

VITAL SIGNS

NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHYSICIANS FOR THE PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR WAR (IPPNW)

IPPNW campaigns for Ban Treaty ratifications

TPNW on track to enter into force by end of 2019

Upon the historic passage of the TPNW by a 122-1-1 vote on July 7, 2017, the treaty opened for signature on September 26. In the year since then, 69 countries have signed the treaty and 19 have both signed and ratified, becoming parties to it when it enters into force.

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

**Year one progress report:
69 signatures; 19 ratifications
despite intense pressure from
nuclear weapons states
50 ratifications needed for entry
into force**

Christopher King of the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs told NGOs at a special signing ceremony on September 23 that the nuclear weapons ban treaty “is gathering support as quickly as other similar arms control treaties in their first year.”

During the UN signing ceremony, which coincided with the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu credited ICAN and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for their roles in “this treaty’s genesis.”

ICAN’s Tim Wright is upbeat about the prospects for the coming year. He believes 50 ratifications and 100 signatures are attainable before the end of 2019.

“Our focus right now, however, should be to get countries to deposit their ratification



Sculpture depicting St. George slaying the dragon. The dragon is created from fragments of Soviet SS-20 and United States Pershing nuclear missiles. UN Photo/Milton Grant

instruments by the end of *this* year,” Wright said. “This is a useful psychological deadline for us. Diplomats don’t want this hanging over their heads in 2019.”

IPPNW affiliates in those countries that have signed but have not yet ratified the treaty are working with their ICAN partners to bring their nations on board.

Wright identified the following countries as potentially ready to ratify the treaty this year: Algeria, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Namibia, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, South Africa.

IPPNW members and colleagues who

are able to help move these governments forward should contact Chuck Johnson, IPPNW’s nuclear program director. “We hope for some pleasant surprises in the next few months and into the coming year,” said Johnson.

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NUCLEAR ABOLITION NEWS AND UPDATES



For more information, please contact Chuck Johnson (cjohnson@ippnw.org)

IPPNW calls on European leaders to uphold Iran nuclear deal

The Trump administration announced earlier this year that the US would unilaterally withdraw from the nuclear agreement with Iran and would impose new sanctions. IPPNW is urging the leaders of France, Germany, and the UK to uphold the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and to protect European companies threatened by US sanctions if they do business in Iran.

In a June 18 letter, IPPNW and its affiliates in the three European countries that helped negotiate the agreement appealed to President Emmanuel Macron, Chancellor Angela Merkel, and Prime Minister Theresa May to stand by the JCPOA. The International Atomic Energy Agency certified once again in September that Iran is in compliance with the terms of the agreement.

Concerns that renewed sanctions will affect public health and the delivery of important medical supplies to citizens of Iran were echoed by Dr. Leila Moein, representing PSR-Iran (see page 7). "For our people," Dr. Moein said, "especially for



Drs. Pierscione, Zwaig, and Behar with Etienne de Gonneville at Élysée Palace.

patients, sanctions again lead to more economic pressure for middle and lower middle-class families."

French government meets IPPNW delegation at Élysée Palace

In a meeting with IPPNW representatives at the Élysée Palace on July 30, Etienne de Gonneville, French strategic affairs councillor, condemned the US decision to withdraw from the JCPOA and shared IPPNW's concerns about the humanitarian consequences that would result from the US reinstating sanctions upon Iran.

Abraham Behar and Jorge Zwaig of AMFPGN and Tomasz Pierscione of Medact met with de Gonneville. They were told that President Macron's government will adhere to the JCPOA alongside the

European Union, UK, Russia, and China, and considers it a good model for preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.


De Gonneville said that the French government is trying to create a European consensus for "health exceptions" should the US extend its trade boycott to affect the importation of medicines from abroad.

Nuclear threat unchanged after Singapore summit

IPPNW co-president Ira Helfand, in a CNN op-ed on the eve of the US-North Korea summit in June, cautioned that the meeting "must be seen as an early step in a complicated negotiation."

Dr. Helfand, who was in Seoul during the summit, spoke at a conference marking the 18th anniversary of the first inter-Korean summit. The conference was organized by the Kim Dae-jung Peace Center and the World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates.

