

# International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW)

## Report to UNODA Vienna on Disarmament and Non-proliferation

### Educational and Training Activities June 2022-May 2024

#### Executive Summary

For over 40 years, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) has been the leading medical voice calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons as an urgent health and humanitarian imperative. As a non-partisan federation of national medical groups in 56 countries, representing tens of thousands of health professionals, medical students, and others, we share the common goal of creating a more peaceful world freed from the threat of nuclear annihilation. During 2022-2024 we have continued our global leadership to educate health professionals, policymakers and the public including: organizing other health organizations to join in educating on the humanitarian and environmental impacts of nuclear weapons and working to advance the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; recruiting and organizing medical students and young doctors to advocate for a world free of nuclear weapons, and; publishing extensively on our key topics through the general and social media.

#### Throughout the past two years:

- **Publishing and media** – IPPNW members have been publishing and speaking widely and extensively on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and related topics. IPPNW spearheaded an initiative in August 2023 that led to more than 150 medical journals, including the *Lancet*, the *British Medical Journal*, the *New England Journal of Medicine* and *JAMA*, issuing [“Reducing the risks of nuclear war: the role of health professionals,”](#) a joint call for urgent steps to decrease the growing danger of nuclear war and to move rapidly to the elimination of nuclear weapons. The unprecedented call to action came in the form of an editorial co-authored by the editors of 11 of the leading medical and health journals, the World Association of Medical Editors, and leaders of IPPNW. The editorial received widespread attention on social media as well. Other media have included numerous interviews and opinion-pieces by IPPNW leadership, especially in the English and Spanish-speaking public media outlets worldwide, and many publications in our affiliate countries including the US, Canada, Greece, India, Germany, Kenya, Spain, Russia, UK, France, Norway, Mexico, Costa Rica, Nigeria, Sweden, Switzerland, Australia and Finland.
- **Social media** - IPPNW social media is active with nearly 11,000 followers on X (formerly Twitter), over 4400 on Facebook and over 1600 on Instagram. Many of our 56-affiliate organizations also have social media accounts and websites collectively numbering in the tens of thousands of followers which expand our educational reach worldwide.
- **IPPNW’s Peace and Health Blog** - IPPNW members and others regularly post blog pieces on topics related to nuclear weapons, war, militarism, conventional weapons and related topics on our blog with over 3000 followers.
- **E-news and Vital Signs newsletters** – We send monthly and biannual online and print educational newsletters to over 4000 supporters.

## Specific activities June 2022-May 2024

### 2022

**June 23 — Public Health and the Duty to Abolish Nuclear Weapons** — IPPNW and the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica co-hosted a side event to the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Panelists included representatives from the International Red Crescent and Red Cross, the International Council of Nurses, World Federation of Public Health Associations, and the World Medical Association. Approximately 40 people attended in person at the United Nations in Vienna, Austria, and the session was livestreamed.

**August – Nuclear Famine (2022)** — IPPNW released the report *Nuclear Famine*, which summarizes new data on the catastrophic effects of a “limited” or regional nuclear war including how it would crash the climate and global food supplies and cause massive starvation. The day of the report’s release, IPPNW hosted an online briefing for the press and civil society.

**August 9 — N-5 Doctors Speak with One Voice: Side Event at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference** — As all nuclear armed states modernized and expanded their nuclear arsenals, health professionals from the N-5 nations, which were conditionally and temporarily given permission to possess nuclear weapons under the 1970 Treaty, came together with one voice to discuss the existential threat that nuclear weapons pose to human and planetary health and the need to prevent nuclear war. 130 participants [tuned in online](#) and roughly 40 people joined in person at the UNHQ in New York City.

**October –Annual Healing Art of Music** - IPPNW and Greater Boston PSR hosted this educational event and concert to address the twin existential threats of nuclear war and climate change. Our 2022 Honorees were Professors Alan Robock, Brian Toon, and Lili Xia who have pioneered critical research on nuclear winter and the climatic consequences of a limited nuclear conflict. This event featured performances by Longwood Symphony Orchestra musicians and members from the Silkroad Ensemble, an international musical collaborative founded by cellist Yo-Yo Ma. Over 300 people tuned into the online event.

