

Do you know about Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

By: Laura Savinkoff, Coordinator BPI

As August begins, my spirit stirs my spirit to remember the thousands who died in an instant in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Every year some of us remind the world what happened in Japan 76 years ago now. We remind the world the threat of it happening again is very, very real. We remind the world that this disaster changed everything for everybody. We live in its shadow but sadly, fewer and fewer people remember or even know one iota of what those two days set in motion. Do you know? And if so, where do you stand on the issue or do you care?

August 6, 1945 dawned clear and bright as the people of Hiroshima bustled about on their way to school or work or regular morning tasks. From nursing babies or elders eating breakfast it was a normal day. Yes, it was war time so there were constant airplanes flying about; USA planes occasionally dropped a bomb somewhere and Japanese planes flew off to bomb somewhere. But, the people lived their regular lives, doing regular things.

But, this day was different. The plane was ignored, until a flash lit up the sky to rival the sun in its intensity. Those close by were instantly vaporized, they were simply gone—poof—gone! Later shadows of people and animals were found imbedded in concrete, in bricks, in pavement. Many were not to be heard from ever again and no trace of them was ever found. Those a bit away from the epicentre screamed in agony; their clothes gone, their flesh hanging from their bones as they burnt from the inside out. Some closer to the river jumped in to cool off but the water was boiling and the bodies writhed in even further agony. A gigantic mushroom cloud rose higher and higher and then it began to rain—big black drops invaded people, animals, insects, birds, buildings—spreading radiation. Miles away radiation invaded everything that existed. It was no longer a clear sunny bright day in Hiroshima; an eerie darkness settled over the area pummeled by the continuous black rain and the unseen invader, the smell of burnt flesh and radiated bodies took over the scent of flowers and trees and grass. It was estimated that 70,000 died instantly and as weeks followed, the death toll rose to 129,000. But this gift was one that kept of giving for years and was passed on from generation to generation through

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disabilities and cancers and other sickness, as altered DNA affecting the new born even today. Who or what was the invader? It was Little Boy, an atomic bomb delivered by the USA.

But that was not enough! On August 9, 1945, also in the morning while people went about their daily lives another USA plane circled above Nagasaki. Some looked up and shaded their eyes as it circled and some tried to hide but there was no hiding from Fat Man—a hydrogen bomb with a higher yield than the one a few days earlier. This one exploded with even more intensity than Little Boy. Again, people, animals, birds and insects simply disappeared to re-appear as shadows. Others walked, screaming with flesh dangling to the boiling pavement. The instant death toll was about 39,000 that grew to 80,000 in the weeks following. Those lucky to be far enough away from instant death or burning flesh did not in the days and years that followed consider themselves lucky.

The Hibakusha, the survivors, suffered all their lives from one illness or another, they suffered emotionally; women suffered silently by refusing to marry or have children as a precaution not to pass on their defected genes to the next generation. For decades the ground, water, trees in these were so infected that it was impossible for anyone, including the natural world, to live there without being affected by radiation poisoning.

And so now you know a little tiny bit of why August brings heartache to many people. But compound that with the fact that we did not learn the lesson. The world exploded in research and development of more nuclear weapons that had to be tested. The areas chosen for these tests by the first five nuclear powers (USA, China, Russia, France, and the United Kingdom) were islands inhabited by Indigenous peoples such as the Marshall Islands, on Indigenous reserves, in African Colonies. Uranium the mineral from which these weapons are derived was mined mostly on lands in the USA, Canada, Australia, Kazakhstan and other regions where Indigenous peoples live.

And the arms race was so intense by the 1960s, that the world took a collective breathe and the work to stop the madness began. In 1976 the Non-Proliferation Treaty became International Law where Article 6 states that all signatories must work toward eliminating nuclear weapons; followed by a few other treaties limiting testing and development.

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But somehow, the 5 original nations holding these weapons grew to 9. The numbers of weapons lessened worldwide but as of 2017 there are still 13,080 ready to launch, with 1500 ready to go in 15 minutes? All 9 nations hold our lives in their hands but even scarier is that it takes only one launch to wipe out the world. Two nations stand out in this endeavour to make our planet uninhabitable: the USA holds 4,018 and Russia 6,400. Either the USA or Russian President can order the launch and we are done—we will all be exterminated like those in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But the difference is, that those two bombs in 1945 are absolutely nothing compared to what exists today and what is on the horizon. Billions are poured into producing more deadly nuclear weapons; into total madness.