In a post-summit interview with the *Korea Herald*, Dr. Helfand gave a candid assessment of the outcome. "Certainly, we are in a better position than a few months ago when [Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un] were hurling nuclear threats at each other.... The people of the United States and South Korea must keep up the pressure on them to continue the current diplomatic efforts.

"The TPNW can be a powerful aid to South Korean efforts to denuclearize the peninsula," Dr. Helfand concluded. 



On September 26th, 2018—the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons—seven countries signed and four countries ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Governments were joined by UN Under-Secretary-General of Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu (right) and ICAN executive director Beatrice Fihn (center). ICAN photo: Darren Ormiz

“Before they end us, we can and must end nuclear weapons”

[Ed. note: Earlier this year, IPPNW co-president Tilman Ruff contributed a powerful essay on the nature of the nuclear threat and the promise of the Ban Treaty to the Australian publication *Fragility and Hope in a World of Uncertainty*. The entire piece, from which these excerpts are taken, is available online.]

The historic Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons...is the first to categorically outlaw nuclear weapons. It fills a gaping hole in international law, which had seen the worst weapon of mass destruction as the only major type of indiscriminate and inhumane weapon not to be banned by an international treaty. This treaty enshrines a comprehensive prohibition of nuclear weapons. It also provides a path to their elimination.



Tilman Ruff (center) bicycling in support of the Ban Treaty in Australia.

[T]here are two kinds of existential threats that have emerged recently and are of human origin. Though they are upon us, it is not yet too late to take the urgent preventive action they demand. The first is environmental disruption, and degradation and depletion of vital resources and ecosystems. Rampant climate disruption due to

global warming poses the greatest of these inter-related challenges. The second, more acute and less potentially reversible, is the danger of nuclear war.

Effectively addressing both climate disruption and nuclear weapons is not optional, but essential. There is only one acceptable answer to the stark, binary choice for all of us: Which will it be—the end of nuclear weapons, or the end of us? Evidence of the true extent of the effects of nuclear weapons has fre-

quently not been collected, or covered up, misrepresented or disregarded by governments, in subservience to the myths that nuclear weapons are weapons like any other, only bigger, and can be used to serve legitimate military purposes and enhance security. The reality is vastly different. No humanitarian



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response, reconciliation or recovery is possible after a nuclear war. The concept of “winners” would be meaningless; there would be only losers.

The ban treaty powerfully codifies in international law a rejection of the legitimacy of nuclear weapons in any hands....Despite states like China, Russia, and the United States opposing the treaties banning landmines and cluster munitions and failing to sign them, they no longer export these weapons, and manufacture and use have declined substantially.

In all human history, people have never had as great an opportunity as we do to avert harm and do good for humanity and for all the current and potential future denizens of planet Earth. We have the opportunity, quite literally, to save our world.

VS

Countries that have signed the TPNW as of October 1, 2018 (• indicates ratification)

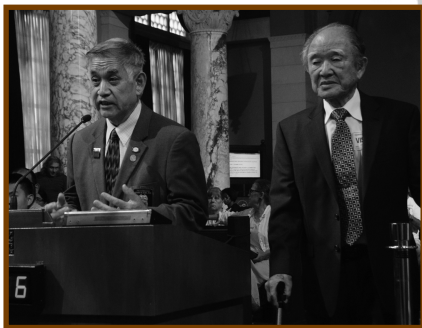
Algeria, Angola, Antigua & Barbuda, Austria•, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Cook Islands•, Costa Rica•, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba•, DRC (Congo), Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Fiji, Gambia•, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana•, Holy See•, Honduras, Indonesia, Ireland, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Laos, Libya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico•, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand•, Nicaragua•, Nigeria, Palau•, Palestine•, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & Grenadines, Samoa•, San Marino•, Sao Tome & Principe, Seychelles, South Africa, Thailand•, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tuvalu, Uruguay•, Vanuatu•, Venezuela•, Vietnam•.



