

Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones working group

Report to Abolition 2000 Annual General Meeting

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Introduction

The [Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones \(NWFZ\) Working Group](#) supports existing regional NWFZs, encourages cooperation between the zones and promotes the establishment of additional NWFZs including in the Arctic, Europe, Middle East and North-East Asia.

The working group was very active in the early years of Abolition 2000, including to promote entry-into-force (EIF) of the African NWFZ (adopted 1996 and EIF in 2009) and establishment of the Central Asian NWFZ (adopted 2006, EIF in 2009). In addition, we organised actions and events to establish NWFZs in the regions mentioned above, educate public about NWFZs, commemorate the anniversary of the first inhabited NWFZ (Treaty of Tlatelolco – which was adopted on Valentine’s Day, 1969) and support for the Conferences of States Parties to NWFZs in 200, 2005 and 2010 – we organised the civil society forums for these.

In the past couple of years the working group has not had an active coordinator. So the group has served mainly as an informal network of people and Abolition 2000 member organizations/affiliated networks active in promoting NWFZs, with occasional cooperation on events.

NWFZ activities, August 2021 – July 2022

- *North-East Asia NWFZ*

Member/affiliate organizations that have historically been active advancing a North-East Asia NWFZ have been Peace Depot (Japan), Blue Banner (Mongolia), PNND (Global), Nagasaki Research Centre for Nuclear Abolition (RECNA – Japan) and Pax Christi Korea/PyeongChang Peace Forum (South Korea). They have worked in cooperation with the Asia-Pacific Leadership Network (APLN – South Korea/Australia).

In early 2021, the World Federalist Movement and the Institute for Global Policy launched [Coalition 3+3 for a NE Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone](#), a cooperative platform with representatives from the various organizations active on the issue. The Coalition, led by Tadashi Inuzuka (PNND Council member and former Senator from Nagasaki), advances the 3+3 model for a NE Asia NWFZ which was developed by Peace Depot and supported by the Democratic Party Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament under the leadership of former Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada. For updates on their activities, please see their [blog articles](#).

- *Arctic Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone*

The Pugwash Canadian Group and Pugwash Denmark have led the work on a proposed Arctic NWFZ, in cooperation with PNND. Pugwash Canada established a [webpage](#) and [discussion group](#) on the initiative. The groups organized a number of events in Canada and Denmark over the past decade. This led to Denmark launching an Arctic NWFZ consultation with Nordic countries and Canada when PNND Council Member Holger Nielsen was Foreign Minister, but this did not get much traction with the other countries. For a recent presentation on the Arctic NWFZ campaign see [Arctic Peace and Security](#), presentation by Dr Adele Buckley (Canadian Pugwash) to the CPRA Annual Conference, 2021.

- *Middle East Zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMD*

Abolition 2000, and many members/affiliates (including Basel Peace Office, Egypt Council on Foreign Affairs, the Israeli Disarmament Movement, PNND...) have been very active in events and advocacy for a Middle East Zone free from nuclear weapons and other WMD in follow-up to the 1995 NPT Review Conference decision supporting such a zone, the 2010 NPT Review Conference decision to invite the UN to

host a conference on such a zone 'to be attended by all States of the Middle East' and UN General Assembly decision [A/73/546](#) (22 December 2018) to hold a conference on establishing such a zone.

The UNGA resolution did not include a requirement for all states in the region to participate in the conference, thus enabling the [conference](#) to proceed. The First Session was held in 22 November 2019. The second session was held in Nov-Dec 2021. The Third Session of the Conference is scheduled to take place from 14 to 18 November 2022 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The [Middle East Treaty Organization](#) (METO) will report to the Abolition 2000 AGM in more detail on civil society, parliamentary and government actions to advance the Middle East Zone.

- *European NWFZ*

A European NWFZ was first proposed during the time of the Cold War, but did not get much traction. More recently it has been proposed a number of parliaments (including Sweden and Switzerland), advanced by Swiss Physicians for Social Responsibility and Basel Peace Office (through a number of events) and analysed (with support in principle) by three academic/policy papers – two of which were released prior to the Russian invasion of Ukraine - [A Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone in Europe Concept – Problems – Chances](#), *Peace Research Institute of Frankfurt* January 2016; and [A Nuclear-Weapon Free Zone in Europe: Why Today?](#) Marc Finaud/ by END INFO in Dec. 2020-Jan. 2021 - and one released following the invasion [Reassessing Europe's Nuclear Order: Perspectives for a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone](#), Arms Control Negotiation Academy, April 2022.

Basel Peace Office is launching a new research and policy project focusing on *Nuclear risks, security assurances and the European nuclear-weapon-free zone concept in the wake of the Ukraine conflict*. Details to be released soon.

- *Single-State NWFZs, cooperation between the zones and a new UN Study*

Mongolia established itself as an innovative single-state NWFZ through declaration by the government in September 1992, followed by legislation adopted by the Mongolian National Assembly in February 2000.

Similar to regional NWFZs, one of the objectives in establishing the zone is to secure security assurances by nuclear weapon states to respect the zone by committing to not deploy nuclear weapons in the zone and to not threaten or use nuclear weapons against the zone. Mongolia has secured such assurances in a joint statement by the P5 in October 2000 a joint statement providing political security assurances to Mongolia ([A/55/530-S/2000/1052](#)). In addition, the Mongolia single-state NWFZ has received recognition by the UN General Assembly in a number of resolutions beginning in 1998 with [General Assembly resolution 53/77 D](#). Blue Banner continues to work to consolidate and strengthen the status of Mongolia as a single-state NWFZ, and to provide this as an example for the establishment of other single state NWFZs.

Blue Banner, the Mexican government and the Kazakhstan government have also been leaders in efforts to build communication and cooperation between the NWFZs. This has included Conferences of States Parties to the NWFZs (initiated by Mexico), research on building cooperation (including [Cooperation among Nuclear Weapon Free Zones: History, Challenges and Recommendations](#), VCDNP, March 2018) and other conferences, workshops and activities.

During the past year, Blue Banner organised some workshops on NWFZs including one during the International Peace Bureau Assembly in Barcelona (October 2021), and a major international conference on NWFZs in Ulaanbaatar from June 9-10, 2022.

The conference adopted the [Ulaanbaatar Statement on Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones](#) which calls for the ratification by the five nuclear weapon states of the protocols to all the NWFZ treaties; supports the establishment of additional NWFZs in Middle East, NE Asia and the Arctic; gives strong support to the further establishment of single state NWFZs; and supports a proposal of Blue Banner and partners for a new UN Study on NWFZs to update the 1975 study in light of the experience in the establishment of NWFZs including single state zones.