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## **Abolition of Nuclear Weapons**

Passed by the WFPHA General Assembly - 1997

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### **The World Federation of Public Health Associations,**

Noting that in 1993 the World Health Organization adopted a resolution calling for an advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice on the legality of the use of nuclear weapons and that the Court ruled on 8 July 1996 by a unanimous vote that nations have "an obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects;"

Recognizing that there continue to exist over 37,000 nuclear weapons on the earth which pose a threat to the health and survival of human civilization and the global environment (1); and that, even with full implementation of existing arms control treaties, by the year 2003 there will be over 20,000 nuclear weapons, or the equivalent explosive force equal to 350,000 Hiroshima nuclear bombs (2) (3);

Concerned about the public health hazards created by nuclear weapons testing, whether conducted in the atmosphere or underground;

Noting that the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, comprised of prominent physicians, political leaders, generals, and scientists from both the nuclear weapons states and other nations, released on 14 August 1996 a report outlining a plan for the total abolition of nuclear weapons and reaffirming disarmament as the world's only option;

Aware that in December 1996 a large group of senior military officers from countries around the world issued a statement declaring "that the continuing existence of nuclear weapons in the armories of nuclear powers, and the ever-present threat of acquisition of these weapons by others, constitutes a peril to global peace and security and to the safety and survival of the people we are dedicated to protect" (4);

1. URGES all nations of the world to ratify promptly the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and to permanently respect the moratorium on explosive nuclear weapons testing, currently being formally observed by the declared nuclear weapons nations and informally observed by the undeclared nuclear weapons nations;
2. CALLS upon all nations to initiate immediately and conclude by the year 2000 negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention that commits the world to a firm timetable for the permanent elimination of nuclear weapons under strict and effective international control.



**World Federation of Public Health Associations**  
**Fédération mondiale des associations de santé publique**  
**Federación mundial de las asociaciones de salud pública**

### **References:**

1. International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. Abolition 2000 Handbook for a World Without Nuclear Weapons, November 1995, p. 20.
2. International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War and the Institute of Energy and Environmental Research. Radioactive Heaven and Earth: the Health and Environmental Effects of Nuclear Weapons Testing In, On, and Above the Earth. New York: The Apex Press, 1991 and Makhijani A., Hu H., Yih K. (eds): Nuclear Wastelands, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995.
3. Figures based on the latest available information from the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Arms Control Association, the International Institute for Strategic Studies, and U.S. government sources.
4. Statement on Nuclear Weapons by International Generals and Admirals, State of the World Forum, The Washington Post, 5 December 1996.

### **Implementation Suggestions:**

1. Send copy of the resolution to relevant government officials and heads of UN agencies.
2. Send copy of the resolution to relevant health and peace organizations, including IPPNW and Physicians for Social Responsibility.
3. Join Abolition 2000 international campaign.

Sponsored by Canadian Public Health Association and American Public Health Association