

NAYARIT – A POINT OF NO RETURN

MEXICO CONFERENCE 2014



“In the past, weapons have been eliminated after they have been outlawed. We believe this is the path to achieve a world without nuclear weapons.”

– CHAIR’S SUMMARY, SECOND CONFERENCE ON THE HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, NAYARIT, 2014



Top: Campaigners at the ICAN meeting before the Nayarit conference.
Left (top): ICAN campaigner Kumar Sundaram from India.
Left (bottom): The opening panel at the ICAN campaigners meeting.
Right: A Ban All Nukes Generation action at the Nayarit conference.

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ABOUT US

The **International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)** is a coalition of non-government organizations in more than 90 countries working to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. We are urging all governments to start negotiations now on a global treaty banning nuclear weapons. Find out more at www.icanw.org

THANK YOU

Special thanks to the **Norwegian** government, **Soka Gakkai International** and the **Dara Foundation** for sponsoring our activities in Nayarit. Thanks also to the **Mexican government** for inviting us to facilitate civil society participation, and **Reaching Critical Will** and **Ban All Nukes Generation** for their contributions to this report.

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Contact: info@icanw.org
Photos: Zita Guerra & Gem Romuld





Top: Ban All Nukes Generation activists outside the conference venue.
Middle (left): Civil society representatives at the conference.
Middle (right): ICAN co-chair Dr. Tilman Ruff makes an intervention.
Bottom: ICAN campaigners meet ahead of the Nayarit conference.



Towards a ban

The humanitarian imperative to abolish nuclear weapons

The Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, hosted by the Mexican government in Nayarit in February 2014, marked a turning point in global efforts to outlaw the most destructive weapons of all. It demonstrated, beyond doubt, that urgent action is needed to avert a catastrophe of unprecedented proportions.

As the global civil society coalition working for a treaty banning nuclear weapons, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) strongly supports the vision laid out by the Nayarit conference chair for the initiation of a diplomatic process to negotiate a legally binding instrument against nuclear weapons. By stigmatizing, delegitimizing and prohibiting these inherently inhumane devices, we can facilitate and greatly speed up their complete eradication from the world.

Not every delegation in Nayarit shared the chair's vision for a new process, but ICAN believes that the political landscape is changing on nuclear weapons and will continue to change such that the more hesitant states – particularly those that currently rely on nuclear weapons in their defence doctrines – will be willing to participate in the negotiations for a ban treaty, and ultimately sign and ratify it.

The Vienna conference

ICAN welcomes Austria's offer to host a third conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons later in 2014. We look forward to hearing more about Austria's plans, and are ready to play a coordinating role for civil society, just as we did in Nayarit and at the first conference on this topic in Oslo in March 2013. The Vienna conference is framed as a continuation of the discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, including the risk of a detonation. We welcome this approach, which has been successful in changing the conversation about nuclear weapons. This reframing of the debate has created space for greater engagement from civil society, international organizations and states. At the same time, we note the appetite among many states for discussions

about potential political and legal initiatives to address nuclear weapons, including calls to negotiate a ban treaty. As we did with Norway and Mexico in the run-up to the first two conferences, we will urge Austria to be as ambitious as possible and to be open to discussions on the different initiatives that states could pursue to address this threat.

We hope that the Vienna conference will be a further step towards negotiations on a legally binding instrument to ban nuclear weapons. We intend to work hard towards this goal and are confident that a process for such a treaty is now emerging.

“History shows that legal prohibitions of weapon systems – their possession as well as their use – facilitate their elimination. Weapons that have been outlawed increasingly become seen as illegitimate. They lose their political status and, along with it, the money and resources for their production, modernization, proliferation and perpetuation.”

– ICAN STATEMENT, NAYARIT CONFERENCE

As the Nayarit conference clearly demonstrated, every day without a nuclear detonation is a lucky day. There is an urgent humanitarian imperative to outlaw and eliminate nuclear weapons before they are ever used again – and every nation has a right and responsibility to be part of this effort. It is time to correct the anomaly that nuclear weapons are the only weapons of mass destruction not yet prohibited by an international convention. Doing so is a necessary step towards their total elimination. ■

A point of no return

The unstoppable momentum for a ban on nuclear weapons

One hundred and forty-six governments attended the Nayarit conference, reflecting the deep global concern about the ongoing threat of nuclear weapons and the strong desire for greater progress towards nuclear abolition. Nayarit succeeded in putting the idea a treaty banning nuclear weapons firmly on the international agenda.

SUMMARY

- Delegates from **146 governments** attended the Nayarit conference
- 65 governments delivered **national statements** at the conference
- A majority of the statements called for a **treaty banning nuclear weapons**
- The **Red Cross** and several **UN agencies** took part in the discussions
- Austria announced a **follow-up conference** in the latter half of 2014
- The Mexican chair declared the Nayarit conference “**a point of no return**”
- He said the “time has come to initiate a **diplomatic process**” for a ban

Catastrophic effects

Delegates heard from medical experts, United Nations agencies, the international Red Cross movement and former military officials, who all reinforced the view that the mere possession and deployment of nuclear weapons is reckless and unsanctionable. They analysed the likely impact of nuclear detonations on economic and social infrastructure, public health, the climate and agriculture, concluding that the effects of even a single nuclear weapon detonation – let alone a full-scale nuclear exchange – would be catastrophic.

