

Stakeholder submission for the 35th session of the Universal Periodic Review

Report on Sweden,

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is a campaign coalition of almost 500 non-government organizations in over one hundred countries. Following the historic achievement of the adoption of a strong nuclear weapons ban treaty, ICAN now campaigns for all States to sign and ratify the Treaty as a matter of urgency, take measures towards the global elimination of all nuclear weapons, and provide an overdue response to the victims of the humanitarian and environmental impact of nuclear weapon tests in the Pacific and elsewhere.

ICAN was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 for “its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its groundbreaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons.”

National Human Rights Framework

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) has clear references to and implications for human rights law and practice. Preambular paragraph 8 reaffirms “the need for all States at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law” The most relevant rights concern from a nuclear weapons attack is the right to life, Other relevant rights concerns include the prohibition of inhuman and degrading treatment, the right to a home and to property, as well as rights violations resulting from nuclear weapons testing.

ICAN notes with appreciation that Sweden participated in the negotiation of the TPNW and voted in favour of its adoption on 7 July 2017. However, Sweden has not yet signed the TPNW.

To sign and ratify the TPNW would be to reaffirm Sweden’s position against weapons of mass destruction and its strong support for the need to respect humanitarian law and human rights at all times.

The fact that nuclear weapons free states join the TPNW is an important strategic undertaking to create conditions for disarmament at a time when the norm against nuclear weapons is weakened. It is also in line with Sweden's obligation under Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to contribute to negotiations on disarmament.

At its core, the TPNW holds the devastating consequences that nuclear weapons have on people, the climate and the environment. This is fully in line with Sweden’s obligations with regards to human rights, humanitarian law and sustainable development. These aspects are also included in Sweden's national security strategy. In 2017, the Prime Minister’s office announced that “Sweden's policy for disarmament and non-proliferation is an integral part of our security policy, and has clear relevance for both regional and global security. The devastating harmful effects on people and the environment that the use of nuclear weapons would entail gives

rise to continued Swedish involvement in this issue. It is a clear security policy interest for us that the stalemate that has long characterized the multilateral cooperation for nuclear disarmament can be lifted.¹

Security issues must now be seen from a much broader perspective than before |... | To the wider security work must also be counted |... | counteracting devastating climate change, efforts for peace and global development, and much more.²

ICAN recommends that Sweden signs and ratifies the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as a matter of international urgency.

¹Prime minister office, Sweden's national security strategy, 2017, p. 13.

² Ibid, p.3