



STATEMENT FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT

OCTOBER 15, 2015

SENATOR EDWARD MARKEY, PNND CO-PRESIDENT

I want to thank you, the Parliamentarians for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament, for the incredible work you are doing to reduce the world's nuclear arsenal. Although I am not able to join you for this important conference, I very much appreciate the opportunity to send you my greetings from the United States Senate in Washington.

I also want to thank your host, the government of the Czech Republic, for its leadership in helping to organize such an amazing event and its long-standing commitment to reducing the world's stockpile of nuclear weapons.

Last year I was pleased to host you in the Kennedy Caucus Room of the U.S. Senate, during the PNND Assembly. I have been working my entire congressional career – along with many of you – to eliminate nuclear weapons from our world. From the Nuclear Freeze Movement of the 1980's to efforts to end nuclear testing, we have stood shoulder to shoulder in this cause.

And when President Obama took office, he outlined a clear vision for a world free from nuclear weapons in an historic speech in Prague, the city where you are gathered today. More recently, the 2010 passage of the new START treaty was a substantial step forward towards this lofty goal. It sent a clear signal that the United States is serious about meeting its disarmament obligations and that we will lead the way to reduce the global stockpile of nuclear weapons.

But escalating conflicts remind us that we must increase our efforts to eliminate the dark shadow that nuclear weapons cast over the earth and humanity.

Last year I introduced in the Senate the Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures (SANE) Act, and introduced it again this year.

My bill would cut a number of oversized or unnecessary nuclear weapons programs in the U.S. Defense and Energy Departments. It would save \$100 billion over the next 10 years.

What's a better use for \$100 billion??? Here are just a few:

- Funding education, not annihilation.
- Investing in constructive economic growth that provides sustainable jobs, not helping to build new more destructive bombs.
- Curing diseases, not creating new instruments of death.

We live in an interconnected world.

Unfortunately, though, we live in an imperfect world. But even in an imperfect world, where human rights violations and violent conflict persist, the risk of nuclear weapons use remains very real and their elimination remains an urgent imperative.

We can and must forge viable agreements on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

Together we can build a better today and a brighter future. This international cross party network of parliamentarians is unprecedented and unparalleled, and must be unyielding in this effort.

You are the key to achieving sustainable multilateral nuclear disarmament and the hope we need to build a more peaceful planet.

Again, I thank you for your tireless work, passion and commitment.