

# THE HAGUE PEACE PALACE APPEAL

## 'Urgent appeal for a nuclear weapon-free world'

We, Dutch physicians for peace (NVMP), organizers of the conference 'Urgent appeal for a nuclear weapon-free world' in the Hague Peace Palace, November 26, 2019 are deeply worried about the unacceptable risks of nuclear weapons for the global health and well-being. So it is our medical duty to raise our voice.

**Let's wake up!** There are still 15,000 nuclear weapons around - 93% Russian or American, up to hundreds times more powerful than the two destroying Hiroshima and Nagasaki (1945), with devastating medical-humanitarian impact on civilians and with no help possible. About 2000 are on high alert, ready to be launched within minutes, and nuclear weapon states have openly threatened to use them, risking total annihilation of mankind - the Nuclear Winter.

**Let's wake up!** Even from a so called limited regional nuclear war we all will suffer: huge amounts of soot in the stratosphere will block the sun, causing massive crop failure, huge migrant streams and up to two billion hunger deaths - the Nuclear Famine.

**Let's wake up!** Often we've been close to unintended nuclear attacks by false alarm, technical or human failure. Developments like cybercrime, killer robots and artificial intelligence will make it even harder to stop an unintended nuclear launch or prevent retaliation.

**Let's wake up!** Important international treaties are in danger or jeopardized and a new nuclear arms race is imminent. Instead of abolishing their arsenals as promised, Russia and the US are modernising and upgrading them in their strategies, even for real use, lowering the nuclear threshold. Trillions of dollars are involved, not available for



***'A nuclear war cannot be won and should  
never be fought!' -Reagan/Gorbachev, 1986***

treating diseases or for prevention by combatting hunger, poverty and inequity.

So mankind is facing an existential choice: either nuclear weapons are here to stay - and then, according to the experts, sooner or later they will go off, intended or unintended. Or, how difficult that may be, we have to eliminate them before they eliminate us.

That is why almost all countries, also the main nuclear powers, signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT, 1970), including Article VI, obliging to eliminate all nuclear weapons. Until now however the nuclear powers did not keep their promises. So we must find ways to urge them to disarm, by mobilizing politics, civil society and public opinion, by supporting the ban treaty TPNW as a pressure tool, to help making the 2020 NPT Review Conference a success. And it is feasible: in 1985 there were 70,000 nuclear warheads worldwide, and now 15,000, thanks to Gorbachev's and Reagan's courage to negotiate. Let's finish that job!

Finally, when a great health risk is imminent, physicians use to take emergency measures to prevent death-at-the-spot. So on short notice we strongly recommend the nuclear powers to de-alert and de-target their weapons of mass destruction and to agree to 'No First Use', in order to minimize the acute risks and to be able to realize the final prevention, in accordance with the very first UN-resolution (1946), unanimously supported, also by the USA and the Soviet Union: Global Zero!

**It is time to bring resolutions and promises  
into practice, for the sake of survival!**



**NVMP**  
Artsen voor vrede