Oh yes, and let's not forget about NATO that has nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them. And it reserves the right to 'first strike'; if it deems a nation to be a threat they can launch a nuclear bomb. So although Russia has more weapons than the USA, the fact that standing with the USA are the UK, France, Israel, Pakistan and India along with all the member states of NATO.

So, what now? Well, in 2021 a new treaty came into being--the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) that states clearly that all aspects of nuclear weapons are illegal as long as the nation is a signatory. Guess what? No nuclear weapons states signed and neither did any NATO states. Which means Canada did not sign and therefore we're part of the unholy nuclear alliance.

So, I ask you, do you believe Canada should support this drive to annihilation, to the death of our planet? If you do then continue to support Canada's role in NATO, support Canada's purchase of 88 Fighter Jets at \$77 Billion that are capable of transporting nuclear bombs; continue to support the mining of uranium.

But if you do not support Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) then raise your voice and stand tall with us who say NO to NATO and to Fighter Jets and to the 'new and improved' nuclear arsenals in the USA, in Russia, in China, in the United Kingdom, in France, in Israel, in Pakistan, in India, and in North Korea and a few others working on developing them.

If you want to live and create a world where our children and grandchildren can thrive and live in peaceful harmony, then let your government know that you do not support MAD, that you do not support enabling death and destruction of Mother Earth. If you and I support the new Treaty to Ban Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) then we must make enough noise that Canada signs and ratifies it and works to make sure others do the same and works to complete the work of the NPT.

Together we can!



Nuclear Weapons Have Always Been Illegal; It's Long Past Time to Abolish Them

By: Jacqueline Cabasso, Executive Director of the Western States Legal Foundation

"History is written by the victors. Thus, the heinous massacre that was Hiroshima has been handed down to us as a perfectly justified act of war.... It is clear that the use of nuclear weapons, which cause indiscriminate mass murder that leaves survivors to suffer for decades, is a violation of international law."—Hiroshima Mayor Takashi Hiraoka before the International Court of Justice, Nov. 7, 1995

OAKLAND, California, USA (IDN) — July 8, 2021, marks the 25th anniversary of the [International Court of Justice's](#) (ICJ's) Advisory Opinion on the legal status of nuclear weapons. The Court found unanimously: "There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion, negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control."

The Court also found that threat or use of nuclear weapons is "generally" contrary to international law forbidding the infliction of indiscriminate and disproportionate harm on civilians and the environment. This was hardly the first time nuclear weapons had been subjected to scrutiny under international law.

The very first United Nations General Assembly resolution, adopted by consensus on January 24, 1946, established a commission of the UN Security Council to ensure "the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction."

The 1961 landmark "Declaration on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons," adopted by more than two-thirds of the United Nations General Assembly, including the USSR, but opposed by the United States, the United Kingdom, France and China, stated that the use of nuclear weaponry "would exceed even the scope of war and cause indiscriminate suffering and destruction to mankind and civilization and, as such, is contrary to the rules of international law and to the laws of humanity."

The 1970 [Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty \(NPT\)](#) includes a legal obligation of nuclear disarmament binding on the five original nuclear-armed States, the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, France, and China, stating: "Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament...."

The NPT's disarmament obligations have been reiterated and reinforced by agreements made in connection with the 1995 NPT Extension Decision and the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, as well as the ICJ's 1996 Advisory Opinion.

In 1984, the United Nations Human Rights Committee found: "It is evident that the designing, testing, manufacture, possession and deployment of nuclear weapons are among the greatest threats to the right to life which confront mankind today." The right to life is enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ICCPR), to which all nine nuclear-armed states except China are parties. (China has signed but not ratified.)

In 2018, the Human Rights Committee revisited the question, and declared: "The threat or use of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, which are indiscriminate in effect and are of a nature to cause destruction of human life on a catastrophic scale, is incompatible with respect for the right to life and may amount to a crime under international law."

