

Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
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February 9, 2015

The Honorable Rob Nicholson, M.P.
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada
125 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G2

Dear Minister,

Re: Recommendations on the 2015 Review Conference of the Treaty on the
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

Greetings from the Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (CNANW). We are a coalition of civil society organizations from across the country working to advance the cause of nuclear disarmament and move toward a world without nuclear weapons—a goal the Government of Canada (GOC) has publicly and consistently supported.

The global push for nuclear disarmament has been energized in recent years by the renewed attention given to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of a nuclear weapons exchange. There is also growing awareness that the existential risk posed by nuclear weapons is exacerbated by deteriorating relations between the world's top nuclear powers—the United States and Russia—which together account for roughly 95% of existing nuclear weapons.

During last year's sessions of the UN General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, the vast majority of the world's nations—including Canada—endorsed statements explicitly expressing concern about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. In this context, we believe it is imperative to start a comprehensive process leading to the enactment of a legal framework for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. It is our view that the humanitarian imperative for nuclear disarmament should be the catalyst to launch such a process.

On 1 December 2014 CNANW hosted an experts' seminar focused on the upcoming 2015 NPT Review Conference, which we believe to be of critical importance for the overall health of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The discussions addressed a broad range of legal, political, security, and verification questions—all related to the pressing need for concrete progress at, and a successful outcome from, the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

Taking into account the deliberations at the seminar, the Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons would like to bring the following recommendations to the Government of Canada to your attention:

1. Prepare for release before the 2015 NPT Review Conference (RevCon) a strategy paper that sets out Canada's priority aims for the meeting and that provides a document for public diplomacy.
2. Seek agreement on mandatory de-alerting measures in order that the world is not imperiled by the perpetuation of dangerous Cold War nuclear postures. Deployed nuclear forces on high-alert status should be a primary focus at the RevCon as a major global threat to be eliminated.
3. Leverage Canada's role as chair of the UN Group of Governmental Experts to urge immediate initiation of FMCT negotiations under NPT auspices or in another forum not subject to veto.
4. 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 NPT.
5. Revive the capacity for verification research within the GOC and create a joint project with a nuclear-weapon state (NWS)— the United States would be a prime candidate— to contribute to the development of verification technology and procedures necessary for nuclear disarmament. An announcement of such a collaborative project could be made at the RevCon.
6. Continue to advocate for reform measures to overcome the NPT's institutional deficit and allow for greater transparency and accountability for the implementation of the treaty by its states parties. These measures could include empowered annual meetings of states parties, provision for convening emergency meetings, managerial continuity through a standing bureau or troika arrangement of chairs and some administrative assistance by means of an implementation support unit.
7. Work to bridge the gap amongst non-nuclear-weapon states (NNWS) that has opened up over whether or not to align with the belief that there is a humanitarian imperative to prevent any detonation of a nuclear weapon by effecting their elimination. Canada finds itself currently in a minority grouping and should migrate to the majority position, which is more in keeping with its political and moral values. A near term aim would be to help restore the solidarity of NNWS in order to maximize their effectiveness as a diplomatic force at the RevCon.
8. Renew ties with civil society in the run-up to the RevCon by convening consultations and inviting input into the Canadian strategy paper suggested in the first point above. The GOC should revive the past practice of including NGO and expert representatives in the Canadian delegation to the RevCon.
9. Consider hosting a meeting of like-minded countries to examine the pathway to a legal framework for the verified, irreversible and enforceable prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, as called for by the Middle Powers Initiative and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament.
10. Welcome the [unanimous motions](#) in the Senate (June 2, 2010) and House of Commons (Dec. 7, 2010) calling for a major Canadian diplomatic initiative in support of

nuclear disarmament and request that a special joint committee of the Senate and House of Commons hold hearings and prepare a report on how best to implement those unanimous motions.

We firmly believe it is in the best interest of every nation to move decisively toward the shared goal of nuclear abolition, and are convinced that Canada can and should play a leading role in this regard. Action on any of the above measures will require some effort and resource expenditure, but 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. Thank you for your attention and actions in regard to these issues.

Sincerely yours,

Beverley J. T. Delong
Chairperson
Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

c.c. Mr. Marc Garneau, M.P., Liberal Foreign Affairs Critic
Mr. Paul Dewar, M.P., NDP Foreign Affairs Critic
Ms. Elizabeth May, M.P., Green Party Leader
M. Mario Beaulieu, chef du Bloc Québécois

This letter has been endorsed by the following organizations:

Antennes de paix/Pax Christi Montreal

Les Artistes pour la Paix

Canadian Federation of University Women

Canadian Peace Alliance/L'Alliance canadienne pour la paix

Canadian Pugwash Group, Board of Directors /les Conférences Pugwash Canada,
Conseil d'administration

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