

BUDAPEST DECLARATION

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Ratified by a unanimous vote of the International Council of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War 1 July 1985

The nuclear arms race threatens the health and the very existence of every human being on our planet. Because medicine can offer no meaningful response to the horrors of nuclear war. Physicians worldwide have acknowledged their professional responsibility to work for the prevention of this final epidemic.

When faced with a life-threatening disease a physician's responsibility does not end with diagnosis. It demands a prescription for interrupting the disease process itself. The International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War have thus adopted a medical prescription for interrupting the greatest threat to human health.

An immediate moratorium on all nuclear explosions is the first essential step in stopping the nuclear arms race. This moratorium should remain in effect until the successful negotiation and signing of a universal comprehensive test ban treaty.

The benefits of this physicians' prescription for the prevention of nuclear war are evident: A nuclear test ban is a clear focal point for rallying world public opinion behind a single, important and readily achievable arms control proposal, thus sidestepping the paralyzing complexity of most other proposals.

A nuclear test ban does not depend on trust. It is sufficiently verifiable even without on-site inspections. Modern seismic techniques can distinguish earthquakes from underground explosions as small as one kiloton.

A nuclear test ban will impede the development of new generations of nuclear warheads, including those designed to power space-based systems, those capable of acting as first-strike weapons, and those that are so small and mobile that future arms control verification might be impossible.

A nuclear test ban would not decrease the security of any country.

A nuclear test ban would strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty. That treaty states: "Recalling the determination . . . to seek to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions for all time and to continue to this end . . . Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date."

A proposed nuclear test ban provides a litmus test for distinguishing those politicians who are committed to ending the arms race from those who tolerate its continuation.

Finally, the achievement of a nuclear test ban will create both psychological momentum and a political climate in which additional disarmament achievements will be possible.

For these reasons the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War have adopted a moratorium on all nuclear explosions as their medical prescription for the coming year.