Citing the ICJ's opinion, the Committee further found that states parties to the ICCPR must "respect their international obligations to pursue in good faith negotiations in order to achieve the aim of

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Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents people of diverse backgrounds officially brought together in 2002 because of our mutual concern for the rise in world conflict. Our mandate is to participate in multilateral non-violent conflict resolution in support of global human rights, ecological and environmental sustainability and international law through education, sharing of information, dialogue and activism locally and globally. We encourage and seek your participation in our mutual work for true peace based on social justice, equality, accountability, integrity, honour, respect, etc in order to build a better world today and future generations.

BPI web site: www.boundarypeaceinitiative.org

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No First Use FAQs--Nuclear No First Use

From: <https://www.globalzero.org/no-first-use-faqs/>
<<https://www.globalzero.org/no-first-use-faqs/>>

What does No-First-Use (NFU) actually mean?

No First Use is a commitment to never use nuclear weapons first under any circumstances, whether as a pre-emptive attack or first strike, or in response to non-nuclear attack of any kind.

Where do nuclear-armed countries stand on No First Use?

China is the only nuclear-armed country to have an unconditional NFU policy.

India maintains a policy of NFU with exceptions for a response to chemical or biological attacks.

France, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States maintain policies that permit the first use of nuclear weapons in a conflict.

Israel does not acknowledge the existence of its nuclear arsenal so has no publicly known position.

Why advocate for global NFU commitments now?

The world has never faced so many crises that could escalate to nuclear conflict. <<https://www.globalzero.org/crisis-response/nuclear-flashpoints/>> In addition to the precarious situation on the Korean peninsula, we're running acceptably high risks of nuclear weapons use between NATO and Russia, India and Pakistan, and the United States and China. In fact right now the chances that nuclear weapons will be used, intentionally, accidentally, or due to miscalculation, are the highest they've been since the worst days of the Cold War.

Establishing global NFU commitments would immediately make the world safer by resolving uncertainty about what a nuclear-armed country might do in a crisis, which removes pressure and incentive for any one country to 'go nuclear' first in a crisis.

What are consequences of nuclear first use?

Any use of a nuclear weapon would invite massive retaliation. A recent study by Global Zero

<<https://www.globalzero.org/wpcontent/uploads/2018/09/estimatedfatalitiesfromrussiannuclearretaliation.pdf>> estimated U. S. fatalities due to a Russian retaliation to a U.S. nuclear first strike. It found 30% of the total population of the top 145 biggest cities in the United States 21 million Americans would die in a Russian nuclear counterattack. To put that in perspective, in the first 24 hours the U.S. death toll would be 50 times greater than all American casualties in World War II.

Not to mention the horrific aftermath of nuclear war. A 2014 study <<https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/2013EF000205>> shows that so-called 'limited' nuclear war in South Asia, in which 100 nuclear weapons are used, would have global consequences. Millions of tons of smoke would be sent into the atmosphere, plunging temperatures and damaging the global food supply. Two billion people would be at risk of death by starvation.

How are No First Use commitments a step toward the goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons?

Global No First Use would be an important step toward making nuclear weapons irrelevant to national security. These policies would strip nuclear weapons of value in the eyes of military planners, enable future nuclear disarmament negotiations, and accelerate the dismantling of these weapons. It would also serve as a confidence-building measure that establishes greater trust among nuclear-armed countries and makes it easier to work together to reduce nuclear risks and ultimately eliminate all nuclear weapons.

No First Use in the United States

What does current United States policy say about the first use of nuclear weapons?

The 2018 U.S. Nuclear Posture Review NPR

<<https://media.defense.gov/2018/Feb/02/2001872886/-1/-1/1/2018-NUCLEAR-POSTURE-REVIEW-FINAL-REPORT.PDF>> maintains the policy the United States would only consider the employment of nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States, its allies, and partners. This loose language holds open the possibility that nuclear weapons **would** be used in an initial attack, (Continued page 4)

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nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

Another recent and widely heralded development was the 2017 negotiation of the [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons \(TPNW\)](#), which entered into force on January 22, 2021. The TPNW specifically prohibits the development, acquisition, possession, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons for those countries that have ratified it. It thus reinforces the existing illegality of the threat or use of nuclear arms applicable to all states and adds another layer to the prohibitions on development and possession applicable to most states, set forth in the NPT and regional nuclear weapon free zone treaties.

