

# **Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (CNWC)**

*A project of the Canadian Pugwash Group*

Annual Report to CPG, September 2021

Submitted on behalf of the CNWC Steering Committee for the period September 2020 through August 2021.

## **1. Engagement with the Government of Canada**

Over the past 12 months CNWC sent two formal letters to the Government of Canada:

**January 25, 2021** – to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (see **Appendix 1** for the full text):

The letter congratulates the Hon. Marc Garneau on his appointment as Foreign Minister. It reviews the mission of CNWC, noting the importance of the international community beginning to “codify all the agreements, regulations, institutional arrangements, and verification measures essential for accomplishing the prohibition and irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons.” It then points to urgent measures needed immediately to reduce the risks of nuclear use and calls for rejection of the pursuit of security through threats and counter threats – a security posture that robs the international community of the focus, human ingenuity, and resources needed to advance global stability and the security of the most vulnerable. The letter laments the collapse of the global disarmament/arms control architecture, welcomes the entry-into-force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, proposes policy initiatives for Canada, and encourages the Minister and the Government “to make nuclear arms control and disarmament a national priority.”

The letter is signed by the CNWC Steering Committee members and was copied to the Minister of Defence and the Foreign Affairs critics of each of the Parties in the House of Commons, and, of course, distributed more widely.

**May 26, 2021** – to the Prime Minister (see **Appendix 2** for the full text in both official languages):

This letter reports to the Prime Minister on the concrete proposals for Canadian action that emerged out of the four on-line webinar sessions held during the course of Winter 2020-2021 (see below). The letter addresses four themes:

- The NPT (Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons) and its forthcoming Review Conference;
- The TPNW (Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons) and its January 2021 entry into force;
- NATO and the need to challenge its continuing insistence that nuclear weapons, and the threat to use them, are central to the collective security of its member states; and
- The high level of public support for nuclear disarmament.

Within the context of the NPT, the letter notes Canada's participation in the Stockholm Initiative and urges Canada to work collaboratively to ensure a positive outcome of the Review Conference.

In the context of the TPNW, the letter notes Daryl Kimball's (of the Washington Arms Control Association) assertion that the TPNW is "a powerful reminder that for the majority of the world's states, nuclear weapons — and policies that threaten their use for any reason — are immoral, dangerous, and unsustainable." It also refers to Paul Meyer's (CPG Chair and former Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament) comment that "the purpose of the treaty over the longer term is to stigmatize nuclear weapons as immoral and illegal weapons of mass destruction."

On NATO, the letter reminds the Prime Minister that "the credibility of the Canadian and NATO commitment to a world without nuclear weapons is commensurate with the extent of their willingness to muster diplomatic energy and tangible resources toward that end." It calls on Canada to, at a minimum, act on the still relevant 2018 recommendation of the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence "that the Government of Canada take a leadership role within NATO in beginning the work necessary for achieving the NATO goal of creating the conditions for a world free of nuclear weapons."

Finally, the letter notes that inasmuch as an April 2021 Nanos Poll confirms overwhelming Canadian support for nuclear disarmament, the Government of Canada has a strong political foundation on which to base bold action.

**May 31, 2021** – An abbreviated version of the May 26 letter to the Prime Minister was published in *Hill Times* as a full-page ad (see **Appendix 3**) and was signed by several prominent Canadians. We are especially grateful to *Hill Times* for its support.

## **2. A webinar series on “Nuclear Disarmament in a World Emergency”** (see **Appendix 4** for the full program of the series)

CNWC undertook this series of webinars on nuclear disarmament in the context of two acknowledged world emergencies – the climate crisis and the tragedy of the current pandemic. The series pointed to the additional crises – insufficiently acknowledged but perilous – of global nuclear arsenals global standing ready to deliver global catastrophe. The purpose of the series was to draw attention to the urgency of disarmament in a time of multiple emergencies and to explore constructive policy responses. A central premise was that all three crises demonstrate with undeniable clarity the absolute impotence of nuclear armaments for fostering human safety and security.

## **3. CNWC Award**

Since 2011, CNWC has annually presented a Distinguished Achievement Award for exemplary action in support of nuclear disarmament. An important element of the award is an in-person presentation in front of a live audience and an address by the recipient, something the current pandemic precluded in 2020. We remain hopeful that a

2021 award presentation event will be possible. Look for an announcement once that is confirmed.

#### **4. Future Plans**

- a) We are currently working on plans for a conference (in-person, in Ottawa) on “Canada and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons” (November 29-30, 2021). The event will be a roundtable of 25 persons, including international participants, and will be convened by Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (CNWC) and hosted by The Simons Foundation Canada.
- b) A letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, once confirmed, will focus on ways in which Canada can act effectively on issues raised through the Stockholm Initiative.
- c) We are also engaged in ongoing work to revise the CNWC website, the recruitment of additional endorsers of the CNWC call (there are currently 1034 endorsers, all of whom have been honoured by the Order of Canada), and plan to launch a discussion within the Steering Committee and with Canadian Pugwash leadership on the ongoing work and structure of CNWC.

#### **5. The CNWC Steering Committee**

Adele Buckley  
Beverley Delong  
Cesar Jaramillo  
Ernie Regehr (Chair)  
Douglas Roche  
Jennifer Allen Simons

#### **6. The CNWC mandate**

##### **A Call for Canadian Action on Nuclear Disarmament**

“The United Nations General Assembly’s first resolution (January 24, 1946) called for the elimination of nuclear weapons from national armaments. That remains the formal objective of the international community,\* but that has not prevented a monumental nuclear arms race, the legacy of which is dangerously present in the 13,000 nuclear warheads that remain in national armaments and in the “modernization” plans and programs of states with nuclear weapons. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which entered into force on January 22, 2021, bans nuclear weapons for all states that are party to it, reinforces the global norm against nuclear weapons, and thus marks a significant milestone in the pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons. States have also acknowledged there remains a need for a comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention\*\* through which to codify all the agreements, regulations,

institutional arrangements, and verification measures essential for accomplishing the prohibition and irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons.

