

Veterans to President Biden: Just Say No to Nuclear War!

Dear President Biden,

We are writing you on the occasion of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, which has been declared by the United Nations General Assembly to be celebrated annually on September 26.

As veterans who have fought in multiple U.S. wars, we are concerned about the very real danger of a nuclear war that would kill millions of people and could possibly even destroy human civilization. Therefore we are asking to have input into the Nuclear Policy Review that your administration has recently initiated.

Exactly who is conducting this Nuclear Posture Review? Hopefully not the same think tanks that have lobbied for disastrous wars that have killed and wounded thousands of U.S. soldiers and hundreds of thousands of people in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and elsewhere. Hopefully not the same Cold Warriors who have militarized U.S. foreign policy. Or the retired generals who cheerlead for war on the cable networks. And we certainly hope not the defense industry itself, which makes obscene profits from war and war preparations, and which has a vested interest in the “modernization,” of nuclear weapons.

Actually, it is our fear that these are exactly the type of “experts” who are currently conducting the Nuclear Posture Review. Will they recommend that we continue to play “nuclear chicken” with Russia, China, North Korea and other nuclear-armed states? Will they recommend that the U.S. continues to spend billions of dollars building new and more destabilizing nuclear weapons and “missile defense” systems? Do they believe that a nuclear war can be won?

The U.S. public does not even know who is conducting the Nuclear Posture Review. There is apparently no transparency at all in a process which could determine the future of our nation and of our planet. We ask that you make public the names and affiliations of all those at the Nuclear Posture Review table. Furthermore, we request that Veterans For Peace and other peace and disarmament organizations be given a seat at the table. Our only vested interest is in achieving peace, and in avoiding a nuclear catastrophe.

When the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons came into force on January 22, 2021, you became the first President to face the [consequential](#) task of a Nuclear Posture Review in the face of International Law declaring nuclear weapons to be illegal. You now hold it within your power to demonstrate to the American people and to the world that you are committed to the goal of a nuclear-free world.

Veterans For Peace urges you to do the following:

1. Adopt and announce a policy of “No First Use” of nuclear weapons and make that policy credible by publicly decommissioning U.S. ICBMs that can only be used in a first strike;
2. Take U.S. nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert (Launch On Warning) and store warheads separately from delivery systems, thereby reducing the probability of an accidental, unauthorized, or unintentional nuclear exchange;
3. Cancel plans to replace the entire US arsenal with enhanced weapons at a cost of more than \$1 trillion over the next 30 years;
4. Redirect the money thus saved into environmentally and socially sound programs, including the accelerated cleanup of highly toxic and radioactive waste left during eight decades of the nuclear cycle;
5. End the sole, unchecked authority of any president (or his or her delegates and their delegates) to launch a nuclear attack and require Congressional approval of any use of nuclear weapons;
6. Comply with our obligations under the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) by actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals;
7. Sign and ratify the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons;
8. Phase out nuclear energy, stop producing depleted uranium weapons, and stop uranium mining, processing and enrichment;
9. Clean up radioactive sites from the nuclear cycle and develop an environmentally and socially sound nuclear waste disposal program; and
10. Fund health care and compensation for victims of radiation.

It will be a real leap forward for transparency and for our democracy if representatives of peace and disarmament NGO’s are given access to this critically important process. We represent millions of people who want nothing more than to see the United States make a dramatic “Pivot to Peace.” What better place to start than to step back from the brink of nuclear war? The Billions of U.S. tax dollars saved could be applied to the very real national security threats of the Climate Crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic. What better legacy for the Biden Administration than to begin a process that could lead to worldwide nuclear disarmament!

**Sincerely,
VETERANS FOR PEACE**