



*Building European capacity to meet
the challenges of the 21st century*



5 December 2014

His Excellency Sebastian Kurz
Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs
Minoritenplatz 8
1010 Vienna
Austria

Dear Minister Kurz:

We are writing to commend the Austrian government for convening the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. As members of global leadership networks developed in cooperation with the U.S.-based Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), we believe it is essential for governments and interested parties to state emphatically that the use of a nuclear weapon, by a state or non-state actor, anywhere on the planet would have catastrophic human consequences.

Our global networks—comprised of former senior political, military and diplomatic leaders from across five continents—share many of the concerns represented on the conference agenda. In Vienna and beyond, in addition, we see an opportunity for all states, whether they possess nuclear weapons or not, to work together in a joint enterprise to identify, understand, prevent, manage and eliminate the risks associated with these indiscriminate and inhumane weapons. Specifically, we have agreed to collaborate across regions on the following four-point agenda for action and to work to shine a light on the risks posed by nuclear weapons. As we approach the 70th anniversary of the detonations over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we pledge our support and partnership to all governments and members of civil society who wish to join our effort.

Identifying Risk: We believe the risks posed by nuclear weapons and the international dynamics that could lead to nuclear weapons being used are under-estimated or insufficiently understood by world leaders. Tensions between nuclear-armed states and alliances in the Euro-Atlantic area and in both South and East Asia remain ripe with the potential for military miscalculation and escalation. In a vestige of the Cold War, too many nuclear weapons in the world remain ready to launch on short notice, greatly increasing the chances of an accident. This fact gives leaders faced with an imminent potential threat an insufficient amount of time to communicate with each other and act with prudence. Stockpiles of the world's nuclear weapons and materials to produce them are insufficiently secure, making them possible targets for terrorism. And while multilateral non-proliferation efforts are underway, none are adequate to growing proliferation dangers.

Given this context, we urge international leaders to use the Vienna Conference to launch a global discussion that would more accurately assess steps to reduce or eliminate the risk of intentional or unintentional use of nuclear weapons. The findings should be shared for the benefit of policy-makers and wider public understanding. We commit to support and engage fully in this endeavor by working together through our global networks and other interested parties.

Reducing Risk: We believe insufficient action is being taken to prevent nuclear weapons use, and we urge conference delegates to consider how best to develop a comprehensive package of measures to reduce the risk of nuclear weapons use. Such a package could include:

- Improved crisis-management arrangements in conflict hotspots and regions of tension around the world;
- Urgent action to lower the prompt-launch status of existing nuclear stockpiles;
- New measures to improve the security of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons-related materials; and
- Renewed efforts to tackle the increasing threat of proliferation from state and non-state actors.

All nuclear-armed states should attend the Vienna Conference and engage in the Humanitarian Impacts Initiative, without exception, and while doing so, should acknowledge their special responsibility on this set of issues.

At the same time, all states should re-double efforts to work toward a world without nuclear weapons.

Raising Public Awareness: We believe the world needs to know more about the devastating consequences of nuclear weapons use. It is therefore imperative that the Vienna discussions and findings are not limited to Conference delegations. A sustained effort should be made to engage and educate a global audience of policymakers and civil society on the catastrophic consequences of the use—intentional or accidental—of a nuclear weapon. We commend the Conference organizers for taking a broad approach to addressing the effects of a detonation, including the wider environmental impacts. The latest climate modeling suggests major and global environmental, health and food security consequences from even a relatively small scale regional exchange of nuclear weapons. Given the potential global impact, the use of a nuclear weapon anywhere is the legitimate concern of people everywhere.

Improving Readiness: The Conference and the ongoing Humanitarian Impacts Initiative must ask what more the world can do to be prepared for the worst. Time and again, the international community has been found wanting when it comes to preparedness for major international humanitarian crises, most recently in the shamefully slow response to the Ebola crisis in West Africa. Preparedness must include a focus on the resilience of domestic infrastructure in major population centers to reduce the death tolls. Since no state is capable of responding to a nuclear weapon detonation sufficiently by relying solely on its own resources, preparedness also must include generating plans for a coordinated international response to an incident. This could save tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of lives.

We wish all those engaged in the Vienna Conference well, and pledge our ongoing support and partnership for all those involved in its important work.

Signed:

From the European Leadership Network

United Kingdom:

Lord Browne of Ladyton (Des Browne), former British Defence Secretary

Sir Malcolm Rifkind MP, Chair of the Intelligence and Security Committee, former Foreign Secretary, former Defence Secretary

Margaret Beckett MP, former Foreign Secretary

Alan West (Admiral the Lord West of Spithead), former First Sea Lord of the British Navy

Sir Menzies Campbell MP, member of the Foreign Affairs Committee

John McColl, former NATO Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR)

Sir Nick Harvey MP, former Minister of State for the Armed Forces

Baroness Williams of Crosby (Shirley Williams), Advisor on Non-Proliferation issues to Gordon Brown

Lord King of Bridgewater (Tom King), former Defence Secretary

David Triesman (Lord Triesman), Foreign Affairs spokesperson for the Labour party in the House of Lords, former Foreign Office Minister

