

Nagasaki Action Plan
for the
Non-use, Prohibition and Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

Nagasaki, Japan
26 April 2017

Introduction

Leaders and experts from 35 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and International Federation stand together in Nagasaki at a unique moment in history. While there is an increasing risk of nuclear weapons use there is also an unprecedented opportunity to prohibit such weapons within the framework of the United Nations. We commend the States that have participated in these negotiations and the role of civil society in this endeavor. The Nagasaki Appeal has been issued calling on all States to help change the course of history by participating in the UN negotiating conference.

Awareness of the unacceptable risks posed by nuclear weapons instills in us a profound sense of responsibility to prevent the unspeakable human suffering which any use of such weapons would cause. Neither our Movement nor any other humanitarian actor or State could ever adequately address the needs of victims and long-term humanitarian consequences.

We leave Nagasaki with a deep awareness of the massive destruction and long lasting suffering nuclear weapons can inflict and have been moved by testimony from survivors. We learned of the daunting challenges faced by the Japanese Red Cross Society in the aftermath of the atomic bombings and of the pain and suffering from radiation-induced illnesses that continue today – almost seventy-two years later. We also leave deeply concerned by the long-term human and environmental costs of decades of nuclear test detonations in the Africa, Central Asia, the Pacific and other regions.

In light of our Movement's long opposition to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and inspired by resolutions of the 2011 and 2013 Councils of Delegates, participants of the Nagasaki Conference commit themselves to intensifying their efforts this year and beyond to ensure that nuclear weapons are never again used, that they are prohibited and that they are eliminated, based on existing commitments and international obligations. To this end, we adopt this Nagasaki Action Plan to guide our efforts and to stimulate even greater engagement by all National Societies in the months and years ahead.

This Action Plan focuses on a range of actions to be taken without delay. These are intended (a) to seize the opportunity presented by the historic negotiations now occurring in the UN and (b) to respond to an ever-increasing risk that

nuclear weapons may be used by intent, accident or miscalculation. It complements the 2013-2017 Action Plan on nuclear weapons adopted in resolution 1 of the 2013 Council of Delegates which continues to guide concerted action by our Movement. A new Movement Action Plan on nuclear weapons should be adopted by the 2017 Council of Delegates, reflecting the results of treaty negotiations and international context in late 2017.

Key messages

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement welcomes the convening by the United Nations of a conference to negotiate a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons. This is an important response by States to the appeal contained in our 2011 Council of Delegates resolution on nuclear weapons and the evidence provided at three international conferences on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons.

We welcome the ICRC's leadership within the Movement on this issue. We will seek to speak with one voice on the basis of the key messages, highlighted below, and in light of the opportunities and constraints of our specific national contexts.

We urge all States to participate in the upcoming negotiating session being held from 15 June to 7 July 2017:

- *In light of their catastrophic humanitarian consequences and the difficulty to envisage how any use of nuclear weapons could be compatible with the rules of international humanitarian law, all States have an interest to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again and that they are eliminated. The prohibition of nuclear weapons is an indispensable step towards achieving these goals.*
- *Participation allows all views to be taken into consideration and does not preclude participation in other nuclear disarmament efforts.*
- *The June-July 2017 negotiating session is a unique opportunity to advance the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.*

The scope and benefits of a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons:

- *Given the humanitarian goals that it seeks to achieve, the treaty must be rooted in international humanitarian law and its prohibitions must be clear and robust. The Movement's objectives in relation to the negotiations should be to help ensure that the treaty:*
 - i. *recognizes the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and the legitimate needs of victims of the atomic bombings and nuclear testing,*
 - ii. *is based on and is consistent with existing principles and rules of international humanitarian law, and*
 - iii. *contains comprehensive and unambiguous prohibitions.*

