

Final Statement of the Nuclear Weapons Working Group at the World Peace Forum in Vancouver for inclusion in the final forum document.

World Peace Forum Calls on the United States to Lead the World in Nuclear Disarmament

Clearly understanding that nuclear weapons are illegal, immoral and environmentally destructive and that the only way to ensure that they will never be used is to eliminate all nuclear weapons,

Privileged to have heard the powerful warnings from individuals who have experienced terrible pain and loss due to the effects of nuclear radiation from nuclear bombs, tests, uranium mining and other stages of the nuclear cycle,

Warned further of the risks posed by the 27,000 nuclear weapons (especially those thousands on high alert) now present in the world;

The Forum calls on all states – especially the nuclear weapons states – to fulfil their obligations under international law to work rapidly toward the goal of nuclear abolition.

We call upon all nuclear weapons states to:

- a) Permanently take all nuclear weapons off hair trigger alert;
- b) Reject all policies by all states for nuclear use;
- c) Begin negotiations on treaties covering various aspects of the arms race, including a legally-binding ban on weapons grade fissile material;
- d) Compensate all victims of nuclear weapons' use, production and testing;

We call upon all states to urgently comply with their legal obligation and revive negotiations in good faith on an agreement for verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament and to end reliance on nuclear weapons within all defence policies.

We encourage all global citizens to:

- a) Invite their mayors to join Mayors for Peace;
- b) Invite their parliamentarians to join the Parliamentary Network for Nuclear Disarmament;
- c) Engage in public education on the need to eliminate the threat posed by nuclear weapons and on the role of international law;
- d) Work persistently to have their community declared a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone, backed with effective legislation;
- e) Encourage professional associations to develop codes of conduct to prohibit their members from participation in development of nuclear weapons,
- f) Work to establish effective national whistle blower protection legislation.

We encourage all states to live up to their obligations as reaffirmed by the International Court of Justice that international humanitarian law requires negotiations leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons, and welcome the consideration by some governments

and non-governmental experts to seek a new opinion from the ICJ on the fulfilment of states' responsibilities.

There is an inextricable link between nuclear power and nuclear weapons¹. We reject the notion that nuclear power is the solution to any problem; we call for the phasing out of nuclear power and for the establishment of an International Sustainable Energy Agency. States must work to redress the harm suffered by indigenous and colonized people because of the nuclear fuel cycle.

As the world's leading military and nuclear power, the United States bears a special responsibility to lead the other nuclear weapon states in fulfilling their obligations to reduce reliance on nuclear weapons in security doctrine and eliminate their weapons stockpile. Even as the United States condemns North Korea for threatening to test a new missile, the Pentagon is poised to develop its own new generation of nuclear-capable long-range delivery systems. And while President Bush declares a nuclear-armed Iran would pose "a grave threat to the security of the world," the United States is modernizing every weapon type in its vast nuclear arsenal.

Largely through the actions of the United States, a new arms race has begun. The rejection of international law (including arms control treaties), the drive to deploy ballistic missile defences and weapons in space, the refusal to rule out the development of new warheads, the threats of first use of nuclear weapons have caused the other nuclear weapon states to work to modernize and expand their forces and have caused non-nuclear states to seek to develop their own nuclear weapons.

While recognizing the special responsibility of the Bush administration in forcing the world into this impasse, we acknowledge that the current administration is simply exacerbating policies that predate this administration and will – if not resisted by civil society – continue beyond its term in office.

One way to break the stranglehold of nuclear weapons is to work on one of the weakest links in the nuclear chain: oppose plans in the United Kingdom to replace its Trident nuclear fleet. The submarine fleet, based in Scotland, is opposed by a broad cross-section of the Scottish public. The replacement system would waste at least 25 billion pounds. We endorse the call of Scottish and other UK activists to convince the government not to replace Trident, thus beginning a domino effect of nuclear disarmament.

Submitted by the Nuclear Weapons Working Group at the World Peace Forum
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¹ Plowshare regrets the inclusion of this reference to nuclear energy in an otherwise powerful appeal, and does definitely not share the authors' view in this matter. In spite of the indispensable development of renewable energy sources, and provided that all due safety and security precautions are taken, nuclear energy is currently – and probably until around 2050 - the only answer to the increase in the world's energy demand and the ensuing rise in atmospheric CO₂ related to the use of carbon-based fuels.