



NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

Committed to a World Free of Nuclear Weapons

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NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT PIONEER WELCOMES NEW OBAMA POLICY SPEECH

“Today, I state clearly and with conviction, America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.”

–U.S. President Barack Obama

President Obama has won high praise from a man who has devoted much of his life to ridding the world of nuclear weapons.

[David Krieger](#), co-founder and President of the [Nuclear Age Peace Foundation](#), has been working on the issue for nearly 27 years. In an essay out today (see below), he called attention to the April 5 speech in Prague in which the U.S. President laid out his vision for a nuclear weapons-free future.



“[President Obama’s speech](#) in Prague was a world changing moment, a promise of unprecedented historical change on the most profoundly dangerous issue confronting not only America but the world,” wrote Dr. Krieger. “In this speech he recognized the imperative for our common security of eliminating nuclear weapons and of America’s unique moral responsibility to lead this effort.”

The biggest change, Dr. Krieger pointed out, was the presence of true U.S. leadership focused on the goal of a nuclear weapons-free world.

Last month, Dr. Krieger led a delegation to Washington, DC to present a petition to the White House. Called “U.S. Leadership for a Nuclear Weapons-Free World,” the special appeal was signed by 70,000 people and 100 organizations.

Remarkably, the last line of the petition, which was circulated largely in 2008 *before* Obama’s election, has been fulfilled in large part by President Obama’s Prague speech. This is what the petition said:

“We call upon President Obama to make a world free of nuclear weapons an urgent priority and to assure US leadership to realize this goal.”
(See below for the seven points of the petition.)

“Political will and US leadership have been the most significant missing elements for achieving a world free of nuclear weapons,” wrote Dr. Krieger in his essay. “Now that these elements are in place, we may be surprised by how quickly the planning and implementation process can proceed toward the total global elimination of these unconscionable weapons.”

Although Dr. Krieger sees the speech as a remarkable beginning, and believes that progress is more likely now than it has been in many years, he recognizes that there is still a long way to go. “[President Obama] has taken us a third of the way to the goal by articulating this vision. Now a more detailed plan must be formulated and the plan must be implemented,” wrote Dr. Krieger.

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation wants to help bring such a plan, based on this new U.S. policy, to fruition. The Foundation wants to use its extensive [educational resources](#) (www.wagingpeace.org and www.nuclearfiles.org) to create strong grassroots support for the goal we share with President Obama.

The Foundation believes that sensible nuclear disarmament -- multilateral, phased, irreversible, verifiable and transparent -- is an essential part of ensuring the future viability of our precious planet Earth.

Anyone who supports the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons can join the Foundation here. <http://www.wagingpeace.org/> Membership is free.

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Here is the text of the petition presented to the White House on March 11, 2009.

“US Leadership for a Nuclear Weapons-Free World”

Nuclear weapons could destroy civilization and end intelligent life on the planet.

The only sure way to prevent nuclear proliferation, nuclear terrorism and nuclear war -- before the next blinding flash -- is to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

The era of nuclear weapons must be brought to an end. This can be done. It will require leadership and commitment. Nuclear weapons were created by humans, and it is our responsibility to eliminate them before they eliminate us.

The United States, as the world's most militarily powerful nation, must take the initiative in convening and leading the nations of the world to urgently take the following steps:

De-alert. Remove all nuclear weapons from high-alert status, separating warheads from delivery vehicles;

No First Use. Make legally binding commitments to No First Use of nuclear weapons and establish nuclear policies consistent with this commitment;

No New Nuclear Weapons. Initiate a moratorium on the research and development of new nuclear weapons, such as the Reliable Replacement Warhead;

Ban Nuclear Testing Forever. Ratify and bring into force the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty;

Control Nuclear Material. Create a verifiable Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty with provisions to bring all weapons-grade nuclear material and the technologies to create such material under strict and effective international control;

Nuclear Weapons Convention. Commence good faith negotiations, as required by the Non-Proliferation Treaty, to achieve a Nuclear Weapons Convention for the phased, verifiable and irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons;

Resources for Peace. Reallocate resources from the tens of billions currently spent on nuclear arms to alleviating poverty, preventing and curing disease, eliminating hunger and expanding educational opportunities throughout the world.

