

# It's time to get serious about nuclear disarmament: An open letter from local, county, and state officials to President Joe Biden

November 16, 2023

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
The White House  
Washington, DC

Dear President Biden:

We, local and state elected officials from throughout the country, write to you about a clear and present danger—the growing threat of nuclear war—to urge you to act decisively and urgently to confront this existential threat to humanity and all we hold dear.

In July, 2022 you said “I have a responsibility to act with urgency and resolve when our nation faces clear and present danger.” You also speak regularly and eloquently about the American people’s ability to take on big challenges and accomplish whatever it is we set out to do as a people, as a country.

There are a number of steps you should take immediately that will significantly reduce nuclear risks, make the United States and the entire world safer and get us back on the path to a world free of nuclear weapons.

As you know these goals are shared by the other major nuclear powers whose leaders joined with you in 2022 to declare that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought” while also affirming the shared obligation under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation (NPT) Treaty “to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament.”

Mr. President, it's time to act before catastrophe strikes and our luck runs out.

From November 27th to December 1st, 2023, the 2nd Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) will be held in New York City. We urge your administration to send an observer delegation to the meeting. Doing so would send a clear signal to all nations — notably those countries that have either signed or ratified the TPNW — that their voices, concerns and desire for a safer world matter and that you believe the treaty can be an effective tool to make progress on global nuclear disarmament.

During the 2020 presidential campaign you said, "I will restore American leadership on arms control and non-proliferation as a central pillar of U.S. global leadership...I will work to bring us closer to a world free of nuclear weapons so that the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are never repeated."

We urge you to show that leadership now by formally inviting Russia, China and all nuclear weapons states to enter into negotiations to pursue a verifiable, time bound agreement to eliminate all nuclear weapons. Such an invitation to pursue dialogue and diplomacy built on a foundation of mutual self-interest in preventing a catastrophic nuclear war is precisely what is needed right now in the midst of heightened global tensions.

Sincerely,

**Pious Ali**

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