This is an issue of “deep concern shared by all”, said the Mexican chair, noting that the effects of a nuclear detonation “are not constrained by national borders”. He extracted the following factual conclusions from the expert presentations:

The Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons underscored the urgent need for a new diplomatic process to outlaw and eliminate nuclear weapons. Like the Oslo conference before it, the Nayarit conference laid out – in stark and shocking detail – the humanitarian case for concerted global action by states, international organizations and civil society to prevent any use of nuclear weapons. In closing the conference, the Mexican chair described Nayarit as “a point of no return”, and signalled that a new diplomatic process to prohibit nuclear weapons is imminent.

In addition to exploring the immediate and long-term impacts nuclear detonations, the Nayarit conference assessed the risk of nuclear weapons use – whether by accident, miscalculation or intent. Experts drew attention to the many known instances of the near use of nuclear weapons, when the fate of entire populations had hung on a razor’s edge.

- Beyond the immediate death and destruction caused by a nuclear detonation, socio-economic development would be hampered and the environment damaged. Suffering would be widespread, with the poor and vulnerable being the most severely affected.
- The reconstruction of infrastructure and the regeneration of economic activities would take several decades, causing profound social and political harm.
- Radiation exposure could result in short- and long-term negative effects in every organ of the human body and would increase cancer risks and future hereditary pathologies.
- Today the risk of nuclear weapons use is growing globally as a consequence of proliferation, the vulnerability of nuclear command and control networks to cyber-

Chair's summary: Time has come for a new diplomatic process

“Nayarit is a point of no return,” declared Juan Manuel Gómez Robledo, Mexico’s vice-minister for multilateral affairs and human rights, delivering the chair’s summary as he closed the Nayarit conference. “The broad-based and comprehensive discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons should lead to the commitment of states and civil society to reach new international standards and norms, through a legally binding instrument.” He noted that, in the past, weapons have been eliminated after they have been outlawed: “We believe this is the path to achieve a world without nuclear weapons.”

Pursuing a treaty prohibition on nuclear weapons, he said, is consistent with states’ obligations under international law, including those derived from the Non-Proliferation Treaty and common article 1 of the Geneva Conventions.

A new diplomatic process

“It is the view of the chair that the Nayarit conference has shown that time has come to initiate a diplomatic process conducive to this goal,” he said, alluding to a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons. “Our belief is that this process should comprise a specific time frame, the definition of the most appropriate fora, and a clear and



substantive framework, making the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons the essence of disarmament efforts.” The 70th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki attacks – to be marked in August 2015 – is “the appropriate milestone to achieve our goal”.

The chair concluded that the “broad and active participation of states and civil society reflects the global concern regarding the effects of nuclear weapons, as well as the increasing recognition that this is an issue of the utmost importance to all peoples in the world”. He said that the Nayarit conference had succeeded in facilitating an informed discussion about the

humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, building on the outcomes of the Oslo conference hosted by Norway in March 2013. “It is the chair’s perception that awareness of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons is already changing the hearts and minds worldwide of those engaging in discussions concerning nuclear weapons.” He welcomed Austria’s offer to host a third conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, which had received “great support from participants”. The Vienna conference will be an opportunity “to deepen the momentum, anchor these conclusions and take them forward”.

attacks and to human error, and potential access to nuclear weapons by non-state actors, in particular terrorist groups.

- As more countries deploy more nuclear weapons on higher levels of combat readiness, the risks of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional use grow significantly.
- It is a fact that no state or international organization has the capacity to address or provide the short- and long-term humanitarian assistance and protection needed in the case of a nuclear weapon explosion. Moreover, it would not be possible to establish such capacities, even if attempted.

Sixty-five governments delivered national statements during the conference, drawing these and other factual conclusions, and urging greater political action to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. A majority of the national statements endorsed the specific proposal for a treaty banning nuclear weapons as a necessary step towards elimination. The vice-president of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Christine Beerli, also called for a new legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. ICAN campaigner Ray Acheson said that nuclear-free states must have the courage to lead efforts for a ban treaty. “Show that leadership and you will have the support of civil society,” she said.

Opinion: Imagine a world without nuclear weapons

Desmond Tutu

We must vociferously challenge the perceived entitlement of a select few nations to possess nuclear bombs. As Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary-General, put it in January of last year: “There are no right hands for wrong weapons.”

But how do we uproot the discriminatory order? How do we end the minority rule? In our decades-long fight against apartheid in South Africa, we depended upon the combination of an irrepressible domestic groundswell of popular opposition to the regime and intense and sustained pressure from the international community. The same is needed now in the movement to abolish nuclear weapons.

This week, in the Mexican state of Nayarit, diplomats from three-quarters of all nations are gathered to discuss the devastating humanitarian impact of nuclear detonations. They will address the inability of emergency workers to provide relief to the wounded; the widespread dispersal of radiation; the lofting of millions of tonnes of soot from firestorms high into the upper troposphere; the collapse of global agriculture from lack of sunlight and rainfall; the onset of famine and disease on a scale never before witnessed.

The Nayarit conference is not



only a much-needed reminder of what nuclear weapons do to humans beings – something seldom mentioned in arms control discussions – but also a vital chance for the international community to chart a new course. It is high time for the nuclear-free nations of the world, constituting the overwhelming majority, to work together to exert their extraordinary collective influence.

