



International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)

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Chapter I. Sustainable development and financing for development

Chapter I of the Pact must recognize that all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) face a common existential peril: that any use of nuclear weapons anywhere likely would cause catastrophic and long-term humanitarian consequences everywhere, threatening the fulfillment of SDGs, potentially irreparably.¹

As States Parties to the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) declared on 1 December 2023, at the second Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW (2MSP): “Nuclear weapons inflict catastrophic destruction, and unspeakable suffering and death. Their use would have long-term damage to the environment, socioeconomic and sustainable development, the global economy, food security and the health of current and future generations, including the disproportionate impact nuclear weapons have on women and girls.”

This declaration reaffirms the TPNW itself, which recognizes in its preamble “that the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons cannot be adequately addressed, transcend national borders, pose grave implications for human survival, the environment, socioeconomic development, the global economy, food security and the health of current and future generations, and have a disproportionate impact on women and girls, including as a result of ionizing radiation.”

Chapter I of the Pact must further recognize that wasteful spending on sustaining nuclear arsenals diverts resources from investments in and financing for sustainable development. In 2022 alone, nuclear-armed states spent \$82.9 billion on nuclear weapons.² As the 2MSP declaration continued: “In a world where challenges persist in meeting basic human needs, the

¹ See ICAN, “The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and Sustainable Development Goals,” October 2019, at

https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/ican/pages/1192/attachments/original/1583764927/TPNW_and_SDGs_%281%29.pdf?1583764927

² See ICAN, “Wasted: 2022 Global Nuclear Weapons Spending”, June 2023, at

https://assets.nationbuilder.com/ican/pages/3785/attachments/original/1686495965/ICAN_Spending_Report_2023_sm.pdf?1686495965

investment of substantial financial resources in modernizing and expanding nuclear arsenals is indefensible and counterproductive as it comes at the expense of investment in sustainable development for genuine human well-being, as well as disarmament, education, diplomacy, environmental protection, and health."

Chapter II. International peace and security

International peace and security can be ensured only through the total elimination of nuclear weapons. As the United Nations Secretary-General recognized in the New Agenda for Peace, "the existential threat that nuclear weapons pose to humanity must motivate us to work towards their total elimination."

It is therefore critical that Chapter II of the Pact makes clear that (a) the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and the rejection of the unsustainable policies of nuclear deterrence that perpetuate the continued existence of nuclear weapons, must be the international community's utmost priority, and that (b) the most promising path toward the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the universalization and implementation of the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

The TPNW is the only globally-applicable treaty-based ban of nuclear weapons, the only multilateral framework for the verified elimination of nuclear weapons, and the only treaty that obligates its member states to assist people and remediate environments affected by nuclear weapons use and testing.

In particular, ICAN recommends that Chapter II of the Pact:

- Calls upon all states that have not yet done so to sign, ratify, accept, approve or accede to the TPNW at the earliest possible date;
- Commends the 93 states that have signed the TPNW and the 69 States that have become parties to the TPNW;³
- Welcomes the convening of the first Meeting of States Parties of the TPNW in June 2022 in Vienna, and the convening of the second Meeting of States Parties of the TPNW in November 2023 in New York;
- Welcomes the decisions and declarations adopted at the first and second Meetings of States Parties to the TPNW, including the Vienna Action Plan, and welcomes further the ongoing informal intersessional work to implement the Vienna Action Plan;
- Calls upon all states to participate in the third Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW, to be convened in March 2025 in New York, and to support the intersessional work of TPNW states parties leading toward the third Meeting of States Parties;
- Urges the full implementation of the TPNW's Articles 6 and 7 on providing victim assistance, environmental remediation, and international cooperation and assistance to affected communities, in consultation with survivors and others impacted by nuclear weapons;

³ As at 31 December 2023.

- Demands that nuclear-armed states commit to eliminate their nuclear weapon programmes in a time-bound manner; and
- Demands that all states that currently incorporate nuclear weapons in their security doctrines renounce these weapons and remove them from such doctrines urgently.

Chapter II of the Pact must recognize, as TPNW States Parties articulated in the 1 December 2023 declaration of the second Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW, that: “Far from preserving peace and security, nuclear weapons are used as instruments of policy, linked to coercion, intimidation and heightening of tensions. . . . We reaffirm our grave concern about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, which cannot be adequately addressed, transcend national borders, pose grave implications for human survival and well-being and would be incompatible with respect for the right to life.”

Chapter III. Science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation

Chapter III of the Pact must acknowledge that the increasing application of emerging technology to nuclear weapons systems increases the risk of nuclear war, and that, as technology advances, the only way to eliminate this risk is to eliminate the weapons.

As ICAN’s Executive Director recently stated, “as machine learning advances, the process whereby advanced machines make decisions is becoming increasingly opaque – what is known as AI’s ‘black box problem.’ . . . When it comes to nuclear weapons, trying to anticipate, mitigate, or regulate the new risks created by emerging technologies will never be enough. We must remove these weapons from the equation entirely. This means that all governments must commit to stigmatize, prohibit, and eliminate nuclear weapons by joining the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which offers a clear path toward a world without such arms. It also means that nuclear-armed states must immediately stop investing in modernizing and expanding their nuclear arsenals, including in the name of making them ‘safe’ or ‘secure’ from cyberattacks. Given the insurmountable risks posed by the mere existence of nuclear weapons, such efforts are fundamentally futile.”⁴

It is for this reason that States Parties to the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), in their 1 December 2023 declaration of the second Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW, articulated that “the international community must address new and continually evolving developments in science and technology in the nuclear domain”.

Chapter III of the Pact must similarly take note of the risks posed by the increased application of technological developments to nuclear weapons, as well as the promise of the TPNW to rid the world of these risks.

⁴ Parke, Melissa, “Preventing AI Nuclear Armageddon”, 8 November 2023, <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/dangers-of-artificial-intelligence-ai-applications-nuclear-weapons-by-melissa-parke-2023-11>

Chapter IV. Youth and future generations

As is true for other existential threats affecting youth and future generations, the scourge of nuclear weapons was not created by young people, and yet it is today's youth and future generations who face the greatest risk from the catastrophic harms of nuclear weapons. Analysts for the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, for example, calculated that a child born today is unlikely to live out their natural lives without witnessing nuclear devastation.⁵

In their 1 December 2023 declaration, States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) pledged to collaborate through an inclusive approach with stakeholders, including youth. States Parties promised further that: "We will work relentlessly to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons for the sake of current and future generations."

It is for this reason that Chapter IV of the Pact must recognize the imperative to eliminate nuclear weapons on behalf of youth and future generations, and to empower young people with the tools to fulfill this goal, namely, the TPNW..

Chapter V. Transforming global governance

Chapter V of the Pact should take note of the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) as the first multilateral framework providing for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, but also as a model for transforming global governance.

The TPNW is innovative among nuclear weapons fora for ensuring that all states parties have equal voice, without affording special privileges to nuclear-armed states. The TPNW, including in its rules of procedure, is also unparalleled among nuclear weapons processes for ensuring diverse participation in meetings of states parties and in intersessional processes, and for being inclusive of perspectives from a wide range of civil society actors.

Chapter V of the Pact should make reference to the TPNW as a potential model for reform in other multilateral bodies as well.

⁵ Hellman, Martin, "An existential discussion: What is the probability of nuclear war?", 18 March 2021 <https://thebulletin.org/2021/03/an-existential-discussion-what-is-the-probability-of-nuclear-war/>