The UN Office of Disarmament Affairs has invited Veterans for Peace, USA, along with other relevant NGOs, to prepare a submission about disarmament and non-proliferation education and training efforts covering the last two years (from June 2022 until May 2024) in Microsoft Word format by 31 May 2024. The General Assembly “Requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report reviewing the results of the implementation of the recommendations and possible new opportunities for promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education, and to submit it to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session;” (By operative paragraph 3 of the above resolution) The report is a biennial compilation of work by Governments, UN entities, inter-governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations operating in this field. It is presented to the full membership of the General Assembly and circulated to a wide audience of disarmament and non-proliferation educators."

This report is the Veterans For Peace, Inc. response to the above invitation.

**US National Veterans For Peace (VFP)**

**Statement of Purpose**

We, as military veterans, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. To this end we will work, with others both nationally and internationally

1. To increase public awareness of the causes and costs of war
2. To restrain our governments from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations
3. To resist racism and repression in our home communities
4. To oppose the militarization of law enforcement
5. To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons
6. To seek justice for veterans and victims of war
7. To abolish war as an instrument of national policy

To achieve these goals, members of Veterans For Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace.

**VFP nuclear weapons education**

Nuclear Weapons Policy as a cause of nuclear proliferation: Nuclear weapons are already being used as a deterrent to resistance to US domination around the world. But the aggressive nature of the US Nuclear Posture backfires when nations are labeled “enemies” and decide that to deter US aggression and overthrow of their governments they must acquire nuclear
weapons, as is the case with North Korea. Similarly, although Iran does not have nuclear weapons, they are enriching uranium to a higher level partly in response to the US backing out of the JCPOA. In the case of Libya, it is an example of where the US might not have brought down the country if it had nuclear weapons; other countries see this as an example of why they must get their own.

Cost of war: Even conventional war is an environmental disaster in and of itself. Preparation for war (buildup of arsenals, 800 foreign military bases, preparing the public to accept war with Russia and China) uses over 50% of the discretionary budget. In addition, the minerals and processes used to make weapons and build bases adds to the environmental and human cost of war. To mine these minerals, the US government interferes in the internal affairs of other nations.

Arms race: The arms race never stopped, although many people in the US thought that it had. But in the last twenty years or so, all of the nuclear-armed nations are “modernizing” their nuclear weapons systems. The new US nuclear weapons are taking a high toll in money, engineering skills, research and environmental impact to make weapons that no country really dare use.

Proliferation: The US has placed nuclear weapons in five European countries and is now in the process of placement in two more. This represents a potential for either state or non-state actors to use those weapons and a direct threat to the existence of Russia - and may cause a nuclear war that could bring down civilization.

Refusal to honor the terms of the Non-Proliferation Treaty:

Under Article I of the NPT, nuclear-weapon states pledge not to transfer nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices to any recipient or in any way assist, encourage or induce any non-nuclear-weapon state in the manufacture or acquisition of a nuclear weapon. The seven European nations that do or will possess US nuclear weapons is in direct violation of the NPT.

US Nuclear Posture violates the principle of not threatening use of nuclear weapons against a country that does not possess them - explicitly declaring that the US will use nuclear weapons in the case of chemical, biological, cyber and space attacks, regardless of whether the other country possesses nuclear weapons.

In Article III, “preventing diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons”. Plutonium for nuclear weapons always comes from nuclear energy reactors. Since nuclear energy and nuclear weapons share most of the same pathways and issues (uranium mining, milling, processing, transportation and waste disposal), VFP does not support nuclear energy.

In Article VI, “Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.” NONE of the States Parties is negotiating, let alone in good faith, to cease the arms race.

War as National Policy: VFP believes that all war is immoral, particularly the threat or use of nuclear weapons, and that there are many peaceful alternatives to war.
VFP Nuclear Abolition Working Group

Mission statement

1. Adopt and announce a policy of “No First Use” of nuclear weapons (as China has) and make that policy credible by publicly decommissioning U.S. ICBMs that can only be used in a first strike;

2. Reduce the probability of an accidental, unauthorized, or unintentional nuclear exchange by taking U.S. nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert and storing warheads separately from delivery systems;

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
The VFP Nuclear Abolition Working Group wrote the VFP Nuclear Posture Review in contrast to Biden’s Nuclear Posture Review (VFP NPR). Instead of advocating for full-spectrum dominance and making nuclear weapons the centerpiece of US defense policy, the VFP NPR illustrates how the relationship between the US and other nuclear armed countries can be improved through diplomacy and respect for the security concerns of all. The nuclear policy history and concerns were analyzed and recommendations made for an improvement of relationships that could lead to nuclear disarmament. The document is at https://tinyurl.com/VFP-NPR2.