Without delay, they should embark on a process to negotiate a global treaty banning the use, manufacture and possession of nuclear weapons – whether or

not the nuclear-armed nations are prepared to join them. Why should these weapons, whose effects are the most grievous of all, remain the only weapons of mass destruction not expressly prohibited under international law? By stigmatizing the bomb – as well as those who possess it – we can build tremendous pressure for disarmament.

Desmond Tutu, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984, is an ICAN supporter. This is an excerpt from an article published by CNN International on 13 February 2014.

Survivors' perspective

In the opening session of the Nayarit conference, the testimonies of atomic bomb survivors from Japan – known as *hibakusha* – gave a human face to the catastrophic harm caused by nuclear weapons. Yasuaki Yamashita, a Japanese man now living in Mexico, spoke of the horrific scenes following the atomic destruction of Nagasaki on 9 August 1945. Setsuko Thurlow, a survivor of the Hiroshima blast on 6 August, described the hardship she has endured over many years, and implored delegates to take urgent action. “We need a new path,” she said, “one that recognizes the utterly unacceptable humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons –

weapons we have a moral obligation to prohibit.” She expressed her hope “that this new movement to ban nuclear weapons will finally lead us to a nuclear-weapon-free world”.

The conference also heard accounts from Toshiki Fujimori, a Hiroshima survivor, on the long-term effects of a nuclear weapon detonation, and Terumi Tanaka, a Nagasaki survivor, on the social and psychological impacts. Masaki Koyanagi, whose grandparents survived the Nagasaki bombing, spoke of the inter-generational harm. “In order for the deaths of the victims not to be in vain,” she said, “I believe I have the duty to tell the world the truth about the atomic bomb.”

The devastating impact of nuclear weapons through their testing was also highlighted in Nayarit. Jeban Riklon, a senator from the Marshall Islands, reported on the long-term health and environmental consequences of US nuclear testing on his country. He was two years old at the time of the infamous “Bravo” hydrogen bomb test, which dumped high-level radioactive fallout onto his home atoll of Rongelap in 1954. Six decades later, the atoll remains contaminated and unsafe for habitation.

“The time has come for non-nuclear-weapon states and civil society to initiate a nuclear weapons ban for the sake of humanity.”

– SETSUKO THURLOW, HIROSHIMA SURVIVOR



In addition to the Marshall Islands, the governments of Algeria, Belarus, Kiribati, Kazakhstan, New Zealand and Ukraine all delivered statements underscoring the staggering and ongoing toll of nuclear testing on their regions.

Jesús Martínez, an ICAN campaigner from El Salvador who lost both legs to a land mine, drew parallels between the processes to ban land mines and cluster munitions and the emerging process to ban nuclear weapons. “States have a responsibility to act and reach a solution to this problem,” he said.

The Austrian announcement

On the opening day of the Nayarit conference, the Austrian foreign minister, Sebastian Kurz, issued a press statement announcing his intention to host a third conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons in the latter part of 2014. Discussions there are expected to focus on what must be done to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again. “Nuclear weapons are not only a permanent threat to all humankind, but also a relic of the cold war that we must finally overcome,” Mr Kurz said in the statement. “The international

nuclear disarmament efforts require an urgent paradigm shift, not the least in light of the danger of further nuclear weapons proliferation.”

He highlighted new research showing that even a limited regional nuclear conflict would cause devastating global consequences for health, food security, the climate, the economy and the social order much beyond the immediate humanitarian emergencies. “This danger is by no means abstract. It is a Sword of Damocles above our heads and should be at the centre of international efforts.”

He warned of the “considerable risk” of a nuclear explosion by accident, misjudgement or terrorism, and argued that reliance on nuclear weapons is an “outdated” approach to security. “A concept that is based on the total destruction of the planet should have no place in the 21st century,” he said.

Austria believes that the elimination of nuclear weapons can only be achieved through their “international stigmatization”. Speaking at the high-level meeting of the UN General Assembly on nuclear disarmament in September 2013, the Austrian president, Heinz Fischer, said: “Nuclear weapons should be stigmatized, banned and eliminated before they abolish us.”

ICAN will call on states attending the Vienna conference to commit to starting work on a new legal instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. Nadja Schmidt, an ICAN campaigner in Austria, responded to the foreign minister’s announcement: “This is an opportunity for Austria to provide important global leadership and bring the world a step closer to genuine security in a world free of all weapons of mass destruction.”

“Nuclear weapons are not only a permanent threat to all humankind, but also a relic of the cold war that we must finally overcome.”

– SEBASTIAN KURZ, AUSTRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

She said that negotiating a treaty to ban nuclear weapons would be a defining moment of the 21st century. “We applaud our foreign minister’s initiative and call for decisive action to launch this process when he hosts the world’s nations in Vienna later this year.” ICAN plans to hold a civil society forum in conjunction with the government conference to raise public awareness about the threat of nuclear weapons and the urgent need for a ban. ■

WHO SAID WHAT IN NAYARIT

Analysis from Reaching Critical Will

As with the Oslo conference before it, Nayarit exposed nuclear weapons as dangerous and destructive. The evidence presented by UN agencies, academics, former military officials and civil society organizations clearly revealed that the continued possession and deployment of nuclear weapons is a reckless and unsanctionable gamble with the future of humanity and the planet.

