



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-02538**

BY: **Ms. DAMOFF (OAKVILLE NORTH-BURLINGTON)**

DATE: **JUNE 20, 2018**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **SIGNED BY THE HONOURABLE CHRYSSTIA FREELAND**

Response by the Minister of Foreign Affairs

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Nuclear weapons

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

Advancing nuclear disarmament in a concrete way remains a priority for the Government of Canada. Canada absolutely recognizes the grave consequences of a nuclear detonation, which are clear and beyond dispute.

Canada is resolved to make further progress on effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament in order to advance toward the shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons. The Government of Canada welcomes pragmatic actions that contribute to achieving this goal and is concentrating its efforts on practical, inclusive and effective measures that take account of the current security environment. To this end, Canada continues to recognize the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT) as the principal multilateral framework for achieving this goal.

Canada does not believe that the *Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons* (Prohibition Treaty) will be effective in achieving nuclear disarmament, as without the participation of nuclear weapon states it will not result in the elimination of a single nuclear weapon. However, while Canada does not intend to sign the treaty, the Government of Canada

acknowledges that it reflects legitimate frustration with the pace of nuclear disarmament and the desire of many countries, communities and individuals to move more rapidly toward a world free of nuclear weapons. The Government of Canada particularly appreciates the role of civil society in informing Canadians about the dangers of nuclear war and encouraging further action on nuclear disarmament.

The Government of Canada believes that a more effective approach to nuclear disarmament is to support pragmatic and inclusive measures that counteract growing international divisions and unite nuclear and non-nuclear armed states in working toward our common goal. This is why Canada chaired a United Nations Expert Group in 2017-18 to prepare the way for negotiation of a *Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty* (FMCT) that would end production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons. This group successfully produced a consensus report that lays out, in plain language, the underlying obligations of a treaty as well as options for its definitions, verification requirements, and legal/institutional structure. Based on this report, Canada is calling for the immediate negotiation of an FMCT in the Conference on Disarmament.

In addition to the FMCT, Canada is involved in multilateral initiatives to develop and strengthen measures to build global capacity for nuclear disarmament verification (essential for disarmament and currently lacking), and to further the implementation of the 2010 NPT Action Plan.

In these challenging times, Canada recognizes the need to redouble our efforts to protect and promote the rules-based system and the norms established over many decades. The Government of Canada truly appreciates that many stakeholders are working to create the conditions for continued progress on nuclear disarmament. Canada is confident that with leadership on the FMCT and active participation in practical initiatives like the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, Canada can constructively advance this process.