



## Stakeholder submission for the 42nd session of the Universal Periodic Review

### Report on Japan

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is a campaign coalition of over 600 non-government organizations in over one hundred countries. Following the historic achievement of the adoption of a strong nuclear weapons ban treaty, ICAN now campaigns for all States to sign and ratify the Treaty as a matter of urgency, take measures towards the global elimination of all nuclear weapons, and provide an overdue response to the victims of the humanitarian and environmental impact of nuclear weapon tests in the Pacific and elsewhere.

ICAN was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 for "its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its groundbreaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons."

#### *National Human Rights Framework*

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons has clear references to and implications for human rights law and practice. Preambular paragraph 8 reaffirms "the need for all States at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law" The most relevant rights concern from a nuclear weapons attack is the right to life, other relevant rights concerns include the prohibition of inhuman and degrading treatment, the right to a home and to property, as well as rights violations resulting from nuclear weapons testing.

Japan has not yet signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). It supports the retention and potential use of the US nuclear weapons on its behalf, as indicates in various policy statements, including the country's national security strategy of 2013, which states that "the extended deterrence of the US, with nuclear deterrence at its core, is indispensable [to Japan]"

Japan is the only country to have suffered the wartime use of nuclear weapons. In the final days of World War II, the United States detonated two atomic bombs over the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, killing more than 200,000 people instantly or within a few months of the attacks. Many thousands more have died in the years following the attacks from illnesses caused by their exposure to radiation from the bombs. Almost all the victims were civilians.

Japan has consistently voted against an annual UN General Assembly resolution since 2018 that welcomes the adoption of the TPNW and calls upon all states to sign, ratify, or accede to



it "at the earliest possible date"

Japan did not formally participate in the negotiation of the TPNW at the United Nations in New York in 2017 and thus did not vote on its adoption. However, it attended the opening session of the negotiations to explain its decision not to participate. It said that "it would be difficult for Japan to participate in this conference in a constructive manner and in good faith". In 2016, Japan voted against the UN General Assembly resolution that established the formal mandate for states to commence negotiations on "a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination". Many media outlets and civil society groups in Japan criticized the government for opposing the negotiations.

ICAN now urges Japan to sign and ratify the TPNW, as a matter of international urgency.