“It seems clear to us that inevitable and unavoidable policy implications arise from what we now know about the extent of the risks involved,” argued the **Irish** delegation. In this vein, most governments taking the floor during the conference argued that it now time to examine ways forward that, as **New Zealand’s** representative said, do not simply rely on implementation of the NPT or a hope of compliance with international humanitarian law.

The **Thai** representative described the Mexico conference as a call to action to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. From civil society’s perspective, the conferences in Oslo and Nayarit have created our best opportunity to start the process to achieve this world. States must embrace this opportunity when they meet in Vienna later this year.

We face a daily risk that a nuclear weapon will be detonated, whether by accident, miscalculation or design. Thus the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons is an imperative that should be approached with the utmost urgency. The momentum created by the Austrian government’s announcement and the Mexican chair’s summary of the Nayarit conference must be carried forward with conviction and courage.

THE BAN PROPOSAL

For many governments attending the conference, the way forward is a ban on nuclear weapons. And despite the concerns of some of the nuclear-dependent governments, a treaty banning nuclear weapons should not be seen as antagonistic towards nuclear-armed states. It would constitute a coherent approach to setting the conditions and framework for nuclear disarmament

and overcoming some of the inertia undermining the elimination of nuclear weapons. History shows that legal prohibitions of weapon systems – their possession as well as their use – facilitate their elimination. Weapons that have been outlawed increasingly become seen as illegitimate.

Delegations including Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Holy See, Iran, Jordan, Kiribati, Malaysia, Malawi, the Marshall Islands, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nigeria, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tanzania, Tonga, Tuvalu and Zambia – supported by the **International Committee of the Red Cross** – explicitly called for a ban on nuclear weapons.

Mexico’s foreign minister, Dr José Antonio Meade Kuribreña, led the charge, stating that nuclear weapons must be banned and the world’s safety cannot rely on weapons of mass destruction. **Costa Rica** called for the negotiation of an instrument to ban nuclear weapons, emphasizing that the humanitarian focus on the impact of nuclear weapons was the right approach to spearhead our efforts. **Morocco** stated that the next phase of political action to obtain “the noble goal of banning nuclear weapons” is now needed.

Zambia made a strong appeal for a ban on the use, production and stockpiling of nuclear weapons, saying that a comprehensive ban had “gained grip” in the international system over the past couple of years. A ban is the preferred first step towards the elimination of nuclear weapons, it said. **Palestine** gave its support for the adoption of a blueprint in Nayarit with the objective of banning nuclear weapons and eliminating them within a concrete time frame.

Jordan said it joined the call for an early start of negotiations on a legally binding instrument for a ban on nuclear weapons. **Mongolia** noted a growing trend to ban nuclear weapons was under way and expressed its hope that the upcoming conference in Austria would lead to concrete talks on a ban. **Tanzania** and **Nigeria** expressed concern that there is no international treaty banning these weapons of mass destruction and stressed the absolute necessity to

abolish them from Earth. **Malawi** stated that the conferences in Nayarit and Oslo have cemented the conviction among states that nuclear weapons must be banned once and for all and that it is the duty of states to start the negotiations on a ban.

Kiribati on behalf of five other Pacific island states – **Samoa, Tuvalu, the Marshall Islands, Tonga and Papua New Guinea** – stated that a treaty banning nuclear weapons is long overdue. The island states appealed to all non-nuclear-weapon states not to sit back and wait for the nuclear-armed states to lead the way but instead to set the agenda for concrete steps towards the negotiation of a legally binding treaty.

The **Holy See** said it is high time to take the next steps and use the momentum of the Nayarit conference to launch a plan of action towards the development of an international norm and legal ban on nuclear weapons for the benefit of humanity.

Iran called for the development of a road map and action plan with the objective of banning nuclear weapons, which are an existential threat that cannot be tolerated. **Cuba** laid out five concrete steps in a process towards an international ban and the total eradication of nuclear weapons. **Chile** likewise said nuclear weapons should be banned in a legally binding instrument and urged all countries to share this vision.

NEW MOMENTUM

There was overwhelming support for Austria’s announcement to hold the next meeting of what is now clearly established as an international diplomatic process on nuclear weapons. Over 40 delegations expressed their appreciation of Austria’s offer and their support for the continuation of the process.

The sense of momentum established in Nayarit was palpable for all present. Many delegations, including Morocco, Colombia, Cuba, Brazil, Iran, Palestine, Ethiopia, Peru, Kiribati on behalf of the Pacific island states, New Zealand, Cote d’Ivoire, Egypt, Bhutan, Jamaica and Comoros emphasized that Nayarit was a milestone on a clear path towards the

elimination of nuclear weapons.

Many referred to Nayarit and the coming meeting in Vienna as a road map, plan of action, blueprint, and concrete steps in a process forward. **Bhutan** even called the conferences on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons an “Oslo process”. The feeling of progress was tangible.

