



Back from the Brink: The Call to Prevent Nuclear War

We call on the United States to lead a global effort to prevent nuclear war by:

- 1. renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first;***
- 2. ending the sole, unchecked authority of any president to launch a nuclear attack;***
- 3. taking US nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert;***
- 4. cancelling the plan to replace its entire arsenal with enhanced weapons; and***
- 5. actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.***

Endorsing organizations to date

City

Portland ME

Health

American Academy of Pediatrics Maine Chapter

Maine Academy of Family Physicians

Maine AllCare

Maine Medical Association

Maine Nurse Practitioners Association

Physicians for Social Responsibility Maine Chapter

Faith

Allen Avenue Unitarian Universalist Church

Congregation Bet Ha'am

First Parish Portland

Pax Christi Maine

Portland Friends

The Church of Universal Fellowship

Peace

Global Network against Nuclear Power & Weapons in Space

Maine Peace Action Committee

Maine Peace Fund

Peace Action Maine

Peace & Justice Center of Eastern Maine

Greater Brunswick PeaceWorks

Veterans for Peace Tom Sturtevant Chapter

Environmental

Maine Rivers

Toxics Action Center

Social Justice

Resources for Organizing and Social Change

Elders for Future Generations

Business

Gaia Consulting

Other

In 2019, the Maine Senate passed a Back from the Brink resolution

What is Back from the Brink

In 2017, 122 nations completed negotiations and adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which calls for the elimination of all nuclear weapons. The US is not one of them.

PSR Maine, in collaboration with PSR National, Union of Concerned Scientists, and organizations all over the country, is using the Back from the Brink statement as a tool to educate the public about the urgent humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and to urge elected officials to prevent nuclear war through policy changes and diplomacy.

Endorsing organizations and individuals support this effort and have agreed to have their names included in communications to policy makers and in educating the public. **For more information or to endorse, please go to <http://bit.ly/BackfromtheBrink> or contact PSR Maine directly karen@psrmaine.org or 207-210-0084**

Statement details

We call on the United States to lead a global effort to prevent nuclear war by:

1. renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first;

The United States should renounce its current first use policy. A “no first use” declaration would reduce the incentive for an adversary to decide to use its nuclear arsenal first for fear that it might otherwise be destroyed by the United States.

2. ending the sole, unchecked authority of any president to launch a nuclear attack;

Presidential sole authority is an artifact of the Cold War, but this system is risky and unjustified; no single individual should be able to make such a momentous decision. The process can be changed to include multiple decision-makers in authorizing the use of nuclear weapons.

3. taking U.S. nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert;

Several hundred missiles (of the U.S. stockpile) in underground silos, are ready to be launched in minutes. Hair-trigger alert or launch on warning allows the US to launch these missiles quickly in response to warning of an incoming attack and can be launched within minutes after a presidential order. This practice increases the risk of a nuclear war starting in response to false alarm, and there have been numerous close calls over the past 40 years as a result of human errors and system failures.

4. cancelling the plan to replace its entire arsenal with enhanced weapons; and

Over the next 30 years, the United States plans to spend more than a trillion dollars to replace its entire nuclear arsenal and the bombers, missiles, and submarines that deliver them. Such a tremendous investment of money and effort sends the wrong message to the rest of the world by making it clear that the United States continues to see its nuclear arsenal as central to its security and intends to keep it so for the foreseeable future.

5. actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.

The United States—like Britain, China, France, and Russia—is already obligated under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to take concrete steps toward eliminating its nuclear arsenal. Most recently, the creation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was approved in July 2017 by 122 countries and has so far been signed by more than 50 countries. The United States refused to even participate in the negotiating process, exhibiting blatant disregard for most of the world—as well as its own long-standing treaty obligations under the NPT.