



WILPF CALL FOR PEACE RESOURCE GUIDE # 3

**Templates for TPNW letters to
Biden, corporations, editor; media
release. Treaty Compliance actions.**

Educating the general public and your legislators about the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) are important tasks that WILPFers can undertake from the safety of their homes. The entry into force (EIF) of this treaty happens on Friday 22nd January 2021 for the 51 nations who have already ratified the treaty. That milestone can be used as the basis for letters WILPFers can write to the President-Elect, their congressional reps, and their local newspaper to explain what the treaty imposes on ratifying nations, how those legal restrictions will be felt in the USA and why nuclear weapons should be banned everywhere.

This Call for Peace Resource Guide #3 contains five templates/samples for such written documents and a sheet with facts to be used for elaborating the samples. In order to fully understand the ramifications of the TPNW you should also consult the Call for Peace resource guides #1, #2 and #4. These sample letters were written by activists and posted in various websites such as nuclearban.us and orepa.org for anyone to use.

Letter to Joe Biden can be sent by USPS or sent via his website: <https://go.joebiden.com/page/s/contact-us>

President-Elect Joe Biden
c/o Biden for President
P.O. Box 58174
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Dear President-Elect Biden,

Congratulations on your election as 46th President of the United States!

Two days after your inauguration, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning Nuclear Ban Treaty becomes international law in the first 50 nations that have ratified it. Another 34 nations are in the process of ratifying, and many more will follow, including important allies of the United States. **How will you respond to this historic development?**

President Obama promised us “a world without nuclear weapons.” And it is our long-standing legal obligation under the Non-Proliferation Treaty to negotiate the elimination of these weapons “in good faith.” The rest of the world has now decided to take the logical next step and ban nuclear weapons under international law. **Will you welcome this new treaty as being totally in keeping with America’s existing commitments?**

As this new treaty was reaching its 50th ratification, the Trump Administration took the unprecedented step of pressuring countries to withdraw their ratifications. **How will you rebuild relationships with these countries?**

Like the climate crisis, nuclear weapons pose an existential threat to the whole world. Our survival as the human race requires responding to both — before it's too late. The Nuclear Ban Treaty opens the way for bold and decisive action on climate by freeing up enormous resources that are currently being squandered on nuclear weapons. **Will you seize this unique opportunity to address both these existential threats at the same time?**

Yours sincerely, [put your name and street address here]

Letter to the editor of your local newspaper

Editor,

January 22, 2021, will be a historic day. That's the day the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons enters into force.

Because the US has not signed or ratified the Treaty, the legal prohibitions do not technically apply to us. But the Treaty, representing the will of 122 nations of the world who want us to keep the promise we made in 1970 to disarm "at an early date" still has compelling moral force.

Across the country and around the globe people will celebrate the Treaty with displays of banners, bell-rings, visits and letters to elected officials, public readings of the Treaty, and more. US leaders have long said we have a special obligation to lead the way to nuclear abolition. It's time to put that commitment on the dotted line—sign the Treaty and lift the nuclear shadow that has loomed over the world for 75 years!

Yours sincerely, [put your name and street address here]

Op Ed for your local newspaper (find out their word limit and contact their opinion editor ahead of time)

(original researched and written by Timmon Wallis & Vicki Elson, NuclearBan.US)

Title " A Big Step Toward Eliminating Nuclear Weapons " Contact: your email address and phone number

January 22, 2021: Around the world, activists are joining with governments to celebrate today's milestone in the struggle to abolish all nuclear weapons from the face of the earth forever. We may yet eliminate these weapons of mass destruction before they eliminate us.

Today, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons enters into force as law in the first 50 ratifying countries, with many more countries expected to join soon. The nine nuclear-armed nations, US, Russia, UK, France, China, Israel, India, Pakistan, and North Korea, are not among them, but this Treaty will soon make it harder for them to continue with business as usual when it comes to nuclear weapons.

It's *never* been legal to *use or threaten to use* nuclear weapons against cities or civilian populations. But now it's *also* illegal to develop, test, produce, manufacture, transfer, station, possess, or stockpile nuclear weapons. Significantly, under this treaty, it's also illegal to "assist, encourage, or induce" anyone else to do any of those things. That includes financing them, at least for some of the countries that join the Treaty.

One reason that nuclear weapons still exist is because they're extremely profitable for a couple dozen very large defense contractors. They keep getting those contracts because they keep financing our politicians in Washington. It's that simple.

