



PRESS RELEASE

On the occasion of the second official “Conference on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the Republic of Rwanda,” held at the Hotel Ste Famille in Kigali, Rwanda, February 3, 2023, the union of 6 Non-Governmental Organizations related with the promotion of the culture of peace and the protection of the environment in Rwanda, joining with the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), urges the Rwandan State to join the 92 States which have signed and the 68 States which have ratified the United Nations Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

In a context of war between Ukraine and Russia, with increasing tension between the U.S./West and Russia, the risk of the use of nuclear weapons is higher than it has ever been in history. It is urgent to join the only treaty with the promise to eliminate nuclear weapons and maintain world peace. Any use of nuclear weapons would seriously compromise the sustainable development agenda and cause irreversible environmental damage, and any exchange of nuclear weapons would threaten the survival of humanity.

For decades, African states have been leaders in nuclear disarmament. They played a leading role during the negotiations of the TPNW and encourage the universalization of the Treaty. The most recent signature was made on January 9, 2023, by the Republic of Djibouti.

Rwanda's signature and ratification of TPNW would be consistent with its long tradition of supporting initiatives to advance nuclear disarmament. Becoming a state party to the TPNW is a simple but important step that every state can – and should – take to help end the age of nuclear weapons for good. Given the unique existential threat that nuclear weapons pose to humanity and the lack of recent progress towards eliminating these weapons, the universalization and full implementation of the TPNW is an urgent humanitarian imperative.

Like the NPT, the TPNW does not limit a state party's ability to pursue nuclear energy or nuclear technology for non-military purposes. The preamble to the TPNW states “that nothing in this Treaty shall be construed to affect the inalienable right of its States Parties to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination”.

Together we encourage Rwanda, as a State that has opted for the promotion of the green economy in the world, as a State that has experienced devastation and should lead in preventing further catastrophe, to sign the Treaty. It would be better if the treaty were signed before the next meeting of States Parties which will take place in November 2023 in New York, in order to highlight its role in promoting PEACE and SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT in Africa and around the world.



Signatures

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