

Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

Canada Urged to Stop Objecting, Start Working for Global Law to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons

Media Release: February 9, 2015

Thirteen prominent organizations have urged the Canadian government to cease objecting to and start working for a global law to eliminate all nuclear weapons.

In a letter to Canada's new Foreign Minister, Rob Nicholson, the Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons also warned that deteriorating relations between the major nuclear powers, the US and Russia, have heightened the risk of nuclear conflict. Those two states possess 95 percent of the world's 16,300 nuclear weapons, which include a frightening number on high-alert status.

Citing the "catastrophic humanitarian consequences" of nuclear warfare, the letter called on Canada to: "Support the commencement of work on a Nuclear Weapons Convention in a forum not subject to veto and cease objecting to the negotiation of such a convention as being somehow incompatible with the Non-Proliferation Treaty."

The letter, emerging out a recent seminar held in Ottawa, appealed to the government to take action to protect the viability of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which will undergo a month-long review at the UN starting April 27. "Given the huge stake Canada has in the future viability of the NPT and the global nuclear governance based on it, we believe some focused efforts are warranted," the letter said.

A Nuclear Weapons Convention, called for by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, would be a global treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons.

The letter called on the government to publish a strategy paper setting out Canada's priority aims and to revive Canada's capacity for verification technology to ensure compliance with nuclear agreements. It also requested the government to host a meeting of like-minded states as called for by the Middle Powers Initiative. The government should also work more closely with civil society representatives.

Contact: Cesar Jaramillo, Program Officer, Project Ploughshares
Phone: 519-888-6541
Email: Cesar Jaramillo <cjaramillo@ploughshares.ca>

The 13 organizations signing the CNANW letter are:

Antennes de paix/Pax Christi Montreal

Les Artistes pour la Paix

Canadian Peace Alliance/L'Alliance canadienne pour la paix

Canadian Pugwash Group, Board of Directors

Canadian Voice of Women for Peace/La Voix des Femmes

Physicians for Global Survival / Médecins pour la Survie Mondiale

Project Ploughshares

Religions for Peace Canada

Rideau Institute on International Affairs

Science for Peace

**United Nations Association in Canada/ Association canadienne
pour les Nations Unies**

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom - Canada

**World Federalist Movement - Canada/ Mouvement Fédéraliste
Mondial - Canada**