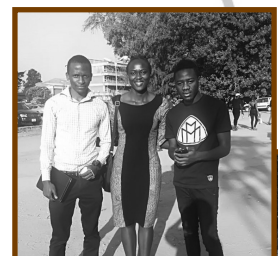
Canadian Physicians for Global Survival medical student Nikki Shah (left) talked about “youth-led nuclear disarmament” at the International Federation of Medical Students Association’s 62nd General Assembly in August.



Spain’s Podemos Party, part of the new ruling coalition, delivered 92 parliamentary pledges in support of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to ICAN in June. At a roundtable on “Achieving a world without nuclear weapons,” set up in May by the news agency Pressenza in conjunction with the Humanist Forum in Madrid, Aurora Bilbao of IPPNW Spain, (fourth from left) gave a powerful presentation on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. She and Carlos Umaña of IPPNW Costa Rica (left) helped convince parliamentarians of the urgent need for the nuclear ban treaty.



On August 28, the California state legislature passed a resolution urging US leaders and the American people “to embrace the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, make nuclear disarmament the centerpiece of our national security policy, and spearhead a global effort to prevent nuclear war.” For IPPNW, AJR 33 had special meaning: California senate majority leader Bill Monning, who introduced the resolution, is a former IPPNW executive director. The Los Angeles city council also unanimously passed a resolution to support the TPNW. Dr. Jimmy Hara of PSR-LA (left) spoke about the “Back from the Brink” campaign, a grassroots movement promoted by PSR and other US groups. just before the vote.



Kenyan Medical Students are participating in a Medical exchange program with IPPNW Germany. The participants engage in humanitarian field work, explored the theme of peace and disarmament. African student Everlyne Achieng (inset) and other students in Lusaka, Zambia, are working to revive African student organizations.



idea of linking student groups from different universities is bearing fruit. The United University Project has so far gathered student groups from Wroclaw/Nagasaki and Berlin/Hiroshima. Asuka Nishigaki (right), from Nagasaki, spent some time with Kamelia Mokri at the Wroclaw Medical College. All the students are happy to have built personal relationships which enable them to work on local and shared projects.



IPPNW doctors and students gathered in Wroclaw, Poland, for this year's European Regional Meeting. Students raised their voices together for human rights, non-violent solutions to conflict, individual responsibility for peace building, and protection of health care workers in conflict areas.



IPPNW Mongolia hosted the 10th North Asian Regional conference and the 3d North-South Consultative Meeting in Ulaanbaatar in September. The conference called upon all Asian nations that have not already done so to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.



Indigenous Australian nuclear test survivor, Sue Coleman-Haseldine holds IPPNW's replica of ICAN's 2017 Nobel Peace Prize medallion, which was taken on a series of tours throughout the country sponsored by the Medical Association for the Prevention of War (MAPW) and ICAN Australia. The tours rallied support among long-time campaigners and political leaders alike. MAPW is collecting endorsements for a Health Professionals' call for Australia to sign and ratify the Treaty, which will be released later this year.



Students for Social Responsibility and Medical Peace Work in Action, with fellow students from the program, which aims to integrate peace activities with online course themes of urban settlements. A student representative (center) met with medical students in Dhaka, as part of her mission to establish chapters.



In September, a PSR Bangladesh team led by student representative Anindya Shams engaged 72 pupils from Notre Dame College in Dhaka in a Target X activity about the threat of nuclear weapons. Fellow medical students in Nashik, India commemorated Nagasaki and Hiroshima days with the activity "Bombs No More," in which students were given an image of a nuclear warhead and asked to draw creative ideas other than a bomb.

“Gun violence can be reversed with a science-based approach”

IPPNW doctors spoke out on armed violence prevention and the role of health professionals at two United Nations meetings to assess the progress of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PoA). IPPNW collaborated with the

quences of armed violence and the need for health professionals and parliamentarians to work together to prevent violence.

IPPNW has regularly offered our policy recommendations at the PoA meetings. They include that States’ should:

- Include health care professionals on national commissions on Small Arms in order to help assess strategic investments based on highest needs and to interface with WHO Violence Prevention Focal Points that exist in more than 100 countries;
- Implement national collection of data on gun-related injuries and deaths, use the data to calculate the costs of gun violence, and implement

where he will present on the use of social media to raise awareness about medical and social service aid to victims of gender-based violence in Zambia.

