

3rd anniversary of the TPNW's Entry into Force

Additional talking points for ICAN Campaigners

The TPNW's impact to date

- To date, close to half of all the world's countries have joined the landmark treaty, either as signatories or parties. Just last week, we celebrated the 70th ratification, by São Tomé and Príncipe, and we expect Indonesia's ratification imminently.
- Though this is still a young treaty, it has already had an impressive impact.
 - Most importantly, it has brought humanitarian and environmental concerns to the fore of the debate about nuclear weapons.
 - It has also reinvigorated efforts to achieve nuclear justice in countries still suffering from the long-term consequences of nuclear tests conducted decades ago.
 - It has prompted banks and other financial institutions to divest billions of dollars from the companies that manufacture nuclear weapons – because they are now banned.
 - It has consolidated the international consensus that nuclear threats, whether explicit or implicit, are inadmissible.
 - And it has exposed the dangerous fallacy of nuclear deterrence.
 - On this third anniversary of the TPNW's entry into force, we renew our call for all countries that haven't yet joined it to do so. For most countries, prohibiting nuclear weapons is an obvious step to take. Fundamentally, it is about safeguarding humanity. About ensuring that cities are not targets in warfare. About bequeathing a safe and habitable planet to future generations.

Deterrence as obstruction towards progress on nuclear disarmament, and how the TPNW pushes back (2MSP outcome)

- The TPNW is the way to prevent nuclear war, not deterrence – **the second meeting of TPNW states parties late last year produced a strong condemnation of deterrence** which is the first time a UN treaty outcome has laid out the threat that deterrence poses to the future of life on our planet.
 - The second meeting for states parties in 2023 further developed the position of TPNW states parties on deterrence, qualifying nuclear weapons as “as instruments of policy, linked to coercion, intimidation and heightening of tensions.”
 - States parties condemned “the renewed advocacy, insistence on and attempts to justify nuclear deterrence as a legitimate security doctrine gives false credence to the value of nuclear weapons for national security and dangerously increases the risk of horizontal and vertical nuclear proliferation.”
 - “The perpetuation and implementation of nuclear deterrence in military and security concepts, doctrines and policies not only erodes and contradicts non – proliferation, but also obstructs progress towards nuclear disarmament.”

- The 2MSP declaration concluded with the pledge that “We, the States Parties to the TPNW, will not stand by as spectators to increasing nuclear risks and the dangerous perpetuation of nuclear deterrence.”
- Nuclear deterrence is a flawed theory that is contradicted by the history of how nuclear conflict has been avoided up to now, which has been by luck not by deterrence - in the words of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres “luck is not a strategy” and as ICAN’s Executive Director, Melissa Parke has said: “Nuclear deterrence may well work until the day it doesn’t”.
- It is based on the idea that all leaders will act rationally 100% of the time and make decisions based on the best possible intelligence – but leaders cannot be relied on to always act rationally and all are capable of making the wrong call in a crisis due to bad intelligence, stress and the pressure from those around them to act.
- Deterrence is based on demonstrating the readiness to use nuclear weapons which potential opponents respond to by demonstrating the same readiness and this constantly risks cycles of escalation as we are seeing in the world at the present moment.
- Deterrence is morally and politically unacceptable. It is based on the threat to wage nuclear war which would kill millions outright and lead to a nuclear winter and mass starvation that recent research shows would kill billions of people.
- Rather than making countries safe, nuclear deterrence actually makes conflict more likely. We can see this in Russia’s invasion of Ukraine where Moscow facilitated its aggression by using its nuclear arsenal to blackmail other countries into not intervening directly against it.

Condemnation of nuclear threats and the role of the TPNW (1MSP outcome)

- The first meeting of TPNW states parties in 2022 issued a strong condemnation of any and all nuclear threats in the light of Russia’s irresponsible and unacceptable threats to use nuclear weapons when it invaded Ukraine earlier that year
- This underlines the need for all countries to join the TPNW as it bans all nuclear weapons-related actions, including threats to use them.
- The international response to Russia’s occasional threats since then have demonstrated the influence the TPNW is already having on the conduct of all states - the condemnation by the TPNW states have been echoed by the G20 and individual leaders, including President Xi Jinping, Chancellor Olaf Scholz and NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg.
- This universal condemnation of Russia’s threats have also led to Moscow walking back on those threats which demonstrates how stigmatisation of a country's behaviour can cause it to change its conduct.