

The International Physicians' Call

**IPPNW 3rd WORLD CONGRESS, AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS
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The International Physician' Call for an End to the Nuclear Arms Race was developed during the Third Congress of IPPNW. Thousands of medical professionals have already added their names and support to the petition. After the Fourth Congress of IPPNW, the completed petition will be presented by an international delegation of physicians to the leaders of the five nations known to possess nuclear weapons.

As physicians, we wish to express our professional concern over the unprecedented threat to life and health posed by nuclear weapons, a threat that hangs over hundreds of millions of people. The increasing accumulation of destructive power and the development of ever more sophisticated weapons greatly increase the risk of nuclear war.

If even a single nuclear weapon is exploded over one of our major cities, hundreds of thousands will be killed. If many nuclear weapons are exploded, radioactive fallout and disturbance of the biosphere will cause suffering and death – particularly from starvation, radiation illness, infectious disease and cancer – without regard to national boundaries.

The remaining medical facilities and personnel will be inadequate to help the wounded. An all-out nuclear war would end our present civilization.

The cost of the arms race is not only the vast sums being diverted to armaments in a world where tens of thousands of human beings die each day of treatable diseases. The cost is also on the great psychological damage that is being done, particularly to young people and children who fear they will have no futures.

We recognize that to reach agreements to end the nuclear arms race and avert the introduction of nuclear weapons into any conflict represents a major political task. We regard such agreements as crucial and urgent since the threat of nuclear war is the greatest challenge to health and survival that humanity has ever faced. As physicians, we believe a nuclear war would be the final epidemic.