

<http://wilpf.org/the-time-is-now-un-votes-to-ban-nuclear-weapons-in-2017/>

## **The Time is Now! UN Votes to Ban Nuclear Weapons in 2017!**

On 27 October, the United Nations adopted a landmark [resolution](#) to launch negotiations in 2017 on a treaty outlawing nuclear weapons! At a meeting of the [First Committee of the UN General Assembly](#), which deals with disarmament and international security matters, 123 countries [voted](#) in favour of the resolution, with 38 against and 16 abstaining. The resolution will set up a UN conference beginning in March next year, open to all member states, to negotiate a “legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination”. The negotiations will continue in June and July.

WILPF has been campaigning for the abolition of nuclear weapons since they were first created in 1945. Most recently, we have been actively engaged in the process to prohibit nuclear weapons as a member of the steering group of the [International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons \(ICAN\)](#). ICAN has [hailed](#) the adoption of the resolution as a major step forward, marking a fundamental shift in the way that the world tackles this paramount threat.

Despite arm-twisting by a number of nuclear-armed states, the resolution was adopted in a landslide. A total of 57 nations were co-sponsors, with Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, Nigeria and South Africa taking the lead in drafting the resolution.

Most of the nine nuclear-armed nations voted against the UN resolution. Many of their allies, including those in Europe that host nuclear weapons on their territory as part of a NATO arrangement, also failed to support the resolution. But the countries of Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and the Pacific voted overwhelmingly in favour of the resolution, and are likely to be key players at the negotiating conference in New York next year.

On Monday, 15 Nobel Peace Prize winners [urged](#) nations to support the negotiations and to bring them “to a timely and successful conclusion so that we can proceed rapidly toward the final elimination of this existential threat to humanity”. The International Committee of the Red Cross has also [appealed](#) to governments to support this process, stating on 12 October that the international community has a “unique opportunity” to achieve a ban on the “most destructive weapon ever invented”. [Amnesty International](#), [Greenpeace](#), and [Oxfam International](#) have also indicated support for the prohibition and ICAN’s work.

WILPF’s disarmament programme [Reaching Critical Will](#) has led on advocacy and analysis at the United Nations this past month and over the years leading up to this historic moment. WILPF members in Sections around the world have been contributing to national pressure on their governments. We will be out in force for the negotiations next year and beyond!

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Stay tuned with us for more details and announcements in the coming months.