

European Parliament Votes In Favour Of A Ban on Nuclear Weapons

By [International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons](#)

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Brussels/Strasbourg. European Union's legislature takes clear stance on upcoming negotiations on international treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons: the EU's Member States should "support the convening" and "participate substantively" in its negotiation.

Today the European Parliament took a clear stance to support the negotiations of a treaty banning nuclear weapons. In this resolution, the EU's Parliament:

- "Welcomes the recommendation to the UN General Assembly ... to convene a conference in 2017 ... to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons"
- "Invites the EU Member States to support the convening of such a conference in 2017 and to participate constructively in its proceedings"
- "Invites VP/HR Federica Mogherini and the European External Action Service to contribute constructively to the proceedings of the 2017 negotiating conference"

This resolution is adopted on the same day as United Nations General Assembly votes on starting negotiations on a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons. Unlike EU parliamentarians, however, the majority of the EU's governments appear to defend the possession and legitimacy of nuclear weapons instead of strengthening humanitarian law and banning the last weapons of mass destruction.



The European Parliament's resolutions are not binding on Member States in regards to foreign policy matters, but act as recommendation and send a message to the governments across Europe that parties from the entire political spectrum are supportive of this process.

"The resolution is a particularly encouraging development, as even the EU's centre-right and conservative parties voted for strong language in favour of the start of negotiations to prohibit nuclear weapons under international law in 2017", says Leo Hoffmann-Axthelm, ICAN campaigner in Brussels.

While their governments at home, together with the world's nuclear armed states, are almost the only countries globally to oppose a Ban Treaty, the people's representatives in the European Parliament took a view that much closer mirrors what surveys have been showing for a long time: we reject nuclear weapons, and will not want to entrust our

“security” to a deterrence gamble that has failed far too often to guarantee 100% reliability.

While also condemning Russia’s nuclear sabre-rattling, the resolution sends a clear signal of de-escalation and calls on all EU Member States, the EU’s diplomatic service and HR/VP Federica Mogherini to participate constructively in the negotiations to prohibit nuclear weapons.

While this resolution was adopted in Brussels, many European governments at the United Nations in New York are preparing to vote ‘No’ to the UN resolution setting up negotiations for a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons under international law. “Aside from some strong European leaders in Austria, Ireland and Sweden, it’s hypocritical of the majority of European governments to claim seeking a world free of nuclear weapons while working hard to keep nuclear weapons legal to possess and use for their military alliances. Nuclear weapons are inhumane and indiscriminate weapons of mass destruction, and should have no place in a Europe that is committed to upholding humanitarian law and values, ” says Beatrice Fihn, executive director of ICAN.

The resolution to start negotiations of a treaty banning nuclear weapons will be voted upon by governments on 27 October 2016, at the United Nations in New York.

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