

UACHTARÁN NA hEIREANN  
PRESIDENT OF IRELAND

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. HIGGINS

It is an honour to, once again, have the opportunity to express my support for the World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs.

As we mark this solemn 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the lessons of the catastrophic impact of nuclear weapons should remain in our minds as important as ever, with perhaps an ever increasing sense of urgency.

The disarmament and non-proliferation regime, which has underpinned international security for decades, is under ever graver threat. We live in a time of heightened, and extreme, nuclear risk.

We have witnessed attacks against nuclear facilities, attacks which were in the clearest breach of international law, and have heard nuclear threats.

The risk of regional and global nuclear proliferation is growing and there continues to be a lack of real and substantive progress on disarmament as global armaments expenditure soars to record levels — \$2.718 trillion in 2024, is the figure that the Stockholm Institute Peace Research Institute reports.

This Conference, and the enduring testimonies of the hibakusha, are crucially important events in reinforcing the global call against these devastating weapons of destruction. The prevention of any further horrific suffering as a result of nuclear weapons use, or testing, must

remain, and become our shared core motivation.

The important work of recent Nobel Peace Prize winners Nihon Hidankyo is a pertinent, and timely, reminder of this. I recall the words of the Norwegian Nobel Committee in its citation to them:

"These historical witnesses have helped to generate and consolidate widespread opposition to nuclear weapons around the world by drawing on personal stories... [t]he hibakusha help us to describe the indescribable, to think the unthinkable, and to somehow grasp the incomprehensible pain and suffering caused by nuclear weapons.

Ireland's position is unchanging: the only guarantee of safety from nuclear weapons is their complete elimination from our world. Ireland will continue to play our part in promoting concrete steps towards that goal, and upholding the disarmament framework, including at next year's Review Conferences of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and Treaty on the Prohibition on Nuclear Weapons.

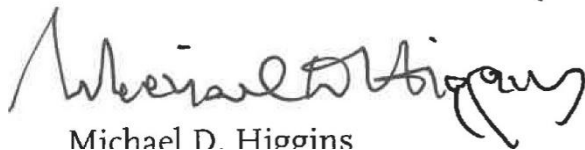
Ireland was proud to champion a resolution at the 2024 United Nations General Assembly establishing a scientific panel to study the effects of nuclear war. It is our hope that this work, and the objective evidence it provides, alongside the voices of those who have suffered the consequences of nuclear weapons, will drive the international community to make urgent progress on disarmament, and to strengthen the nuclear taboo.

It is our collective duty to recover the widest possible support for the fulfilment of the promise of peace made 80 years ago. You may rest assured of the people of Ireland's unwavering commitment to

achieving a nuclear-weapon free world. I thank you for providing a beacon to the international community of strength, tenacity and moral clarity.

I wish the World Conference every success in this hugely valuable, necessary and urgent work.

*In support and solidarity*

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Michael D. Higgins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping tail.

Michael D. Higgins

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Uachtarán na hÉireann  
President of Ireland