### 2023

**February 6 – IPPNW Executive Committee approved the creation of a new IPPNW Geneva Liaison Office** – IPPNW opened its new Geneva office to increase capacity to work with other international health agencies including the WHO and to enable us to work more closely with diplomats and other decision-makers located in the world's Peace Capital. For the remainder of 2023 and throughout 2024, Geneva staff and volunteers advanced discussions with WHO Secretariat staff, governments, and key partner organizations on the importance and need for WHO to produce a new authoritative study on the effects of nuclear war on health and health services. WHO last studied the issue in 1987. Our Geneva office secured its legal status in Switzerland in September, and as a recognized non-profit organization in December 2023.

**February 18 – Webinar: War in Ukraine: On the Brink of a Nuclear Catastrophe** – Over 450 people watched this webinar featuring an international expert panel exploring the public health and environmental consequences of the ongoing crisis in Ukraine after one year, along with the solutions to pull us back from the brink of a nuclear catastrophe. The event can be viewed [here](#).

**April 20-22 – 223<sup>rd</sup> World Medical Association (WMA) Council Session** – IPPNW participated in the WMA Council session in Nairobi, Kenya, making a presentation reinforcing our mutual responsibility to inform the general public and our leaders of the catastrophic health consequences of nuclear war. An IPPNW International Student Representative participated in the Junior Doctors Network meeting.

**April 25-29- 23<sup>rd</sup> World Congress, Mombasa, Kenya** – With the theme “Disarmament, Climate Crisis and Health” IPPNW convened in Mombasa its XXIII World Congress, its first Congress on the African continent, attended by over 200 health professionals and students. Dozens of sessions and workshops highlighted how global issues including the threat of nuclear weapons, ongoing wars, and climate issues adversely affect our health. Prior to the Congress, over a dozen IPPNW medical students and junior doctors from 9 countries braved a 500km bike tour from Nairobi to Mombasa to spread the word on disarmament, nuclear weapons abolition and the health effects of climate change/climate justice.

**May 2-6 – World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) World Congress on Public Health, Rome, Italy** – IPPNW joined thousands of public health professionals from around the world at a 5-day conference, culminating in our presentation to the full audience at the plenary on War and Health on the climate effects of nuclear war on food supply and public health. This was new information for many of these influential public health leaders.

**May 21-26 – World Health Assembly (WHA 76), Geneva** – IPPNW participated in the WHA to advocate for WHO to update its 1987 report on the health effects of nuclear weapons and in support of WHO’s Global Health and Peace Initiative – attending a side-meeting conducted by the governments of Switzerland and Oman, along with the WHO, in support of that initiative.

**May 26 – Webinar – Young World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) - Prevention, Preparedness and Response to Global Emergencies** – IPPNW presented in a panel on the inherent inadequacy of preparations for a single nuclear weapon attack and the complete impossibility of responding to nuclear war as part of a comprehensive panel covering public health emergencies.

**July 13-16 - African Union (AU) Summit, UN, Nairobi, Kenya** – IPPNW joined with other organizations in reaching out to African delegates, especially Ministers of Foreign Affairs, to discuss with them the TPNW and seek their support within their specific countries.

**July 31-August 11 - NPT PrepCom, Vienna, Austria** - IPPNW members participated in the NPT PrepCom at the UN in Vienna to educate and advocate on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons use. IPPNW addressed delegates during the NGO session on the dangers of nuclear weapons and called on members to recognize the vulnerabilities of nuclear power reactors including the Ukrainian Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. IPPNW released a report and held a press conference on a study showing possible radiation exposures from a potential meltdown of Zaporizhzhia. In addition, IPPNW hosted a youth side event on stories from Hibakusha.

**September 13-15 – World Health Organization (WHO) – Radiation Emergency Medical Preparedness and Assistance Network (REMPAN) meeting** – Seoul, S. Korea – IPPNW’s Board chair presented on the responsibility of medical professionals to advocate for prevention of nuclear war and the abolition of nuclear weapons. This echoed the call from IPPNW and over 150 medical and health journals in their

August and September issues. The meeting was held at the Korea Institute of Radiological and Medical Sciences to address medical responses to radiation emergencies.

