

# THANKS TO YOU, WE ARE OPEN! PROGRESS REPORT, SPRING 2023



International Physicians for the Prevention of  
Nuclear War (IPPNW) Geneva Liaison Office  
Campus Biotech Innovation Park  
15, av. de Sécheron, 1202  
Genève, Switzerland



# Why Geneva, Why Now?



Facing the greatest threat of nuclear conflict since the Cold War, IPPNW, *with your help*, is re-doubling its efforts for preventing nuclear war.

The Russian Federation has repeatedly warned that it would consider using tactical nuclear weapons in Ukraine. These threats have heightened concern about the risk of nuclear war among the public and world leaders to a level not seen in decades.

The time is ripe for our message to be heard and understood. Eliminating all nuclear weapons is an urgent medical, humanitarian, environmental, and public health imperative. Setting up a liaison office in Geneva is a logical next step in strengthening IPPNW's global network of 55 national affiliates and our partners in the health community worldwide.

Establishing a permanent presence in the "Peace Capital" of the world, we are better able to use our NGO status at the United Nations and the World Health Organization to advance our work. IPPNW can take advantage of our international credibility, working side-by-side with diplomats and decision-makers in Geneva.

Our Geneva office will help our movement to:

- Build on the momentum for nuclear weapons abolition created by the passage of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons by the UN in a 122-1-1 vote. IPPNW initiated and remains a leader in the 2017 Nobel Prize winning International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)--the lead civil society organization, based in Geneva. Working with diplomatic missions, we will continue to urge nations to join the Nuclear Ban Treaty. So far 96 countries have signed or ratified it. By encouraging more nations to join we help establish the international norm that nuclear weapons are illegal and their possession or use is forbidden.
- Coordinate our nuclear weapons abolition advocacy with our colleagues in the International Committee for the Red Cross, the World Medical Association, the World Federation of Public Health Associations, and the International Council of Nurses, whose international headquarters are all in Geneva.
- Urge the World Health Organization to join in--by updating their 1987 report on the Health Effects of Nuclear War and acknowledging the duty of health professionals to help prevent the greatest immediate threat to the health and welfare of humankind.



# Geneva Office Up and Running in 2023

In March, IPPNW established a new office in Geneva as an official association at the University of Geneva's Campus Biotech Innovation Park, 15 av. de Secheron, 1202--a fifteen-minute walk from the United Nations.



IPPNW's Program Director, Chuck Johnson moved this year to Geneva to direct the office in person. He has worked closely with Emma Pike, a contractor from our Boston office, and Alexandra Reidon--whose previous experience in setting up ICAN's Geneva Office has been invaluable.



Chuck and colleagues of Swiss IPPNW gave presentations at the University of Geneva's Institute for Global Health (ISG), met with students, faculty, and new colleagues there, and are spreading the word on fertile ground that nuclear weapons and war are a critical health issue.



*IPPNW Program Director Chuck Johnson presents to Prof. Beat Stoll's class at University of Geneva's Institute for Global Health*

Among other projects, we are working with Dr. Andrew Haines in drafting an opinion piece for medical journals to consider issuing jointly on the acute health threat of nuclear war, as was done previously in addressing the climate crisis with broad global participation. We are also participating with the WHO in developing their Global Health for Peace Initiative (GHPI) and addressing concerns of NGOs providing medical aid in war zones or politically charged environments.

*At left, IPPNW Student Representative Victor Chelashow, Kenya, and Linda Pentz Gunter of Beyond Nuclear share a podium at ICAN's Civil Forum, Vienna, July 2022*

# 2022: the year the world remembered nuclear weapons

## IPPNW's actions in a chaotic year

### Timely warning - 5 Days before the Invasion of Ukraine



<http://www.ippnw.org/no-war>



Olga Mironova, IPPNW VP  
Russian Federation, moderator



Ira Helfand, IPPNW  
Immediate Past President

As the War in Ukraine began to look more and more likely, IPPNW organized a webinar on the dangers such a war would bring, including potentially hundreds of thousands of casualties from conventional war, threats to nuclear power plants that could serve as hostage facilities or dirty bombs, and even the potential use of nuclear weapons. Thousands of health professionals and concerned citizens from around the world tuned in. Our panelists Dr. Barry Levy, Linda Pentz Gunter, and Dr. Ira Helfand proved all too prescient as the tragic consequences of this war have unfolded.

