

MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia's Nuclear Choice: Lawfare or Warfare

Australia has a clear choice between supporting nuclear war or international law according to a [new report](#), released today, on the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Choosing Humanity: why Australia must join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons builds a compelling national interest argument for Australia to play an active role in the stigmatization, prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons by joining the treaty.

Against a backdrop of nuclear weapons talk and tension, including calls for Australia to acquire nuclear weapons, the report has been developed by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, the Australian-founded initiative awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize.

Choosing Humanity is being launched in nine cities across Australia and features contributions from former President of the Australian Human Rights Commission Professor Gillian Triggs, ACTU President Michele O'Neil, federal parliamentarians, faith groups and nuclear test survivors. Contributing author and former High Court judge Hon Michael Kirby said "Our regional neighbours in New Zealand signed and ratified the nuclear weapon ban treaty earlier this year, raising the question of why Australia has not taken this critical step." Kirby will speak at the Sydney launch at NSW Parliament House on Hiroshima Day, 6 August.

The report comes amid growing international nuclear weapons tension with leaders undermining important agreements including the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (Iran nuclear deal) and the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

"The international legal infrastructure surrounding these weapons of mass destruction is under pressure and under-performing," said ICAN Australia Director and report editor, Gem Romuld.

"A nuclear-free defence posture is in our clear national interest and is both feasible and necessary, given the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. The UN nuclear ban treaty provides our best chance to get rid of our worst weapons," she said.

The report will be made publicly available to commemorate 74th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki this week.

[Click here for the report.](#)

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Background notes on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons:

Almost 80% of the public support Australia joining the treaty (Ipsos, Nov 2018) and close to 90 federal parliamentarians have [pledged](#) to work for Australia to take this step. Parliamentary supporters include National, Liberal, Greens, Labor, Centre Alliance and independent parliamentarians. The Australian Labor Party committed to sign and ratify the treaty in government at its December 2018 national conference.

Adopted by the UN in July 2017 the treaty currently has 70 signatories and 24 states parties. It will enter into force and become international law after the 50th ratification, which is expected in the next 18 months.