

AUSTRALIAN GOVT SHOULD LISTEN TO JACINTA ARDERN ON NUKE DISARMAMENT

Written by John Hallam

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PEOPLE FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

HUMAN SURVIVAL PROJECT

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The Australian Government should listen to, and learn from, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinta Ardern on nuclear disarmament, when she arrives in Australia for talks with the Turnbull Government at the end of this week.

According to People for Nuclear Disarmament and the Human Survival Projects's UN nuclear disarmament campaigner John Hallam:

“New Zealand has played a leadership role in nuclear disarmament both at the UN and elsewhere for decades now. Over ten years ago, their then nuclear disarmament ambassador played a key role in getting up a resolution on operational readiness of nuclear weapon systems – a resolution that Australia now votes for because it plays a vital role in making the world a safer place and reducing the risk of an accidental apocalypse. Since then they have led, together with a small group of other countries including Switzerland and Austria, South Africa, Mexico, and a number of others, in lobbying for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), now known as the 'Ban' Treaty.”

“Jacinta has expressed the ambition for an early entry-into-force of the Ban Treaty. Indeed this would be highly desirable, should it be able to be achieved. We hope that she is persuasive with Prime Minister Turnbull, and can reverse his stubborn and perverse opposition to the TPNW.”

“But there is a lot more than the Ban Treaty on the nuke disarmament agenda. Coming up immediately in May 14-16 in New York is a High Level Conference on Nuclear Disarmament. Unlike the Ban Treaty, this forum is one in which matters of nuclear (war) risk reduction can be brought up. The current risk of an accidental (or otherwise) nuclear apocalypse is, according to the Doomsday Clock, and to many other distinguished authorities on nuclear weapons – as high as it has ever been, ever. The risk of an inadvertent end to civilisation and much besides that should be the topmost priority discussion topic in any Parliament until the situation changes. Nuclear Risk reduction is literally an existential priority.”

“In reviving the position of Minister for Nuclear Disarmament, Jacinta is doing the right thing and recognising this reality. Nuclear disarmament and risk reduction are existential priorities, matters of global life and death. She has gotten the right message.”

“Others however, do not seem to have gotten this message. Malcolm should listen to our New Zealand ally when she visits later this week, and understand that there really are more important things than Barnaby. He should sign, ratify, and urge others including especially the US itself to sign and ratify, the TPNW. He should have Australia represented at the highest level at, and play a constructive role in, the High Level Conference – a role that recognises the

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existential importance of reducing risks of nuclear war. And he should talk long and deeply with our ally from across the 'ditch' about these matters.”

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