

# **Australia must sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons**

**N**uclear weapons are the most destructive weapons on earth. They pose a threat so grave they are an existential risk to all humanity.

Since the 1945 nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we have known the devastating impacts of these weapons. In Australia, Indigenous people have borne the brunt of nuclear weapons testing.

The current threat of nuclear conflict between the US and North Korea highlights how urgent it is for all nations to disarm. In the words of Ban Ki-moon, there are no right hands for the wrong weapons.

There are over 15,000 nuclear weapons globally, with 1800 on hair-trigger alert. If a single modern nuclear weapon is detonated in a large city, millions of people would be killed. In addition to the scale of casualties, a viable humanitarian response would be impossible because many health workers, ambulances, emergency services and hospitals would be destroyed in the blast and the city would be dangerously radioactive to surviving responders.

As long as these weapons exist, the risk of their use remains.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) outlaws

these weapons and was adopted by the United Nations in July this year. This treaty is supported by 122 nations and will enter into force when 50 countries have ratified it. It categorically rejects nuclear weapons and represents the most positive step forward in global disarmament in decades. The Norwegian Nobel Committee recognised this by awarding the Nobel Peace Prize for 2017 to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) for its work to achieve the Treaty.

The Treaty will not eliminate nuclear weapons overnight. However, similar treaties which have outlawed chemical weapons, biological weapons, landmines and cluster munitions, have led to massive reductions in the manufacture and use of such weapons as well as their progressive dismantlement.

As long as some countries hold these weapons, other countries will work to acquire them. There are no safe hands for nuclear weapons. We face a clear choice: continue to let these weapons spread and risk their inevitable use, or eliminate them.

Nuclear weapons are an existential threat to all Australians and all humanity. These weapons are illegitimate, immoral and now, illegal.

**We, the undersigned, urge the Australian Government to sign  
and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons:**

Alice Springs Peace Action Think Tank  
Alternatives to Violence QLD Inc  
Amnesty International Australia  
Antinuclear Australia  
Australian Catholic Social Justice Council  
Australian Civil Society Coalition on Women,  
Peace and Security  
Australian Conservation Foundation  
Australian Council for International  
Development  
Australian Council of Trade Unions  
Australian Manufacturing Workers Union  
Australian Nonviolence Projects  
Australian Nuclear Free Alliance  
Australian Student Environment Network  
Australia Yearly Meeting of the Religious  
Society of Friends (Quakers)  
Ban Uranium Mining Permanently  
Beyond Nuclear Initiative  
Brigidine Sisters Kildara Centre  
Brigidine Sisters Victorian Community  
Canossian Daughters of Charity  
Cara House  
Carmelites Province Australia and Timor Leste  
Catholics in Coalition for Justice and Peace  
ChildFund Australia  
City of Fremantle  
Conservation Council of South Australia  
Conservation Council of Western Australia  
Council for Peace with Justice  
Council of Australian Humanist Societies  
Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul  
Democracy at Work Melbourne

Edmund Rice Centre  
Electrical Trades Union  
Environment Centre Northern Territory  
Evatt Foundation  
Footprints for Peace  
Friends of the Earth Australia  
Gabriela Australia  
Graham F Smith Peace Foundation  
Greenpeace Australia Pacific  
Healthy Futures  
Human Survival Project  
Humanist Society of NSW  
Humanist Society of Victoria  
Hunter Peace Group  
Independent and Peaceful Australia Network  
International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear  
Weapons  
Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and  
Papua New Guinea  
International Women's Development Agency  
Latin American Solidarity Network  
Lismore Presentation Sisters  
Marrickville Peace Group  
Mayors for Peace  
Medical Association for Prevention of War  
Melbourne Unitarian Peace Memorial Church  
Missionaries of the Sacred Heart Justice and  
Peace Centre  
National Council of Churches in Australia  
National Tertiary Education Union  
Oxfam Australia  
Pace e Bene Australia  
Pacific Fellowship Inc

Pax Christi Victoria  
Pax Christi Australia  
People for Nuclear Disarmament  
Plan International Australia  
Presentation Sisters Tasmania  
Presentation Sisters Wagga  
Presentation Sisters Queensland  
Queensland Regional Meeting (Quakers)  
SafeGround Inc.  
Save the Children Australia  
Sisters of Our Lady of Sion, Australian Region  
Sisters of St Joseph  
Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
Soka Gakkai International Australia  
South Coast Labour Council  
Sydney Peace Foundation  
Tasmania Quaker Peace & Justice Committee  
Tasmanian Regional Meeting (Quakers)  
Union of Australian Women NSW  
Uniting Church in Australia Assembly  
Uranium Free NSW  
Victoria Regional Meeting of the Religious  
Society of Friends (Quakers)  
Walkatjorra Walkabout  
War Resisters International Australia  
Western Australia Nuclear Free Alliance  
Women in Black  
Women's International League for Peace and  
Freedom, Australia  
World Citizens Association of Australia  
World Vision Australia  
Young Women's International League for  
Peace and Freedom