There were, however, a few detractors, mainly states relying on nuclear weapons in their military doctrines’ conception of security, against the overwhelming tide of support for action to rid the world of these weapons. Clearly on the defensive, **Pakistan, Finland, Australia, Spain, Turkey, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, India, the Czech Republic and Hungary** expressed skepticism about the possibility of a ban on nuclear weapons. The delegations of Australia, Canada and Germany argued that “simply banning nuclear weapons” will not guarantee the elimination of nuclear weapons. Yet the path they prefer – pressing for implementation of the NPT action plan from 2010, continuing to promote the “step-by-step” approach to nuclear disarmament, and insisting on the participation of nuclear-armed states – also does not guarantee the elimination of nuclear weapons. In fact, it has failed to achieve this goal. Incremental steps that have been agreed to over the past 20 years have not been implemented and the actions of some nuclear-armed states have actually resulted in steps backwards.

Under prevailing domestic and international political circumstances, the nuclear-armed states are unlikely to support any serious efforts towards the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons in the foreseeable future. This is why more governments than ever have expressed interest in trying something new. Rather than repeating the same approach to try to force a grand, comprehensive step-by-step solution, nuclear-weapon-free states are calling for a ban on nuclear weapons, which overcomes the dilemma posed by placing the onus on the nuclear-armed states to lead a process for nuclear disarmament. Emboldened by the discourse on the

humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, which not only allows but even demands the participation of all countries in the world, these countries are indicating a growing willingness to take action to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe.

AGAINST THE TIDE

In stark contrast to the evidence presented throughout the conference, a few delegations such as Canada, Pakistan, India, the Netherlands and Germany chose to highlight the security implications of nuclear weapons. **Germany** pointed out the central role that nuclear weapons have in the international community and argued that nuclear weapons had greatly contributed to keeping peace during the cold war. Together with **Australia**, Germany also expressed worry about “antagonizing” those with nuclear weapons.

These kinds of arguments seemed particularly hollow against the testimonies of countries that have experienced the disastrous humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, such as the **Marshall Islands, Kazakhstan, Belarus, New Zealand, Ukraine and Algeria**. These states presented harrowing statistics on the extent of the impacts of nuclear testing on and near their territories, causing severe ecological, economic and public health impacts, and untold suffering to civilians.

The most poignant testimonies, however, came from five *hibakusha*, survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who told their stories of the nightmarish devastation inflicted on those cities and their inhabitants. Their presence was a powerful reminder of the urgency and overwhelming importance of the need to ensure that these weapons are never used again.

This is an abridged version of a report prepared by Ray Acheson, Beatrice Fihn and Katherine Harrison for Reaching Critical Will. The full report is at www.reachingcriticalwill.org

QUOTES FROM STATEMENTS

“The discussions here should lead us all to the same conclusion: that nuclear weapons must be outlawed and eliminated without delay.”
– Pacific Island states

“This conference in Nayarit strengthens further our resolve to support the growing trend to ban nuclear weapons.”
– Mongolia

“The idea of a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons has gained grip in the multilateral system over the past couple of years.”
– Zambia

“Given the catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, we must work to create a new international treaty explicitly prohibiting their use and possession.”
– Chile

“The next phase of the humanitarian discussion should involve an assessment of what we, policymakers, can do to prevent catastrophe.”
– Ireland

“Let us use the momentum of this conference to launch a programme of action to begin the process of developing a global ethical norm and a legal ban on all nuclear weapons.”
– Holy See

“The growing support on this issue must now be translated into meaningful action towards a treaty to outlaw and eliminate nuclear weapons.”
– Malaysia

“Our conviction is clear: nuclear weapons must never be used again and the time has come for states to fulfil their existing obligations and prohibit and eliminate them once and for all.”
– International Committee of the Red Cross

ICAN in action

Raising public awareness and building political support

As the designated civil society partner for the Nayarit conference, ICAN facilitated the participation of a diverse range of non-government organizations from across the globe – to enhance understanding of the catastrophic humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and to convey the growing public demand for negotiations on a ban.

SUMMARY

- **137 campaigners** from 83 organizations and 44 countries participated
- ICAN encouraged governments to call for a **treaty banning nuclear weapons**
- ICAN's message featured in national and international **media coverage**

In the lead-up to the Nayarit conference, ICAN campaigners reached out to all governments to encourage them to participate in the conference and to call for negotiations on a treaty banning nuclear weapons. We met with foreign ministry officials in capital cities, wrote to parliamentarians, organized public forums and published materials setting out the humanitarian case for a ban.

In the two days prior to the conference, we brought together 137 civil society representatives from 83 organizations for a “campaigners meeting” in Nayarit – to prepare ourselves for the coming days and to devise longer-term strategies for building the momentum, globally and regionally, for negotiations on a ban. Campaigners came from 44 countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Brazil, Burundi, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, France, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, the Philippines, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, Venezuela, Zambia and Zimbabwe. ICAN was pleased to sponsor the participation of many campaigners from developing countries.

Media and communications

ICAN voices featured prominently in much of the commentary and reporting on the Nayarit conference, particularly in Latin American media. Our opinion articles ran on the websites of CNN International, The Guardian and The Huffington Post, as well as in some national newspapers. Through television, radio and print interviews, we conveyed the strong public opposition to nuclear weapons and the growing support for negotiations on a ban. A *Forbes* magazine columnist wrote: “The proposal from civil society driven by ICAN deserves to be supported like any other that leads us to correct the failures of the existing regime.”

The campaign also generated its own media for the conference, including a short video shown to all government delegates, which reinforced our message that a ban is the next vital step towards elimination. A new interactive ICAN website at goodbyenuk.es featured video interviews laying out the arguments for a ban, and photos of the events in Nayarit were uploaded in real time to our Flickr page.

