

Proposed Resolution for Denver City Council
January 22, 2021 International Day for Entry Into Force
GLOBAL TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Whereas, the United Nations General Assembly Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty has been ratified by enough of the world's governments that it Enters Into Force on January 22, 2021.

Whereas, prior to the treaty's adoption, nuclear weapons were the only weapons of mass destruction not subject to a comprehensive ban, despite their catastrophic, widespread and persistent humanitarian and environmental consequences. The new agreement fills a significant gap in international law. It prohibits nations from developing, testing, producing, manufacturing, transferring, possessing, stockpiling, using or threatening to use nuclear weapons, or allowing nuclear weapons to be stationed on their territory. It also prohibits them from assisting, encouraging or inducing anyone to engage in any of these activities.

Whereas, international arms control cooperation is building. Over the past century, world governments have increasingly looked to create laws that govern the conduct of nations in war. The institutions that work to verify these international agreements have become robust and the rules enabling their ability to provide verifiable oversight have also been strengthened. Any international agreement that would move us closer to abolition would also include robust on-the-ground inspections using lessons learned from the process the U.S. and Russia have developed over years of nuclear arms control cooperation. The alternative to serious nuclear disarmament efforts is the status-quo where countries will continue to develop nuclear weapons programs over time and we will increasingly face a world that teeters on the brink of nuclear war.

Whereas, nuclear weapons pose a particular threat to cities, which are in many cases the primary targets for an attack. Governments of nuclear nations are putting their citizens' lives at risk by subscribing to the strategy of nuclear deterrence, which has been undermined time and again by near misses and miscalculations.

Whereas, as many as 49 Minuteman III first strike Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) nuclear weapons are on alert in the ground in Colorado. These warheads can be launched within minutes and reach any destination within 35 minutes. A Minuteman warhead has the potential to destroy the genetic code of the human race. Current warheads carry 27 times more power than the first nuclear bomb dropped by the U.S. on Hiroshima, Japan August 6, 1945.

Whereas, on June 30, 2020 the U.S. Conference of Mayors—to which Denver belongs—unanimously adopted a resolution calling for Human-Centered Security in a Time of Global Pandemic. The resolution calls on the United States to “lead a global effort to prevent nuclear war by renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first; ending the sole, unchecked authority of any president to launch a nuclear attack taking U.S. nuclear weapons off hair trigger alert; cancelling the plan to replace its entire arsenal with enhanced weapons; and actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.” <http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/ecbn/resolution/20200630.html>

Be it resolved that the Denver City Council Supports the UN Nuclear Ban Treaty,

Our city is deeply concerned about the grave threat that nuclear weapons pose to communities throughout the world. We firmly believe that our residents have the right to live in a world free from this threat. Any use of nuclear weapons, whether deliberate or accidental, would have catastrophic, far-reaching and long-lasting consequences for people and the environment. Therefore, we support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and call on our government to sign and ratify it.