



International Physicians
for the Prevention of Nuclear War



January 25, 2022

Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock
Federal Republic of Germany
Berlin, Germany
Via Email

Dear Honorable Foreign Minister Baerbock,

Germany's decision to participate in the first meeting of state parties of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) has sent a strong signal of hope to the world. We want to convey our sincerest gratitude and heartfelt congratulations to you in the Green Party for your central role making this happen.

Since our founding in the 1980s, IPPNW has provided scientific evidence on the horrific humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons to policy makers and public. Hand in hand with Greens from all over the world, we contributed to ending the first Soviet-US arms race and to opening the way for meaningful disarmament treaties.

But now, tragically, the nuclear armed states are abandoning arms control agreements while spending billions to "modernize" and expand their nuclear arsenals.

Even after the large reduction in total number of nuclear weapons in the world, approximately 2000 nuclear weapons remain on hair trigger alert and ready to be launched within minutes. A single one of them could kill over a million people. The very real concern about the instability of US President Trump, who once commanded the world's most lethal nuclear force, and who may regain this power, is just a recent example in a long line of threats to human survival from nuclear weapons, due to technical or human failure. The current situation of nuclear-armed states and alliances that deploy them facing off over the fate of Ukraine emphasizes the fact that rather than keeping us safe, the possession of these weapons threatens everyone. No one should have the power to destroy the world.

To create new awareness of and action on this greatest acute danger for humankind, IPPNW founded the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) in 2006 and began work that culminated in the adoption of the TPNW at the United Nations in 2017. This has changed the debate on nuclear weapons by focusing on the humanitarian consequences of their development and use, rather than their supposed "strategic value."

We appreciate the announcement in your election program to lead a "broad public debate on outdated deterrence theories." Because of recent news of the German Ministry of Defense seeking to buy a new nuclear weapon carrier system, we believe that the time to lead that debate in a more positive direction has come. The acquisition of new nuclear weapon carriers, at a cost of several billion euros, would contradict not only Green Principles but would also thwart the will of a great majority of the German people who support an end to nuclear sharing, according to recent public polls. It would extend the danger nuclear sharing poses for Germany for many

years and it would feed the arms race when the new B61-12 bombs would be stationed in Germany.

Therefore, we urge you to use your influence in the governing coalition to start the urgently needed debate on nuclear deterrence and nuclear sharing. When the public is presented with the scientific evidence of danger to humanity of nuclear weapons, that knowledge will help to overcome the dangerous and counterproductive concept of security based on an existential threat of mutual annihilation.

We have come a long way together. You are now in the position to exercise leadership and build upon Green achievements, to accomplish the will of Germans to live free from the nuclear threat, and to show to humanity a safer way.

Sincerely,



Dr. med. Arun Mitra
Co-President
India



Dr. med. Sally Ndung'u
Co-President
Kenya



Dr. med. Tilman Ruff
Co-President
Australia



Dr. med. Carlos Umaña
Co-President
Costa Rica

CC:

Dr. Angelika Claußen
Co-President, IPPNW Germany
IPPNW Co-Regional Vice President for Europe

Dr. Lars Pohlmeier
Co-President, IPPNW Germany

Dr. Inga Blum
At-Large Board Member, IPPNW Germany

IPPNW, a registered U.S. charity according to I.R.S. code 501(c)3, is a not-for-profit organization comprised of physicians, health care professionals, and medical students in 63 nations and is the recipient of the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize. We are headquartered at 339 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148.