Throughout the conference, we provided rapid social media coverage, responding to government statements and showcasing the work of our campaigners. ICAN posts on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Vimeo reached more than half a million people. Our campaign was highly visible at the conference – with ICAN tote bags, lapel pins, temporary tattoos and printed materials.

We also launched a “campaigners kit” providing practical ideas for individuals and organizations around the world to raise public awareness and inspire, persuade and pressure their governments to take action ahead of the Vienna conference and beyond to realize a nuclear-weapon-free world. ■

Statement: It is time to ban nuclear weapons

Ray Acheson

We have been given over the past two days a chilling reminder of what nuclear weapons are, and what they do. They do not bring security. They bring death and destruction on a scale that cannot be justified for any reason. The claim by some states that they continue to need these weapons to deter their adversaries has been exposed by the evidence presented at this conference and in Oslo last year as a reckless and unsanctionable gamble with our future.

The immediate effects of even a single nuclear weapon detonation are shocking and overwhelming. Its destructive force will cause nightmarish scenes of death and despair. One detonation will cause tens of thousands of casualties and inflict immediate and irreversible damage to infrastructure, industry, livelihoods and human lives. The effects will persist over time, devastating human health, the environment and our economies for years to come. These impacts will wreak havoc with food production and displace entire populations. As we have heard here from scientists and physicians, the use of less than 1 per cent of existing arsenals against cities would have extreme and long-lasting consequences for the Earth's climate and for agriculture. This would put billions of lives in jeopardy.

An unacceptable risk

The existence of nuclear weapons generates great risk. There have been numerous instances where the incidence of an accidental nuclear detonation has hung on a razor's edge. And we have recently heard a number of reports of the declining operational atmosphere and disturbing behaviour of those in supposed "command and control" of these arsenals.

Such accidents are only made possible, however, because the military doctrines of the nuclear-armed states and some of their allies require preparations for the

deliberate use of nuclear weapons – in many cases within minutes of an order being given. The risk of conflict between states possessing nuclear weapons is a direct consequence of possession and of nuclear deterrence relationships.

While nuclear weapons have not been used in acts of war since the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, they have nevertheless created health and environmental catastrophes around the world. Testing in the Pacific, Kazakhstan, the United States, Africa, South Asia and China has caused profound damage to the environment and human health.



Nuclear weapons also undermine development and the achievement of global economic and social equality. The maintenance and modernization of nuclear weapons diverts vast and essential resources needed to address real human needs, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Despite all this evidence about the horror, instability and injustice generated by nuclear weapons, some insist that we will not see their elimination in our lifetime. That depends on whether we are willing to accept the risk we live with today. Unless we act, nuclear weapons will be used – by accident, design or miscalculation. The only questions are when, where and how many.

The humanitarian agenda

Unlike the other weapons of mass destruction – chemical and biological weapons – nuclear weapons are not yet subject to an explicit legal prohibition. Now is the time to address this anomaly, which has been allowed to persist for far too long. Those countries that have renounced nuclear weapons – the overwhelming majority – have made the right decision for the security of their countries and their populations and for the survival of life on Earth.

Those same countries have the opportunity now to advance not only the humanitarian agenda but also our human future by negotiating a treaty banning nuclear weapons. We would welcome the participation of the nuclear-armed states. But most of them have demonstrated their unwillingness to constructively engage let alone lead in such a process.

History shows that legal prohibitions of weapon systems – their possession as well as their use – facilitate their elimination. Weapons that have been outlawed increasingly become seen as illegitimate. They lose their political status and, along with it, the money and resources for their production, modernization, proliferation and perpetuation.

For us, the announcement of the next meeting in Vienna indicates a willingness among governments to move from a discussion about the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons to a discussion about what must be done to make sure they can never be used again.

Ridding the world of nuclear weapons will take courage. It will take leadership by states free of nuclear weapons. Show that leadership and you will have the support of civil society. It is time. It is time to change the status quo. It is time to ban nuclear weapons.

Ray Acheson is a member of ICAN's international steering group and the director of Reaching Critical Will. This statement was delivered in Nayarit on behalf of ICAN.

Opinion: Taking action to ban nuclear weapons

Jody Williams

When one thinks of a sunny Mexican resort, the devastation of nuclear weapons is not usually what comes to mind. Yet this week in Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico, that is exactly what Mexico's minister of foreign affairs will be asking experts from international organizations, government and research institutes to do: focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. Or, more to the point, to focus on the very real horror that was unleashed on the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945: communities literally blown apart, hundreds of thousands of people dead in their tracks or dying slow and painful deaths.

But of course it doesn't stop with death and destruction. With decades of research behind us, we now know that there are long-term environmental, developmental and health consequences to nuclear weapons as well. Sadly, though, in a world that has for many years now focused on "state security" and fighting "terrorism", it hasn't been easy to get governments to make the high humanitarian cost of nuclear weapons the starting point for action to ban and eliminate them. But that is changing.

From Norway to Mexico

Last March, the Norwegian government hosted a meeting in Oslo of 128 governments, UN agencies, international organizations and civil society. By the end of that meeting, the group had concluded that no international response plan could ever adequately deal with a nuclear detonation. As a logical extension of that conclusion, many states then expressed their recognition of a shared responsibility to act to prevent any accidental or intentional use of these weapons of mass suffering. And they agreed to come together again, this time in Mexico.

