

Open Letter to Presidents Putin and Biden In advance of their June 16, 2021 Summit

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We write to you, world leaders whom we know fully understand the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, and the cataclysmic effects on humanity of a nuclear war: the possible end of civilization as we know it.

We are participants of a growing international campaign for a commitment by nuclear-armed states to a policy of no first use of nuclear weapons. We have just completed a number of successful global events, including a two-day conference preparatory to launching this campaign, which have included over 700 participants from Asia, Africa, Europe, Middle East, South America, North America, and the Pacific. Arising from these events is an appeal to you to use your summit to make a mutual bilateral commitment on No First Use (NFU) as a first step to adoption of such a commitment by other nuclear weapon states and to the elimination of all nuclear weapons .

We are mindful that decades ago your predecessors declared "*A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought*". A few years ago, Mr. Biden, you declared in an eloquent speech about the threat of nuclear war, "*If we want a world free of nuclear weapons, the United States must take the initiative to lead us there.*" Similarly, Mr. Putin, you have said "*The understanding that a third world war could be the end of civilization should restrain us from taking extreme steps on the international arena that are highly dangerous for modern civilization.*" The United Nations set the goal to eliminate nuclear weapons in its very first resolution, adopted unanimously, and reaffirmed this in 2013 by establishing September 26th as the annual *International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons*.

Now is the perfect time for you to declare a joint commitment that your nations **will not use nuclear weapons first under any circumstances**, and to make this a key step toward fulfilling the UN goal to totally eliminate nuclear weapons from the planet. We pledge to you - as legislators, former political/military leaders and representatives of multiple civil movements endorsing this goal - to mobilize civil and political support for your effort.

You should know that such a measure will be supported by most of the other 189 States Parties of the Non-Proliferation Treaty who unanimously agreed in 2010 to support '*policies that could prevent the use of nuclear weapons*' and '*to establish the necessary framework to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons*', and will be strongly supported by the 122 nations that in 2017 approved the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

We believe it is in your hearts to achieve this noble goal. We call on you to initiate this vital step at your summit and to lead us all to a planet free of nuclear weapons.

Sincerely,

[Open for endorsement by representatives of civil society organizations, legislators, religious/political leaders and other interested individuals. [Click here](#) to endorse]