

# Open Letter to President-Elect Donald Trump on Nuclear Weapons and the Dangers of Nuclear War

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#)

In-depth Report: [Nuclear War](#)

**[Prefatory Note:** The text below is an Open Letter to the next American president urging complete nuclear disarmament as an urgent priority.

The letter was prepared under the auspices of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, and its current list of signatories are listed below. It is hoped that concerns with nuclear weapons policy will rise to the top of the global policy agenda and will engage people everywhere. It is our view that the elimination of nuclear weaponry is a matter of upholding the human interest of all peoples, as well as promoting the national interest of each country.]

<https://www.wagingpeace.org/open-letter-trump/>

## Open Letter to President-elect Trump: Negotiate Nuclear Zero

As president of the United States, you will have the grave responsibility of assuring that nuclear weapons are not overtly threatened or used during your term of office.

The most certain way to fulfill this responsibility is to negotiate with the other possessors of nuclear weapons for their total elimination. The U.S. is obligated under Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to engage in such negotiations in good faith for an end to the nuclear arms race and for nuclear disarmament.

A nuclear war, any nuclear war, would be an act of insanity. Between nuclear weapons states, it would lead to the destruction of the attacking nation as well as the attacked. Between the U.S. and Russia, it would threaten the survival of humanity.

There are still more than 15,000 nuclear weapons in the world, of which the United States possesses more than 7,000. Some 1,000 of these remain on hair-trigger alert. A similar number remain on hair-trigger alert in Russia. This is a catastrophe waiting to happen.

Even if nuclear weapons are not used intentionally, they could be used inadvertently by accident or miscalculation. Nuclear weapons and human fallibility are a dangerous mix.

Nuclear deterrence presupposes a certain view of human behavior. It depends on the willingness of political leaders to act rationally under all circumstances, even those of extreme stress. It provides no guarantees or physical protection. It could fail spectacularly and tragically.

You have suggested that more nations – such as Japan, South Korea and even Saudi Arabia – may need to develop their own nuclear arsenals because the U.S. spends too much money protecting other countries. This nuclear proliferation would make for a far more dangerous world. It is also worrisome that you have spoken of dismantling or reinterpreting the international agreement that places appropriate limitations on Iran's nuclear program and has the support of all five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany.

As other presidents have had, you will have at your disposal the power to end civilization as we know it. You will also have the opportunity, should you choose, to lead in ending the nuclear weapons era and achieving nuclear zero through negotiations on a treaty for the phased, verifiable, irreversible and transparent elimination of nuclear weapons.

We, the undersigned, urge you to choose the course of negotiations for a nuclear weapons-free world. It would be a great gift to all humanity and all future generations.

**To add your name to the open letter, [click here](#).**

Initial signers:

David Krieger  
President, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

Richard Falk  
Senior Vice President, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

Daniel Ellsberg  
Distinguished Fellow, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

Noam Chomsky  
Professor Emeritus, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Oliver Stone  
Film director

Setsuko Thurlow  
Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Survivor

Anders Wijkman  
Co-President, Club of Rome

Helen Caldicott  
Founding President, Physicians for Social Responsibility

Ben Ferencz  
Former Nuremberg war crimes prosecutor

Robert Jay Lifton  
Columbia University

Hon. Douglas Roche, O.C.  
Former Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament

Martin Hellman  
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Robert Laney  
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Jonathan Granoff  
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