This is a historic first: 146 countries determined to consider the many far-ranging impacts of the



“There is an opportunity to take the discussions about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and make them the basis for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons. Let’s not squander this moment.”

world's most destructive weapon and take some concrete action and bring about a long overdue international ban. While not exactly capturing the headlines, this second conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons may have a profound impact on our collective future.

What we are seeing is a shift away from the thinking that nuclear weapons should be glorified as the guarantors of national security, or symbols of international power and prestige. They are now starting to be recognized by our governments to be what they are: instruments of irreversible human and environmental destruction.

The people of Japan and all the victims of nuclear testing already know all of this: generations after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, they are still living with the consequences of the nuclear bombs.

The governments, international organizations and research institutes gathered this week in Mexico have a huge task ahead of them – to lay the groundwork for a new treaty to outlaw and finally eliminate these weapons. They will need our help. There is much work to be done to convince the many governments that are not yet on board.

It can be done, but will take the continued drive and commitment of civil society across the world pushing governments to do the right thing. It will also take the voice of millions of individual citizens expressing their strong opposition to nuclear weapons at every opportunity possible to their own governments. The actions of ordinary people do make a difference, and will help build the political momentum in favour of a new global treaty.

Some – many, in truth – will claim that a ban on nuclear weapons will never happen, that it is not possible. I was told the same while leading the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. In 1997 we proved them wrong and the Mine Ban Treaty was born. That treaty is the product of what happens when non-governmental organizations, international organizations, UN agencies and governments all unite for one purpose: to create a more peaceful world.

This week in Mexico, there is an opportunity to take the discussions about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and make them the basis for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons. Let's not squander this moment. It's time to relegate nuclear weapons to the dust bin of history.

Jody Williams, a Nobel laureate, is chair of the Nobel Women's Initiative and an ICAN supporter. This article was published by the Huffington Post on 11 February 2014.



Top: Ban All Nukes Generation activists hand out flowers to mark Valentine's Day and thank Nayarit participants.
Bottom: A group discussion among ICAN campaigners from nuclear "umbrella" states.



Statement: **Ban All Nukes Generation – ‘Game Changers’**

Maral Hassanshahi and Sofia Miranda Cogollos

We are the participants of the “Game Changers” project organized by the Ban All Nukes Generation. We are from Australia, Austria, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Germany, Japan, Kenya, Iran, Italy, South Korea, Switzerland and the United States. We are thrilled that Mexico is hosting this important conference and is giving civil society an opportunity to voice our views on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

We have a message for you. At the beginning of the conference, we were deeply touched by the testimonies from the *hibakusha*. Their testimonies have renewed our determination to eliminate nuclear weapons once and for all. We believe that nuclear weapons should never be used again under any circumstances. Everything should be done to reduce the risk of their use. We further contend that the humanitarian imperative should be the motor for all nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measures. We simply cannot

understand why nukes have yet to be banned. States must take responsibility for preventing the use of nuclear weapons. We have the right to say no to nuclear weapons because we are the generation who were born after nuclear weapons were made by our parents’ and grandparents’ generations.

We, the youth, do not want to

be the victims of nuclear weapons. We have the responsibility to serve as a bridge between our parents’, grandparents’ and children’s generations. We desperately long for and dream of a world where our children and grandchildren live free from the threat of nuclear weapons. Now is the time for us all to be game changers. *Gracias!*



Sofia Miranda Cogollos of Colombia and Maral Hassanshahi of Iran.

Statement: **Highlighting the impact of weapons on people**

Jesús Martínez

My name is Jesús Martínez, and I am from El Salvador. As a survivor of an indiscriminate weapon that is now prohibited, and as part of ICAN, I address you to share some reflections on the humanitarian perspective of nuclear disarmament. It is my pleasure to do so today, on the anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which made this part of the world the first nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Understanding the risk posed by nuclear weapons to our global society, Mexico, in organizing this conference, has taken a historic step to lay the foundations for something that is much greater.

Whenever I hear the testimonies of the *hibakusha*, I cannot help remembering every second that elapsed when I lost my legs because of an anti-personnel mine. I hope that the presence of these victims compels us to maintain the humanitarian approach in this conference and future endeavours.

After the discussions in Oslo and now in Nayarith, as a global society

we know what we want. We want what Latin America has already achieved: the prohibition of nuclear weapons. I am an activist who has worked for a ban on anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions, and for control of the arms trade.

“It is essential that we start, from here, to organize the route to a ban. We must look for a path where we can walk together to the success we desire: the banning of all nuclear weapons once and for all.”

It is beyond my understanding why the greatest threat of all – that of nuclear weapons – has not yet been addressed through a legally binding treaty banning their existence. Being clear on this global objective and after having shown consensus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, I hope

that the states present take into account the responsibility to act and arrive at a solution to this problem.

We salute Austria for promoting the next follow-up meeting to this, and for maintaining the humanitarian approach to nuclear disarmament. We will continue to be very attentive, and we will accompany and support them in this task. It is essential that we start, from here, to organize the route to a ban. We must not look for a plan that takes us to yet another plan, but we must look for a path where we can walk together to the success we desire: the banning of all nuclear weapons once and for all.

