



NFLA media release, 30th April 2021

NFLA welcomes Bangor City Council becoming the first Welsh Council to support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

The UK & Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) welcomes the decision of Bangor City Council to pass a resolution supporting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), as part of the ICAN Cities Appeal. They become the first Welsh Council to support the TPNW.

The TPNW entered into force in January 2021, and it has just been announced that the first States Parties Conference taking this process forward will meet in Vienna on January 12th – 14th 2022. The Treaty seeks to start a process for effective nuclear disarmament. It also seeks to unlock the stalemate that has existed on encouraging multilateral nuclear disarmament evident in ongoing, but largely stalled, discussions at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conferences.

There are currently 54 states that have ratified the TPNW, including the Irish Government, Austria, South Africa, New Zealand, Mexico and the Vatican State. A further 32 states have signed it and are in the process of ratifying it.

As a part of the campaign to encourage those states who oppose the TPNW, such as the nuclear weapon states the UK, USA, Russia, China and France; the Nobel Peace Laureate the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) has encourages Local Authorities to pass resolutions supporting this Treaty and writing to their government to engage with it.

Across the world, over 400 towns, cities, counties and federal states have passed TPNW resolutions, including Paris, Berlin, Oslo, Barcelona, Washington DC, Sydney, Amsterdam, Bruges, Geneva, Montreal, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. (1)

In the UK, Bangor become the 16th Council to pass a resolution supporting the TPNW. The others include Manchester, Edinburgh, Leeds, Brighton and Hove, East Ayrshire, Fife, Hastings, Hebden Royd, Lancaster, Newham, Norwich, Oxford, Renfrewshire, Shaw and Crompton and Tower Hamlets.

Bangor are the first Welsh Council to join this growing movement. A campaign supported by a wide range of Welsh peace groups is assisting the NFLA and Mayors for Peace in encouraging other councils to pass such resolutions. Bangor City Council passed their resolution on Monday 26th April – the 35th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster.

NFLA applauds the councillors on Bangor City Council for passing this resolution and encourages them to consider joining both the NFLA and Mayors for Peace to work further on these and other related matters.

NFLA is aware a number of other Councils in the UK are considering passing such resolutions after upcoming local elections.

These resolutions are powerful messages of solidarity with those working for multilateral nuclear disarmament. Just this week, a new study by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute calculated that world military spending in 2020 – despite their being a global public health emergency in the Covid-19 pandemic – has increased to almost \$2 trillion. (2) In the UK, defence spending will increase by £24 billion over the next four years, at a time when foreign aid and local government have seen their budgets slashed, in the latter case, for much of the past decade by over a third.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR & RENEWABLE ENERGY ISSUES



NFLA works closely with the Mayors for Peace organisation, led by Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These matters will be discussed further at the first Board Meeting of the European Chapter of Mayors for Peace in June and the upcoming Global Executive Conference of Mayors for Peace in early July. Both organisations are strong supporters of seeing progress through the TPNW, as well as seeing the end to the logjam at the NPT.

NFLA Welsh Forum Chair, Councillor Ernie Galsworthy, said:

“I warmly congratulate Bangor City Council being the first Welsh Council to pass a resolution supporting the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty. I now encourage other Welsh Councils to follow Bangor’s positive lead. This Treaty is a positive way to campaign for a nuclear weapons free world that also cares for nuclear test veterans and all those impacted by these awful weapons. Towns, cities and counties working together with civil society and the majority of countries within the United Nations on nuclear disarmament has to be the obvious way forward. I call on the UK Government to reconsider its recent announcement to increase the level of Trident warheads and listen to public opinion that wants to see reductions, rather than increases, in our nuclear weapons arsenal.”

Ends - for more information please contact Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary, on 07771 930196.

Notes to Editors:

- (1) ICAN Cities Appeal list of supporting Councils - https://cities.icanw.org/list_of_cities
- (2) SIPRI report on global military expenditure - <https://sipri.org/media/press-release/2021/world-military-spending-rises-almost-2-trillion-2020>