

6th September 2014

To:
Mr Anthony Albanese MP
Federal Member for Grayndler
334a Marrickville Road, Marrickville NSW 2204

Dear Anthony

Re: Request for a meeting to discuss peace and security initiatives coinciding with the International Day of Peace (21st September 2014)

I write to you on behalf of the Marrickville Peace Group and the Gallipoli Centenary Peace Campaign. If possible, members from both groups would like to arrange a meeting with you during the week beginning 15th September to discuss peace and security initiatives coinciding with the International Day of Peace.

International Day of Peace

The International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21st September. The United Nations General Assembly has declared this to be a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples.

To mark the 30th anniversary of the General Assembly Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace, the theme of this year's International Day of Peace is the 'Right of Peoples to Peace'. (Refer to the declaration at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/RightOfPeoplesToPeace.aspx>)

Given the threats that nuclear weapons pose to peace and security around the world, indeed to humanity's very survival, the Marrickville Peace Group resolved at its meeting in August to publicise the global call for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons on the International Day of Peace.

Accordingly, we would like to draw your attention to an appeal for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons currently being sponsored by Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). (Refer to PNND: <https://www.facebook.com/pnndglobal> and ICAN: <http://www.icanw.org>).

This appeal recognises that parliamentarians have an important role to play in advancing peace and security by eliminating nuclear weapons. The appeal notes that parliamentarians have a duty to "promote the safety and well-being" of the people they represent and that a "global ban on nuclear weapons is a humanitarian imperative of the highest order" which is "necessary, feasible and increasingly urgent". (Refer to ICAN's paper on the catastrophic effects of nuclear weapons on our health, societies and the environment entitled *Catastrophic Humanitarian Harm*: <http://www.icanw.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/catastrophicharm2012.pdf>)

So far the call for such a treaty has been endorsed by 150 governments, the United Nations Secretary-General, and the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. In addition, opinion polls around the world indicate overwhelming public support for a ban, including polling taken in nuclear-armed nations.

Endorsing the Global Parliamentary Appeal for a Nuclear Weapons Ban

As of August this year, a total of 547 parliamentarians in 28 different countries around the world, including Australia, have endorsed the PNNPD appeal. In Australia the appeal has been endorsed by 57 Federal parliamentarians and 45 State and Territory parliamentarians. (Refer to the form attached).

We urge you to endorse the Global Parliamentary Appeal for a Nuclear Weapons Ban. If your stated practice of not signing petitions extends to this Global Appeal as well, we would like to discuss other options (see below) that you could exercise in supporting this vital appeal.

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (26th September 2014)

We also draw your attention to the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons which will be observed this year on 26th September.

The International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons was established by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on the anniversary of the first ever UNGA High Level Meeting for Nuclear Disarmament.

In March 2014, the Inter Parliamentary Union (comprising 164 member parliaments), adopted a resolution that, among other things, calls on parliaments and parliamentarians to commemorate the day. (Refer to the resolution entitled 'Towards a Nuclear Weapon Free World: The Contribution of Parliaments': <http://www.ipu.org/conf-e/130/Res-1.htm>. For additional information on this campaign, refer to Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND): <http://www.pnnd.org/article/world-body-parliaments-calls-negotiations-abolish-nuclear-weapons>).

Other Endorsement Options

If you are unable to meet with us before 21st September, **can you indicate if you support the aims of the international campaign to ban nuclear weapons**. If so, we would be interested in referring to your support in our publicity related to the International Day of Peace.

We also note that these international calls for a ban on nuclear weapons can be supported in numerous other ways by parliamentarians. These include:

- Requesting the Speaker/President of their parliament to note the day with a statement of support;
- Lodging a motion in parliament to support the day;
- Asking the Prime Minister/President/Foreign Minister how the government plans to observe the day;
- Joining civil society events organised in Canberra or in their capital.

Additional Peace Initiatives

Apart from seeking your support for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons, the Marrickville Peace Group and the Gallipoli Centenary Peace Campaign (GCPC) would also like to take the opportunity to obtain your support for a range of other peace initiatives. These include:

- The Statement on Iraq - (see Statement attached).
- The Marrickville Peace Group's Submission to the Defence Issues Paper
- The Gallipoli Centenary Peace Campaign's call for Richardson's Lookout in Marrickville to be also officially recognised as a Peace and Reconciliation Park – (see GCPC's Proposal and Marrickville Council's Resolution attached)

With respect to other peace initiatives, the Marrickville Peace Campaign would like to acknowledge the stand you took on Israel's recent attack on Gaza as expressed in the article you wrote for theguardian.com on 1st August 2014.

While both the Marrickville Peace Group and the Gallipoli Centenary Peace Campaign would prefer to meet with you during the week beginning 15th September, we are happy to meet with you at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully



Jon Atkins
Member of Marrickville Peace Group
Secretary of Gallipoli Centenary Peace Campaign
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