

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

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
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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
33

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
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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
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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
11

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)
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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 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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