**October 4-7 – 74th World Medical Association (WMA) General Assembly** - IPPNW participated in the 74th WMA General Assembly in Kigali, Rwanda to encourage discussions among the medical fraternity on health issues surrounding nuclear weapons and to seek WMA's support in updating the World Health Organization 1987 publication on "Effects of Nuclear War on Health and Health Services".

**October 21 – Fourth annual Healing Art of Music** - IPPNW and Greater Boston PSR presented this educational event and concert to address the twin existential threats of nuclear war and climate change. The 2023 event honored Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey for their extraordinary work as longtime leaders on climate action and nuclear disarmament. Approximately 150 people from Boston and the surrounding area joined the event in person.

**November 14** - IPPNW issued a [statement](#) calling for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in the Israel-Palestine war.

**November 26-December 1 – Second Meeting of States Parties (2MSP) to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)** - More than 50 IPPNW doctors, medical students and activists from 14 countries participated in the meeting at UN headquarters in New York to reinforce the urgent need to prevent nuclear war by abolishing nuclear weapons. IPPNW moderated a daylong Campaigners Forum on the eve of 2MSP, attended by 200 activists from around the world. IPPNW was also a lead organizer of a half-day youth conference with Youth for TPNW, the largest youth-led event of the week. IPPNW co-sponsored and helped coordinate the [Nuclear Free Future Awards presentations at the Blue Gallery](#), attended by more than 200 people. Recipients were deserving activists in communities affected by nuclear weapons testing in New Mexico USA, the Marshall Islands, and French Polynesia. IPPNW delivered powerful testimony at an NGO session addressing treaty delegates, and organized a major side event on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons featuring leading international health agencies. IPPNW's regional vice president from Mexico was appointed to the 15-member Scientific Advisory Committee to the Treaty.

**November 30-December 12** – IPPNW sent its first delegation to the UN climate summit (COP28) in Dubai to address disarmament, climate justice and health. They brought the message of how the twin existential threats of nuclear weapons and climate change are the most dangerous to global survival, connected the dots on military production/use emissions and climate change and educated on the dangers of nuclear power plants.

## **2024**

**April 12, Meeting with World Health Organization Director-General, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus** – IPPNW joined ICAN's executive director in meeting Dr. Ghebreyesus in his office and secured his support for the update of the 1987 report, ["Effects of Nuclear War on Health and Health Services,"](#) and for additional publicity of the catastrophic health dangers posed by nuclear war.

**April 13, IPPNW virtual Medical Student webinar** - IPPNW Medical Students held an educational webinar “Understanding the Impacts of Nuclear Testing” featuring first and second generation testing survivors, attended by over a dozen medical students.

**April 16 & 24 - NukeEx, Brussels, Belgium & Oslo, Norway** – Ten IPPNW leaders participated in the NukeEXPO, a scientific expo on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons and associated risks, hosted by Norwegian People’s Aid and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The event had a series of substantive panels with a simultaneous exhibition space, where participants could connect directly with organizations on the four core categories of weapons, risks, impacts, and response. IPPNW hosted stalls in the "impacts" and "response" sections of the exhibition, highlighting the HINW and lack of meaningful medical response following any use of nuclear weapons. IPPNW’s co-president presented at the Brussels meeting.

**April 18-20, Seoul, S. Korea – World Medical Association Council** – IPPNW Board chair and a Zambian medical student attended and met with Korean Doctors Against Nuclear Weapons as well as participated in the Junior Doctors meeting.

**May 9, Nobel Laureates meeting, Rome, Italy** – IPPNW co-presidents participated in this meeting at the Vatican.

**May 9-10 –UN Summit for the Future, Nairobi, Kenya** – Kenya and German IPPNW members participated in the United Nations Summit for the Future to advocate for the UN to include consideration of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and war in all policies and programs. IPPNW hosted an official exhibition booth at the Summit, highlighting the twin existential threats of nuclear war and the climate crisis.

**May 27-June 1 – World Health Assembly (WHA), Geneva** – IPPNW will again participate in the WHA to advocate for WHO to update its 1987 report on the health effects of nuclear weapons and will conduct a side event with representatives of WHO, WMA, WFPHA, ICRC, ICN, and IFMSA on May 31<sup>st</sup> on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and the need for health professionals to lead the way in explaining these catastrophic health dangers to the public and world leaders.