- *A treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons will have important benefits – both directly and indirectly. It will:*
 - i. *reinforce the stigma against the use and possession of nuclear weapons and their proliferation,*
 - ii. *motivate States currently relying on nuclear weapons to move away from such a military and security posture, and*
 - iii. *clearly establish the prohibition of nuclear weapons as a global norm, which all States can aim to adhere to over time.*
- *Such a treaty will be consistent with existing legal and political commitments, including those in Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and in action plans adopted by NPT Review Conferences. It will also advance the goals of regional nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties.)*
- *A treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons has a crucial role to play in freeing resources for development as well as the protection of public health and cultural heritage, the prevention of large scale population movements and the prevention of global food shortages resulting from cooling of the atmosphere following even a limited nuclear war. Nuclear disarmament is a key element in ensuring human security and the survival of the human species.*

Messages for nuclear-armed or nuclear-allied States that have decided not to participate in the negotiations:

- *If States are unable at this time to join negotiations for the prohibition of nuclear weapons, they should nonetheless take urgent steps to reduce the very real risks of intentional or accidental use of these weapons. These steps include reducing the role of nuclear weapons in military doctrine and taking nuclear warheads off “hair-trigger” alert. Given the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons, any risk of use including the risk inherent in nuclear deterrence postures is unacceptable. (These and other risk-reduction measures would implement long-standing political commitments, including the Action Plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.)*
- *Today’s complex security environment and threat of nuclear weapons use in tense regions of the world have increased risks for all of humanity - creating an urgent need for the prohibition of nuclear weapons and of action by nuclear-armed States and alliances to fulfill their existing obligations and political commitments. Such efforts should converge in the elimination of nuclear weapons once and for all time.*

Role of NS leaders

Decisions to renounce, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons and to pursue steps to reduce their risks are made at the highest levels of government. National Society leaders have a unique role to play, as they are often the only representatives of the Movement with access to these high-level State officials. National Society leaders commit to enhancing their engagement with relevant national authorities, before and following the June-July 2017 UN negotiations,

through the following types of actions, to the extent possible and useful in their national contexts:

- Contact senior government officials and the media in May 2017 to urge the participation of all States in negotiations to prohibit negotiations and to communicate on the contents and importance of the treaty on the basis of the messages above.
- Contact senior officials from 3 National Societies not attending this meeting by 1 June to urge them to become active on this issue, request them to endorse the Nagasaki Action Plan and to urge their National Society to consider co-sponsorship of the 2017 Council of Delegates resolution on nuclear weapons.
- Name a focal point on nuclear weapons within the National Society by 1 June, with responsibility to coordinate the efforts described below and to liaise with the ICRC, International Federation and partner National Societies where appropriate.
- Engage in writing or orally with ministries of foreign affairs, defense, environment, health and emergency response and leading parliamentarians responsible for these areas to communicate the Movement's urgent concerns and position on nuclear weapons.
- Communicate publicly, notably on 8 May, including through opinion editorials, interviews and letters to the editor that will raise public awareness of current nuclear weapons-related risks and opportunities, based on the Movement's position, ICRC briefings and other materials produced subsequent to the Nagasaki Conference.

Additional National Society Actions

National level activities aimed at supporting or influencing State policy on nuclear weapons are indispensable to all Movement objectives on nuclear weapons and should engage authorities, organizations and the general public. National Societies will enhance their engagement in a variety of efforts of the type indicated below, to the extent possible in their national context and in accordance with their mandate:

- Communication to National Society members, volunteers and staff of the Movement's views on nuclear weapons and on current risks and opportunities through National Society websites, publications and meetings of staff and volunteers.
- Briefings of national international humanitarian law committees and/or other relevant national bodies.
- Regular meetings with Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense to maintain engagement, based on ICRC explanatory notes and positions.