“You are thus invited to sign on to the following statement:

***“I join other Canadians in calling on Canada and all member states of the United Nations to intensify nuclear disarmament efforts and to begin preparations for a Nuclear Weapons Convention.”***

[\*In Action 3 of the 64-point action plan of the 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the five Nuclear Weapon State members of the Treaty (China, France, Russia, United States, United Kingdom) joined its 186 non-nuclear weapon state members in the following statement: “In implementing the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, the nuclear-weapon States commit to undertake further efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate all types of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed, including through unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral measures.”

\*\* The Nuclear Threat Initiative on the need for a Nuclear Weapons Convention:

<https://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/proposed-nuclear-weapons-convention-nwc/>

and the NPT Action Plan represents a basic outline of provisions a convention should include:

[https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues\\_development-enjeux\\_developpement/peace\\_security-paix\\_securite/action\\_plan-2010-plan\\_d\\_action.aspx?lang=eng](https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/peace_security-paix_securite/action_plan-2010-plan_d_action.aspx?lang=eng)]

## 7. CNWC Programming

CNWC is engaged on essentially five fronts:

- a) We reach out to Order of Canada recipients to invite them to endorse the call for a NWC, keep those who endorse the call informed of our activities, and invite participation by them, especially in signing on to letters to Government.
- b) We engage with government, through letters, briefings, and meetings, pressing not simply for them to endorse a NWC in principle, but encouraging direct action on a range of elements of the global nuclear disarmament agenda.
- c) CNWC from time-to-time holds nuclear disarmament forums and information sessions for Parliamentarians, convinced that without legislators that are more literate on nuclear issues, Governmental action and progress will be impeded.
- d) We present an annual award designed to celebrate and encourage civic action in support of disarmament.
- e) From time-to-time CNWC co-sponsors conferences and workshops with like-minded groups on agreed disarmament agenda items.

## 8. Thank you

As noted in earlier reports, CNWC is a volunteer-led project and thus relies on a wide range of individuals and organizations. Not all can be listed here, but with special thanks we draw your attention to the following:

- The Canadian Pugwash Group is the sponsoring organization for the CNWC project and, in addition to the important public affirmation that comes with that sponsorship, the CPG also brings critically important financial and administrative support, the latter coming especially via the CPG Treasurer who looks after the financial administration. Special thanks to CPG Chair Paul Meyer and Treasurer Peter Venton.
- The Simons Foundation Canada has provided CNWC a three-year grant to support the administration of the project, and in the Fall of 2020 the Foundation assumed basic secretariat services for CNWC. Special thanks to Dr. Jennifer Simons, the Foundation president, and Elaine Hynes, who carries out the work of the CNWC secretariat.
- As always, we emphasize the critically important affirmation of the more than 1,000 recipients of the Order of Canada who have endorsed the CNWC call. They lend our work heightened credibility and are a manifestation of the broad support within Canada for effective action on disarmament. Many of the CNWC endorsers agree from time-to-time to sign on to our letters to the Government of Canada and other public statements
- We are especially indebted to the distinguished jurilinguist Gérard Snow, a Member of the Order of Canada and CNWC endorser, for his ongoing translation services.
- The CNWC Steering Committee, all busy people with myriad involvements, keeps the project running.

Submitted on Behalf of the CNWC Steering Committee

September 2021

Ernie Regehr, Chair, CNWC Steering Committee

Four appendices follow:

Appendix 1 – January 25, 2021 letter to Foreign Minister

Appendix 2 – May 26, 2021 letter to Prime Minister

Appendix 3 – May 31, 2021 letter to PM in *Hill Times*

Appendix 4 – Schedule of four on-line seminars



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January 25, 2021

The Honourable Marc Garneau, PC, CC, CD, MP  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Global Affairs Canada  
Lester B. Pearson Building  
125 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, ON  
K1A 0G2

Dear Mr. Garneau,

On behalf of Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (CNWC), we congratulate you on your appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs. In this moment of multiple global crises – the pandemic, the climate crisis, and the heightened threat of a nuclear weapons catastrophe – the responsibilities of the Foreign Minister and of Global Affairs Canada are extraordinarily important, and we write to welcome you into this key role and to wish for you strength and wisdom as you carry out your work.

As you know, CNWC is a project of the Canadian Pugwash Group and is endorsed by more than 1,000 influential Canadians, all of whom have been honoured by the Order of Canada. Our basic call, which you have supported, is for the international community to begin formulating the terms of a global nuclear weapons convention, the kind of instrument needed to codify all the agreements, regulations, institutional arrangements, and verification measures essential for accomplishing the prohibition and irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons.

We understand such a convention to be a long-term undertaking in support of the universally affirmed goal of a world without nuclear weapons and that, in the meantime, there are urgent initiatives and measures to be taken to reduce the risks of nuclear use and to reduce nuclear arsenals on the path to zero.

CNWC has regularly written to the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister to make the case that the old ways of trying to build security — through escalating military threats and counter-threats — rob us of the focus, human ingenuity, and resources needed to advance the security of the most vulnerable. The perversion of global priorities in the prevailing militarized understanding of security is best illustrated by the ongoing failure to properly fund the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the failure to mount a globally coordinated response to the present pandemic. It becomes clearer with each day that only an over-riding commitment to human security — building sustainable health systems, ensuring access to clean water and affordable housing, pursuing environmentally responsible food production and credible responses to climate change, and disarmament — will forge a path to durable peace and security.

