



Stakeholder submission for the 40th session of the Universal Periodic Review

Report on Iceland

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is a campaign coalition of over 600 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 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 regrets that Iceland supports the retention and potential use of nuclear weapons on its behalf, as indicated by its endorsement of various alliance statements of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), of which it is a member. Iceland has consistently voted against an annual UN General Assembly resolution since 2018 that welcomes the adoption of the treaty and calls upon all states to sign, ratify, or accede to it "at the earliest possible date".

However, it is noted and welcomed that Iceland, although a NATO state, forbids the stationing of nuclear weapons on its territory.¹

ICAN welcomes the pledge made by the Prime Minister of Iceland, Katrín Jakobsdóttir to work for her country's signature and ratification of the Treaty, and that around 40% of Parliamentarians have pledged their support for the Treaty.

Recommendations

Iceland should ensure that nuclear weapons do not have a role in its national defence plans and security policies. It should renounce the retention and potential use of nuclear weapons on its behalf, for instance through a declaratory statement, and refrain from endorsing future alliance statements in support of weapons of mass destruction.

Iceland should urgently sign and ratify the TPNW, and encourage other states to adhere to the Treaty. Until it is in a position to do so, it should welcome the TPNW as a valuable contribution to the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture, attend its meetings of states parties as an observer, and work with its states parties on practical steps towards disarmament.

¹ <https://www.government.is/media/utanrikisraduneyti-media/media/Varnarmal/National-Security-Policy-ENS.pdf>