

## **Nuclear Ban Week Vienna**

18 – 23 June 2022

### **Background information for media**

Nuclear weapons are back at the top of the international agenda. Russia's invasion of Ukraine and threats to use nuclear weapons have reawakened fears of nuclear war and brought the terrible consequences of the use of nuclear weapons to the forefront of public consciousness. Decades-old assumptions about security and deterrence have been upended overnight, as Russia uses its nuclear weapons not to deter but to coerce and intimidate: to facilitate aggression and provide a cover for war crimes and violations of human rights.

It is now clearer than ever that security is impossible while nuclear weapons exist, and the risks of nuclear catastrophe are growing. The nine nuclear-armed states possess between them over 12,000 nuclear weapons, many on high alert and ready to be launched within minutes. The world urgently needs a realistic and practical plan to get rid of these weapons. Nuclear Ban Week will bring governments, international organizations and civil society together in Vienna from 18-23 June for a series of meetings and events aimed at doing just that.

### **21-23 June. Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, at the United Nations in Vienna.**

On 21-23 June, governments will gather for the first Meeting of States Parties of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which came into legal force on 22 January 2021. They will determine how to take forward the treaty's mission, now more urgent than ever: the total elimination of nuclear weapons worldwide. As the first intergovernmental conference on nuclear weapons since the start of the Ukraine crisis, the meeting will lead the international response to the increased risk of nuclear conflict and catastrophe.

Over 100 governments participating in this meeting are expected to:

- Adopt a political declaration that responds to the recent threats of use of nuclear weapons, and the increased risk of nuclear conflict.

- Develop procedures for providing assistance to victims of use or testing of nuclear weapons, and for environmental remediation.
- Decide on key aspects of the implementation of the TPNW, including the deadlines for destruction of nuclear weapons by nuclear-armed states joining the treaty.
- Expand and reinforce efforts to increase the membership of the treaty in face of increasing nuclear weapons threats.

### **What's in it for journalists?**

- *First United Nations conference where possibly 100 governments will respond directly with Russia's threats to use nuclear weapons.*
- *Access to ministers and senior officials from the countries leading the effort to stop the nuclear weapons threats, in the face of bitter opposition from nuclear-armed states and their allies.*
- *Perspectives on nuclear weapons and security from states outside Europe/NATO: Asia, Africa and Latin America.*
- *A chance to watch a daring and ambitious new treaty being brought to life despite fierce resistance from the world's most powerful countries.*

More about the Meeting of States Parties: <https://vienna.icanw.org/msp>

Media accreditation will be managed by the UN Information Service Vienna (UNIS). The standard requirements are available [here](#), and the UN media advisory and registration information for the 1MSP can be found [here](#).

More about the TPNW: [https://www.icanw.org/the\\_treaty](https://www.icanw.org/the_treaty)

### **20 June: International Conference on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons, at the United Nations in Vienna.**

Russia's nuclear threats have led to discussion and speculation about the possibility of nuclear weapons being used in the Ukraine conflict. A worrying trend is the increasing number of military and political analysts, both in Russia and in NATO countries that try to normalise the threats to use of nuclear weapons and downplay the humanitarian impact of any use.

This conference will provide governments and the international community with expert analysis of what the effect of detonating nuclear weapons in a densely-populated region such as Europe would actually be. How many people would be killed and injured? Could medical and emergency response services cope? How far would the effects spread? What about mass panic and movements of people? What would be the longer-term health, economic and environmental effects?

The Austrian government is organising a Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons on 20 June, where leading scientific, medical and environmental experts, humanitarian workers, policy analysts and nuclear survivors will tackle these questions. Building on the work of the groundbreaking humanitarian impact conferences in 2013 and 2014, participants will develop the factual and scientific foundation for global action towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

### **What's in it for journalists?**

- *Access to facts, figures and data to illustrate what political and military leaders' rhetoric on nuclear weapons would mean in reality.*
- *Contact with leading scientific and technical experts on the effects of nuclear weapons.*
- *First-hand stories from survivors of use and testing of nuclear weapons.*

More about the conference: <https://vienna.icanw.org/humanitarian-impact-conference>

Registration for media representatives: [bmeia.gv.at](http://bmeia.gv.at)

More about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons:

[https://www.icanw.org/catastrophic\\_harm](https://www.icanw.org/catastrophic_harm)

### **20 June, Parliamentary conference on banning nuclear weapons, at the United Nations in Vienna.**

Parliamentarians around the world have played a crucial role in getting governments to act on nuclear disarmament, and were instrumental in the creation of the TPNW. At the ICAN Parliamentary Conference on 20 June, co-hosted by the Austrian Parliament, parliamentarians from 15 countries will meet to discuss ideas and strategy, and plan their next steps for getting governments to join the TPNW and make genuine progress on nuclear disarmament.

**What's in it for journalists?**

- *Political perspectives from legislators in nuclear-armed states and states in nuclear alliances on the need to change policy on nuclear weapons.*
- *Insight into the mechanisms of building political will and influencing government policy.*

More about the conference: <https://vienna.icanw.org/parliamentarian-conference>

**18-19 June, ICAN Civil Society Conference on building a larger movement against nuclear weapons, Aula der Wissenschaften.**

The ICAN NuclearBan Forum on 18-19 June will bring together a vast array of civil society expertise, ideas and energy from all regions of the world: activists, scientists, analysts, medical and legal experts, academics and survivors. They will plan the national, regional and global actions needed to drive forward the implementation of the TPNW and eliminate nuclear weapons – in Russia and worldwide. The action at the NuclearBan Forum will take place on four distinct stages and will feature a range of workshops, speakers, panels and interactive dialogues.

**What's in it for journalists?**

- *Perspectives and analysis on nuclear issues that provide a stark contrast to the narrative of nuclear-armed governments and challenge widely-accepted ideas about security.*
- *Access to a wide range of well-informed, stimulating and provocative activists from around the world.*
- *A chance to see how a Nobel-prize-winning global civil society coalition functions in defining, pursuing and achieving its goals.*
- *Youth activist voices for nuclear disarmament*

More about the Forum: <https://vienna.icanw.org/forum>

Media registration for the Forum: <https://vienna.icanw.org/press-and-media>

More about ICAN: [https://www.icanw.org/the\\_campaign](https://www.icanw.org/the_campaign)

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