We call upon President Obama to make a world free of nuclear weapons an urgent priority and to assure US leadership to realize this goal.”

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PRESIDENT OBAMA CALLS FOR A WORLD FREE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS By David Krieger

In a remarkable speech for any American leader, President Obama, speaking in Prague on April 5, 2009, provided new hope for a world free of nuclear weapons. “I state clearly and with conviction,” he said, “America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.” He told his audience that America, as the only country to have used nuclear weapons, “has a moral responsibility to act.”

For many years the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation has been calling for US leadership for a nuclear weapons-free world, based on the understanding that if the US does not lead, significant progress will not be possible. For the past two presidencies this leadership has been largely lacking. During the George W. Bush presidency, the US was the leading obstacle to nuclear disarmament. Now, with President Obama, there is a dramatic shift

and the goal of US leadership for a nuclear weapons-free world that once seemed far distant, if not impossible, appears at hand.

President Obama's speech in Prague was a world changing moment, a promise of unprecedented historical change on the most profoundly dangerous issue confronting not only America but the world. In this speech he recognized the imperative for our common security of eliminating nuclear weapons and of America's unique moral responsibility to lead this effort.

He made it clear that while America cannot do it alone, it will lead by its actions. He called for "concrete steps," including reducing the role of nuclear weapons in US national security strategy and urging other nuclear weapons states to do the same, reducing the number of nuclear weapons in its arsenal, working aggressively for US ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, seeking a new treaty to end production of fissile materials for weapons, strengthening the Non-Proliferation Treaty, creating an international fuel bank to reduce the risks of proliferation, assuring that nuclear weapons will not be acquired by terrorists, and leading an international effort to gain control of vulnerable nuclear materials throughout the world within four years.

President Obama recognized that a world without nuclear weapons "will not be reached quickly." He cautioned that such a world may not occur within his lifetime, and that achieving it will require "patience and persistence." But this was not a speech about timeframes or deadlines. It was a speech setting forth a much needed vision and providing a promise of US leadership. He has taken an important step toward the goal of a nuclear weapons-free world by articulating this vision and committing to work toward it. Now a more comprehensive plan must be formulated and implemented.

With the political will that President Obama has provided, it is possible that we could move far more rapidly toward a world of zero nuclear weapons than could previously be imagined. Political will and US leadership have been the most significant missing elements for achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. Now that these elements are in place, we may be surprised by how quickly the planning and implementation process can proceed toward the total global elimination of these unconscionable weapons.

President Obama is a man of great vision, a leader that sees beyond the horizon. When he encounters a problem requiring change, he addresses it and proposes solutions. His leadership on the issue of a nuclear weapons-free world comes none too soon. In his speech, he has faced the threat of nuclear weapons squarely. The vision and the initial steps toward achieving it that he has articulated deserve our strong support.

As President Obama noted, there will be many who will say that it cannot be done. But these naysayers cannot steal the future from those who seek a world free of nuclear threat or those committed to building a world at peace. The President will need the American people standing with him and saying, "Yes, we can."

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation -- The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation initiates and supports worldwide efforts to [abolish nuclear weapons](#), to strengthen international law and institutions, and [to inspire and empower a new generation of peace leaders](#). Founded in 1982, the Foundation is comprised of individuals and organizations worldwide who realize the imperative for peace in the Nuclear Age. The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation is a non-profit, non-partisan international education and advocacy organization. It has consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council and is recognized by the UN as a Peace Messenger Organization. For more information about the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, see www.wagingpeace.org/menu/about .

Go on-line and watch our 10-minute DVD [*Nuclear Weapons & the Human Future*](http://www.wagingpeace.org/nuc_weapons_human_future.php).

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[Click here to see our First One Hundred Days Nuclear Disarmament Agenda for President Obama](#)