But investors, concerned with “legislative risk” posed by the Treaty (not to mention the ethical and reputational burden of supporting this industry), are already jumping ship. Two of the five largest pension funds in the world have divested from nuclear weapons. The City of New York is expected to divest its pension funds in the near future. Also, the City of Northampton, MA has divested too, and is refusing to award city contracts with any of these companies.

The profiteers and the politicians continually try to convince us that these mad machines keep us “safe.” But this Treaty expresses international rejection of “deterrence theory.” It stigmatizes nuclear weapons as a grave danger to all humanity. It lays the groundwork for sensible, fair multilateral disarmament to eliminate all nuclear weapons from all countries. It’s worth noting that the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) won the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize for its role in facilitating the Treaty.

The profiteers’ activities will soon become illegal in increasing numbers of countries where they have offices, projects, suppliers or investors. If they’re smart, they’ll convert their scientists and facilities to green technologies that address climate change and other pressing social needs.

In the US, activists are celebrating this international pressure, and adding to it with federal, state, and city level legislation, divestment campaigns, and public education. They are urging their legislators to sign the ICAN Pledge to support the Treaty. Learn more at NuclearBan.US, DontBankOnTheBomb.com, and ICANW.org.

Sample media release about an event your branch is hosting to celebrate the EIF of the TPNW

YOUR LETTERHEAD HERE

for immediate release
(date)

contact: (Your name and phone/email)

HEADLINE in bold, centered:

EVENT AT (LOCATION) TO MARK THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS: LOCAL RESIDENTS CELEBRATE TREATY’S ENTRY INTO FORCE

January 22, 2021, will be a historic day for nuclear weapons. On that day, at midnight, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons will enter into force, establishing in international law a categorical ban on nuclear weapons, seventy-five years after their development and first use.

The momentous occasion will be marked by actions, events, and celebrations around the globe and across the United States.

In (your town here), the members of (your group here) will mark the historic day by (your event/activity here) at (time, place).

“Right now, the Treaty does not legally apply to the United States,” said (your name), “because we have not signed or ratified it. But that does not mean we will not be feeling the moral force of the Treaty. All nuclear weapons, including the 3,900 in the US stockpile, have been declared unlawful by the international community.”

The (your activity/event) in (your town) is just one of many events happening around the country. At nuclear weapons production sites in Tennessee, Kansas City, New Mexico and California, banners declaring NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE ILLEGAL will be hung on fences at the plant entrance.

Letters will be delivered to members of Congress. University campuses that are engaged in support activities for weapons production will be asked to reconsider their activities. Churches and temples will ring their bells.

“The entry into force of the Treaty is a turning point,” said (you or someone else from your organization).

“On the one hand, it is the end of a long process to outlaw nuclear weapons. On the other hand, it is just the beginning of a new movement to confront nuclear weapons states and demand they lift the dark shadow of nuclear annihilation that has loomed over the world for the last seventy-five years.”

For more information on other activities, see the Facebook page of Nuclear Ban Treaty EIF (www.facebook.com/groups/743982149793909) and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) events page at www.icanw.org/events.

For more information on local activities, contact: (name and local contact information here).

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If your branch will be demonstrating outside a company or national laboratory that designs and/or manufactures nuclear weapons and their delivery systems then you can pretend you are a Treaty Compliance Unit checking their facility is in compliance with the TPNW as described in this webpage: www.nuclearban.us/onsite/. Below is the letter you would hand out to workers entering the facility or security guards or you'd stick it on some suitable wall or fence.

ALERT FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS MANUFACTURERS, SUPPLIERS, SUB-CONTRACTORS AND INVESTORS:

NUCLEAR BAN TREATY ENTRY INTO FORCE 1/22/21

On 1/22/21, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons enters into force as law in the 50 ratifying countries. That means that everything to do with nuclear weapons will be completely illegal in those countries. Many more countries are expected to ratify in the near future, and the treaty will become law in those countries 90 days after ratification.

As of late December 2020, 135 countries have indicated their support for this Treaty, 86 countries have signed it, and 51 have ratified it. New signatures and ratifications are documented at:

www.icanw.org/signature_and_ratification_status

This treaty will not enter into force in the US or in any of the other nuclear-armed nations (Russia, UK, France, China, Israel, India, Pakistan, and North Korea) until they decide to join the treaty. However, nuclear weapons companies with offices, projects, subsidiaries, contracts, suppliers, or investors in these other countries will be affected immediately. There is no law that protects US companies, their directors or employees, from prosecution in another country when the laws of that other country are being violated.