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[www.nuclearweaponsconvention.ca](http://www.nuclearweaponsconvention.ca)

The nuclear crisis is dangerously escalating. Nuclear weapons states are rushing to modernize their still bulging arsenals, and the disarmament/arms control architecture is in a state of collapse following the abandonment of a succession of key treaties: including the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (in 2001), the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (in 2007), the Iran nuclear deal (abandoned by the US in 2018), the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces agreement (in 2019), and the Treaty on Open Skies (2020). The 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty still lacks key ratifications needed for it to enter into force. For more than two decades the UN's designated forum for negotiating treaties, the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament, has been deadlocked and has made no progress on a promised treaty, actively championed by Canada, to block further production of fissile materials for weapons purposes.

One notable bright spot in this grim picture has been the successful negotiation, adoption, and entry-into-force on January 22 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The TPNW is a breakthrough achievement. Supported by a majority of United Nations members, it bans nuclear weapons possession by States Parties to the Treaty, paralleling the treaties banning biological and chemical weapons. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres calls it an “historic” development that will “form an important component of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime,” and that will reinforce the global norm against nuclear weapons.

We reiterate our call for Canada to join the TPNW while continuing its support of the foundational Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). We, of course, anticipate that the incoming Biden Administration in the United States will help to create a more favourable climate for arms control and disarmament, and we urge Canada to take advantage of this opportune moment to support and publicly call for action on key measures to promote real reductions in stockpiles and to reduce the risks of nuclear use. We thus again urge Canada to:

- Encourage the United States to extend the New START Treaty with Russia and commence negotiations towards a follow-on Treaty of deeper cuts;
- Work with like-minded partners to call on NATO to revise its Strategic Concept to radically reduce and ultimately eliminate its reliance on nuclear weapons, and to remove all US tactical nuclear weapons from the territories of NATO partner states in Europe;
- Call on the United States and Russia to declare they will never be the first to use nuclear weapons;
- Encourage all nuclear weapon states to remove all their nuclear weapons from high alert status; and
- Encourage the US, NATO, Russia, and China to commence ongoing talks on the conditions and requirements for strategic stability and disarmament.

We urge you and the Government to make nuclear arms control and disarmament a national priority. We are confident that Canadian political leaders who publicly and regularly acknowledge the nuclear crisis, and who advance constructive responses, will have the enduring support of Canadians. We are also well aware of, and deeply appreciate, the work of the skilled officials and diplomats in Global Affairs Canada on this file. They need to be publicly supported and encouraged at the highest political levels.

Please be assured of our continued support for constructive disarmament initiatives. We look forward to hearing your responses to the above recommendations, and to learning the details of your planned attention the existential nuclear weapons threat more broadly.

Sincerely,



Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (CNWC):

Ernie Regehr, O.C. (Chair)

Adele Buckley

Bev Delong

Cesar Jaramillo

Douglas Roche, O.C.

Jennifer Simons, C.M.

cc: The Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan, PC, OMM, MSM, CD, MP, Minister of National Defence

The Hon. Michael Chong, PC, MP

Stéphane Bergeron, MP

Jack Harris, MP

Elizabeth May, OC, MP



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May 26, 2021

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Office of the Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON  
K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister,

Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (CNWC) has regularly written to you and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in recent years, warning that strategic instability and regional crises are in danger of escalating out of control, increasing the threat of nuclear attacks. We have urged that Canada move beyond old approaches to one that builds global security, rejects the temptation to seek stability in nuclear threats and counter threats, turns with renewed emphasis to dialogue and diplomatic responses to conflict, and redoubles diplomatic efforts in support of nuclear arms control and disarmament.

We regret that we have not received substantive responses to our communications, yet we persist, mindful of our responsibility as informed citizens to bring the nuclear peril and realistic responses to it to the attention of policymakers.

We appreciate your Government's attention to the climate crisis and the current pandemic, and we encourage you to persist and intensify those efforts and to devote increased resources to address the needs and well-being of the world's most vulnerable. Our focus in CNWC is the need to recognize the reality of the dangerous and escalating threat of nuclear use, and thus we especially urge you to publicly acknowledge this threat and to speak directly to Canadians about your Government's response to it.

The threat of nuclear use – whether deliberately, by accident, or through miscalculation – has been impressed anew upon us in recent weeks by incidents such as the intensifying confrontation in Ukraine, President Putin's threat that those who cross Russia's "red lines" will "regret [their actions] in a way they never have before," President Biden's recent statement that the United States will defend Japan using its "full range of capabilities, including nuclear," and a tweet from the U.S. Strategic Command that contemporary conflicts could lead adversaries to resort to nuclear use as "their least bad option." In the context of full-bore nuclear "modernization" in all states with nuclear weapons, the nuclear danger is real and growing.

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[www.nuclearweaponsconvention.ca](http://www.nuclearweaponsconvention.ca)

In four on-line webinar sessions held during the course of Winter 2020-21 (see Appendix), CNWC, a project of the Canadian Pugwash Group and supported by more than 1,000 distinguished Canadians, all of whom have been honoured by the Order of Canada, engaged an international group of arms control/disarmament experts to address the growing threat of a nuclear catastrophe in the context of disturbing strategic instability, the accelerating climate crisis, and the unnerving and persistent reality of a global pandemic.

We were again reminded that the world's nuclear arsenals, far from being the "supreme guarantee of security," as NATO officially puts it, represent instead a potent and existential threat to the planet while at the same time being utterly impotent in the struggles to face the climate crisis, pandemic perils, and a broad range of threats to the safety and well-being of vulnerable populations the world over.

Through expert analysis and dialogue, this series of events developed a set of concrete proposals for Canadian action, set out in four sections below:

- NPT (the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons) and its forthcoming Review Conference;
- TPNW (Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons) and its January 2021 entry into force;
- NATO and the need to challenge its continuing insistence that nuclear weapons and the threat to use them are central to the collective security of its member states; and
- Public support for Nuclear Disarmament.

We look forward to your substantive response to the following analysis and recommendations.

