

Abolition 2000

Report of the Nuclear Weapons Convention working group

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The primary call of the Abolition 2000 founding statement is for governments to *'Initiate immediately and conclude negotiations on a nuclear weapons abolition convention that requires the phased elimination of all nuclear weapons within a timebound framework, with provisions for effective verification and enforcement'*. As such, many of the activities of Abolition 2000 members are directed toward the goal of a nuclear weapons convention.

In 1996, Abolition 2000 established a working group on a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC), the primary purposes of which were to advance the proposal for a nuclear weapons convention at the United Nations, and to pull together a group of experts (not all of them Abolition 2000 members) to draft a Model NWC.

The group worked with leading countries in the International Court of Justice 1996 nuclear weapons case, on a follow-up United Nations General Assembly resolution highlighting the unanimous conclusion of the ICJ that there is a universal obligation to negotiate for complete nuclear disarmament, and calling for governments to implement this obligation through negotiations leading to the conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention. This resolution was adopted in October 1996, and similar resolutions have been adopted annually since then. The number of countries voting in favour has increased to over 130.

The group of experts working on the Model NWC completed their work in late 1996 and the Model was submitted to the United Nations by Costa Rica in early 1997. The Model NWC was revised in 2007, resubmitted to the UN by Costa Rica and Malaysia, and promoted by the UN Secretary General in his Five Point Plan for Nuclear Disarmament.

Abolition 2000, working in cooperation with PNND, succeeded over the years in getting numerous resolutions supporting a nuclear weapons convention adopted in parliaments of non-nuclear countries and introduced into parliaments of nuclear armed countries.

Abolition 2000, working in cooperation with Mayors for Peace, succeeded over the years in getting numerous city resolutions, as well as resolutions of the US Conference of Mayors, supporting a nuclear weapons convention.

Abolition 2000 member organisations have worked with governments to advance the NWC proposal (and the Model NWC) in the NPT Review Conferences, and were successful at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, at which the governments agreed that *'All States need to make special efforts to establish the necessary framework to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons. The Conference notes the Five-Point Proposal for Nuclear Disarmament of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, which proposes inter alia the consideration of negotiations on a **nuclear weapons convention** or a framework of separate mutually reinforcing instruments backed by a strong system of verification.'*

Abolition 2000, working in cooperation with PNND, moved the 170 member parliaments of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (including the parliaments of most of the nuclear-armed and allied states) to agree in 2014 to support negotiations for a nuclear weapons convention or package of agreements.

In 2013 and 2016, Abolition 2000 focused on advancing the nuclear weapons convention through the UN Open Ended Working Group. The Model NWC was presented to the OEWG by Costa Rica and Malaysia, and provided guidance on the elements for a nuclear ban treaty, which the OEWG in 2016 recommended be negotiated.

We moved the member parliaments of the *Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe* (which includes the legislatures of France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States) in July 2016 to support the proposals at the OEWG for multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, and to support the 2018 UN High Level Conference on Nuclear Disarmament.

We also focus on promoting the NWC through Peace & Planet, a project initiated by Abolition 2000 in 2014 that engages environmental, human rights, justice, anti-war and development communities in nuclear abolition.

In 2015, Abolition 2000 members and partners (Mayors for Peace, Religions for Peace and PNND) drafted A Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: Our Common Good, calling on governments to ‘advance a nuclear weapons convention or framework of agreements that eliminate nuclear weapons.’ The statement has been endorsed by mayors, parliamentarians and religious leaders from around the world. The appeal was presented to the OEWG in 2016. We are gathering additional endorsements and plan to present it to the new UN Secretary-General in June and circulate to all members of the United Nations in September to encourage them to support nuclear abolition initiatives at the UN.

One of the problems with the working group is that many of the activities promoting a NWC have been undertaken by Abolition 2000 members without sufficient coordination. This is mostly due to work overload by members, but also because the Abolition 2000 communication systems were not up to scratch. This could improve now, as a result of the work done by the Basel Peace Office to upgrade the website, update the working groups, and improve communications. However, it would also be useful to hold another NWC strategy and planning session open to all Abolition 2000 member organisations – similar to the one we organised in October 2012 (see [Report on the Abolition 2000 Session on Achieving a Global Treaty to Abolish Nuclear Weapons](#), 11 October 2012).