

APPEAL FOR A DENUCLEARIZED MIDDLE EAST

The Middle East is the most highly volatile region on earth. A region of intense militarisation that absorbs almost 30% of global arms exports. A region that has suffered greatly from foreign military interventions, bloody wars, occupations and brutal violations of rights, above all the right of the Palestinian people to create their own independent state within the borders set in 1967.

We are profoundly concerned about the threat of a new war in this region, this time on the pretext of Iran's nuclear program.

We seek to ensure that all diplomatic and political means be employed to resolve the crisis in the relations between Iran and the West on the basis of international law.

We proclaim, once again, that there are no military solutions to international problems.

We state our full agreement with the Ankara Declaration on a Middle East free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, which was adopted last December by the IPPNW member organisations that are active in countries in the region and elsewhere, including the US, France and other EU countries.

We do not recognise the right of any country in the world to acquire nuclear weapons, especially if it is a country in the volatile Middle East. This is true not only of Iran, but also of Israel, which has already acquired a large nuclear arsenal, more powerful than that of Great Britain, and is the only country in the Middle East that has not signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)..

We salute the decisions of the UN General Assembly in favour of creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and call upon all countries in the region to support and contribute to convening an international conference on this subject under UN auspices.

At the same time, we believe that the spread of nuclear power plants, such as those scheduled by Turkey in regions of high seismic activity, constitutes a major threat to the security of the Middle East and the Mediterranean as a whole

The Middle East and the Mediterranean must not experience the nightmare of a new Hiroshima, Fukushima or Chernobyl.

For the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation

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Maria Arvaniti-Sotiropoulou, President

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