- Hosting of public seminars and events on nuclear weapons for specific groups such as parliamentarians, health professionals, the scientific community and emergency responders.
- Outreach to and cooperation with national organizations working in the fields of health, environment and emergency response.
- Communication and cooperation with long-standing organizations working on nuclear weapons issues.
- Integrate the voices of nuclear bomb survivors and those affected by nuclear testing into outreach activities.
- Outreach to youth to raise awareness of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and to promote their active engagement in support of Movement objectives.
- Include lectures on the humanitarian consequences and legal aspects of nuclear weapons in IHL training and dissemination activities for the armed forces and civil society.
- Promote this Action Plan with other regional National Societies bilaterally or through regional Movement structures to share information and, where possible, to consider joint approaches to governments on a regional basis.

Global Action and support

For the Movement to achieve its goals consistent messages and a smooth flow of updated information are essential. The following actions were identified that will support these ends:

a. Short term (May – October 2017)

- ICRC will prepare regular updates for National Societies on developments at the international level, analysis of treaty negotiations and key messages.
- National Societies working on nuclear weapons will inform the ICRC and International Federation of their focal points, efforts, events and interventions and seek support as required from ICRC, the International Federation or other active National Societies.
- ICRC to provide interactive briefings on negotiations, outcomes, treaty content and key messages (via Skype or other means) to National Societies in specific regions to promote and facilitate timely national interventions with authorities and the public.
- ICRC to prepare model letters, speaking points and opinion editorials to support National Society interventions with relevant officials and the public.

- Regular short messages from the ICRC, for use in social and traditional media, during and following UN negotiations and the adoption of a new treaty, for use by National Societies.
- Strengthen the focal point role within the International Federation for sharing of information on NS interventions, results and needs.
- National Societies, with support from the International Federation, maintain and develop the international network of National Societies active in promoting Movement objectives on nuclear weapons. The Federation will support, in particular, the exchange of information on progress and challenges in national contexts.
- The International Federation will coordinate the involvement of National Societies in prohibition negotiations at the United Nations and other relevant multilateral meetings and support the development of common statements on behalf of National Societies.
- The Nagasaki Action Plan, negotiation results and information on work by National Societies to be presented to the International Federation's Governing Board for action and follow-up by an assigned member of the Secretariat and regional heads.

b. Mid-term (November 2017 and beyond)

- A new resolution on nuclear weapons to be adopted by the 2017 Council of Delegates to guide enhanced and sustained professional communication and coordination efforts by our Movement in the years ahead.
- The ICRC and International Federation are requested to launch a global campaign designed to ensure that Nagasaki is the last atomic bombing and to provide us all with the tools and global coordination to ensure achievement of Movement objectives. National Societies will contribute resources to this endeavor. The campaign will support implementation of a new Movement Action Plan (2017-2021).
- Integrate Movement objectives on nuclear weapons into global Red Cross and Red Crescent Youth Conferences and other events to raise awareness of new generations to the risks of nuclear weapons and need for their prohibition, before the hibakusha are no longer with us.
- A Movement Support Group including dedicated National Societies, the ICRC and International Federation to support and coordinate implementation of the Action Plan.

Participating National Societies:

Algerian Red Crescent
Australian Red Cross
Austrian Red Cross
Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society
Bangladesh Red Crescent Society
Belgian Red Cross
Costa Rican Red Cross
Danish Red Cross
Fiji Red Cross
German Red Cross
Indonesian Red Cross
Red Crescent of Iran
Iraqi Red Crescent
Japanese Red Cross Society
Magen David Adom in Israel
Italian Red Cross
Jordan Red Crescent
Kazakh Red Crescent
Latvian Red Cross
Lebanese Red Cross
Micronesian Red Cross
Netherlands Red Cross
Nigerian Red Cross
Norwegian Red Cross
Philippines Red Cross
Qatar Red Crescent
Red Cross of Serbia
South African Red Cross
Swedish Red Cross
Thai Red Cross
Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross on behalf of 14 Caribbean National Societies *
Turkish Red Crescent
Vanuatu Red Cross
Vietnam Red Cross

+ International Committee of the Red Cross

+ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

* Antigua & Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haïti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Surinam and Trinidad & Tobago.

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