#### **NPT**

When disarmament experts turn their minds to the forthcoming NPT review conference, they tend to agree on three fundamental points:

- 1) It is critically important for the continuing credibility of the Treaty and for disarmament prospects that the review produce a constructive final document;
- 2) At the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences the NPT states agreed on a set of measures to advance nuclear disarmament - what is now required is the political will to fulfill these commitments; and
- 3) The intransigent refusal of nuclear-weapon states to act to meet their Article VI obligations "to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures" for disarmament will continue unless non-nuclear-weapon states, including those that, like Canada, are allied to one or more of the nuclear powers, mount a collective challenge to the nuclear powers.

We note that the 2021–22 Departmental Plan for Global Affairs Canada includes a reference to "strengthening the foundations of international arms control and disarmament, notably to reinforce the NPT." In this moment, an important way to strengthen the NPT is to challenge nuclear-weapon states to take advantage of the forthcoming review conference to demonstrate a commitment to action on the Treaty's Article VI disarmament obligations by, at a minimum, taking the following steps:

- Collectively renew their commitment to the "unequivocal undertaking [to]...accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals," and "to undertake further efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate all types of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed, including through unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral measures."

- Reiterate the 1985 statement by U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.”
- Agree to take concrete steps, like de-alerting, to reduce the risks of accidental use of nuclear weapons.
- Acknowledge the need for significantly increased transparency regarding their nuclear arsenals and doctrines, and recognize that nuclear-weapon states are accountable to all States Parties to the NPT for the irrevocable implementation of the disarmament requirement in Article VI.

Canada, as a supporter, along with 15 other countries, of the Stockholm Initiative, is well placed to work collaboratively to ensure that the initiative’s 22 “stepping stones” are adequately reflected in the review conference outcome document. We appreciate that Canada has joined with Sweden and Germany in writing to President Biden to urge serious consideration of the proposals.

## TPNW

We again express our disappointment at the Government’s failure to welcome the TPNW as a positive contribution to global efforts to overcome the long-term and dangerous failure of nuclear-weapon states to meet their NPT disarmament obligations. It is broadly recognized that implementation of the NPT’s Article VI requirement for “effective measures” toward eliminating nuclear arsenals requires additional political, administrative, and legal instruments that are external to the NPT. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the proposed treaty on fissile material controls are examples of critically important legal instruments to support implementation of Article VI. The TPNW is another such instrument.

As a new legal instrument, the TPNW adds nuclear weapons to the list of weapons of mass destruction, along with chemical and biological weapons, subject to legally binding prohibitions. It reflects the urgency with which the majority in the international community view the need for nuclear disarmament action, and it constitutes a formal declaration by a significant portion of the planet (by population and territory) that nuclear weapons are unacceptable on the grounds that their extraordinary humanitarian and environmental consequences put them in violation of International Humanitarian Law and “the principles of humanity and the dictates of public conscience.” The TPNW sets out the legal prohibitions that are mandated by that conclusion and challenges all states with nuclear weapons to bring their national security policies into line with fundamental humanitarian and human rights principles.

Daryl G. Kimball, executive director of Washington’s Arms Control Association, refers to the TPNW as “a powerful reminder that for the majority of the world’s states, nuclear weapons — and policies that threaten their use for any reason — are immoral, dangerous, and unsustainable.” And as former Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament Paul Meyer has noted, “the purpose of the treaty over the longer term is to stigmatize nuclear weapons as immoral and illegal weapons of mass destruction.”

The irreversible presence of the TPNW on the arms control/disarmament landscape makes it impossible to credibly ignore the growing legal/moral consensus that any actual use of such weapons would be a crime against humanity and a violation of International Humanitarian Law. The challenge for Canada (and for other “nuclear umbrella” states) is thus to recognize that fundamental changes to their security policies are required to bring them into conformity with the principles of humanity. We encourage Canada to participate as an observer in the forthcoming first meeting of the States Parties to the TPNW.

## NATO

The requirement to bring security policies into strict conformity with International Humanitarian Law has serious implications for NATO. The alliance's current Strategic Concept insists that nuclear forces are "the supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies," but it also commits NATO "to the goal of creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons." Canada has sought, as it explained last year in a statement to the UN First Committee, to reconcile its support for nuclear weapons as essential to its security with its support for "policies and practices to eliminate nuclear weapons." Indeed, nuclear-weapon states have long asserted the same dual commitments – to nuclear weapons and to a world without nuclear weapons – but the credibility of their disarmament commitments is belied by the fervour with which they pursue nuclear modernization and the stolid determination with which they ignore disarmament.

The credibility of the Canadian and NATO commitment to a world without nuclear weapons is commensurate with the extent of their willingness to muster diplomatic energy and tangible resources toward that end. As a NATO partner, Canada has both the obligation and the opportunity to press for alternatives to security policies based on threats of nuclear devastation. At a minimum, the Government should thus act on the still relevant 2018 recommendation of the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence "that the Government of Canada take a leadership role within NATO in beginning the work necessary for achieving the NATO goal of creating the conditions for a world free of nuclear weapons." We urge your Government to work with like-minded partners in NATO to revise the Alliance's Strategic Concept and defence posture to end reliance on nuclear weapons.

One concrete measure of NATO's commitment to ending its reliance on a nuclearized security posture would be for the European non-nuclear-weapon state members of NATO that now host U.S. nuclear weapons on their territories to end such arrangements and for all U.S. nuclear weapons to be returned to home territory.

Canadian diplomatic engagement should also promote dialogue toward a new kind of relationship between NATO and Russia. The point is not to ignore the latter's violations of international law or serious human rights abuses, but to recognize that nuclear weapons have no role to play in addressing those violations. Indeed, Canada should encourage NATO and the United States to undertake ongoing talks with both Russia and China on the conditions and requirements for strategic stability and nuclear disarmament. The Stockholm Initiative "stepping stones" endorsed by Canada call for just such intensified dialogue on strategic stability and to "foster mutual understanding and trust and setting the frame for future arms control and disarmament."

