December 5, 2014

His Excellency Sebastian Kurz
Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs
Minoritenplatz 8
1010 Vienna
Austria

Dear Minister Kurz:

We are writing to commend publicly the Austrian government for convening the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. As members of global leadership networks developed in cooperation with the U.S.-based Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), we believe it is essential for governments and interested parties to state emphatically that the use of a nuclear weapon, by a state or non-state actor, anywhere on the planet would have catastrophic human consequences.

Our global networks–comprised of former senior political, military and diplomatic leaders from across five continents–share many of the concerns represented on the conference agenda. In Vienna and beyond, in addition, we see an opportunity for all states, whether they possess nuclear weapons or not, to work together in a joint enterprise to identify, understand, prevent, manage and eliminate the risks associated with these indiscriminate and inhumane weapons.

Specifically, we have agreed to collaborate across regions on the following four-point agenda for action and to work to shine a light on the risks posed by nuclear weapons. As we approach the 70th anniversary of the detonations over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we pledge our support and partnership to all governments and members of civil society who wish to join our effort.

Identifying Risk: We believe the risks posed by nuclear weapons and the international dynamics that could lead to nuclear weapons being used are underestimated or insufficiently understood by world leaders. Tensions between nuclear-armed states and alliances in the Euro-Atlantic area and in both South and East Asia remain ripe with the potential for military miscalculation and escalation. In a vestige of the Cold War, too many nuclear weapons in the world remain ready to launch on short notice, greatly increasing the chances of an accident. This fact gives leaders faced with an imminent potential threat an insufficient amount of time to communicate with each other and act with prudence. Stockpiles of the world’s nuclear weapons and materials to produce them are insufficiently secure, making
them possible targets for terrorism. And while multilateral non-proliferation efforts are underway, none are adequate to growing proliferation dangers.

Given this context, we urge international leaders to use the Vienna Conference to launch a global discussion that would more accurately assess steps to reduce or eliminate the risk of intentional or unintentional use of nuclear weapons. The findings should be shared for the benefit of policymakers and wider public understanding. We commit to support and engage fully in this endeavor by working together through our global networks and other interested parties.

**Reducing Risk:** We believe insufficient action is being taken to prevent nuclear weapons use, and we urge conference delegates to consider how best to develop a comprehensive package of measures to reduce the risk of nuclear weapons use. Such a package could include:

- Improved crisis-management arrangements in conflict hotspots and regions of tension around the world;
- Urgent action to lower the prompt-launch status of existing nuclear stockpiles;
- New measures to improve the security of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons-related materials; and
- Renewed efforts to tackle the increasing threat of proliferation from state and non-state actors.

All nuclear-armed states should attend the Vienna Conference and engage in the Humanitarian Impacts Initiative, without exception, and while doing so, should acknowledge their special responsibility on this set of issues.

At the same time, all states should re-double efforts to work toward a world without nuclear weapons.

**Raising Public Awareness:** We believe the world needs to know more about the devastating consequences of nuclear weapons use. It is therefore imperative that the Vienna discussions and findings are not limited to Conference delegations. A sustained effort should be made to engage and educate a global audience of policymakers and civil society on the catastrophic consequences of the use—intentional or accidental—of a nuclear weapon. We commend the Conference organizers for taking a broad approach to addressing the effects of a detonation, including the wider environmental impacts. The latest climate modeling suggests major and global environmental, health and food security consequences from even a relatively small scale regional exchange of nuclear weapons. Given the potential global impact, the use of a nuclear weapon anywhere is the legitimate concern of people everywhere.

**Improving Readiness:** The Conference and the ongoing Humanitarian Impacts Initiative must ask what more the world can do to be prepared for the worst. Time and again, the international community has been found wanting when it comes to preparedness for major international humanitarian crises, most recently in the shamefully slow response to the Ebola crisis in West Africa. Preparedness must include a focus on the resilience of domestic infrastructure in major population
centers to reduce the death tolls. Since no state is capable of responding to a nuclear weapon detonation sufficiently by relying solely on its own resources, preparedness also must include generating plans for a coordinated international response to an incident. This could save tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of lives.

We wish all those engaged in the Vienna Conference well, and pledge our ongoing support and partnership for all those involved in its important work.

Signed:

1. Nobuyasu Abe, former United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament, Japan.

2. Sergio Abreu, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and current Senator of Uruguay.

3. Hasmy Agam, Chair, National Human Rights Commission of Malaysia and former Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations.


5. Irma Arguello, Chair, NPSGlobal Foundation; LALN Secretariat, Argentina.

6. Margaret Beckett MP, former Foreign Secretary, UK.

7. Álvaro Bermúdez, former Director of Energy and Nuclear Technology of Uruguay.

