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STATES AGREE TO BAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Negotiations conclude at the United Nations, new treaty will open for signature in September

After a decade-long effort by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), and 72 years after their invention, today states at the United Nations concluded negotiations and formally adopted the new treaty, which categorically prohibits nuclear weapons. Until now, nuclear weapons were the only weapons of mass destruction not yet prohibited despite the widespread catastrophic consequences that would result from any use or accidental detonation of these weapons.

On adoption of the treaty, **ICAN Executive Director Beatrice Fihn** said:

“No one believes that the indiscriminate killing of millions of civilians is acceptable – no matter the circumstance – yet that is what nuclear weapons are designed to do.

Today the international community rejected nuclear weapons and set a clear standard against the acceptability of these weapons.

It is time for leaders around the world to match their values and words with action by signing and ratifying this treaty.”

The ‘Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons’ was adopted with 122 states voting in favor and 1 against, and it will open for signature by states at the United Nations in New York on September 20, 2017. Around 130 states have participated in negotiations.

This treaty is a clear indication that the majority of the world no longer accepts nuclear weapons and do not consider them legitimate weapons. The repeated objection and boycott of the negotiations by many nuclear-weapon states demonstrates that this treaty has the potential to significantly impact their behavior and stature. As has been true with previous weapon prohibition treaties, changing international norms leads to concrete changes in policies and behaviors, even in states not party to the treaty.

“The strenuous and repeated objections of nuclear armed states is an admission that this treaty will have a real and lasting impact,” Fihn said.

From the beginning, the effort to ban nuclear weapons has benefited from the broad support of international humanitarian, environmental, nonproliferation, and disarmament organizations in more than 100 states. Significant political and grassroots organizing has taken place around the world, and many thousands have signed petitions, joined protests, contacted representatives, and pressured governments.

About ICAN

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is a global campaign coalition working to mobilize people in all countries to inspire, persuade and pressure their governments to prohibit nuclear weapons.

ICAN has worked closely with governments on this process since 2010, and campaigns in about 100 countries to ensure that this treaty becomes a reality.

More information about ICAN can be found on www.icanw.org.

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