While the TPNW represents the total repudiation of nuclear weapons by most of the states that do not possess them, the United States, the eight other nuclear-armed states and almost all of the countries under the U.S. nuclear umbrella boycotted the negotiations. In a joint statement following the July 7, 2017, United Nations vote to adopt the Treaty, the U.S., France, and the United Kingdom declared: “We do not intend to sign, ratify or ever become party to [the Treaty].”

Twenty-five years after the International Court of Justice declared the obligation to achieve nuclear disarmament through good-faith negotiation, where does the world stand? On January 27, 2021, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* announced it is keeping the hands of its Doomsday Clock at 100 seconds to midnight, the closest we've ever been to global oblivion, stating: “By our estimation, the potential for the world to stumble into nuclear war—an ever-present danger over the last 75 years—increased in 2020.”

Indeed, tensions between the United States and Russia and the United States and China have increased dangerously, with flashpoints in the Ukraine and Taiwan that could potentially spawn nuclear confrontations.

Despite hopes for the new U.S. administration, President Biden's 2022 budget request extends funding for all nuclear warhead and delivery system upgrades in the Trump budget as well as a massive investment in the nuclear weapons infrastructure, intended to project nuclear weapons research, development, production, and deployment well into the second half of this century.

All of the nuclear-armed states are qualitatively modernizing, and in some cases quantitatively increasing their nuclear arsenals. In the midst of a global pandemic, according to a recent report by the [International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons \(ICAN\)](#), in 2020, the nine nuclear-armed states spent \$72.6 billion on nuclear weapons, with the U.S. leading the pack at \$37.4 billion, or \$70,881 per minute.

Joint Statement by U.S. President Biden and Russian President Putin on July 21, 2021, in which they “reaffirm the principle that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought,” must signal the start of a new era of intensive diplomatic efforts centrally involving the United States, Russia, and China. Dramatic reductions of U.S. and Russian nuclear stockpiles could lead to comprehensive disarmament negotiations with the other nuclear-armed states.

The Doomsday Clock is ticking. The nuclear-armed states and their allies should reverse their opposition to the TPNW. They should welcome the Treaty as a positive step towards the negotiation of a long-overdue, comprehensive agreement on the achievement and permanent maintenance of a world free of nuclear weapons, in conformity with the ICJ opinion and other requirements of international law preceding the TPNW by decades. [IDN- InDepthNews – 05 July 2021]

WHAT'S UP?

The Grand Forks Community Action Team addresses addiction in all its forms. With the global community we are hosting an event to mark **International Overdose Awareness Day on August 28th** starting at **9 am at Market on Market** in Grand Forks to Reduce the Stigma and Reduce the Harm. At **11 am we will start to walk** from Gyro Park; at **8 pm in front of The Source there will be a vigil to honour all the victims of addiction and overdose deaths.** We urge all to support and extend a helping hand to all who suffer from addictions across all strata of society.

The BPI & KRUNA will gather to commemorate the victims of **Nagasaki/Hiroshima** and the full nuclear industry on **Aug. 6th in Castlegar at the Doukhobor Discovery Center @ 6 pm** and on **Aug. 9th in City Park in Grand Forks at 6 pm.** We do not have programs set up but we welcome you to share your thoughts.

Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs. Free postage: {Name of MP}, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6 Go to the Government of Canada website for MP contact information at <http://www.canada.gc.ca>

The BPI welcomes your input. Articles are the author's responsibility and may not be common consensus of members. To submit articles contact Laura at **250-444-0524 or 250-442-0434** or email L4peace@telus.net.

The BPI is an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Peace Pledge Union, Abolition 2000 and CNANW and works with local and global peace, social justice and environmental groups.

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which can be ordered by the president, whose authority to use nuclear weapons is virtually limitless) or in response to a conventional, biological, chemical or cyber attack.

Who would believe a U.S. NFU policy?

Making a NFU policy credible, establishing it as a commitment that other countries can count on, means going beyond simple declaratory statements. This would require meaningful changes to the kinds of nuclear weapons the United States builds and the way it deploys them. One tangible way to show your NFU policy means something is to take all nuclear weapons off high-alert, meaning they are no longer ready to launch instantly. Another is to eliminate all land-based nuclear missiles (also known as intercontinental ballistic missiles, or ICBMs), which are by definition nuclear first-strike weapons, and prioritize the kinds of systems that would be used only in response to a nuclear attack. More recommendations for what the U.S. nuclear arsenal could look like under a guiding principle of NFU can be found in Global Zero's Alternative U.S. Nuclear Posture Review. <https://www.globalzero.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/ANPR-Final.pdf>

How would adoption of a NFU policy affect national security? Don't we need to keep all our options on the table to deter our enemies?

