

Nobel Peace Prize Statement – ICAN international – 6 October 2017

It is a great honour to have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2017 in recognition of our role in achieving the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This historic agreement, adopted on 7 July with the backing of 122 nations, offers a powerful, much-needed alternative to a world in which threats of mass destruction are allowed to prevail and, indeed, are escalating.

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is a coalition of non-governmental organizations in one hundred countries. By harnessing the power of the people, we have worked to bring an end to the most destructive weapon ever created – the only weapon that poses an existential threat to all humanity.

This prize is a tribute to the tireless efforts of many millions of campaigners and concerned citizens worldwide who, ever since the dawn of the atomic age, have loudly protested nuclear weapons, insisting that they can serve no legitimate purpose and must be forever banished from the face of our earth.

It is a tribute also to the survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – the *hibakusha* – and victims of nuclear test explosions around the world, whose searing testimonies and unstinting advocacy were instrumental in securing this landmark agreement.

The treaty categorically outlaws the worst weapons of mass destruction and establishes a clear pathway to their total elimination. It is a response to the ever-deepening concern of the international community that any use of nuclear weapons would inflict catastrophic, widespread and long-lasting harm on people and our living planet.

We are proud to have played a major role its creation, including through advocacy and participation in diplomatic conferences, and we will work assiduously in coming years to ensure its full implementation. Any nation that seeks a more peaceful world, free from the nuclear menace, will sign and ratify this crucial accord without delay.

The belief of some governments that nuclear weapons are a legitimate and essential source of security is not only misguided, but also dangerous, for it incites proliferation and undermines disarmament. All nations should reject these weapons completely – before they are ever used again.

This is a time of great global tension, when fiery rhetoric could all too easily lead us, inexorably, to unspeakable horror. The spectre of nuclear conflict looms large once more. If ever there were a moment for nations to declare their unequivocal opposition to nuclear weapons, that moment is now.

We applaud those nations that have already signed and ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and we urge all others to follow their lead. It offers a pathway forward at a time of alarming crisis. Disarmament is not a pipe dream, but an urgent humanitarian necessity.

We most humbly thank the Norwegian Nobel Committee. This award shines a needed light on the path the ban treaty provides towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Before it is too late, we must take that path.