8. Fatmir Besimi, Deputy Prime Minister and former Minister of Defense, Macedonia.

9. Hans Blix, former Director General of the IAEA; Former Foreign Minister, Sweden.

10. Jaakko Blomberg, former Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland.

11. James Bolger, former Prime Minister of New Zealand.

12. Kjell Magne Bondevik, former Prime Minister, Norway.

13. Davor Božinović, former Minister of Defence, Croatia.

14. Des Browne, NTI Vice Chairman; ELN and UK Top Level Group (TLG) Convener; Member of the House of Lords; former Secretary of State for Defence.

15. Laurens Jan Brinkhorst, former Deputy Foreign Minister, Netherlands.

16. Gro Harlem Brundtland, former Prime Minister, Norway.
17. **Alistair Burt MP**, former Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, UK.

18. **Francesco Calogero**, former Secretary General of Pugwash, Italy.

19. **Sir Menzies Campbell MP**, member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, UK.

20. **General James Cartwright (Ret.)**, former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, U.S.

21. **Hikmet Çetin**, former Foreign Minister, Turkey.

22. **Padmanabha Chari**, former Additional Secretary of Defence, India.

23. **Joe Cirincione**, President, Ploughshares Fund, U.S.

24. **Charles Clarke**, former Home Secretary, UK.


26. **Tarja Cronberg**, former Member of the European Parliament; former Chair of the European Parliament Iran delegation, Finland.

27. **Cui Liru**, former President, China Institute of Contemporary International Relations.

28. **Sérgio de Queiroz Duarte**, former United Nations Under Secretary for Disarmament Affairs and member of Brazil’s diplomatic service.

29. **Jayantha Dhanapala**, President of Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs; former United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament, Sri Lanka.

30. **Aiko Doden**, Senior Commentator with NHK Japan Broadcasting Corporation.

31. **Sidney D. Drell**, Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution, Professor Emeritus, Stanford University, U.S.

32. **Uffe Ellemann-Jensen**, former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Denmark.

33. **Vahit Erdem**, former Member of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, Chief Adviser to President Süleyman Demirel, Turkey.

34. **Gernot Erler**, former German Minister of State; Coordinator for Intersocietal Cooperation with Russia, Central Asia and the Eastern Partnership Countries.

35. **Gareth Evans**, APLN Convener; Chancellor of the Australian National University; former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia.

36. **Malcolm Fraser**, former Prime Minister of Australia.

37. **Sergio González Gálvez**, former Deputy Secretary of External Relations and member of Mexico’s diplomatic service.
38. Sir Nick Harvey MP, former Minister of State for the Armed Forces, UK.
39. Robert Hill, former Defence Minister of Australia.
40. Jim Hoagland, journalist, U.S.
41. Pervez Hoodbhoy, Professor of Nuclear Physics, Pakistan.
42. José Horacio Jaunarena, former Minister of Defense of Argentina.
43. Jaakko Iloniemi, former Minister of State, Finland.
44. Wolfgang Ischinger, current Chair of the Munich Security Conference; former Deputy Foreign Minister, Germany.
45. Igor Ivanov, former Foreign Minister, Russia.
46. Tedo Japaridze, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Georgia.
47. Oswaldo Jarrin, former Minister of Defense of Ecuador.
48. General Jehangir Karamat (Ret.), former chief of Pakistan’s Army.
49. Admiral Juhani Kaskeala (Ret.), former Commander of the Defence Forces, Finland.
50. Yoriko Kawaguchi, former Foreign Minister of Japan.
51. Ian Kearns, Co-Founder and Director of the ELN, UK.
52. John Kerr (Lord Kerr of Kinlochard), former UK Ambassador to the US and the EU.
53. Lord King of Bridgwater (Tom King), former Defence Secretary, UK.
54. Walter Kolbow, former Deputy Federal Minister of Defence, Germany.
55. Ricardo Baptista Leite, MD, Member of Parliament, Portugal.
56. Pierre Lellouche, former President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, France.
57. Ricardo López Murphy, former Minister of Defense of Argentina.
58. Richard G. Lugar, Board Member, NTI; former U.S. Senator.
59. Mogens Lykketoft, former Foreign Minister, Denmark.
60. Kishore Mahbubani, Dean, Lee Kuan Yew School, National University of Singapore; former Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations.
61. **Giorgio La Malfa**, former Minister of European Affairs, Italy.

62. **Lalit Mansingh**, former Foreign Secretary of India.

63. **Miguel Marín Bosch**, former Alternate Permanent Representative to the United Nations and member of Mexico’s diplomatic service.

64. **János Martonyi**, former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hungary.

65. **John McColl**, former NATO Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe, UK.

66. **Fatmir Mediu**, former Defence Minister, Albania.

67. **C. Raja Mohan**, senior journalist, India.


69. **Hervé Morin**, former Defence Minister, France.

70. **General Klaus Naumann (Ret.)**, former Chief of Staff of the Bundeswehr, Germany.


73. **Sam Nunn**, Co-Chairman and CEO, NTI; former U.S. Senator

74. **Volodymyr Ogrysko**, former Foreign Minister, Ukraine.

