

INAUGURAL STATEMENT

1. **Why this New Network.** We have joined together to support a nuclear weapons free world, believing that these weapons pose an existential threat to all nations and peoples. As a group of individuals who have held high executive or advisory positions across the Asia Pacific region – from South Asia to East Asia and Australasia – we will work to promote policies in our own region and beyond to effectively contain, diminish and eliminate nuclear weapons, and to create a security environment conducive to the achievement of those goals.

2. We have come together in Japan for our inaugural meeting because Hiroshima and Nagasaki remain indelible historical reminders of the horror of nuclear weapons, and the Fukushima disaster a shocking contemporary reminder of the mortal danger of uncontrolled exposure to nuclear radiation.

3. We believe that we have a particular responsibility to work for change in the Asia Pacific region. As the world's economic, political and security centres of gravity shift inexorably here, our stake in a secure world order – and obligation to contribute with ideas, policy proposals and vision to that end – have grown commensurately. What happens in this region impacts every dimension of the global nuclear agenda. We have shown the way forward with nuclear weapons free zones in the Treaties of Raratonga and Bangkok, but also have – in South Asia and the Korean Peninsula – two of the world's most acute areas of nuclear tension. The quest to eliminate nuclear weapons cannot succeed without the determined engagement of policymakers in the Asia Pacific region.

4. **The Nuclear Threat.** We believe in a nuclear weapons free world because:

- Nuclear weapons are the most indiscriminately inhumane weapons ever invented, their use an affront to every fundamental principle of international humanitarian law.
- So long as anyone has nuclear weapons there are others who will want them; so long as any nuclear weapons remain anywhere, they are bound one day to be used – by design, mistake or miscalculation – by state or non-state actors; and any such use will be catastrophic.
- While nuclear weapons cannot be uninvented, they can and must be outlawed, as chemical and biological weapons have been.

5. We believe that the risks associated with nuclear weapons in the post-Cold War world are much more acute than most policymakers accept and most publics are aware. Serious

threats persist from the use or misuse of weapons by existing nuclear armed states, newly nuclear-armed states and terrorist actors, and from aspects of the civil fuel cycle:

- Existing arsenals amount to some 23,000 weapons with a combined destructive capacity of 150,000 Hiroshima bombs. That nuclear peace has held since 1946 owes more to good luck than good stewardship. In a world, now, of multiple nuclear-armed states, significant regional tensions, command and control systems of varying sophistication, potentially destabilizing new cyber technology, and continuing development of more modern (including smaller and potentially more useable weapons), it cannot be assumed that such luck will continue.
- The risks of proliferation are growing. Israel for many years, and India and Pakistan since the end of the Cold War, have become nuclear armed states outside the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); North Korea has tested weapons in defiance of it; should Iran build nuclear weapons others in its region will very likely follow; and many other states have the technical capability to join their ranks. Nuclear armed states inside the NPT have not been disarming fast enough, straining the confidence of their non-nuclear partners in the credibility of the NPT grand bargain.
- Terrorist groups exist which would acquire and use nuclear weapons if they could. The security of nuclear weapons, and the fissile materials which only states can produce, is of critical significance, and despite major improvements in cooperation cannot be assumed to be complete.
- Civil nuclear energy use seems certain to grow significantly in the decades ahead, notwithstanding the impact of the Fukushima tragedy, which makes clear the urgent need for high, universal and mandatory global safety standards, and effective human and technical infrastructure. Potential diversion of material from civilian to military use will remain of continuing concern, with uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing facilities built without international or multilateral management constituting a particular proliferation risk.

6. The Need for New Policy Momentum. We believe that efforts to achieve a world free from the threat of nuclear weapons are at a critical stage, and badly need re-energizing, both globally and regionally. Until recently there were grounds for optimism: in the many statements by very senior officials of the Cold War era challenging the role and utility of nuclear weapons in the contemporary world; in a major increase in nuclear-focused analysis and advocacy by research institutes, think tanks and blue-ribbon international panels; and a significant revival of civil society activism. President Obama showed the way forward with his ground-breaking commitment to achieving “a world without nuclear weapons” in his 2009 Prague speech, and some important developments followed, including agreement by the United States and Russia to make cuts in their deployed strategic nuclear weapons, the modestly successful 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, and the productive Washington Nuclear Security Summit, which is to reconvene in Seoul in 2012.

7. But that momentum is in danger of stalling. There is little sign of progress on bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, on breaking the negotiation stalemate on a treaty to prohibit further production of fissile material for nuclear weapons,

on meeting future proliferation risks associated with the civil nuclear sector, or on measures to significantly strengthen the non-proliferation treaty regime. Further bilateral arms reduction negotiations between the U.S. and Russia have stalled, and there are few if any signs of willingness by the established nuclear weapons powers, both inside and outside the NPT, to embark on serious multilateral arms reduction negotiations of a kind which could eventually lead to a nuclear weapons free world.

