

Till: Utrikesdepartementet, ud.remissvar@regeringskansliet.se
Kopia: martin.rahm@gov.se, ud-nis@gov.se
Diariennr. UD2019/00979/NIS
Från: Greenpeace

Amsterdam, 23 April 2019

Dear Madam/Sir,

Re: Greenpeace's submission to the formal Inquiry into the consequences of a Swedish accession to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

Greenpeace is thankful for the opportunity to provide its input on this issue.

Greenpeace first set sail as an organization in 1971 to stop nuclear weapons testing on the Island of Amchitka and still believes that the fight to rid the world of nuclear weapons, the first ever campaign Greenpeace engaged with, is as urgent as ever.

Greenpeace joins the call for the Swedish government to take a clear stand against nuclear weapons and against the politics of fear and mutual destruction.

Nuclear weapons are the most destructive, inhumane and indiscriminate weapons ever created and yet they are the only weapons of mass destruction not yet comprehensively prohibited in international law. While biological and chemical weapons have been explicitly and completely banned, since 1972 and 1993 respectively, nuclear weapons have not been constrained up to now.

This is a legal anomaly, which is finally in the process of being fully corrected with the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Adopted with the support of 122 nations on July 7, 2017, this landmark treaty is the materialization of the will of the international community to live in a nuclear weapons-free world. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is a roadmap to achieving the total elimination of these weapons of mass destruction. To enter into force, the Treaty must be signed and ratified by 50 countries. To date, there are 23 ratifications and 70 signatures.

At a time of great global tension, when nuclear-armed states are modernizing their arsenals and threatening to use their nuclear weapons, it is all the more important for Sweden to declare its unequivocal opposition to nuclear weapons and to help strengthen international norms against them. The treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons sets the benchmark for a world where nuclear weapons are considered a threat to security, not an avenue to it. Joining the treaty is the only responsible course of action.

Sweden has had a long history of standing for global peace and security. It has joined international treaties banning biological weapons, chemical weapons, anti-personnel landmines, and cluster munitions based on the inhumane and indiscriminate impact of these weapons on civilians. As a responsible member of the international community, Sweden should now join the UN treaty banning the worst weapons of all: nuclear weapons.

The vital and internationally recognized role that Sweden has in the struggle for general and complete nuclear disarmament will not be weakened, but rather strengthened when Sweden signs the Treaty. Even more importantly, as a beacon in the effort for disarmament, a Swedish signature would contribute significantly to the universal support of the Treaty.

It is with regret that we note that the Inquiry into the consequences of a Swedish accession to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons by Lars-Erik Lundin recommends a course of action that would place Sweden on the wrong side of history. In particular, the report contains only cursory considerations of humanitarian and environmental consequences of nuclear weapons, which was the main reason for the development and negotiation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Humanitarian and environmental consequences must be the primary considerations when it comes to determining policy on nuclear weapons.

Furthermore, the report fails to address the increasing risk of nuclear weapons use either by accident, miscalculation or design and the prevention of the new nuclear arms race.

The opinions expressed by this report and the conclusions it draws would represent a significant departure from Sweden's traditional voice as a champion for nuclear disarmament. This would run contrary to Sweden's history of rejecting weapons of mass destruction, ever since it abandoned its own nuclear weapons programme several decades ago. It would also run contrary to the will of the people of Sweden. A survey¹ by the Olof Palme International Center has found that 85% of Swedes believe Sweden should sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This sends a clear sign to the government.

Nuclear weapons threaten every nation's security and would cause catastrophic humanitarian consequences if used. The impact on civilians and the environment would be devastating. The International Committee of the Red Cross has warned that no meaningful humanitarian response would be possible following a single nuclear detonation anywhere, let alone in the aftermath of a full-scale nuclear war.

The production and use of nuclear weapons also has devastating and long-lasting effects on the Earth's environment. Production has polluted vast amounts of soil and water at hundreds of facilities all over the world. Many of the substances released remain hazardous for thousands, some for hundreds of thousands, of years. The use of a large number of nuclear weapons would disrupt the global climate, causing widespread agricultural collapse and famine. The burning cities ignited by nuclear explosions would loft smoke high into the upper atmosphere, blanketing the globe. This, in turn, would cool, darken,

¹ <https://www.palmecenter.se/article/starkt-stod-for-att-sverige-undertecknar-karnvapenforbudet/>

and dry the Earth's surface, decimating food crops, potentially leading to the starvation of billions of people.

Greenpeace is opposed to the manufacture, possession, deployment and use of all weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical and biological). Weapons of mass destruction, through their development, testing, proliferation and use, threaten the continued existence of life on this planet. Their use would destroy not only the lives of millions of people but also the basis of life for other species and ecosystems.

Greenpeace is calling on the government of Sweden to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons without delay.

Yours sincerely,



Bunny McDiarmid
Executive Director
Greenpeace International



Mads Flarup Christensen,
Executive Director
Greenpeace Nordic