At the one-year anniversary mark for the start of the war in Ukraine, IPPNW held a second webinar presenting a briefing paper summarizing what had happened to date and our appeal to Russia and NATO to avert nuclear war and for all parties to respect international humanitarian law. IPPNW Chair Dr. Ruth Mitchell from Australia moderated this year's panel, with thousands tuning in from around the globe for a second time.

# Over One Million signed our petition with Nobel Laureates



## Open Letter From Nobel Peace Prize Laureates and Citizens of the World Against War and Nuclear Weapons:

**We reject war and nuclear weapons.** We call on all our fellow citizens of the world to join us in protecting our planet, home for all of us, from those who threaten to destroy it.

The invasion of Ukraine has created a humanitarian disaster for its people. The entire world is facing the greatest threat in history: a large-scale nuclear war, capable of destroying our civilization and causing vast ecological damage across the Earth.

**We call for an immediate ceasefire and the withdrawal of all Russian military forces** from Ukraine, and for all possible efforts at dialogue to prevent this ultimate disaster.

**We call on Russia and NATO to explicitly renounce any use of nuclear weapons** in this conflict, and we call on all countries to support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons **to ensure that we never again face a similar moment of nuclear danger.**

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, IPPNW, and other Nobel Peace Prize Laureates are asking Avaaz and all citizens around the world to join this historic call to reject war and nuclear weapons — when it's huge, it will be delivered to the Russian Federation and NATO:

COUNT ME IN

By continuing you agree to receive Avaaz emails. Our [Privacy Policy](#) will protect your data and explains how it can be used. You can unsubscribe at any time.



IPPNW turned to fellow Nobel Peace Prize winners and the grassroots advocacy group Avaaz to launch a petition rejecting war and nuclear weapons and urging people to join our global appeal. The petition called for an immediate ceasefire, the withdrawal of all Russian military forces from Ukraine, and for Russia and NATO to explicitly renounce any use of nuclear weapons in the conflict.

Within 10 days our petition had received over a million signatures which we hand delivered to the UN High Representative on Disarmament and to the Russian, United States, French, and British UN embassies. We remain in communication with Avaaz regarding future actions this year.

# New funding launches IPPNW forward faster!

We have great news! IPPNW's capacity to advocate for the elimination of nuclear weapons is growing. Another big supporter of nuclear disarmament just gave \$100,000 and will give another \$50,000 next year toward the establishment of a new IPPNW office in Geneva!

This is on top of a founding \$100,000 matching gift for the Geneva office with \$50,000 already matched. When the dust settles with these gifts, and the many others we have received from you and others like you, we will have received over \$300,000 in the first nine months of the Geneva project. Thank you!

This positive financial feedback is accelerating development of the Geneva

office, including adding a new key member to our team at the Central Office –Cynthia Hurst, who recently joined IPPNW as director of development.

Cynthia has extensive fundraising experience, including on the international stage, having been director of development for the International Campaign for Tibet, established at the behest of the Dalai Lama, where she increased the annual budget to over \$4.5 million per year. Cynthia looks forward to working with all of our wonderful supporters as she focuses on increasing IPPNW's fundraising momentum for the Geneva office and all activities leading toward our goal of eliminating nuclear weapons.

## What's Next?

- Hire a long-term staff member for the Geneva office in the summer of 2023 and continue our contracts with local experts in Switzerland;
- Develop ongoing collaboration with the School of Global Health: recruiting interns and professors;
- Strengthen growing relationships with Geneva groups : Mediciens Sans Frontieres, International Committee for the Red Cross, and many more to expand our worldwide impact;
- Build momentum from IPPNW's historic 23rd World Congress in Mombasa, Kenya - and at both the World Medical Association Council Meeting in Nairobi, and the World Federation of Public Health Associations in Rome - with IPPNW presentations before our partner groups.

## You can help

**Give Today**

Support our growing movement for the elimination of nuclear weapons at [IPPNW.Org](http://IPPNW.Org)