8. We believe that if the risks of a nuclear weapons world are to be addressed, and the vision of a nuclear weapons free world advanced, policymakers have to get serious about five distinct, but interrelated, sets of policy commitments:

- Action on disarmament: through bilateral and multilateral processes, to dramatically reduce the role and salience of nuclear weapons in national armouries (including through no-first-use commitments, strong negative security assurances and making clear that extended deterrence means a potential nuclear response only to nuclear threat contingencies); minimize their number; dramatically limit their deployment and alert status; and then achieve their total elimination.
- Action on non-proliferation: through strengthening the NPT safeguards regime; universal adoption and effective implementation of the Additional Protocol; action to minimise the proliferation potential of any expansion of civil nuclear energy use, including development of proliferation resistant technologies; and effective international action through the UN Security Council in response to the current proliferation risks posed by North Korea and Iran.
- Action on the critical building blocks for both non-proliferation and disarmament: bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty; negotiating an effective Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty and addressing the question of existing stockpiles; continuing to strengthen nuclear security measures worldwide; encouraging the formation of new nuclear weapon free zones particularly in areas subject to tension, including North East Asia and the Middle East; and refining and developing the elements of a Nuclear Weapons Convention (as proposed by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon in his five-point plan for nuclear disarmament) as a foundation for future multilateral negotiations.
- Action to address regional tensions and other non-nuclear factors hindering progress toward disarmament: the quest to delegitimise, minimize and eliminate nuclear weapons will founder unless there is a determined effort to strengthen the relationships, institutions and dialogue and other processes that preserve stability, defuse conflict and build overall trust, confidence and mutual respect in areas of potential nuclear confrontation like South Asia, the Korean Peninsula and the Middle East.
- Action to educate and inform publics about the nuclear threat: sustained public education programs and information campaigns, aimed at exposing young people in particular to the acute dangers posed by nuclear weapons and associated technology, and informing publics of the cost to governments of maintaining nuclear arsenals – at least \$100 billion annually – and the opportunity cost this

represents in terms of foregone expenditure elsewhere, especially in developing countries.

9. APLN Work Program and Priorities. Our initial work program will focus on three specific areas of manifest significance in our own region as well as in the larger international context:

- Deterrence: belief in nuclear deterrence still has strong resonance in a number of states' policies, not least in the Asia Pacific region, and persuasive arguments need to be made for reducing and ultimately eliminating reliance on nuclear armouries. APLN will address whether nuclear deterrence has any credibility in any context in the present global environment, the proper scope and limits of extended deterrence, and the role played by perceived deterrence needs in South and North East Asia; and will explore the prospects and feasibility of a nuclear weapon free zone, including North Korea, in North East Asia.
- Transparency and Other Conditions for Disarmament: significant openness – about not only doctrine but capability (including the nature and extent of nuclear weapon stockpiles and their general deployment) – is a crucial precondition for any serious moves toward s disarmament. Such transparency must necessarily be based on mutual trust, confidence and respect, often in short supply in the Asia Pacific region, and APLN will explore ways of meeting these needs.
- Nuclear Fuel Cycle: with the Asia Pacific likely to see particular growth in civil nuclear energy in the decades ahead, this is an important region in which to develop international collaborative approaches to nuclear programs, including multilateral approaches for enrichment and reprocessing, whole-of-life fuel supply assurances, and cooperation on spent fuel management, security and safety. APLN will explore the prospects for an Asian Nuclear Energy Community to further regional collaboration and high non-proliferation, security and safety standards.

10. APLN members will meet as regularly as resources permit; engage as appropriate in both individual and collective advocacy; publish group statements from time to time, representing the views of those signing them, aimed at highlighting particular issues in the nuclear policy debate; publish occasional individually signed papers and analyses; and work with partner organisations (including the European Leadership Network, Nautilus Institute and Asan Institute) in hosting, and participating, in workshops and conferences. We appreciate the support we have received from the Nuclear Threat Initiative to enable the initial establishment of the Network and its Secretariat in Canberra.

11. No-one could be more conscious than we are of the acute sensitivity and difficulty of the task of achieving our vision of a nuclear weapons free world, and the time this will take on even the most optimistic assumptions. We are not naïve about the scale of the challenge.

12. But we believe there is no more important and challenging policy issue in the world today than saving the planet from the catastrophe that will be inevitable if we – and those around the world who share our concern – do not ultimately succeed. We must achieve a world free once and for all of the horror of nuclear weapons, the most indiscriminately inhumane agents of destruction ever built.

[SIGNED]

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