## Public support for Nuclear Disarmament

Vigorous Canadian engagement on nuclear disarmament would win overwhelming public support. An April 2021 Nanos Poll found 80 percent of Canadians agree that the world should work to eliminate nuclear weapons, and that 74 percent agree that Canada should join the TPNW, with that support level remaining at 73 percent, even in the face of strong pressure from the United States not to do so. That unambiguous support can embolden your Government to recast nuclear disarmament efforts as a national priority.

We are aware that Canada is not in a position, on its own, to bring major influence to bear on the global nuclear crisis. That is true for Canada in any global endeavour, but Canada does have a seat at key tables, including NORAD and NATO, at which nuclear deterrence issues are addressed. Canada has the company of like-minded states at the NATO table and thus the opportunity to seriously explore new directions. We can assure you from our engagement with international arms control and disarmament experts, and our engagement with the Canadian public, that a more assertive, principled, and humanitarian approach to the nuclear crisis would be widely welcomed.

As always, we acknowledge the work of the skilled diplomats and officials in Global Affairs Canada who carry out Canada's disarmament diplomacy. It is our sense that the Department's work on disarmament would benefit from explicit and public endorsement by the Prime Minister, and from an ambitious set of instructions and policy directives. In that regard, we are disappointed that the 2019 and 2021 mandate letters to the Minister of Foreign Affairs make no reference to nuclear weapons or to arms control and disarmament. In a context of mounting nuclear dangers, that omission is unacceptable.

In looking forward to your substantive response to the ideas and proposals set out above, we convey to you our good wishes and hopes for the Canadian government's creative and responsible response to the truly extraordinary set of global challenges we now face.

Sincerely,



Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (CNWC):

Ernie Regehr, O.C. (Chair)  
Dr. Adele Buckley  
Bev Tollefson Delong  
Cesar Jaramillo  
The Hon. Douglas Roche, O.C.  
Dr. Jennifer Allen Simons, C.M.

cc: The Hon. Marc Garneau, P.C., C.C., C.D., M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs  
The Hon. Harjit S. Sajjan, P.C., O.M.M., M.S.M., C.D., M.P., Minister of National Defence  
The Hon. Erin O'Toole, P.C., C.D., M.P., Leader of the Opposition  
Jagmeet Singh, M.P., Leader of the New Democratic Party  
Yves-François Blanchet, M.P., Leader of the Bloc Québécois  
Annamie Paul, Leader of the Green Party of Canada



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Le 26 mai 2021

Le très honorable Justin Trudeau  
Premier ministre du Canada  
80, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A2

Monsieur le premier ministre,

Au cours des dernières années, le Rassemblement canadien pour une convention sur les armes nucléaires (RCCAN) vous a écrit régulièrement ainsi qu'au ministre des Affaires étrangères pour prévenir que l'instabilité stratégique et les crises régionales risquaient fort de monter en flèche, augmentant la menace d'attaques nucléaires. Nous avons recommandé vivement que le Canada révise sa politique et adopte une nouvelle approche axée sur la sécurité mondiale, qu'il rejette la tentation de rechercher la stabilité au moyen de menaces et de contremenaces nucléaires, qu'il se tourne plus résolument vers le dialogue et les démarches diplomatiques et enfin qu'il intensifie les efforts diplomatiques en faveur du contrôle des armes et du désarmement nucléaires.

Attristés de n'avoir reçu aucune réponse sérieuse à nos communications, nous persistons néanmoins, attentifs à notre responsabilité, en tant que citoyens informés, de sensibiliser les décideurs politiques aux graves dangers des armes nucléaires et de leur proposer des pistes réalistes.

Nous apprécions toute l'attention que votre gouvernement porte à la crise climatique et à la pandémie actuelle et vous encourageons à persister dans cette voie, à intensifier les efforts et à consacrer encore plus de ressources au soulagement des personnes les plus vulnérables dans le monde. Notre mission au RCCAN étant d'exposer la réalité de la menace dangereuse et montante des armements nucléaires, nous vous exhortons à reconnaître publiquement cette menace et de vous adresser directement aux Canadiennes et aux Canadiens afin de clarifier votre position sur cette question.

Le risque d'un recours – délibéré, accidentel ou par erreur de calcul – au nucléaire est revenu nous hanter au cours des dernières semaines à la suite d'événements comme la confrontation montante en Ukraine, la menace du président Poutine à l'endroit de ceux qui, franchissant les « lignes rouges » fixées par la Russie, regrettent plus que jamais leurs actions, la déclaration récente du président Biden selon laquelle les États-Unis défendront le Japon par tous les moyens dont ils disposent, y compris le nucléaire, et un gazouillis du commandement stratégique américain disant que les conflits actuels pourraient amener les adversaires à recourir au nucléaire comme « option la moins pire ». Dans le contexte d'une « modernisation » nucléaire à plein régime dans tous les États nucléarisés, le danger nucléaire est bien réel et grandissant.

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[www.nuclearweaponsconvention.ca](http://www.nuclearweaponsconvention.ca)

Dans le cadre d'un webinaire en quatre temps tenu au cours de l'hiver 2020-2021 (voir l'appendice), le RCCAN, mouvement parrainé par Pugwash Canada et appuyé par plus d'un millier d'éminents Canadiens et Canadiennes qui sont tous lauréats de l'Ordre du Canada, a invité un groupe international d'experts en matière de contrôle des armes et de désarmement à discuter de la menace croissante d'une catastrophe nucléaire dans le contexte de l'inquiétante instabilité stratégique, de la crise climatique pressante et de la réalité troublante et persistante d'une pandémie mondiale.

Une fois de plus, ils nous ont rappelé que les arsenaux nucléaires de la planète, loin d'être la « garantie suprême de sécurité » que prétend l'OTAN, représentent au contraire une menace puissante et existentielle à la planète tout en étant complètement impuissants dans les luttes contre la crise climatique, les périls de la pandémie et une vaste gamme de menaces à la sécurité et au bien-être de populations vulnérables de partout au monde.

