



IRELAND

First Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition
of Nuclear Weapons

National Statement

Statement by Ireland

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President,

Ireland is proud to participate in this, the first Meeting of States Parties of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. I congratulate you, President, and your team for your able leadership throughout the uncertainties of the preparatory period and I assure you of my delegation's full support.

While this first MSP is an important milestone, regrettably this meeting takes place at a dark moment for European and global security. Russia's unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine, and its accompanying nuclear threats and rhetoric, illustrate starkly the urgency of our work towards a world free of nuclear weapons. With the invasion, and its aggressive nuclear rhetoric, Russia's actions threaten to undermine the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We strongly urge Russia to refrain from nuclear rhetoric and threats. Ireland reiterates our strongest support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

In light of heightened nuclear danger – this is a time for clarity and courage – we cannot shy away from calling out those who threaten the use of nuclear weapons. We each have a vital stake in disarmament. The humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons continue to drive Ireland's engagement on nuclear disarmament to this day, including as a State Party to this important Treaty.

The urgency of disarmament has been further reinforced by our increased understanding of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, including the important work advanced through yesterday's meeting of the humanitarian initiative.

It is our fundamental belief that nuclear weapons offer no security. And we know that no amount of resources could provide an adequate humanitarian response to nuclear weapons use. We know that nuclear rhetoric serves to heighten risks and drive escalation in conventional conflict.

To those that have doubts about the treaty, we urge you to reconsider, and ask what alternative vision you are offering to your societies, to the global community and to your children.

The same commitment to multilateralism that drove Ireland in the 1950s and 1960s informed the Irish approach to the historic TPNW negotiations in 2017. A vital element of our engagement was to ensure that the provisions of the Treaty were fully consistent and complementary with the NPT – and indeed they are. We are pleased to have co-facilitated the working paper on complementarity, with Thailand. We are committed to continuing to emphasise and raise awareness of this complementarity, including among States outside the Treaty. The NPT always envisaged a separate legal instrument to give effect to its disarmament provisions.

The Treaty, therefore, plugs a vital legal gap, in ensuring that nuclear weapons join chemical and biological weapons as weapons of mass destruction, comprehensively prohibited under international law.

It clearly signals the international community's rejection of these inhumane weapons. The comprehensive set of prohibitions set out in the TPNW give practical expression to the "effective measures" for nuclear disarmament envisaged in the NPT. Indeed, by prohibiting nuclear weapons, TPNW State parties have created a legal framework that can help to implement article VI of the NPT and achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world – which is the goal of all parties to the NPT, including nuclear-weapon States.

As well as its core prohibitions, the TPNW also stands out for its innovative approach to women, peace and security. It commits to supporting effective participation of both women and men is an essential factor for the promotion and attainment of sustainable peace and security, and commits to supporting and strengthening the effective participation of women in nuclear disarmament. The preamble acknowledges that nuclear weapons have a disproportionate impact on women and girls who are more impacted by ionising radiation.

Ireland is pleased to have co-authored a paper with Chile, Mexico and UNIDIR on operationalizing the gender provisions of the Treaty. We ask that at this meeting, and in the intersessional period, priority is given to this important aspect of the Treaty's work.

The TPNW is an inclusive Treaty, reflecting not just states but civil society, academia, parliamentarians, and crucially, survivors of nuclear weapons testing and use. Ireland is pleased to have contributed to the sponsorship programme to support broad participation at this week's meeting.

This treaty is the latest chapter in Ireland's long history of nuclear diplomacy. We look forward to working with all states to support the Treaty's implementation and universalisation, to reinforce its position within the international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture, to give voice to victims, to promote disarmament education and to move closer to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

Thank you Mr. President.

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