When the Golden Rule anti-nuclear sailboat (see below) was in Washington, DC in 2023, a group of people from the Golden Rule Project, Nuclear Abolition Working Group and supporters gave a copy of the VFP NPR to every Senator and Representative. This is one way to educate political leaders about the necessity and possibility of nuclear disarmament.

Guest speakers, webinars

The VFP Nuclear Abolition Working Group invites speakers and hosts webinars about every aspect of the nuclear chain. These are well attended and serve to educate VFP members and supporters about nuclear issues.

Support for BftB and TPNW and legislative measures

VFP is a member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and a partner with Back from the Brink. As such, our educational materials advocate for:

- Ratifying the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons
- Eliminating the President’s sole authority to launch a nuclear strike
- Cancelling the $2 Trillion nuclear “modernization” program
- Declaring a no-first-use of nuclear weapons policy
- Taking nuclear weapons off of hair-trigger alert.

Some of the actions the VFP Nuclear Abolition Group suggests that people take are to ask their Representative to support:

- H Res 77, the “Back from the Brink” Bill
- HR 2775, the "Nuclear Weapons Abolition and Conversion Act"
- Renewal and expansion of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act
- Renewal and improvements to the Compact of Free Association
- Any other measure that supports VFP positions regarding nuclear weapons

Other actions, on the non-legislative front:
- Attend shareholder meetings of nuclear weapons manufacturers to educate the shareholders and attempt to transition to manufacturing different, life-affirming products rather than weapons of mass destruction.
- Demand that cities, pension funds and other funds divest from companies that produce or fund nuclear weapons. Move their own money to funds that do not support nuclear weapons.
- Demonstrate at National Labs, Universities, nuclear weapons manufacturing plants and military bases involved with developing, testing, manufacturing and other activities that support nuclear “modernization” and maintenance.
- Support indigenous and rural communities in their efforts to stop uranium mining, milling, transportation and processing as well as efforts to clean up radioactive contamination.
- Write letters to the editor, op-ed pieces, and articles about nuclear issues.
- Hold educational webinars and meetings

VFP Golden Rule Project

In 1958, four Quaker activists attempted to sail the Golden Rule to the nuclear weapons testing area of the Marshall Islands. Although the crew was arrested in Honolulu, the public outcry and increased anti-nuclear movement of the time gave President Kennedy the cover he needed to sign the Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963. The Golden Rule’s first voyage also inspired the founding of Greenpeace.

In 2010, Veterans For Peace found the Golden Rule and spent five years restoring her. From 2015 to today, VFP sails the Golden Rule for a “Nuclear-Free World and a Peaceful, Sustainable Future”.

The restored Golden Rule has sailed from British Columbia to Ensenada, Mexico multiple times and to Hawai’i and all around the Hawaiian Islands.

For 13 months, in 2022-23, the Golden Rule sailed the navigable waters of the Eastern US - from Minneapolis to Cuba to Maine, and from New York to Toronto and all around the Great Lakes. There were 102 ports-of-call and over 350 educational presentations. Mayors, city councils and even whole states greeted the Golden Rule with Proclamations of Welcome, Resolutions in support of nuclear abolition measures, fire boats, police boats and speakers for the educational events. Press
coverage was usually a front-page picture and write-up, radio shows, and TV news spots. Over 300 educational presentations spread the word about the need and possibility for nuclear abolition. The messaging and advocacy is the same as that for the VFP Nuclear Abolition Working Group.

In addition, the *Golden Rule* has provided additional audiences for voices of the indigenous people of the Marshall Islands, Guam and the US. Speakers also include radiation victims from Japan and everywhere that nuclear weapons have been used and people who are working on various nuclear issues.

**VFP Chapters and Members**

Over 50 VFP chapters supported *Golden Rule* visits and the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Many participate in actions that the VFP Golden Rule Project or VFP Nuclear Weapons Abolition Group calls for, as well as their own actions for disarmament.