His project is a follow-up to a multi-year collaborative research and education project conducted by the late Dr. Bob Mtonga and Dr. Michael Schober of IPPNW Austria. The original project was designed to improve social services for victims of violence in Lusaka. Dr. Phiri will also present a poster by AFP director Maria Valenti on the benefits of cross collaboration among organizations working on sustainable development goals (SDGs) and international arms control agreements.

VPA annual meeting in Berlin

Dr. Ursula Völker of IPPNW Germany was chosen to present on her work in child and adolescent psychiatry at the WHO’s Violence Prevention Alliance (VPA) annual meeting in Berlin. She will share compelling stories of her young patients, including refugees, and will describe her work with youth welfare agencies, the police, domestic relations courts, school and health authorities, forensic psychiatry, and probation officers to help her patients stay safe and improve their well being.



Ursula Völker

Dr. Völker is an attending physician in an acute/emergency ward for young people in Hamburg, Germany. She will also present on the current priorities of IPPNW, which has been an active member of the VPA for more than a decade.



Drs. Shannon Gearhart (left) and Cathey Falvo represented IPPNW at UN small arms sessions.

Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons to conduct two side events sponsored by the Mission of Sweden to the UN. The panels connected the dots between major international arms control agreements and treaties, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the common theme of “reducing human suffering.”

Dr. Cathey Falvo was one of only a few civil society members who addressed States’ delegates during a special session of the PoAPrepCom. She gave IPPNW’s recommendations on how to integrate public health personnel and procedures into all aspects of national action plans on violence prevention. “Gun violence can be reversed with a science-based approach,” Dr. Falvo said.

Dr. Shannon Gearhart joined a panel where she spoke about the health conse-

the public health model to identify and monitor proposed interventions.

- Improve the health infrastructure for survivors of armed violence, including improving communications and coordination among medical providers and social service agencies.

Improving care for victims of violence Safety 2018

Dr. Masiku Phiri of IPPNW Zambia will represent AfP at the 13th World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion (Safety 2018) in Bangkok, Thailand. The World Health Organization is a co-sponsor. Dr. Phiri was selected out of hundreds of applicants, and will join a panel



Masiku Phiri

"NO CHILD SHOULD EVER EXPERIENCE THE BITTER TASTE OF WAR"

An interview with Dr. Leila Moein of PSR-Iran

Dr. Leila Moein has been an active member of Iranian Physicians for Social Responsibility since her days as a medical student. She is one of the organizers of an international conference on Health for Peace, which will take place at Shiraz Medical University in November.

VS: Why is advocating for the prevention of war and armed violence and the abolition of nuclear weapons important to your work as a doctor?

LM: I was born in the Middle East, right when Saddam's regime imposed war on my country. My father was a teacher of philosophy and literature and volunteered to defend his country and his family. And when I was three, he was martyred in the war. I grew up in the horrendous environment of war. For this reason, I decided to try to establish peace and security in my country and around the world, so that no child would ever experience the bitter taste of war. When I was a medical student I learned about the destructive and irreparable effects of nuclear weapons, and I decided to work on this issue to prevent its harm to human society.

VS: How did you first get involved with PSR Iran?

LM: In 2006 I became acquainted with a member of the Society of Chemical Weapons Victims Support, Dr. Shahriar Khateri, who acquainted me with the large number of chemical weapons victims in Iran. I understood from the scientific studies about the similarities between those harmed by chemical and nuclear weapons. Dr. Khateri and I attended the 2006 IPPNW Congress in Helsinki, Finland. After returning from Helsinki, I started working with a group of medical students to form PSR-Iran. After four years, at the 2010 Congress in Basel, Switzerland, PSR-Iran officially joined IPPNW.

VS: What are your thoughts and concerns about the impacts of the US choosing to withdraw from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), also known as the Iran Nuclear Agreement, and reestablish broad economic sanctions on Iran and those who trade with Iran?

