

Nuclear Weapons, No First Use: “It Makes the World Safer”

Today marks 74 years since the atomic bombing of Nagasaki; the 74th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima was August 6.

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Jeff Carter is Executive Director of Physicians for Social Responsibility.

In a statement released today, he said:

“During the second 2020 presidential debate, Senator Elizabeth Warren reiterated her support for a ‘No First Use’ policy on nuclear weapons, stating, ‘It makes the world safer. The United States is not going to use nuclear weapons preemptively, and we need to say so to the entire world.’ Warren is the original sponsor of No First Use legislation in the Senate (S. 272). Physicians for Social Responsibility welcomes discussion of a nuclear ‘No First Use’ during a presidential debate. This is a matter of public health and safety, and it’s also a matter of the United States’ moral and political position on the global stage. This is not a partisan issue, and it affects all of us. . . .

“Establishing an official U.S. policy of No First Use of nuclear weapons would provide critical stability and serve as an essential step to preventing potential nuclear conflict. Right now, the United States has withdrawn from almost every multilateral nuclear arms treaty that effectively provided critical verification of arms reduction and helped prevent a new nuclear arms race. Meanwhile, the risk of nuclear war is greater than it’s been since the height of the Cold War. Nuclear weapons make us less safe, not more. Establishing a policy of No First Use puts us back on track and pulls us back from the brink of nuclear war.

“Most Americans don’t want our nation to start a nuclear war; in fact, most Americans think we already have an official policy that we will never start a nuclear war. It’s time to make No First Use a reality. Doing so will signal the seriousness of our commitment to nuclear nonproliferation, and our seriousness of our intent to prevent a nuclear war from ever occurring. It will send a strong signal to other nuclear-armed countries and to those with the potential to develop nuclear arsenals. When the United States adopts a No First Use policy, this may motivate other nuclear-armed nations to follow suit. People in other nations justify their nuclear buildups by pointing to U.S. policies to ‘keep all options on the table.’ A U.S. declared No First Use policy would remove that justification.”

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