Ce dialogue entre experts et les analyses qu'ils ont pu faire ont permis que se dégage de ce webinaire une série de propositions concrètes pour une action canadienne, que nous regrouperons sous les quatre chefs suivants :

- le TNP (Traité sur la non-prolifération des armes nucléaires) et sa prochaine Conférence d'examen
- le TIAN (Traité sur l'interdiction des armes nucléaires) et son entrée en vigueur en janvier 2021
- l'OTAN et l'importance de remettre en question son insistance persistante sur la possession d'armes nucléaires et sur la menace d'y recourir pour assurer la sécurité collective de ses États membres
- l'appui du public envers le désarmement nucléaire.

Nous espérons recevoir des réponses sérieuses aux analyses et recommandations qui suivent.

#### **Le TNP**

Lorsque les experts en désarmement se penchent sur la tenue de la prochaine Conférence d'examen du TNP, ils ont tendance à s'entendre sur trois points fondamentaux :

- 1) Il est de première importance pour la crédibilité continue du Traité et des avenues de désarmement que l'examen aboutisse à un document définitif constructif.
- 2) Aux conférences d'examen de 2000 et de 2010, les États parties au TNP ont convenu d'un ensemble de mesures propres à l'avancement du désarmement nucléaire. Ce qu'il faut maintenant, c'est la volonté politique de remplir ces engagements.
- 3) Le refus intransigeant des États nucléarisés de remplir les engagements qu'ils ont pris, au titre de l'article VI, de « poursuivre de bonne foi des négociations sur des mesures efficaces » en vue du désarmement ne va pas cesser à moins que les États non dotés d'armes nucléaires, y compris ceux qui, comme le Canada, sont alliés à une ou plusieurs puissances nucléarisées, se rallient pour tenir tête à celles-ci.

Nous avons noté que le Plan ministériel 2021-2022 des Affaires mondiales Canada parlait de « renforcer les fondements du désarmement et du contrôle des armes à l'échelle internationale, notamment de renforcer le Traité sur la non-prolifération des armes nucléaires. » À l'heure actuelle, une bonne façon de renforcer le TNP serait d'engager les États nucléarisés à profiter de la prochaine Conférence d'examen pour confirmer leur engagement à donner suite à leurs obligations de désarmement au titre de l'article VI du Traité en prenant les mesures suivantes :

- renouveler collectivement l'engagement qu'ils ont pris sans équivoque « de procéder à l'élimination totale de leurs arsenaux nucléaires » et « de redoubler d'efforts pour réduire et, à terme, éliminer tous les types d'armes nucléaires, déployés ou non, notamment par des mesures unilatérales, bilatérales, régionales et multilatérales »;

- réitérer la déclaration de 1985 du président américain Ronald Reagan et du chef de l’Union soviétique Mikhaïl Gorbatchev selon laquelle « une guerre nucléaire ne peut être gagnée et ne doit jamais être livrée »;
- convenir de prendre des mesures concrètes, comme la levée d’états d’alerte, afin de réduire les risques de recours accidentels aux armes nucléaires;
- reconnaître l’importance d’une transparence considérablement accrue à l’égard de leurs arsenaux nucléaires et de leurs doctrines, et admettre que les États nucléarisés ont des comptes à rendre à tous les États parties au TNP quant à la mise en œuvre irrévocable de l’obligation de désarmement au titre de l’article VI.

Le Canada, qui compte parmi les 16 pays qui ont appuyé l’Initiative de Stockholm, est bien placé pour veiller collectivement à que les 22 « jalons » de l’Initiative se retrouvent dans le document de synthèse de la Conférence d’examen. Nous sommes heureux de constater que le Canada s’est joint à la Suède et à l’Allemagne pour presser le président Biden à prendre acte des propositions.

#### **Le TIAN**

Nous déplorons encore une fois le fait que le gouvernement n’ait pas choisi de saluer le Traité sur l’interdiction des armes nucléaires comme contribution positive aux efforts de la communauté internationale pour pallier l’omission persistante et dangereuse des États nucléarisés de respecter leurs obligations de désarmement au titre du TNP. Tous reconnaissent que la mise en œuvre de l’obligation consacrée à l’article VI du TNP de prendre des « mesures efficaces » en vue de l’élimination des arsenaux nucléaires exige l’adoption d’instruments politiques, administratifs et juridiques supplémentaires en complément au TNP. Le Traité d’interdiction complète des essais nucléaires et le projet de traité sur l’arrêt de la production de matière fissile sont des exemples d’instruments juridiques d’importance capitale en vue de la mise en œuvre de l’article VI. Le TIAN est un autre instrument du même ordre.

Comme nouvel instrument juridique, le TIAN ajoute les armes nucléaires à la liste des armes de destruction massive, telles les armes chimiques et biologiques, qui sont assujetties à des interdictions exécutoires. Il est le reflet de l’urgence que la majorité des pays de la communauté internationale attaché à l’importance d’un désarmement nucléaire, et il renferme une déclaration officielle d’une fraction importante de la planète (tant du point de vue de la population que du territoire) affirmant que les armes nucléaires sont inacceptables du fait que, de par leurs extraordinaires répercussions humanitaires et environnementales, elles contreviennent au droit international humanitaire et aux « principes de l’humanité et des exigences de la conscience publique ».

Selon le directeur général de la Arms Control Association de Washington, Daryl G. Kimball, le TIAN nous rappelle avec force qu’aux yeux de la majorité des pays du monde les armes nucléaires – de même que les énoncés politiques qui menacent d’y recourir pour quelque raison que ce soit – sont immorales, dangereuses et intenables. Et comme le faisait remarquer l’ancien ambassadeur du Canada pour le désarmement, Paul Meyer, le but à plus long terme du traité est de stigmatiser les armes nucléaires comme immorales et assimilables à des armes illégales de destruction massive.

