

Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs

1995 Nobel Peace Prize

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Pugwash congratulates ICAN for the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize

Pugwash sends its warmest congratulations to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) on the announcement that it has been awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize, in recognition of their work “to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons”.

With the one of the most significant landmarks of progress in the field, the momentous negotiation of the Nuclear Ban Treaty achieved earlier this year, we commend the Nobel Committee for such an auspicious choice. ICAN are thus the latest non-governmental organization working on the abolition of nuclear weapons to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, following the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) in 1985 and, of course, the joint award to Pugwash and its founder Joseph Rotblat in 1995. We are proud that the tradition of recognizing the importance of nuclear disarmament work continues.

Amid this good news, however, the continuing threat posed by the existence of nuclear weapons remains. As the Nobel Committee referenced in their announcement, “the risk of nuclear weapons being used is greater than it has been for a long time... Nuclear weapons pose a constant threat to humanity and all life on earth.” Tensions on the Korean Peninsula, uncertainty over the Iran nuclear deal, and the continued reliance on nuclear weapons in some states’ security policy are serious challenges to international peace and security. The work of ICAN over the past decade has been instrumental in challenging the narrative of the usability of nuclear weapons, culminating in the Ban Treaty. We, as non-governmental organizations and as citizens of the world, must now all work together to ensure the implementation of this treaty, crucially the engagement of the nuclear weapons states, and any other means for pursuing a world free of nuclear weapons.

Sergio Duarte, President of Pugwash

Paolo Cotta Ramusino, Secretary-General of Pugwash