LM: By doing so, the United States repeatedly denied the Iranian public confidence in its government. Rebuilding this damaged wall is very hard between the two countries. I hope the United Nations will punish the US government. The start of a new round of sanctions against Iran will put pressure on the Iranian people, particularly those who are vulnerable, such as patients, children, women, and low-income families, who are being harmed by rising inflation rates due to sanctions. And this is a gross violation of human rights. Iran has proven its goodwill to the world with its adherence to the JCPOA and now it's time for international organizations to do their best to defend the Iranian people.

VS: What is the relationship between PSR Iran and the Tehran Peace Museum? What projects have you been working on recently with the Museum?

LM: PSR-Iran is based at Tehran's Peace Museum. In fact, it is the family home of all peace activists in Iran. We use the facilities of the Museum of Peace to hold meetings and activities. Given the conditions created after the withdrawal of the United States from the treaty, our most important project in PSR-Iran is to reduce the impact of sanctions on health and the treatment of patients by creating an international communication bridge.

VS: Can you tell us a little bit about the



upcoming International Congress on Health for Peace in Shiraz?

LM: We have designed this congress with the purpose of reinforcing health professionals' efforts for peace-building and peace policy discourse at a global level. Shiraz has a rich history of humanism and peace-building, and is the birthplace of the great Persian poets Hafiz and Saadi, who are the symbols of peace and friendship. The Tehran Peace Museum and the municipality of Shiraz will also host a congressional cultural and artistic festival. **VS**

Your donations help support the work of IPPNW students worldwide. Please give as generously as you can to help strengthen their movement and help IPPNW achieve its goals to abolish nuclear weapons and prevent armed violence.

ippnw.org/donate.html

First Mtonga Scholar is IPPNW leader's son

Mangamanga Mtonga is the recipient of the inaugural Dr. Robert Mtonga Memorial Scholarship, which was established last year to honor his late father's memory and to carry forward his tireless work for peace, disarmament, and health by helping African students in the health professions who wish to follow in his remarkable footsteps. The scholarship, funded by donations from Dr. Mtonga's friends



and colleagues, includes a \$1,000 contribution toward Mangamanga's educational expenses at Lusaka Apex Medical University in Zambia.

"This award has been received with deepest heartfelt joy and happiness in our family. This will help enhance my studies as it is a great motivation."

Mangamanga recently wrote to us to say he passed all of his exams for the first year and is now entering his second year at the medical school.

Make an ongoing commitment to peace and disarmament

A generous donor has offered to match the next \$1000 dollars donated to the Dr. Robert Mtonga Memorial Scholarship Fund. Please make a tax-deductible donation through IPPNW's website. In the "comments" box at the end of the form, type "Mtonga Scholarship."



ONLINE:

<https://tinyurl.com/y7pyjumj>


Quaker Fellow is IPPNW intern

IPPNW welcomes Erica "Eust" Eustis, a Quaker Voluntary Service (QVS) Fellow, as a program associate for IPPNW at the Central Office in Boston. Eust graduated from Simmons College in May 2017 with a Bachelor's of Science in Biochemistry, is highly interested in public health work, and believes deeply in the cause of nuclear weapons abolition. Eust is looking forward to being involved in the work

IPPNW does at the intersections between peace and health.

QVS is an organization that hosts young volunteers across the United States to perform a year of service work at the intersection of transformational spirituality and activism. QVS Fellows engage in various kinds of social justice work at community-based organizations, while living in an intentional community with other Fellows and exploring

their spirituality.

"Eust has hit the ground running," said executive director Michael Christ, "with an infectious combination of wit, skill, and enthusiasm." 



ONLINE:

quakervoluntaryservice.org



Eust Eustis (left) with Amy Hendrickson of Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility and Cole Harrison of Massachusetts Peace Action at Don't Bank on the Bomb event outside BNP Paribas bank in Boston.



IPPNW is a non-partisan federation of national medical organizations in 62 countries dedicated to safeguarding health by working to ban nuclear weapons and to address the impact of militarism and war on human health.

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339 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148 USA
Tel: +1.617.443.1733 || Email: director@ippnw.org

IPPNW Staff: Michael Christ, Chuck Johnson, Maria Valenti, Erica Eustis, George Cani; editing and layout: John Loretz