La présence irréversible du TIAN dans le paysage du contrôle des armes et du désarmement rend impossible d’ignorer crédiblement le consensus croissant – tant juridique que moral – autour de l’idée que tout recours réel à ce genre d’armes constituerait un crime contre l’humanité et une violation du droit international humanitaire. Le défi pour le Canada et pour les autres États bénéficiaires d’un « parapluie nucléaire » est donc de reconnaître que des changements fondamentaux à leurs politiques de sécurité s’imposent pour que celles-ci respectent les principes humanitaires. Nous exhortons le Canada à participer comme observateur à la prochaine première assemblée des États parties au TIAN.

## L'OTAN

L'obligation d'adapter les politiques de sécurité pour qu'elles soient conformes au droit international humanitaire a des implications sérieuses pour l'OTAN. Tout en soutenant que les armes nucléaires sont « la garantie suprême de sécurité des Alliés », l'OTAN, selon son concept stratégique actuel, poursuit « l'objectif qui consiste à créer les conditions pour un monde sans armes nucléaires ». Le Canada a tenté, comme il l'a expliqué l'an dernier dans une déclaration au Premier Comité de l'ONU, de concilier son appui aux armes nucléaires comme essentielles à sa sécurité avec son appui « en faveur de politiques et de pratiques visant à éliminer les armes nucléaires. » En effet, les États nucléarisés ont depuis longtemps affiché le même dédoublement d'engagement – tout à la fois pour les armes nucléaires et pour un monde délivré des armes nucléaires –, mais la crédibilité de leur engagement est démentie par la ferveur avec laquelle ils préconisent la modernisation nucléaire et leur détermination impassible à ignorer le désarmement.

On jugera la crédibilité de la détermination du Canada et de l'OTAN de débarrasser le monde des armes nucléaires à l'aune de leur volonté de mobiliser des énergies diplomatiques et des ressources matérielles à cette fin. De par son association à l'OTAN, le Canada a à la fois l'obligation et l'occasion de faire pression pour l'établissement de nouvelles politiques de sécurité axées sur la menace que représente la dévastation nucléaire. À tout le moins, le gouvernement canadien devrait donner suite à la recommandation de 2018, toujours pertinente, du Comité permanent de la Chambre des communes sur la Défense nationale voulant que « le gouvernement du Canada joue un rôle de chef de file au sein de l'OTAN en entreprenant le travail requis pour atteindre l'objectif de l'OTAN qui consiste à créer les conditions nécessaires à l'existence d'un monde sans armes nucléaires. » Nous pressons votre gouvernement de collaborer avec des membres homodoxes de l'OTAN à une révision du Concept stratégique et de la posture de défense de l'Alliance qui mettrait fin à la dépendance à l'égard des armes nucléaires.

Une mesure concrète de l'engagement de l'OTAN à mettre fin à sa posture de sécurité axée sur le nucléaire serait que les États membres de l'OTAN du continent européen qui ne sont pas nucléarisés et qui actuellement accueillent des armes nucléaires américaines dans leur territoire mettent fin à ces arrangements et retournent toutes ces armes d'où elles viennent.

La mission diplomatique canadienne devrait également promouvoir le dialogue pour de nouvelles relations entre l'OTAN et la Russie. Il ne s'agit pas d'ignorer les violations par la Russie du droit international ni ses atteintes graves aux droits de la personne, mais de reconnaître que les armes nucléaires n'ont pas de place dans la répression de ces violations. En effet, le Canada devrait encourager l'OTAN et les États-Unis à entreprendre des pourparlers continus avec la Russie et la Chine relativement aux conditions et aux exigences d'une stabilité stratégique et d'un désarmement nucléaire. Les « jalons » de l'Initiative de Stockholm qu'a appuyés le Canada appellent justement à ce genre de dialogue renforcé sur le maintien de la stabilité stratégique et invitent « à promouvoir la compréhension et la confiance mutuelles et à définir le cadre des futurs accords de maîtrise des armements et de désarmement ».

## L'appui du public envers le désarmement nucléaire

Un engagement ferme du Canada envers le désarmement nucléaire recueillerait un appui enthousiaste du public. Un sondage Nanos d'avril 2021 a indiqué que 80 pour cent des Canadiennes et des Canadiens approuvaient l'idée que le monde entier devrait s'efforcer d'éliminer les armes nucléaires et que 74 pour cent d'entre eux étaient d'avis que le Canada devait adhérer au TIAN, dont 73 pour cent en dépit des fortes pressions contraires du gouvernement américain. Ce franc appui devrait inciter votre gouvernement à donner à l'effort de désarmement nucléaire l'importance d'une priorité nationale.

Nous savons bien que le Canada n'est pas en position, seul, d'exercer une influence majeure dans la crise nucléaire mondiale. Cela est vrai pour n'importe quel dossier d'envergure mondiale, mais il reste que le Canada siège à des forums clés, y compris le NORAD et l'OTAN, où les questions de dissuasion nucléaire sont débattues. Le Canada jouit de la compagnie de pays homodoxes à la table de l'OTAN, ce qui lui donne l'occasion d'explorer à fond de nouvelles avenues. Nous pouvons vous assurer, sur la foi de nos relations avec les experts internationaux en matière de contrôle des armements et de désarmement et avec le public canadien, qu'une politique plus affirmative, rationnelle et humanitaire à l'égard de la crise nucléaire serait très bien accueillie.

Comme toujours, nous saluons le travail des habiles diplomates et officiels d'Affaires mondiales Canada chargés d'appliquer la diplomatie canadienne en matière de désarmement. Nous sommes persuadés que leur mission gagnerait en efficacité si elle bénéficiait d'un soutien clair et notoire de la part du premier ministre et d'un dispositif ambitieux d'instructions et de directives politiques. À ce propos, nous sommes déçus qu'aucune mention ne soit faite des armes nucléaires, du contrôle des armes ou du désarmement dans les lettres de mandat de 2019 et de 2021 au ministre des Affaires étrangères. Dans un contexte de dangers nucléaires croissants, pareille omission est inacceptable.

