



A national network of organizations working to address issues of nuclear weapons production and waste cleanup

OCTOBER 24, 2020 CELEBRATING THE TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON THIS HISTORIC DAY



The Alliance for Nuclear Accountability (ANA) today celebrates the 50th ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Under the terms of the treaty, it will enter into force, and become part of international law in 90 days, following today's deposit of its instrument of ratification at the United Nations by the nation of Honduras.

The TPNW puts legal force behind the aspiration of the nations of the world to be free from the threat of destruction by nuclear weapons. Adopted at the United Nations in 2017 by an overwhelming majority of the world's countries, formally signed by 84 to date, and now officially ratified, the TPNW bans the development, testing, production, manufacture, acquisition, possession or stockpiling, transfer, control or receipt, use of threat of use, stationing or deployment of nuclear weapons by any state party to the Treaty.

No state currently in possession of nuclear weapons has signed the TPNW. Nevertheless, the entry into force of this Treaty is an historic milestone on the journey to a world free of nuclear weapons. Nations that possess or stage nuclear weapons, including the United States, will now find themselves standing outside the bounds of international law. Today, the international "norm" changes and nuclear weapons are illegal.

As precursor, in 1970, the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) obligated the United States and other states parties to the NPT to pursue in good faith negotiations leading to complete disarmament at an early date. In 1996, the World Court underscored that legal obligation in a unanimous ruling that the NPT required the nuclear weapons states to not only pursue but to achieve disarmament. Today, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons adds moral and legal weight to the disarmament aspirations embraced—and the obligations incurred—in the Nonproliferation Treaty.

ANA, a network of thirty-one organizations whose members live downwind and downstream from the U.S. Department of Energy weapons complex sites, calls on the U.S. government to hear the compelling call of the TPNW, and to take immediate steps toward compliance with the Treaty.

ANA President Marylia Kelley noted, "The U.S. should sign and ratify the TPNW. In the mean time, the United States should take immediate steps toward the overarching goal of the TPNW, a world free of the existential threat of nuclear annihilation." ANA recommendations include constraining the development of new nuclear bombs and warheads and focusing instead on environmental justice and cleanup for communities suffering from the radioactive and toxic pollution that accompanies nuclear development.