It has *never* been legal to *use or threaten to use* nuclear weapons, in almost every imaginable scenario, under international laws of war already incorporated into US law. (To be legal, they would have to be used without causing disproportionate harm to civilians, without causing prolonged and superfluous suffering to soldiers, without adversely affecting neutral countries downwind, without causing long-term damage to the environment, etc.)

With this nuclear ban treaty, it is now *also* illegal to develop, test, produce, manufacture, transfer, station, possess, or stockpile nuclear weapons. Significantly, under this treaty, it's also illegal to assist, encourage, or induce anyone else to do any of those things. That includes financing those activities, in at least some of the countries that join the Treaty.

The consequences for violating treaty-enforcement laws in the ratifying countries will vary. But for example, in Ireland and Switzerland, any person (including a corporate decision-maker) who violates these laws may be **subject to large fines and a prison term as long as five years to life.**

Companies that make and maintain nuclear weapons will face increasing calls for divestment because of this treaty. Two of the five largest pension funds in the world have already divested from the nuclear weapons industry. The City of New York is expected to divest its pension funds in the near future. Investors will be increasingly concerned with “legislative risk” as well as with reputational risk and the possibility of stranded assets as future weapons contracts are cancelled.

The Treaty represents an absolute rejection of “deterrence theory” by most of the world. It stigmatizes nuclear weapons as a grave danger to all humanity, whether they are used as designed or detonate by accident. And it lays out a clear pathway for the elimination of all nuclear weapons from all countries, in line with existing legal obligations to disarm that the US and other nuclear-armed nations have already committed themselves to. It is worth noting that the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons won the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize for its role in facilitating the Treaty.

Since you will thus be facing increasing domestic and international pressure to get out of the nuclear weapons business, it may be advisable to consider conversion, perhaps with government assistance, to other products, like green technologies that address climate change. This would have the added benefit of reputational repair.

We call on you to take this opportunity to relinquish all nuclear weapons-related activities of your company that are now illegal in 50 countries and soon in many more. We urge you to join us in demanding that the United States work to eliminate all nuclear weapons before they eliminate us, in line with our existing legal obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. And we strongly recommend that you begin now to transition your work away from banned weapons and towards utilizing the skills and resources of your company to address the climate crisis and other pressing social needs.

List of facts for using in correspondence with legislators & newspapers

TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

1. The Treaty was approved at the United Nations in July 2017 by 122 nations.
2. According to the terms of the Treaty, 50 nations had to ratify it (or accede to it) before it would enter into force. Entry into force would automatically happen 90 days after the 50th ratification was deposited at the UN.
3. As of November 1, 2020, 84 states have signed the treaty.
4. On October 24, 2020, Honduras became the 50th nation to deposit its ratification at the United Nations.
5. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons will enter into force on January 22, 2021.
6. None of the nuclear weapons states (US, Russia, England, France, China, Israel, India, Pakistan, North Korea) have signed the Treaty. Legally, the terms of the Treaty will not apply to them until they have signed the Treaty. None of the “umbrella states”—those countries protected by agreements with nuclear powers—have signed the Treaty.
7. The Treaty outlaws the development, manufacture, testing, possession, transfer, acquisition, stockpiling, use or threat of use, control or receipt, stationing or deployment of nuclear weapons.
8. The Entry Into Force of the Treaty will make nuclear weapons illegal under International Law.
9. The Entry Into Force will pressure umbrella nations, especially nations with US/NATO nuclear weapons deployed on their soil (Belgium, Germany, The Netherlands, Italy, Turkey) and nations that permit nuclear weapons in their ports, controlled waters, or on US bases on their soil, to reconsider their responsibilities under the Treaty.

There are no checks on any President's ability to start a nuclear war. It's as easy as ordering a pizza & ∞ more dangerous. Elimination of #nuclearweapons is only safe course. #nuclearban treaty #TPNW comes into effect 22 Jan @handle of recipient

The President of the U.S. can start a nuclear war at any point, and legally no one can stop him. Elimination of #nuclearweapons is only safe course. Luckily #nuclearban treaty enters into force 22 Jan. icanw.org @handle of recipient

Please share with the WILPF DISARM Committee chairs (send email to disarmchair@wilpfus.org) any letters-to-the-editor or op-eds you get published, any response you receive from the Biden administration or other legislators you correspond with.