

Public Statement to the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the  
2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the  
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

Faith Communities Concerned about Nuclear Weapons

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As faith communities concerned about nuclear weapons, we collectively call this body's attention to the pressing need to work productively for a world free from the most destructive weapons ever created. Our respective faith traditions and our lived experience as people of faith compel us to speak together, regardless of our differences, to denounce this threat to our shared humanity.

We recognize the fearfulness that has driven nations to take up arms against threats to their security but we collectively choose to face that fear not with additional posturing or intimidation but with continued action for a world based on trust, compassion and equality. We believe that this peacebuilding work requires courage, resilience and imagination. Our faith-based traditions have given us both the imperative to continue this humanitarian disarmament work, even, perhaps especially, when there are so many voices of despair and pessimism.

We share and value the basic human right to live in a world free from the fear of total destruction, in an environment free from contamination. The indiscriminate and destructive capacity of nuclear weapons makes them wholly incompatible with our faith traditions and requires our consistent advocacy for their total and complete elimination.

We believe in the power of people of goodwill to work for a better world, to shape policy and institutions so that they foster the fullness of life and support human dignity. The growing support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons has given us great cause for joy and enhanced hope for humanity.

We have heard the criticism that the TPNW is divisive but we find this logic distracts attention from the larger, more profound way that the threat of nuclear annihilation divides humanity into those with the ability to threaten and those who live under threat.

Our faith traditions demand that we care for and accompany those who are suffering. We continue to mourn the devastating impacts of nuclear testing and nuclear detonations on human bodies, human communities and the planet. We believe that there should be accountability for those who cause human suffering and that the nuclear horrors of the past demand that we act in solidarity and support for all victims. We share the determination of these global hibakusha that no one else endure what they have suffered.

We call upon the members of this body to take seriously your accountability to the suffering of the past, overcoming the mutual mistrust and fear that would prevent you from opening the way to a better, safer future for all. We respect the seriousness of your mission and we implore you to work earnestly for a world free of nuclear weapons.

At this Preparatory Committee session, we strongly urge all States to engage in constructive dialogue toward the shared goal of a world free from nuclear weapons; we urge those States that question the value of the TPNW to engage in good-faith debate toward the elimination of nuclear weapons.

As people of faith, we urge States parties to:

- 1) Heed the voices of the world's hibakusha by unequivocally recommitting to achieving a world without nuclear weapons, by supporting the signing and ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)
- 2) Actively assist victims and remediate contaminated environments and to engage in international cooperation and assistance to affected communities
- 3) Recognize that all effective measures are mutually reinforcing and advancement in each area supports advancement in others. The entry into force of the TPNW; the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT); halting the production and eliminating global stockpiles of fissile materials; irreversibly dismantling global nuclear weapon production architecture; ending programs designed to increase the accuracy and versatility and lower the threshold for use of nuclear weapons; and eliminating nuclear weapon stockpiles, among other effective measures, are global undertakings, fully compatible with and contributing to the realization of the objectives and commitments of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)
- 4) Recognize that there are core prohibitions common to the NPT and the TPNW such as those against the transfer of nuclear weapons, against assisting other states in acquiring nuclear weapons, etc., which can be supported regardless of a state's position toward the TPNW. We encourage all States to engage in constructive dialogue regarding the strengthening of such prohibitions as a concrete and practical step toward fulfilling the obligation of all States Parties to the NPT to pursue nuclear disarmament.

## Signatories

ACT Alliance  
All Souls Nuclear Disarmament Task Force  
American Friends Service Committee  
Buddhist Council of New York  
Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament  
Community of Christ  
Conference of Major Superiors of Men  
Congregation of our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd  
Disciples Peace Fellowship  
Ecumenical Peace Institute/Clergy and Laity Concerned  
Fellowship of Reconciliation – United States  
Franciscan Action Network  
Gandhi Development Trust  
International Fellowship of Reconciliation  
International Peace Research Association  
InterReligious Task Force on Central America and Colombia  
Islamic Society of North America  
Jesuit Refugee Service – Asia Pacific  
Leadership Conference of Women Religious  
Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns  
Missionary Society of St. Columban  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
Ohne Ruestung Leben (Germany)  
On Earth Peace  
Orthodox Peace Fellowship  
Pacific Conference of Churches  
PAX – Netherlands  
Pax Christi Aotearoa-New Zealand  
Pax Christi Asia-Pacific  
Pax Christi Australia  
Pax Christi Austria  
Pax Christi Flanders  
Pax Christi Germany  
Pax Christi International  
Pax Christi Italia  
Pax Christi Metro Washington, DC-Baltimore  
Pax Christi Pilipinas  
Pax Christi UK  
Pax Christi USA  
PEAC Institute  
PEACEWORKERS  
People for Nuclear Disarmament  
Presbyterian Peacemaking Fellowship  
Religions for Peace UK  
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)  
Rissho Kosei-kai  
San Francisco, CA Friends Meeting Peace Committee  
Scottish Christians Against Nuclear Arms  
Soka Gakkai International  
Toda Peace Institute  
Unitarian Universalist Association  
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries  
United Religions Initiative  
Westminster Justice and Peace Commission  
World Bosniak Congress  
World Council of Churches  
World Evangelical Alliance