



NEWS FROM BEYOND NUCLEAR

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Takoma Park first US city to declare compliance with Nuclear Ban Treaty

TAKOMA PARK, MD, March 15, 2018 -- The City Council of Takoma Park, Maryland, last night (March 14th) voted unanimously on a [resolution](#) that reaffirms the city's support for the [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#), or 'Nuclear Ban Treaty.'

The Nuclear Ban Treaty was adopted last year at the UN by 122 countries. The Treaty comprehensively prohibits everything to do with nuclear weapons and makes these weapons illegal under international law. Fifty-seven countries have signed it so far, and as many as 146 countries are expected to sign it in the coming months.

The United States is not one of them, but as with the Paris Climate Agreement, that does not stop cities, states, businesses, colleges and faith communities from complying with this Treaty.

Takoma Park was one of the first cities in the US to declare itself a 'Nuclear-Free Zone' back in 1983. Since then, through a city [ordinance](#), Takoma Park has banned companies involved in the production of nuclear weapons from doing business in Takoma Park, or from or for bidding on City contracts, and has avoided investment in companies engaged in the production of nuclear weapons.

Since these prohibitions mean that Takoma Park already complies with the new Treaty, the March 14 resolution declaring the City 'treaty compliant' was more of a formality. As the first city in the US to do so, however, Takoma Park has led the way for many more to follow.

As many as 220 Nuclear Free Zones were established across the US during the 1980s. Many of these, including Chicago, still have legally-binding ordinances on their books which comply with the new Treaty. Others, including New York City, are now looking into this afresh in light of this Treaty.

By aligning themselves with the rest of the world in support of the Nuclear Ban Treaty, Takoma Park is turning its back on the \$1.2 trillion plans to upgrade and modernize the US nuclear arsenal. Takoma Park is the first to officially do so, but it will not be the last.

Background information from Dr. Timmon Wallis

There are more than 40 international treaties that the US has either not signed or not ratified, including most famously the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, which every single country in the world has now signed – apart from the United States.

Other important treaties that the US has refused to sign include the 1997 Ottawa Treaty banning landmines and the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions. In both those cases, the US military has severely restricted their use of these weapons even though the US government has not actually signed the treaties.

While a city like Takoma Park cannot literally *sign* an international treaty between sovereign nations, they can nevertheless do a considerable amount to *comply* with such a treaty.

The Takoma Park Nuclear-Free Zone Act (chapter 14.04 of the City Code) explicitly prohibits any “person, corporation, university, laboratory, institution or other entity in the City knowingly and intentionally engaging in the production of nuclear weapons.”

It further prohibits the City and its officials, employees or agents from “knowingly and intentionally granting any award, contract or purchase order, directly or indirectly, to purchase or lease products produced by a nuclear weapons producer.” And it instructs the City Administrator to maintain a socially responsible investment policy for the City that avoids “industries and institutions which are knowingly and intentionally engaged in the production of nuclear weapons.”

There are exclusions to these prohibitions and a waiver procedure to bypass them where necessary. However, Takoma Park is clearly doing all it is able to do as a city, within the limits of its jurisdiction and control, to comply with all the prohibitions in the Nuclear Ban Treaty.

During the 1980s and ‘90s, as many as 220 towns, cities, counties and Native American nations across the US declared themselves Nuclear Free Zones. Many of these passed legally-binding ordinances and city codes like the one in Takoma Park.

NuclearBan.US is a national campaign to get cities and states, colleges, hospitals, businesses, faith communities and individuals to be in compliance with the Nuclear Ban Treaty.

Dr. Timmon Wallis is Executive Director of NuclearBan.US and author of Disarming the Nuclear Argument: the Truth about Nuclear Weapons (Luath Press, 2017).

NuclearBan.US is a partner of ICAN, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons and winner of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize.

Beyond Nuclear aims to educate and activate the public about the connections between nuclear power and nuclear weapons and the need to abandon both to safeguard our future. Beyond Nuclear advocates for an energy future that is sustainable, benign and democratic. The Beyond Nuclear team works with diverse partners and allies to provide the public, government officials, and the media with the critical information necessary to move humanity toward a world beyond nuclear. Beyond Nuclear: [6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite 400, Takoma Park, MD 20912](mailto:Info@beyondnuclear.org). Info@beyondnuclear.org. www.beyondnuclear.org.