

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 007  
(A-24)

Introduced by: American Association of Public Health Physicians

Subject: AMA Supports a Strategy for Eliminating Nuclear Weapons

Referred to: Reference Committee on Amendments to Constitution and Bylaws

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1 Whereas, AMA policies concerning weapons, which were modified last in 2015, voice clear  
2 “opposition to nuclear war” (Ref 1) and support for “the elimination by all nations of nuclear  
3 weapons and other weapons of mass and indiscriminate destruction” (Ref 2); and  
4

5 Whereas, millions have been sickened or killed by nuclear weapons testing around the world  
6 since 1945, yet the United Nation’s Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, adopted by the  
7 UN General Assembly in 1996 and ratified by 178 countries as of March 2024, has failed to  
8 enter into force because the United States and other nuclear weapons possessing countries  
9 have not ratified it and because, ominously, Vladimir Putin’s government withdrew its ratification  
10 in 2023 (Ref 3); and  
11

12 Whereas, AMA policy supports a “comprehensive nuclear test ban” and encourages the US  
13 Government to “to continue the process of bilateral and verifiable nuclear arms reduction”, (Ref  
14 4 & 5) but that process has stalled; and  
15

16 Whereas, seventy-six years after the 1945 bombs that killed hundreds of thousands of innocent  
17 civilians in Japan, the United Nation’s Treaty of the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at last  
18 became international law in 2021, though the Treaty is not ratified yet by any country that  
19 possesses nuclear weapons, (Ref 6); and  
20

21 Whereas, the US government plans to spend \$1.7-3 trillion over the next thirty years to update  
22 its thousands of nuclear bombs and delivery systems, money that the concepts of intersectional  
23 justice (Ref 7) dictate should be better spent on healthcare, education, housing and other  
24 needs; and  
25

26 Whereas, a strategy towards implementing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons  
27 has been enunciated (Ref 8); and  
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29 Whereas, this strategy has been endorsed by hundreds of local governments, civil society  
30 organizations, and medical organizations, including the Maine Medical Association, American  
31 Public Health Association, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Union of Concerned  
32 Scientists, (Ref 9); and  
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34 Whereas, the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine, the Middle East, and the Indo-Pakistani region  
35 involving nuclear weapons possessing countries are raising the risk of an intentional or  
36 accidental nuclear war with devastating health consequences; therefore be it  
37

38 RESOLVED, that our American Medical Association calls for the United States and the other  
39 nuclear weapons states to sign and ratify the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of

1 Nuclear Weapons and to pursue good-faith negotiations on effective measures relating to the  
2 cessation of the nuclear arms race (Directive to Take Action); and be it further  
3

4 RESOLVED, that our AMA calls for the United States to renounce the option to be the first  
5 country to use nuclear weapons ("first use") during a conflict (Directive to Take Action); and be it  
6 further  
7

8 RESOLVED, that our AMA supports a process whereby multiple individuals, rather than solely  
9 the President, are required to approve a nuclear attack, while still allowing a swift response  
10 when needed (New HOD Policy); and be it further  
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12 RESOLVED, that our AMA calls on the US government to cancel plans to rebuild its entire  
13 nuclear arsenal and instead to reassess its true strategic needs for the types and numbers of  
14 nuclear weapons and delivery systems. (Directive to Take Action)  
15

Fiscal Note: Modest - between \$1,000 - \$5,000

Received: 4/24/2024

#### REFERENCES

1. H-520.999 Opposition to Nuclear War  
The AMA recognizes the catastrophic dangers to all life in the event of nuclear war and supports efforts for the prevention of such a nuclear holocaust.
2. H-520.988 Abolition of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass and Indiscriminate Destruction  
The AMA supports the elimination by all nations of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass and indiscriminate destruction.
3. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comprehensive\\_Nuclear-Test-Ban\\_Treaty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comprehensive_Nuclear-Test-Ban_Treaty) Accessed 3.28.2024
4. H-520.994 Nuclear Test Ban  
The AMA acknowledges the threat from nuclear weapons to the health of the people of the world and favors the establishment of a mutual, verifiable, and comprehensive nuclear test ban
5. D-440.972 Safety from Nuclear Weapons and Medical Consequences of Nuclear War  
Our AMA will support legislation that would protect public health and safety, should the testing of nuclear weapons by the United States be resumed.  
Our AMA will urge the U.S. and all national governments to continue to work to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons and will collaborate with relevant stakeholders to increase public awareness and education on the topic of the medical and environmental consequences of nuclear war.
6. <https://disarmament.unoda.org/wmd/nuclear/tpnw/> Accessed 3.28.2024
7. Intersectional Justice: <https://psr.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/intersectional-justice.pdf>. Accessed 3.28.2024
8. Back from the Brink. Our five policy solution. Available at: <https://www.preventnuclearwar.org/our-five-policy-solutions/>. Accessed 3.28.2024
9. APHA Policy 20209: <https://www.apha.org/Policies-and-Advocacy/Public-Health-Policy-Statements/Policy-Database/2021/01/13/Toward-a-World-Free-of-Nuclear-Weapons> . Accessed 3.28.2024

#### RELEVANT AMA POLICY

##### **H-520.999 Opposition to Nuclear War**

The AMA recognizes the catastrophic dangers to all life in the event of nuclear war and supports efforts for the prevention of such a nuclear holocaust.

Citation: (Sub. Res. 82, A-81; Reaffirmed: Sunset Report, I-98; Reaffirmed: CSAPH Rep. 2, A-08; Reaffirmed: Res. 524, A-15)

##### **H-520.988 Abolition of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass and Indiscriminate Destruction**

The AMA supports the elimination by all nations of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass and indiscriminate destruction.

Res. 617, I-96 Reaffirmed: CLRPD Rep. 2, A-06 Reaffirmed: Res. 524, A-15

**H-520.994 Nuclear Test Ban**

The AMA acknowledges the threat from nuclear weapons to the health of the people of the world and favors the establishment of a mutual, verifiable, and comprehensive nuclear test ban.

Res. 90, I-88 Reaffirmed: Sunset Report, I-98 Reaffirmed: CSAPH Rep. 2, A-08 Reaffirmed: Res. 524, A-15

**D-440.972 Safety from Nuclear Weapons and Medical Consequences of Nuclear War**

1. Our AMA will support legislation that would protect public health and safety, should the testing of nuclear weapons by the United States be resumed.

2. Our AMA will urge the U.S. and all national governments to continue to work to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons and will collaborate with relevant stakeholders to increase public awareness and education on the topic of the medical and environmental consequences of nuclear war.

Res. 436, A-05 Appended: Res. 524, A-15

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