There exists no plausible circumstance in which the use of a nuclear weapon would be in the national security interests of the United States, American people, or U.S. allies. A nuclear counterattack following a U.S. first strike would be catastrophic, resulting in the deaths of millions of Americans and the total devastation of economic and social infrastructure. Any first use against lesser threats, such as countries or terrorist groups with chemical and biological weapons, would be gratuitous; there are very effective alternative means of countering those threats.

There is little evidence to suggest nuclear weapons are effective in deterring non-nuclear attacks, including biological and chemical use. If the United States suffered a non-nuclear attack, it is difficult to imagine any president considering using nuclear weapons destroying entire cities and killing hundreds of thousands of people, damaging the environment for generations, spreading deadly radiation possibly to uninvolved countries in retaliation.

Is there support for U.S. adoption of NFU?

There is growing momentum for NFU in the United States. A 2016 poll <https://today.yougov.com/topics/politics/articles-reports/2016/08/11/poll-results-nuclear-weapons> showed at least two-thirds of Americans support NFU. Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee Representative Adam Smith (D-WA9) have introduced the No First Use Act (S.1219/H.R.2603) which states, "It is the policy of the United States to not use nuclear weapons first."

A number of former senior-level military commanders and government officials support U.S. adoption of NFU, including former Vice Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General (ret.) James E. Cartwright <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/15/opinion/end-the-first-use-policy-for-nuclear-weapons.html>, Ambassador Thomas Pickering, and former Secretary of Defense William Perry <http://www.wjperryproject.org/notes-from-the-brink/two-minutes-to-midnight>.

How would adoption of No First Use affect U.S. commitments to its allies and partners? Would they be encouraged to develop their own nuclear arsenals?

NFU in no way reduces the ability of the United States to deter nuclear attacks on the U.S. or its allies. Allies would be able to rely on the superior capabilities of U.S. non-nuclear forces, which are sufficient to deal with threats to the U.S. and its allies, including biological or chemical weapons threats. A NFU policy would also help allay apprehensions among some allies about the U.S. using nuclear weapons first in a conflict. The first use of nuclear weapons against Russia or China would invite massive retaliation against the U.S. and its allies. First use against lesser threats like North Korea could result in blanketing allies or others uninvolved in the conflict with deadly radioactive fallout.

A 2016 Global Zero study https://www.globalzero.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/nfu_ally_proliferation.pdf that looked at the potential for a NFU policy to encourage proliferation by U.S. allies with extended deterrence agreements found no evidence that a country's decision to remain non-nuclear was based on its expectation that the United States would conduct a nuclear first strike on its behalf. The reliability of commitments to second-strike and conventional (non-nuclear) defense were found to be more important to extended deterrence. A move to develop nuclear weapons would also go against allied obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Is it true the U.S. President has the sole authority to order the launch of nuclear weapons? What effect does NFU have on that authority?

Every American president has sole authority to order the launch of nuclear weapons. No one, not Congress, not the secretary of defense, not the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff can veto his or her decision. That means under the current system, one person has the power to start a nuclear war at any time, for any reason.

A legally-binding NFU policy would change that by making the first use of nuclear weapons illegal, clearly limiting the circumstances under which a president's nuclear launch order could be executed.

What can I do to make No First Use the policy of the United States?

Global Zero is working every day to make No First Use a reality all of the nuclear-armed countries of the world, including the United States. If you'd like to support the work of our experts and advocates, please chip in here https://secure.actblue.com/donate/forward2019?source=direct_link&. Your donation will fund our work to educate policymakers, the public and the press, and help build a broad base of political support for this critical next step on the road to zero.

If you're interested in rolling up your sleeves and getting more involved, check out Beyond the Bomb <http://www.beyondthebomb.org/>, a grassroots organization building a people-powered movement to prevent nuclear war. You can sign the No First Use pledge to let your representatives know where you stand and get updates about key moments when your voice will make the biggest impact on your elected officials.



NO MORE NUKES, EVER!