

Statement on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

On Friday 22 January 2021 the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons comes into force. This is an historic milestone on the path to nuclear disarmament and an opportunity to refocus on genuine peacebuilding rooted in dialogue, justice, respect for human dignity, and care for our planet.

In setting out the “*moral and humanitarian imperative*” for complete elimination of nuclear weapons, Pope Francis reminded us that “*international peace and stability cannot be based on a false sense of security, on the threat of mutual destruction or total annihilation.*”^[1]

We urge support for the Treaty and repeat our call for the UK to forsake its nuclear arsenal. The resources spent on manufacturing, maintaining and upgrading these weapons of mass destruction, should be reinvested to alleviate the suffering of the poorest and most vulnerable members of our society, for the Common Good of all peoples.^[2]

At the same time, we implore the government to strengthen its arms control regulations, tackling the manufacture and sale of other weaponry, which continues to destroy so many lives throughout the world.

Above all we pray: “*Lord, Father of our human family, you created all human beings equal in dignity; pour forth into our hearts a fraternal spirit. Move us to create healthier societies and a more dignified world, a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.*”^[3]

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+William Nolan

Bishop of Galloway

Commission for Justice and Peace, Catholic Bishops' Conference of Scotland

+William Kenney

Auxiliary Bishop of Birmingham

[1] Message to the UN conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination (23 March 2017) [vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2017/documents/papa-francesco_20170323_messaggio-onu.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2017/documents/papa-francesco_20170323_messaggio-onu.html)

[2] Statement on nuclear weapons (4 August 2020) [cbcew.org.uk/statement-on-nuclear-weapons/](https://www.cbcew.org.uk/statement-on-nuclear-weapons/)

[3] *Fratelli Tutti* [vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html)