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A MORAL IMPERATIVE FOR THE NUCLEAR AGE

More than 2,000 physicians from 70 nations are gathered in Montreal for the 8th World Congress of IPPNVV under the motto: "Healing Our Planet A Global Prescription." Nearly 200,000 physicians worldwide are a part of our movement.

The nuclear arms race is a moral and spiritual tragedy. For over forty years, politicians and military leaders have attempted, under various rationales, to justify it. But the jargon of the nuclear age — deterrence, counter-force, flexible response and the like — is part of a charade which attempts to explain the inexplicable, defend the indefensible, and justify the insane. Nuclear weapons are instruments of genocide as morally repugnant as gas chambers: their mere existence, let alone the threat to use them is morally unacceptable under any circumstances.

We physicians seek to expose the fraud which governments have willfully perpetrated upon a hopeful but frightened citizenry. To contend that nuclear weapons are guarantors of national security is a deception. What security does any nation have, does any individual have, in a world programmed for instant annihilation? By what right do politicians and generals decide whether life on Earth will continue or expire? Why should a few hold the fate of all life on Earth in their grasp?

Many have taken heart from the INF Treaty signed and ratified by the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. While the INF Treaty is a positive step on the long road towards the abolition of nuclear weapons, it is not the end of our journey. Few outside government and the military realize that despite the INF accord, an unrestrained qualitative arms race continues unabated.

The recently completed Moscow summit has helped increase trust by reducing adversarial attitudes based on stereotypes and enemy images. We strongly believe that this progress should be promptly carried further towards an end to all nuclear weapons testing.

Since the Soviet Union's unilateral nuclear test moratorium ended in February of 1987, there have been at least 45 underground nuclear explosions by the Soviet Union, the United States and France. Each of these nuclear explosions is another relentless escalation of the arms race and a waste of between \$25 and \$75 million. Without a moratorium on all nuclear explosions, the success of the arms control process started by the INF Treaty cannot be guaranteed. We therefore urge the leaders of all nuclear

weapons countries and the next president of the United States to join General Secretary Gorbachev in declaring a mutual moratorium on all nuclear explosions. Such a moratorium

must lead to a comprehensive test ban treaty banning all nuclear explosions for all time. What better way to fulfill the promise, still unkept, of the Limited Test Ban Treaty, signed 25 years ago this August?

We therefore call upon all physicians, and people everywhere, to join IPPNW in its global campaign, Cease-Fire '88, to stop all nuclear explosions. Our future depends on action, not resignation. **We urge immediate protest against every nuclear explosion, wherever it occurs. Such protest affirms our commitment to life and to healing and our right to maintain control over our own destiny.**

The resolution of the nuclear dilemma lies with every one of us — we must all accept responsibility. People must wrest their destiny from the cult-keepers of the Bomb. For over forty years the so-called experts have held sway, yet we still live on the edge of the nuclear abyss. Now is the time for people everywhere to have their say. We urge a return to simple common sense. All of us are hostages to the nuclear threat. With unequivocal passion we must voice our moral outrage at the nuclear arms race . and decry-the madness that passes for sanity in the nuclear age.

Nuclear weapons are symptoms of a diseased planet. Instruments of genocide are sheltered with care while millions, including children, die for want of basic medical care, suffer from chronic hunger and sleep on the streets. Promoting the health of people everywhere is fundamental to the attainment of world security and lasting peace. Ten years ago at Alma Ata, the World Health Organization and UNICEF enunciated the goal of health for all by the year 2000. As long as the nuclear arms race continues — as long as our thinking about political problems remains militarized — we will continue to degrade life on Earth. The goal of health for all by the year 2000 can be attained only if nuclear weapons are abolished.

As physicians we seek to treat both the symptom and the disease. Our goal is -a world without nuclear weapons and a new manner of thinking about the way we live together on this planet --- our common home.. The healing process must now begin.

—Unanimously approved by the 61 members of the IPPNIN International Council, representing the 61 nations with IPPNW affiliates.