75. **David Owen** (Lord Owen), former Foreign Secretary, UK.

76. **Sir Geoffrey Palmer**, former Prime Minister of New Zealand.

77. **José Pampuro**, former Minister of Defense of Argentina.

78. **Maj.Gen Pan Zennqiang (Ret.)**, Senior Adviser to the China Reform Forum, China.

79. **Solomon Passy**, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bulgaria.

80. **Wolfgang Petritsch**, former EU Special Envoy to Kosovo; former High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Austria.

81. **Paul Quilès**, former Defence Minister, France.

82. **R. Rajaraman**, Professor of Theoretical Physics, India.

83. **Lord David Ramsbotham**, ADC General (retired) in the British Army, UK.

84. **Jaime Ravinet de la Fuente**, former Minister of Defense of Chile.
85. **Elisabeth Rehn**, former Defence Minister, Finland.

86. **Lord Richards of Herstmonceux** (David Richards), former Chief of the Defence Staff, UK.

87. **Michel Rocard**, former Prime Minister, France.

88. **Camilo Reyes Rodríguez**, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Colombia.

89. **Sergey Rogov**, Director of Institute for US and Canadian Studies, Russia.

90. **Joan Rohlfing**, President and Chief Operating Officer, NTI; former Senior Advisor for National Security to the U.S. Secretary of Energy.

91. **Adam Rotfeld**, former Foreign Minister, Poland.

92. **Volker Rühe**, former Defence Minister, Germany.


94. **Özdem Sanberk**, former Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey.

95. **Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg**, former Minister of Science and Technology and member of Brazil's diplomatic service.

96. **Stefano Silvestri**, former Under Secretary of State for Defence; consultant for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministries of Defence and Industry, Italy.


98. **Ivo Šlaus**, former member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Croatia.

99. **Javier Solana**, former Foreign Minister; former Secretary-General of NATO; former EU High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy, Spain.

100. **Minsoon Song**, former Foreign Minister of Republic of Korea.

101. **Rakesh Sood**, former Prime Minister’s Special Envoy for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, India.

102. **Christopher Stubbs**, Professor of Physics and of Astronomy, Harvard University, U.S.


104. **Eka Tkeshelashvili**, former Foreign Minister, Georgia.
105. **Carlo Trezza**, Member of the Advisory Board of the UN Secretary General for Disarmament Matters and Chairman of the Missile Technology Control Regime, Italy.

106. **David Triesman** (Lord Triesman), Foreign Affairs spokesperson for the Labour Party in the House of Lords, former Foreign Office Minister, UK.

107. **Ted Turner**, Co-Chairman, NTI.

108. **Nyamosor Tuya**, former Foreign Minister of Mongolia.

109. **Air Chief Marshal Shashi Tyagi (Ret.)**, former Chief of the Indian Air Force.

110. **Alan West** (Admiral the Lord West of Spithead), former First Sea Lord of the British Navy.

111. **Wiryono Sastrohandoyo**, former Ambassador to Australia, Indonesia.

112. **Raimo Väyrynen**, former Director at Finnish Institute of International Affairs.

113. **Tyler Wigg-Stevenson**, Chair, Global Task Force on Nuclear Weapons, World Evangelical Alliance, U.S.

114. **Isabelle Williams**, NTI.

115. **Baroness Williams of Crosby** (Shirley Williams), former Advisor on Non-Proliferation issues to Prime Minister Gordon Brown, UK.

116. **Hide Yuzaki**, Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture, Japan.

117. **Uta Zapf**, former Chairperson of the Subcommittee on Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-proliferation in the Bundestag, Germany.

118. **Ma Zhengzang**, former Ambassador to the United Kingdom, President of China Arms Control and Disarmament Association, and President of the China Institute of International Studies.

---

**Asia Pacific Leadership Network (APLN):** A network of more than 40 current and former political, military, and diplomatic leaders in the Asia Pacific region—including from nuclear weapons possessing states of China, India and Pakistan—working to improve public understanding, shape public opinion, and influence political decision-making and diplomatic activity on issues concerning nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament. The APLN is convened by former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans. [www.a-pln.org](http://www.a-pln.org)

**European Leadership Network (ELN):** A network of more than 130 senior European political, military and diplomatic figures working to build a more coordinated European policy community, define strategic objectives and feed analysis and viewpoints into the policy-making process for nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament issues. Former UK Defense Secretary and NTI Vice Chairman Des Browne is Chair of the Executive Board of ELN. [www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/](http://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/)

**Latin American Leadership Network (LALN):** A network of 16 senior political, military, and diplomatic leaders across Latin America and the Caribbean working to promote constructive engagement on nuclear issues and to create an enhanced security environment to help reduce global nuclear risks. The LALN is led by Irna Arguello, founder and chair of Argentina-based NPSGlobal. [http://npsglobal.org/](http://npsglobal.org/)