

June 6, 2013

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Mr. President,

As representatives of national organizations working for the global elimination of nuclear weapons, we respectfully urge that you speak at the September 26, 2013 High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament at the United Nations and:

Reaffirm your determination expressed in Prague to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons and endorse UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Five-Point Proposal on Nuclear Disarmament;

Announce your convening of a series of Nuclear Disarmament Summits beginning in 2014, if possible under UN auspices;

Support extending the General Assembly's Open-Ended Working Group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons;

Announce that the United States will participate in the follow-on conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons to take place in Mexico in early 2014.

President Obama – our organizations are counting on you to be bold in your second term actions and to put your principles into practice. The time is right; the world is ready.

The Nuclear Security Summit process you initiated has been a success. However, securing nuclear materials, while significant, falls well short of what civil society expected following your Prague speech. A Nuclear Disarmament Summit process would take the logical next step by expanding the scope of nuclear dangers to be addressed to the many thousands of nuclear weapons held by states, a large number of which are deployed and ready for use.

The Open-Ended Working Group is a good-faith effort open to all UN members to determine how to proceed with negotiations on nuclear disarmament within the UN framework. You can demonstrate the United States' good faith by directing that the State Department change its current position and participate constructively in the working group this summer, and by supporting extension of the group's mandate.

One-hundred twenty seven countries participated in the March conference in Oslo on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, but not the United States and other members of the Permanent Five. You can demonstrate United States' readiness to act in the spirit of Prague by committing to participate constructively in the follow-on conference in Mexico in early 2014.

In closing, we strongly urge that the United States take advantage of the present opportunities to pursue with vigor a nuclear weapons-free world in accordance with the UN Charter and the Non-Proliferation Treaty obligation to conduct negotiations in good faith on cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and nuclear disarmament. We appreciate your attention and would be happy to meet with you about the matters addressed by this letter.

Sincerely,

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Joseph Gerson, Disarmament Coordinator, American Friends Service Committee

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Jonathan Granoff, President, Global Security Institute

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Catherine Thomasson, Executive Director, Physicians for Social Responsibility

Susan Shaer, Executive Director, Women's Action for New Directions

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Katherine Fuchs, Program Director, Alliance for Nuclear Accountability

Marylia Kelley, Executive Director, Tri-Valley CARES (Communities Against a Radioactive Environment)

Ralph Hutchison, Coordinator, Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance

Jay Coghlan, Executive Director, Nuclear Watch New Mexico

Joni Arends, Executive Director, Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety

Harvey Zendt, 2020 Vision Campaigner, Mayors For Peace

Mark Johnson, Executive Director, Fellowship of Reconciliation

David Swanson, Co-Founder, WarIsACrime.org

Valerie Heinonen, OSU, Leadership Team, Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk - US Province

Odile Hugonot Haber, Co-Chair, Middle East Committee of WILPF-US

Alan Haber, Megiddo Peace Project, Ann Arbor Grey Panthers

Sr. Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN, Executive Director, Pax Christi USA

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Kathleen Sullivan, Ph.D., Program Director, Hibakusha Stories

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cc:

John Kerry, Secretary of State

Rose Gottemoeller, Acting Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security

Thomas M. Countryman, Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and
Nonproliferation

Thomas Donilon, National Security Advisor

Ben Rhodes, Deputy National Security Advisor

Susan Rice, Permanent Representative to the United Nations