



Australian Education Union

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Our Ref: DTJ:JD

2 December 2020

The Hon. Scott Morrison, MP
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

Re: United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

On 25 October 2020, the 50th ratification of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was received which means that after the 90 days, on 22 January 2021, it will come into force.

Australia is currently not a signatory to this Treaty.

Our members of the Australian Education Union (the AEU) are advocates for fairness, respectful behaviours and peaceful outcomes and are buoyed that, internationally, these values are being reflected through the Treaty's impending enactment.

Federally, the AEU is a proud partner with the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear weapons (ICAN) and at our South Australian Branch Council meeting on 21 November 2020, our state delegates were dismayed that Australia is currently not supportive of such a significant Treaty.

Why?

- This Treaty sets clear expectations in order to protect peoples everywhere;
- It puts Australia out of step with international law on nuclear weapons;
- It establishes clearly that nuclear weapons are inhumane, unacceptable, and now illegal, and that no state should possess, use or threaten to use them;
- More financial institutions will divest from companies that produce nuclear weapons, in line with policies to exclude weapons banned by international law; and
- Like the changes in behaviour with bans on landmines and cluster munitions, this is about human rights and recognising the impact on those most vulnerable, victims of developed and developing nations' actions.

The following resolution was passed without dissent or objection:

That AEU SA Branch Council acknowledges international law and the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that will come into force on 22 January 2021 and demand that the Prime Minister and the Federal Liberal Coalition Government lead Australia in becoming a signatory to this Treaty as a priority.

We believe that Australia should not have illegal weapons in its defence doctrine and we expect it to uphold international law.

We also seek that Australia attend the first meeting of states parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as an observer, but preferably as a signatory or state party, when it is convened in Australia within the first year following the Treaty's entry into force.

Prior to this, we seek your leadership and welcome your prompt actions to address this seeming anomaly of a lack of commitment to protect the current and future constituents and population of Australia.

We look forward to the Federal Parliament addressing this situation with urgency.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DTJ', written in a cursive style.

DASH TAYLOR JOHNSON
SA Branch Vice President
Australian Education Union

cc The Hon. Anthony Albanese, Federal Leader of the Opposition