

Senator the Hon Penny Wong 24 April, 2025
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Via email foreign.minister@dfat.gov.au

Dear Minister Wong,

RE: Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) PrepCom, 28 April - 9 May

The Medical Association for Prevention of War (MAPW) is writing to urge that Australia take a strong stand at the NPT PrepCom meeting, which begins next week, towards fulfilment of the NPT and a nuclear weapons free world.

You will be aware of the perilous situation which the world's nine nuclear-armed states and their over 12,000 nuclear weapons create for every one of us, a situation deemed by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists to be the most dangerous ever. Conflicts involving nuclear-armed nations, and global instabilities, elevate the risks of a catastrophic nuclear war occurring.

The five nuclear-armed nations that are party to the NPT continue to directly and grievously violate their Treaty obligation to "pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date". On the contrary, they are actively modernising their arsenals and perpetuating the nuclear arms race. The increasing reliance on nuclear weapons in security strategies, for example in Europe, also directly undermines the principles and objectives of the NPT.

The NPT is complemented and strengthened by the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). The most recent Meeting of States Parties (MSP) to the TPNW in March this year directly challenged the dangerously misguided "deterrence" theory. The meeting declared that "nuclear weapons are a threat to the security, and ultimately the existence, of all states, irrespective of whether they possess nuclear weapons, subscribe to nuclear deterrence or firmly oppose it" and thus "all States therefore have an urgent security interest in their total elimination."

While Australia has not yet signed the TPNW, we are pleased to note the government's attendance at its MSPs, and urge that this positive engagement with the TPNW be referenced at the NPT PrepCom, along with Australia's adoption of many other measures as outlined in ICAN's briefing paper, which MAPW supports.

As a strong supporter of the NPT, Australia must take every possible measure to ensure all member states – particularly those that are nuclear-armed and all the "nuclear umbrella" nations including our own – comply with their NPT obligations.

Sincerely,
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