
VI. EMPOWERMENT

VICTORIES OF PEACE AND ABOLITION

The movement for the elimination of nuclear weapons has had some significant victories since it began. It's important that we celebrate these victories: they inspire us to persevere, even when we don't seem to be making much progress. They're proof that the will of the people can prevail.

1946: The United Nations General Assembly, in its very first resolution, calls for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and establishes a commission to deal with the problem raised by the discovery of atomic energy.

1955: Eleven leading scientists and intellectuals sign the Russell–Einstein Manifesto, warning of the dangers posed by nuclear weapons and calling on world leaders to find peaceful solutions to international tensions.

1957: Internationally renowned physician and Nobel Peace Prize winner Albert Schweitzer publishes the famous Declaration of Conscience, his public appeal against the development of nuclear weapons.

1970: The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty an international treaty promoting nuclear non- proliferation and nuclear disarmament – enters into force.

1981: Thousands of women march to Greenham Common, a military base in the United Kingdom housing 96 nuclear missiles, and commence a 19 year protest which results in the removal of the missiles and the closure of the base.

1982: The biggest demonstration to that date takes place in New York, with one million people gathering in support of the second United Nations Special Session on Disarmament and to express opposition to nuclear weapons.

1984: Jo Vallentine is elected to the Australian Senate as a candidate for the Nuclear Disarmament Party, becoming the first person in the world to be voted into office on the single issue of nuclear disarmament.

1984: New Zealand becomes the first single-nation nuclear-free zone, with the Labour government implementing a nuclear prohibition policy despite considerable opposition from its Western allies.

1985: International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War win the Nobel Peace Prize for raising awareness of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear warfare and for generating opposition to nuclear weapons.

1991: The Cold War ends, marking the beginning of an era of reduced reliance on nuclear weapons, with Russia and the United States substantially reducing the size of their nuclear arsenals.

1991: South Africa completes the process of dismantling all of its nuclear weapons, making it the only nation in the world to have developed nuclear weapons and then voluntarily given them up.


1995: Civil society organizations from across the globe join forces to create Abolition 2000, a network which shifts the world's focus from nuclear arms control to nuclear weapons abolition.

1996: The International Court of Justice, the highest court in the world, holds that there exists an obligation under international law to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to complete nuclear disarmament.

1996: The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, an international treaty banning all nuclear explosions in all environments, whether for military or civilian purposes, opens for signature.

2000: The Review Conference of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty adopts a final document with 13 practical steps towards disarmament

2007: The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons is launched throughout the world with the aim of generating a groundswell of popular support for a treaty that would ban nuclear weapons.



METHOD 1: BRAINSTORMING – GET ACTIVE

MATERIAL: paper and pens, table, computer with internet

LOCATION AND TIME: room with a free wall, approx. 30-60 minutes

Young activism as two pillars: Youth are getting active when they can implement their own ideas. An action is successful if it is also fun. As motivation for an own action it can be helpful to have a look on what already was done successfully. Look at websites like bang-europe.org or ipnw-students.org to see what kind of action people take for nuclear abolition. Design an overview on the different kinds of actions and add your own ideas!

How such an overview could look like:

Outreach	Exhibitions, movies, memorials, signature collection, concerts, workshops in school and with youth groups, seminars, articles, flyer, painting, theater, information desks in the city such as My cup of tea or Target X, article in newspapers
Protest	Demonstration, open letter, banners, fast, flyer
Lobby	Letters to members of parliament, mayors or others, attending international conferences, visiting embassies and missions
Communication & networking	Intercultural meetings, festivals, seminars, sponsored travel

METHOD 2: ABOLITION ONLINE

MATERIAL: computer with internet

LOCATION AND TIME: long-term project at the internet

You would stay updated on nuclear weapons and also inform others? Where would this work better out than at the internet? Here you have a few ideas on online projects for an exchange of information.

- **Creat your own blog:** You can create your own blog free of charge through websites such as blogspot.com or wordpress.com. A blog would let you to post your thoughts about eliminating nuclear weapons, including photos and even videos. You could link your blog to similar blogs.
- **Form a Facebook group:** There are many applications on the social-networking site facebook.com that you could use to promote nuclear weapons abolition. For example, you could set up a “cause” or a “group” and invite your friends to join and donate money. You could then encourage them to invite their friends.
- **Discuss nuclear weapons:** The internet is home to several discussion forums about peace and disarmament. Consider joining these to make your views heard. There are also chat rooms where you can do the same. Many newspapers are now published online as well as in hard copy and enable you to post comments.
- **Make and post a video:** Many computers, particular laptops, have a built-in video camera that allows you to record your thoughts in a movie. You can edit the movie using a program such as Windows Movie Maker and upload it to a website like Youtube.com or DailyMotion.com.