliances that include one or more nuclear-armed states, or joint military operations with nuclear-armed states – as long as this does not involve assistance or encouragement of prohibited activities. Combining alliance membership and adherence to the TPNW is entirely feasible. The TPNW does, however, prohibit states from encouraging or inducing their nuclear-armed allies to continue to possess, test, or use their nuclear weapons. In order to be compliant with the TPNW, non-nuclear alliance states must disavow any and all possession and use of nuclear weapons on their behalf.

The Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor contains state profiles for each of the world’s 197 states. They are categorised according to each state’s basic policy on nuclear weapons, with separate subsections for the 127 TPNW supporters, the 30 other non-nuclear-armed states, the 31 nuclear-weapon-endorsing states, and the 9 nuclear-armed states. The state profiles contain summary data on treaty status and compliance for each state, as well as other key facts. Recommendations for action are made to each state.

VISIT BANMONITOR.ORG TO READ THE FULL REPORT



Norwegian People’s Aid