

Minsk Declaration 2017

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly:

Regretting the breakdown in nuclear security and nuclear weapons reduction agreements between the United States and the Russian Federation, including the Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement, the New START Treaty, and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty,

Calls on all countries to participate in UN negotiations on nuclear disarmament and to pursue the adoption of nuclear risk reduction, transparency and disarmament measures.

Adopted at the 26th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Minsk, Belarus, July 2017

Berlin Declaration 2018

Regretting the deterioration in arms control, nuclear security and nuclear weapons reduction agreements, and the negative effects this could have on strategic stability and threat reduction,

Urges a renewed commitment from OSCE participating States to the Organization's principles of dialogue and detente in the spirit of the Helsinki Final Act, including through the strengthening of arms control regimes,

Urges nuclear weapons States of the OSCE area to recommit to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, including by agreeing to no-first-use principles and arms reduction strategies.

Adopted at the 27th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Berlin, Germany, July 2018

Dialogue, détente & disarmament: The role of parliamentarians and the OSCE

Backgrounder for the OSCE PA 2019 Annual Meeting



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Nuclear threats to Europe

The Ukraine conflict and the deteriorating relationships between Russia & NATO/European Union have eroded and reversed the nuclear détente that developed at the end of the Cold War. This has increased the level of nuclear brinkmanship in the European theatre, stimulated proposals for forward deployment of nuclear weapons, and **elevated the risks of nuclear weapons use by accident or miscalculation.**

There are more than **14,000 nuclear weapons** remaining in the arsenals of the nuclear-armed countries, the majority of them possessed by US and Russia. Nearly 1500 of these are primed and **ready to be fired within minutes** under launch-on-warning policies. In addition, both Russia and NATO retain the option of using nuclear weapons first in a conflict – increasing the tensions between these two military power blocs.

There have already been **at least 15 times when a nuclear exchange nearly occurred** through conflict escalation, miscommunications, and/or faulty information in the nuclear command and control systems. There is an additional risk of **cyberattack by a terrorist organisation** or other third party on nuclear command and control systems, which could trigger an inadvertent nuclear exchange.

The **Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty**, adopted by the USA and USSR in 1987, was a very important step in reducing nuclear dangers in Europe by eliminating a whole class of nuclear weapons that could reach their targets in a very short time and could have been used in war-fighting. The withdrawal of USA and Russia from the INF Treaty in February this year opens the door to the possible deployment of new, destabilising nuclear weapons systems.

In addition, the security doctrines of the USA and Russia have strengthened and expanded the role of nuclear weapons, despite commitments to lower this role.

The nuclear armed States are now spending over **\$100 billion per year** to maintain, modernise, upgrade and deploy nuclear weapons and their delivery systems.

As a result, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists in January 2019 set the hands of the **Doomsday Clock** to 2 minutes to Midnight – the closest it has been since the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In July 2017, a *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons* was adopted at the United Nations. However, the treaty is opposed by the nuclear-armed countries and the allied countries (NATO, Japan, South Korea and Australia).

In June 2019, a group of 16 allied and non-nuclear countries, led by Sweden, launched a nuclear disarmament **Stepping Stones initiative** aimed at engaging nuclear-armed and non-nuclear countries to achieve progress at the 2020 NPT Review Conference.



Parliamentarians for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament:
A global, cross-party network of legislators working to prevent nuclear war, reverse nuclear proliferation and achieve nuclear disarmament.

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Key developments

- The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly expressed concern at the 26th and 27th Annual Sessions about the erosion of arms control agreements and promoted nuclear risk-reduction and disarmament measures including policies **never to use nuclear weapons first**;
- In July 2017, non-nuclear countries negotiated and adopted a **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons**;
- In October 2018, the UN Human Rights Committee affirmed that the threat or use of nuclear weapons is a **violation of the Right to Life**;
- In February 2019, the USA withdrew from the **Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty**, followed by Russia. The USA has also withdrawn from the **Iran nuclear non-proliferation agreement (JCPOA)**;
- In June 2019, a group of 16 allied and non-nuclear countries, led by Sweden, launched the **'Stepping Stones'** nuclear disarmament initiative;
- Parliamentarians for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament (PNND) have released a **Parliamentary Action Plan for a Nuclear Weapon Free World** based on resolutions adopted by OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

What can parliamentarians do?

- Call on nuclear armed and allied governments to re-affirm that **'a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought'**, and adopt **no-first-use policies** to ensure this;
- Encourage governments to support nuclear risk-reduction and disarmament measures proposed at the **2019 UN General Assembly** and the **2020 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference**;
- Reaffirm European support for the **Iran nuclear non-proliferation deal (JCPOA)** and the **non-deployment of nuclear missiles in Europe**;
- Help to **'Move the Nuclear Weapons Money'** by supporting a reduction in nuclear weapons spending and by encouraging your city, state or federal government to divest from nuclear weapons corporations. See www.nuclearweaponsmoney.org
- Join Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND).

For examples and ideas for further action, please see the **Parliamentary Action Plan for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World** at www.pnnd.org