



NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

Committed to a World Free of Nuclear Weapons

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

STATEMENT ON 2009 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

David Krieger, President of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, issued this statement in reference to today's announcement of the Nobel Peace Prize for 2009 :

When the Nobel Committee announced the awarding of the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize to Barack Obama they indicated that they "attached special importance to Obama's vision of and work for a world without nuclear weapons." There is no doubt that Obama's vision has brought new hope to this issue so critical for humanity's future. It is clear that without America's leadership it will not be possible to make serious progress on the elimination of nuclear weapons and, as president, Obama has expressed his commitment to that leadership.

Barack Obama is a purveyor of hope and this was recognized by the Nobel Committee. "Only very rarely," they said, "has a person to the same extent as Obama captured the world's attention and given its people hope for a better future." That hope is an inspiration to action to bolster cooperation among nations and change the world.

In accepting the award, Obama was humble about his accomplishments and about being in the company of "the transformative figures who've been honored by this prize." He said he would accept the award "as a call to action, a call for all nations to confront the common challenges of the 21st century."

President Obama drew attention to the dangers of nuclear proliferation "in which the terror of a nuclear holocaust endangers more people." He indicated that this was the reason that America had "begun to take concrete steps to pursue a world without nuclear weapons." He could have, but did not, point with pride to his recent leadership at the United Nations Security Council resulting in a unanimous council resolution on nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament.

Only one comment of the president in response to the award struck a discordant note, and that was his reiteration of his statement in Prague that the elimination of nuclear weapons may not be completed in his lifetime. He should be careful about lowering expectations on this most critical of all issues for the human future. In this context, he should bolster his own hope, along with the hopes of people across the globe, of achieving this goal within a far more compressed timeframe.

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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.