



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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**HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI REMEMBERED: CALLS FOR A NUCLEAR WEAPONS BAN**

**PHOTO OP OUTSIDE DFAT, BRISBANE AVENUE, BARTON, ACT. TUESDAY 8 – 9 am.**

On Tuesday morning, members of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) will protest outside the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, at the government's opposition to a ban on nuclear weapons. The event will involve depictions of nuclear missiles.

August 9 marks the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the nuclear bombing of the Japanese city of Nagasaki, 3 days after the bombing of Hiroshima on August 6. Both cities were virtually destroyed. Currently there are over 15,000 nuclear weapons in the world, in the hands of just nine nations. Australia gives strong support to US nuclear weapons policies, and has refused to state that the weapons should never be used again.

There is a strong global movement for a nuclear weapons ban treaty, to delegitimise and stigmatise the weapons in the same way that both chemical and biological weapons are banned by treaty. Civil society groups, including ICAN, are working with a large number of governments to achieve such a treaty.

From August 5 to 19, a UN Open-Ended Working Group is meeting in Geneva to discuss legal measures for a nuclear weapons free world, and the group is expected to recommend to the UN General Assembly negotiations for a nuclear weapons ban treaty. Australia has been in the forefront of trying to undermine this process.

ICAN spokesperson Dr Sue Wareham said, "It is appalling that as most of the world is doing everything possible to outlaw these most terrible of all weapons, Australia is doing the bidding of the nations with the weapons. Once again, we will be on the wrong side of history."

A series of intergovernmental conferences since 2013 have concluded that the humanitarian damage from a nuclear weapon explosion would be catastrophic, and relief agencies could offer any survivors very little. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has also been prominent in advocating the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

**For further information, or interview, please call:**

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