Dans l'attente de réponses sérieuses aux idées et aux propositions mises de l'avant plus haut, nous continuons d'espérer que le gouvernement canadien affrontera d'une façon créative et responsable les immenses défis mondiaux qui se présentent à nous.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le premier ministre, l'expression de notre considération distinguée.

Pour le Rassemblement canadien pour une convention sur les armes nucléaires (RCCAN),

Ernie Regehr, O.C. (président)

Adele Buckley

Bev Tollefson Delong

Cesar Jaramillo

l'hon. Douglas Roche, O.C.

Jennifer Allen Simons, C.M.

cc: l'hon. Marc Garneau, C.P., C.C., C.D., député, ministre des Affaires étrangères

l'hon. Harjit S. Sajjan, C.P., O.M.M., M.S.M., C.D., député ministre de la Défense nationale

l'hon. Erin O'Toole, C.P., C.D., député, chef de l'opposition

Jagmeet Singh, député, chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique

Yves-François Blanchet, député, chef du Bloc Québécois

Annamie Paul, chef du Parti vert du Canada



# CANADIANS BACK NUCLEAR WEAPONS BAN

**Open Letter to the Prime Minister**

**May 31, 2021**

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

An April 2021 Nanos Poll found 80 percent of Canadians agree that the world should work to eliminate nuclear weapons, and 74 percent agree that Canada should join the new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; 73 percent agree, even in the face of strong pressure from the US not to do so. As world crises worsen, the global goal of eliminating nuclear weapons is urgent and should be a national priority. Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention\* urges Canada to welcome the Prohibition Treaty and attend as an observer the forthcoming first meeting of the 54 States Parties to the Treaty.

**We call on Canada to take these additional actions:**

- Affirm, and urge nuclear powers to reiterate, the 1985 statement by U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.”
- Press nuclear powers to take concrete steps, like de-alerting and no-first-use commitments, to reduce the risks of accidental use of nuclear weapons.
- Work with like-minded partners in NATO to revise the Alliance’s Strategic Concept and defence posture to end reliance on nuclear weapons.
- Urge NATO and the U.S. to start talks with both Russia and China on the conditions and requirements for strategic stability and nuclear disarmament.

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Carolyn Acker, C.M., Tom Axworthy, O.C., Gerry Barr, C.M., Howard Dyck, C.M., Bruce Kidd, O.C., Bonnie Sherr Klein, O.C., Elizabeth May, M.P., O.C., Margaret MacMillan, C.C., John Polanyi, C.C., Gérard Snow, C.M., Setsuko Thurlow, C.M.

The Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention Steering Committee: Ernie Regehr, O.C. (Chair), Adele Buckley, Bev Tollefson Delong, Cesar Jaramillo, Hon. Douglas Roche, O.C., Jennifer Allen Simons, C.M.

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\* *Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, a project of the Canadian Pugwash Group, is endorsed by more than 1,000 distinguished Canadians, all of whom have been honoured by the Order of Canada.*



*An on-line series of four Thursday seminars:  
November 19 and 26, 2020 and January 21 and 28, 2021  
1:00 – 3:00pm (Eastern)*

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## **Nuclear Disarmament in a World Emergency: Canada's Responsibilities**

**Internationally recognized experts, analysts, and diplomats will examine risks and remedies in the global nuclear crisis, explored in the context of two additional emergencies – the climate crisis and the global pandemic.**

*Sponsored by Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (CNWC)*

### **1. “The Meaning of the U.S. Presidential Election for Nuclear Disarmament”**

Joe Cirincione, analyst, author, and advisor to Democratic Administrations in the United States.

Kelsey Davenport, Director for Non-Proliferation Policy, Arms Control Association, Washington.

Thursday, November 19, 2020, 1:00 – 3:00pm (Eastern)

### **2. “New Challenges Facing the NPT”**

Tariq Rauf, former Head of the Verification and Security Policy Cooperation unit at the IAEA.

Sara Lindgren, Minister-Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Sweden in Geneva.

Thursday, November 26, 2020, 1:00 – 3:00pm (Eastern)

### **3. “The TPNW and NATO”**

Alicia Sanders-Zakre, Policy and Research Coordinator, ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons).

Tom Sauer, Associate Professor in International Politics at the Universiteit Antwerpen in Belgium.

Thursday, January 21, 2021, 1:00 – 3:00pm (Eastern)

### **4. “Renewing Canadian Nuclear Disarmament Efforts”**

Cesar Jaramillo, Executive Director, Project Ploughshares, Canada.

Peggy Mason, President, the Rideau Institute, Ottawa.

Thursday, January 28, 2021, 1:00 – 3:00pm (Eastern)

A present and growing danger, the nuclear crisis is not currently receiving the same public attention as are the climate crisis and the tragedy of the current pandemic. But the nuclear danger is real. Earlier this year CNWC invited the UN's top disarmament official to Ottawa, where High Representative for Disarmament Izumi Nakamitsu warned Canadian Parliamentarians and civil society representatives that the risk of nuclear weapons use – deliberately or by accident or miscalculation – “is higher than it has been in decades.”

This series on “Nuclear Disarmament in a World Emergency” will draw attention to the urgency of disarmament in this time of multiple emergencies and explore constructive policy responses. All three crises demonstrate with undeniable clarity the absolute impotence of nuclear armaments in fostering human safety and security.

At the conclusion of the series, CNWC will issue a report, addressed to the Government of Canada, proposing policies and initiatives relevant for the forthcoming NPT Review Conference and for reinvigorated Canadian engagement and action in support of nuclear disarmament.

***Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention is a civil-society project of the Canadian Pugwash Group and is supported by more than 1,000 influential Canadians, all of whom have been honored by the Order of Canada.***