

Resolution supporting the TPNW submitted in US Congress

April 15, 2019

On Thursday 11 April, US Congresspersons Jim McGovern and Earl Blumenauer introduced a historic resolution, H. Res 302: Embracing the Goals and Provisions of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the first US House of Representatives resolution that calls on the US government to support the nuclear weapons ban treaty (“TPNW”) and make nuclear disarmament a central focus of US national security policy. The text of the resolution is in stark contrast to the United States’ policy on nuclear weapons for many years, which has seen the US engage in a new nuclear arms race, threaten to use nuclear weapons to “totally destroy” civilian populations, boycott successive conferences examining the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and attempt to undermine the negotiation of the TPNW.

---“HR 302 is the first US Congressional resolution to call for the United States to get on board the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons,” says Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN, “this a sign that the TPNW is starting to make an impact on the national security debate in nuclear weapon states. This impact will only continue to grow as the treaty approaches entry-into-force.”

---In an official press release, Representative McGovern outlined the motivations behind the resolution: “There is simply no reason for the United States – or any country – to possess nuclear weapons. Our world has made real progress toward peace in the last century, yet **nuclear weapons continue to keep us tethered to a dark and dangerous past.** Maintaining our nuclear **arsenal costs billions of dollars** that should be spent on the American people, not on preparing for a nuclear war which would threaten the **existence of humanity.** At the end of the day, either we must put an end to nuclear weapons – or they will put an end to us.”

---The resolution also outlines a number of steps the US government should take to reduce the risk of nuclear war, including **taking nuclear weapons off high alert status, ending the President’s sole authority to launch a nuclear strike,** renouncing the policy of using nuclear weapons first and **cancelling the trillion dollar program to “modernize” the US nuclear arsenal.**

This move comes on the heels of a **growing grassroots movement in the US** which has sought to raise awareness and generate support at a local political level for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Earlier in the year, Washington DC passed its own resolution in favor of the TPNW and of the US taking the same list of risk-reduction measures, which have been proposed by US-based campaign **Back from the Brink.**

ICAN campaigners in the United States, including Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, NuclearBan.US, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Soka Gakkai USA and others **have also pushed for the adoption of similar resolutions** in Baltimore, Los Angeles, Salt Lake City and Ojai, in addition to the State of California.

“ICAN calls on all members of the House of Representatives to support this important initiative and **to sign ICAN’s Parliamentary Pledge** to join thousands of legislators worldwide who are working to get their governments to join the TPNW,” says Fihn.

The TPNW currently has been signed by 70 governments and ratified by 23. It will enter-into-force and become international law after its 50th ratification.

Source: <http://www.icanw.org/campaign-news/resolution-supporting-the-tpnw-submitted-in-us-congress/>