



ICAN 2017
NOBEL
PEACE
PRIZE
AUSTRALIA

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June 1st 2020

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

RE: Support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

The upcoming 75th anniversaries of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6th and 9th August, present an opportunity for reflection, remembrance and action. Unfortunately, the threat of nuclear weapons has not been relegated to that of a bygone era, but remains a present and real threat of our times.

In the 1980's, during the peak of the Cold War arms race, councils across Australia and many hundreds internationally, declared themselves **nuclear-free zones**. These declarations represented a grassroots participation in the humanitarian debate happening globally, at all levels of government, with real-life implications for the health and security of constituents.

Thirty years on, instead of dismantling bombs and investing in healthcare and other essential services; nuclear weapons states continue to bolster their weapons arsenals and dismantle longstanding disarmament agreements. A [recent ICAN report](#) reveals how the nine nuclear-armed nations spent 72.9 billion dollars on nuclear weapons in 2019 alone.

In response to these renewed and persistent nuclear threats, the world's non-nuclear weapons states have negotiated the first international legal instrument to comprehensively outlaw nuclear weapons, setting out a pathway for their elimination. As other nuclear arms control agreements are undermined or collapsing, this new accord provides a much-needed pathway forward.

The United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons prohibits nations from developing, testing, producing, manufacturing, transferring, possessing, stockpiling, using or threatening to use nuclear weapons, or allowing nuclear weapons to be stationed on their territory. Adopted at the United Nations in 2017, it also prohibits them from assisting, encouraging or inducing anyone to engage in any of these activities.

Australia has not yet joined the Treaty. Now, just as in the 1980's, it is in the hands of everyday people to put the treaty in front of our decision-makers and office-holders, to indicate our support for Australia's ratification.

Australia has joined the treaties prohibiting other inhumane and indiscriminate weapons including biological weapons, chemical weapons, landmines and cluster munitions. It is inevitable that we also join the nuclear weapon ban treaty.

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons *Cities Appeal* is the mechanism by which councils can engage and participate in the nuclear weapons debate of our time. Nuclear disarmament is council business because civilians, cities and towns are the targets of these weapons of mass destruction.

27 Councils across Australia have already endorsed the Cities Appeal, calling on our federal government to sign and ratify this treaty without delay.

We now invite you to join them, with an endorsement of the Cities Appeal in the lead up to the 75th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The most powerful way to honour the victims and survivors of nuclear weapons is to progress the elimination of these abhorrent weapons. We must not tolerate their existence or accept security frameworks based on nuclear incineration. The mindset that bestows prestige on nuclear arms is immoral, illogical and illegitimate.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to demonstrate the fragility of global public health systems and the power of cooperation among nations. Our world is not equipped for a single nuclear detonation, a catastrophe that can be avoided with diplomacy and negotiation.

A suggested council motion reads as follows:

1. The COVID-19 pandemic starkly demonstrates the urgent need for greater international cooperation to address all major threats to the health and welfare of humankind. Of paramount importance is the threat posed by nuclear weapons.
2. In any instance of a nuclear detonation, the Mayor and Councillors will be amongst the first leaders required to coordinate local responses and guide the community.
3. We acknowledge the victims and survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the upcoming 75th anniversaries of these attacks on August 6th and 9th 2020. To commemorate these anniversaries, our council endorses the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons 'Cities Appeal':

Our city/town is deeply concerned about the grave threat that nuclear weapons pose to communities throughout the world. We firmly believe that our residents have the right to live in a world free from this threat. Any use of nuclear weapons, whether deliberate or accidental, would have catastrophic, far-reaching and long-lasting consequences for people and the environment.

Therefore, we warmly welcome the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons by the United Nations in 2017, and we call on our national government to sign and ratify it without delay.

We urge you to take the small but meaningful step of declaring your support for the treaty. With 79% of the public in favour of Australia signing on (Ipsos public opinion poll, Nov 2018), your constituents are behind you.



Jemila Rushton
Campaigner
International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear weapons, Australia.

Once passed, the Mayor or elected official can send an email to jemila@icanw.org indicating that the council endorses the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) Cities Appeal. It is recommended that council writes to inform the Foreign Minister and local federal representatives that the council has endorsed the ICAN Cities Appeal.