David Owen (Lord Owen), former Foreign Secretary

Lord Richards of Herstmonceux (David Richards), former Chief of the Defence Staff

John Kerr (Lord Kerr on Kinlochard), former UK Ambassador to the US and the EU

Charles Clarke, former Home Secretary

Lord David Ramsbotham, ADC General (Ret.) in the British

Army

Alistair Burt MP, former Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Ian Kearns, Co-Founder and Director of the ELN

France:

Michel Rocard, former Prime Minister

Paul Quilès, former Defence Minister

Pierre Lellouche, Député, former Minister of Foreign Trade, former President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

Bernard Norlain, former Air Defence Commander and Air Combat Commander of the Air Force

Hervé Morin, former Minister of Defence

Russia:

Igor Ivanov, former Russian Foreign Minister

Vyacheslav Trubnikov, former Deputy Foreign Minister, former Director of Foreign Intelligence

Dr. Sergey Rogov, Director of Institute for US and Canadian Studies

Germany:

Richard von Weizsäcker, former President

Ambassador Wolfgang Ischinger, Chair of the Munich Security Conference, former Deputy Foreign Minister

Volker Rühle, former Defence Minister

Walter Kolbow, former Deputy Federal Minister of Defence

Gernot Erler, former Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office, Coordinator for Intersocietal Cooperation with Russia, Member of the Bundestag

Egon Bahr, former Minister of the Federal Government

Uta Zapf, former Chairperson of the Subcommittee on Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-proliferation in the Bundestag

General (Rtd.) Klaus Naumann, former Chief of Staff of the Bundeswehr

Spain:

Dr Javier Solana, former Foreign Minister; Former Secre-

tary-General of NATO; Former EU High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy

Poland:

Professor Dr. Adam Daniel Rotfeld, former Foreign Minister

Austria:

Wolfgang Petritsch, former EU Special Envoy to Kosovo and former High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina

Norway:

Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, former Prime Minister

Kjell Magne Bondevik, former Prime Minister

Kare Willoch, former Prime Minister

Netherlands:

Professor Laurens Jan Brinkhorst, former Deputy Foreign Minister

Italy:

Professor Francesco Calogero, former Secretary General of Pugwash

Carlo Trezza, former Special Envoy for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

Giorgio La Malfa, Former Minister of European Affairs

Stefano Silvestri, consultant for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministries of Defence and Industry

Turkey:

Hikmet Çetin, former Foreign Minister

Vahit Erdem, former Member of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, Chief Adviser to President Süleyman Demirel

Özdem Sanberk, former Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Finland:

Elisabeth Rehn, former Defence Minister

Tarja Cronberg, Former Member of the European Parliament, Former Chair of the European Parliament Iran delegation

Ambassador Jaakko Iloniemi, former Minister of State

Professor Raimo Väyrynen, former Director at Finnish Institute of International Affairs

Ambassador Jaakko Blomberg, former Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Admiral (Rtd.) Juhani Kaskeala, former Commander of the Defence Forces

Sweden:

Rolf Ekéus, former Ambassador to the United States

Dr Hans Blix, former Director General of the IAEA; Former Foreign Minister

Henrik Salander, former Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament, Secretary-General of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, Sweden

Denmark:

Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, former Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mogens Lykketoft, former Foreign Minister

Portugal:

Ricardo Baptista Leite, MD, Member of Parliament

Hungary:

János Martonyi, former Minister for Foreign Affairs

Bulgaria:

Dr Solomon Passy, former Minister for Foreign Affairs

Georgia:

Tedo Japaridze, Member of Parliament and Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee

Eka Tkeshelashvili, former Foreign Minister

Ukraine:

Volodymyr Ogrysko, former Foreign Minister

Serbia:

Goran Svilanovic, Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Konstantin Samofalov, Spokesperson for the Social-Democratic Party, former Member of Parliament

Albania:

Fatmir Mediu, former Defence Minister

Croatia:

Davor Božinovic, former Minister of Defence

Professor Ivo Šlaus, former member of the Foreign Affairs Committee

Macedonia:

Fatmir Besimi, Deputy Prime Minister and former Minister of Defence

From the Nuclear Security Leadership Council

United States:

Sam Nunn, Co-Chairman and CEP of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, former Senator

Richard G. Lugar, former U.S. Senator

General (Rtd.) James Cartwright, former Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Ellen O. Tauscher, former Under-Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, former Member of Congress

Ted Turner, Co-Chairman of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, founder of CNN

Joan Rohlfing, President and C.O.O. of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, former Senior National Security Advisor to the Secretary of Energy

Steve Andreasen, former Director for Defence Policy and Arms Control on the White House National Security Council

Sidney D. Dress, Senior Fellow of the Hoover Institute, Professor Emeritus of Stanford University
Christopher Stubbs, Professor of Physics and Astronomy at Harvard University

J Bryan Hehir, Professor at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government

Joe Cirincione, President of Ploughshares Fund, U.S.