As a victim of land mines, I feel obliged to call on you to take concrete actions, making the most of the momentum of this conference. Despite the complexity of this issue, negotiations must begin as soon as possible. Let us avoid having to regret the humanitarian consequences.

Jesús Martínez is director of the Network of Survivors and Persons with Disabilities. This statement was delivered on behalf of ICAN.



Jesús Martínez.



Hiroshima survivor Setsuko Thurlow and Nagasaki survivor Yasuaki Yamashita.

Analysis: The humanitarian case for disarmament

Rebecca Johnson

The Nayarit conference was the second multilateral meeting on what is being dubbed the “humanitarian initiative” – in which a large cross-regional group of states have been arguing for accelerated efforts to achieve universal nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, on the grounds that the “global and long-term consequences of any nuclear detonation” transcend national borders. Hence, nuclear disarmament is an urgent security issue that must be addressed by all.

The evidence discussed in Nayarit, and in Oslo in 2013, clearly demonstrated that non-nuclear governments must engage more fully in preventing the threats posed by nuclear weapons to the security of their own populations. That engagement is now happening, for not only did the Oslo and Nayarit conferences attract more states than most Non-Proliferation Treaty meetings, but they also engaged India and Pakistan, which are unlikely ever to join the 1968 treaty.

Pushback from the P5

Despite intensive lobbying from some nuclear-weapon states against participation, delegations from 146 governments took part in the Nayarit conference. The five permanent members of the UN Security Council – all nuclear-armed states – boycotted the conference, as they did Oslo. In trying to undermine the growing humanitarian pressure, they veered between dismissing it as a “distraction” and accusing participants of raising humanitarian awareness with the sinister motive of starting a process to ban nuclear weapons.

Are they right in their critique that the humanitarian initiative will have a negative impact on the NPT and similar forums, such as the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva? A look at recent history suggests otherwise. The roots of the present humanitarian initiative can be found in the NPT and reviews of the treaty. And in view of the failure

of the 66-member Conference on Disarmament to carry forward any substantive negotiations since 1996, it is ridiculous to suggest that discussions by 146 governments constitute a distraction.

While some states attending the Nayarit conference are not party to the NPT, and many more are not members of the Conference on Disarmament, the conference chair, Mexico’s vice-minister for multilateral affairs and human rights Juan Manuel Gómez Robledo, noted that progress on disarmament and non-proliferation comes about from actions on multiple fronts – which are mutually reinforcing.

In contrast, traditional arms control efforts have gotten stuck, a result of focusing primarily on weapons numbers and giving undue privilege to the sensitivities of a few nuclear-armed states. The United States and Russia still have many cuts to make in their nuclear arsenals, but they both enjoy the power and prestige they derive from their bilateral arms control relationship too much to get anywhere near the level of zero nuclear weapons that is supposed to be the goal. On the contrary, every time they reduce the number of nuclear weapons, they inject billions more dollars and rubles into their nuclear establishments to modernize and maintain the thousands they intend to keep.

Other nuclear-armed states look at that never-ending game and insist that they too must keep and upgrade their arsenals as long as anyone else has any nuclear weapons. For far too long, the NPT regime and the arms control processes have served to reinforce the status of nuclear-haves at the expense of the nuclear-free. Continued proliferation is the pernicious, if unintended, consequence, as leaders seeking regional or international influence try to get on the bottom rung of the nuclear capabilities ladder, thereby threatening their neighbours’ security even more. Is it any wonder that nuclear-free governments

want to change the terms of engagement?

The humanitarian approach addresses nuclear weapons from the perspective and concerns of everyone’s security. The first step in that approach is to convince governments that the threats and risks are not just a private worry of nuclear-wielding nations, but a real and serious problem for public health, humanitarian assistance, the world economy, development, the environment, climate change and worldwide food security.

An approach here to stay

Whether nuclear-armed states like it or not – and some clearly don’t – the humanitarian approach isn’t going away. Much of civil society, working through ICAN, openly advocates for a treaty that would include all nations and enhance the current non-proliferation regime by clearly banning the use, deployment, production and transfer of all nuclear weapons, and require their total elimination. Meanwhile, governments are still in the process of considering how to act on the global threats posed by nuclear weapons. So nothing is yet decided, but the representatives in Nayarit signalled the need to accelerate nuclear disarmament.

By focusing on human impacts, the Nayarit conference demonstrated that preventing nuclear catastrophe is the responsibility and the right of all. Therefore, Austrian foreign minister Sebastian Kurz’s announcement that Vienna would host a further conference on this topic was warmly welcomed. Kurz explained his government’s motivation, noting: “Nuclear weapons are not only a permanent threat to all humankind but also a relic of the cold war that we must finally overcome.”

Dr Rebecca Johnson FRSA is executive director of the Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy and a co-chair of ICAN. An edited version of this article appeared in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.



Top: "Game Changers" participants.
Middle left: Mexican ICAN campaigner Hector Guerra.
Middle right: The closing session of the Nayarit conference.
Bottom: The ICAN campaigners meeting in Nayarit.



“Unless we act, nuclear weapons will be used – by accident, design or miscalculation. The only questions are when, where and how many.”

– ICAN STATEMENT, NAYARIT CONFERENCE



Above: A Ban All Nukes Generation action at the conclusion of the conference.
Below (right): A reporter at the Soka Gakkai International and ICAN exhibition in Nayarit.

