

Written Report on Activities of Abolition 2000 Nuclear Risk Reduction Working Group

Report prepared by John Hallam, Working Group Co-Convenor

The activities of the Abolition 2000 Nuclear Risk Reduction Working Group have been impacted by the COVID virus, which has meant that until the upcoming NPT Review Conference, delayed by two years, we have made no presentations at UN meetings. We now plan a UN side event [Nuclear Risk reduction – More Topical than Ever](#) on 19 August, in Conference Room B 1300-1500, at which a number of risk reduction initiatives will be presented.

In addition, our activities have been dominated by:

a) The [NoFirstUse Global campaign](#), which initially grew out of the activities of the Abolition 2000 group. The activities of the Global NFU campaign can be considered also to be activities of the Abolition 2000 Risk Reduction Group. One of the prime motivations for advancing NFU globally is that it will open the way for abolition.

One major initiative of **NoFirstUse Global** is [Fulfil the NPT: From nuclear threats to human security](#), an Open Letter to the nuclear weapon states and other States Parties to the NPT, which urges the adoption of NFU policies and phasing out of nuclear weapons manufacture by the 2025 NPT Review Conference. Governments are also asked to commit to a timeframe of no later than 2045 to eliminate nuclear weapons and fulfil Art VI obligations. (See formatted letter with list of endorsers in [English](#), [French](#), [Italian](#) and [Spanish](#)). The Open Letter will be presented to the 2022 NPT Review Conference (There is still time to endorse).



In addition, both Global NFU and the risk reduction group per se have been heavily involved in promoting a [petition](#) by Mayor Akiba of Hiroshima appealing to President Putin and other nuclear powers not to threaten or use of nuclear weapons in Ukraine. That petition has now exceeded 100,000 signatures. See [NoFirstUse Global interviews Mayor Akiba on his appeal: Do NOT use nuclear weapons in the Ukraine conflict](#).

b) The war between Russia and Ukraine, which has caused the risk of nuclear weapons use to spike to levels exceeding even those of most of the Cold War, and equalling only those at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Members of the Nuclear Risk Reduction Group have been active in pleading for a negotiated settlement to the Russia-Ukraine war and in urging that the war not be allowed to escalate, as escalation to global thermonuclear war is all too easy to envisage. Examples of memos to the Ukrainian, Russian, UK, US and other relevant governments are:

- [Escalate to Nuclear? A truly diabolical idea](#). Friday April 29, 2022;
- [Negotiation not Escalation. Please](#), March 17, 2022

A Working Paper for the 10th NPT Review Conference, aimed at diplomats and entitled [No-first-use of nuclear weapons: An Exploration of Unilateral, Bilateral and Plurilateral Approaches and their Security, Risk-reduction and Disarmament Implications](#), has been created by members of the NFU campaign who are also members of the Abolition 2000 Nuclear Risk Reduction Group. The Working Paper was released at a [NoFirstUse Global online event](#) on January 7 and will be further promoted at the 19 August Nuclear Risk Reduction panel.

c) Some members of the Risk Reduction Group and **NoFirstUse Global** as well as some others, are also focussed on lobbying for a resolution in the UNGA that would stigmatise as contrary to the UN Charter and International Humanitarian law, the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, tactical or strategic, in Ukraine or Eastern Europe. A memo is being circulated to governments.

d) **NoFirstUse Global** will also hold a [consultation and campaign update meeting](#) on Tuesday July 26 for representatives of its [85 participating organizations](#). Observers from non-participating organizations are also welcome.

The need for immediate-term nuclear risk reduction across the board either via adoption of doctrines and postures of No First Use or by other means, is in the current context, of greater relevance than ever. Risk reduction also comprises Lowering of operational readiness, improved or resumed mil to mil communications, and avoidance of military exercises with nuclear capable forces close to sensitive borders. It must be said that this last is being violated on a daily basis, with potentially catastrophic consequences.

Risk Reduction Group members remain focussed on both immediate-term (very much focussed on the implications of the Ukraine war) and longer-term (NFU and other measures) – means to decrease the risk that by madness, malice, malfunction or malware we may create an event sequence that not only eliminates what we call 'civilisation', but that also brings about the extinction of many if not most complex land based life-forms including possibly ourselves.

Co-Convenors of the Risk Reduction Working Group: John Hallam, Marc Finaud, Aaron Tovish, Alyn Ware.



[Don't even THINK about starting a nuclear war](#), a social media action conceived by Working Group member Aaron Tovish, invites you to take a photo of yourself and/or a colleague holding a sign '**Don't even THINK about starting a nuclear war**' outside the embassies or consulates of nuclear armed states – in particular China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA. The action is inspired by a take-off of the New York no-parking sign 'Don't even think about parking here'. It indicates that the nuclear armed states should adhere to international law prohibiting the threat and use of nuclear weapons, just as drivers should adhere to laws about parking.