Michael Peterson, President and C.O.O. of the Peterson Foundation

Jim Hoagland, journalist

Isabelle Williams, Nuclear Threat Initiative

Tyler Wigg-Stevenson, Chair of the Global Task Force on Nuclear Weapons of the World Evangelical Alliance

From the Asia Pacific Leadership Network

Australia:

Gareth Evans, Chairman of the APLN, former Foreign Minister

Malcolm Fraser, former Prime Minister

Robert Hill, former Defence Minister

China:

Ma Zhengzang, former Ambassador to the United Kingdom, President of China Arms Control and Disarmament Association, President of the China Institute of International Studies

Major General (Rtd.) Pan Zennqiang, Vice-President of China Foundation for International Studies

Cui Liru, former President of the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations

India:

Lalit Mansing, former Foreign Secretary

Shashi Tyagi, former Chief of the Air Force

Padmanagha Chari, former Additional Secretary of Defence

Rakesh Sood, former Special Envoy for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation to the Prime Minister

Ramamurti Rajaraman, Emeritus Professor of Theoretical Physics at Jawaharlal Nehru University

C. Raja Mohan, senior journalist

Pakistan:

General (Rtd.) Jehangir Karamat, former Chief of the Army

Pervez Hoodbhoy, Professor of Nuclear Physics

Japan:

Nobuyasu Abe, former United Nations Under Secretary-General for Disarmament

Yoriko Kawaguchi, former Foreign Minister

Hide Yuzaki, Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture

Aiko Doden, Senior Commentator at NHK Japan Broadcasting Corporation

New Zealand

Sir Geoffrey Palmer, former Prime Minister of New Zealand

James Bolger, former Prime Minister of New Zealand

Republic of Korea:

Minsoon Song, former Foreign Minister

Chun Yungwoo, former National Security Advisor

Chung-in Moon, former Ambassador for International Security Affairs

Indonesia:

Wiryo Sastrohandoyo, former Ambassador to Australia

Malaysia:

Hasmy Agam, former Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations

Vietnam:

To Nu Thi Ninh, former Ambassador to the European Union

Singapore:

Kishore Mahbubani, former Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations

Sri Lanka:

Jayantha Dhanapala, President of Pugwash, former United Nations Under Secretary-General for Disarmament

Mongolia:

Nyamosor Tuya, former Foreign Minister

From the Latin American Leadership Network

Brazil:

Sérgio de Queiroz Duarte, former United Nations Under

Secretary-General for Disarmament

Álvaro Bermúdez, former Director of Energy and Nuclear Technology

Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg, former Minister of Science and Technology

Chile:

Mexico:

Jaime Ravinet de la Fuente, former Minister of Defence

Sergio González Gálvez, former Deputy Secretary of External Relations

Guyana:

Miguel Marín Bosch, former Alternate Permanent Representative to the United Nations

Noel Sinclair, Permanent Observer of the Caribbean Community to the United Nations

Argentina:

Ecuador:

José Horacio Jaunarena, former Minister of Defence

Oswaldo Jarrin, former Minister of Defence

Ricardo López Murphy, former Minister of Defence

The opinions articulated above represent the views of the signatories, and do not necessarily reflect the position of the European Leadership Network or any of its other members. The ELN's aim is to encourage debates that will help develop Europe's capacity to address the pressing foreign, defence, and security challenges of our time.

José Pampuro, former Minister of Defence

Irma Arguello, Chair of NPSGlobal Foundation

Colombia:

Camilo Reyes Rodriguez, former Foreign Minister

Uruguay:

Sergio Abreu, Senator and former Foreign Minister

Asia Pacific Leadership Network (APLN): A network of more than 40 current and former political, military, and diplomatic leaders in the Asia Pacific region—including from nuclear weapons-possessing states of China, India and Pakistan—working to improve public understanding, shape public opinion, and influence political decision-making and diplomatic activity on issues concerning nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament. The APLN is convened by former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans. www.a-pln.org

European Leadership Network (ELN): A network of more than 130 senior European political, military and diplomatic figures working to build a more coordinated European policy community, define strategic objectives and feed analysis and viewpoints into the policy-making process for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament issues. Former UK Defence Secretary and NTI Vice Chairman Des Browne is Chair of the Executive Board of ELN. www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/

Latin American Leadership Network (LALN): A network of 16 senior political, military, and diplomatic leaders across Latin America and the Caribbean working to promote constructive engagement on nuclear issues and to create an enhanced security environment to help reduce global nuclear risks. The LALN is led by Irma Arguello, founder and chair of Argentina-based NPSGlobal. www.npsglobal.org

Nuclear Security Leadership Council (NSLC): A newly formed Council, based in the United States, brings together approximately 20 influential leaders with diverse backgrounds from North America.

Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI): A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization working to reduce threats from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. NTI is governed by a prestigious, international board of directors and is co-chaired by founders Sam Nunn and Ted Turner. NTI's activities are directed by Nunn and President Joan Rohlfing. For more information, visit www.nti.org. For more information about the Nuclear Security Project, visit www.NuclearSecurityProject.org.