



U.S. Must Take Steps to a World Free of Nuclear Weapons

Nuclear weapons pose a threat to human life and health. Additionally, the weakening of international treaties and the rising threat of nuclear terrorism make taking steps to eliminate nuclear weapons essential. With a new administration, a new Congress and bipartisan support, we have an opportunity to turn a vision of a world free of nuclear weapons into reality.

Physicians for Social Responsibility shares the concerns and recommendations laid out by Henry Kissinger, Sam Nunn, William Perry and George Schultz in their January 4, 2007 *Wall Street Journal* op-ed “A World Free of Nuclear Weapons,” in which they called for:

- Increase warning time to reduce accidental use of a nuclear weapon.
- Entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).
- Further reductions in the US nuclear stockpile.
- Securing weapons-usable material.
- Stepping up efforts to stop the emergence of new nuclear powers.

PSR believes that citizens should act on this opportunity because of the growing threat to human life and health that nuclear weapons pose:

- Thousands of US and Russian nuclear weapons are on high alert, ready to go off in a few minutes notice, which could lead to nuclear war by accident or miscalculation.
- Still tons of unsecure nuclear material and terrorists’ plans to acquire it, a nuclear terrorist attack on an American city would kill 50,000 people outright and another 250,000 would die if they were not adequately protected from the intense local radioactive fall out.
- The climate consequences of a regional nuclear war would cause a sudden decline in agricultural production because of a cooling effect and cause global food shortages.

To prevent the use of nuclear weapons we need to eliminate them completely. Citizens should urge their decision makers to take these steps to zero:

- Immediately resume high-level talks with Russia on a new agreement that would extend or replace key verification and monitoring provisions of the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and negotiate significantly deeper, verifiable, and irreversible reductions in the U.S. and Russian nuclear stockpiles.
- Change Cold War posture of deployed nuclear weapons, taking nuclear weapons off of high alert, to increase warning time and reduce danger of an accidental or unauthorized use.
- Reduce the threat of nuclear terrorism by establishing the goal of securing the most vulnerable nuclear weapons usable materials within four years and through international agreement implement a Fissile Material Cut Off Treaty to end the production of bomb grade material and secure existing stocks.
- Appoint a senior, high-level coordinator to support a renewed, bipartisan effort to win prompt Senate approval of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and actively support ongoing diplomatic efforts to bring on board other nation states whose ratifications are required for the treaty to enter into force.
- Direct relevant cabinet agencies to conduct a new nuclear posture review that reassess threats to US security in a post cold war world and devalues nuclear weapons in the national security strategy.
- End the drive to create new nuclear weapons, like the Reliable Replacement Warhead, and ensure that Russia and China do the same.
- Share rapid nuclear dismantlement plans with all 187 members of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) at the NPT 2010 Review Conference.

Our leaders have an opportunity and a moral obligation to act now for a healthier and safer world. American citizens must set the bar of expectation high to ensure that they do.

Call the Capital Switch Board (1- 202-224-3121) to ask for your Congressional Representative and your Senators to support these steps towards zero nuclear weapons.



For more information contact Jill Parillo at jparillo@psr.org
1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 1012 • Washington, DC 20009
Phone: (202) 667-4260 • Fax: (202) 667-4201 • Visit us on the web: www.psr.org