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A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE IRAN CRISIS AND A NUCLEAR-FREE MIDDLE EAST

PARLIAMENTARIANS AND CIVIL SOCIETY APPEAL ON IRAN AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS

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Parliamentarians, civil society organisations, and prominent individuals are still invited to sign the following letter, which has been sent to its addressees 31 January 2006.

â€" - original letter follows here ---

To:

- President George Bush
- Secy of State Condoleeza Rice
- Secy of Defence Donald Rumsfeld
- UN Ambassador John Bolton
- President Ahmadinejad of Iran
- Foreign Minister of Iran, Kamal Jharze
- Iran UN Ambassador, H.E. Zarif-Khonsari
- Mr Ariel Sharon, Prime Minister of Israel
- Mr Ehud Olmert, exercising Prime Minister
- Mrs Tzipi Livni, Minister of Foreign Affairs
- H.E. Mr. Dan Gillerman, Israel UN Mission

СС

- Mr Kofi Annan, General Secretary of the United Nations
- Mr Mohamed ElBaradei, Director of the IAEA
- Mr Tony Blair, Prime Minister of UK
- Mr Jack Straw, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
- M. Jacques Chirac, Président de la République Française
- M. Dominique de Villepin, Premier Ministre
- M. Philippe Douste-Blazy, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères
- Mr Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission
- Mr Wolfgang Schüssel, Federal Chancellor of Austria and Exercising President of the European Council
- Ms Ursula Plassnik, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria
- Herr Horst Köhler, Bundespräzsident Deutschlands
- Frau Angela Merkel, Bundeskanzlerin Deutschlands
- Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Deutsche Bundesaussenminister
- The Hon. John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia

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The Hon. Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Australia

Dear Presidents Bush and Ahmadinejad, Presidents, Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers, Secretaries of State and Defence and Ambassadors.

The proliferation of nuclear weapons is possibly the single greatest threat to civilisation. If a feared cascade of proliferation occurs, the probability that by malice, madness, miscalculation or malfunction, nuclear weapons will at some point be used will increase sharply. All nations have a responsibility to ensure that the number of nations with nuclear weapons does not grow, to prevent non-state actors from obtaining them, and for those who posses nuclear weapons

to eliminate and abolish them.

Threats and rumours of military action or even nuclear weapons use only worsen a growing crisis between Iran, the United States, and Israel.

Reports of preparations for and explorations of military options, no matter how speculative, are highly disturbing and are in themselves dangerous. Such explorations must cease. There must be no talk of war.

But there IS talk of war, both from the United States and from Israel. And, President Ahmadinejad, you have spoken of "wiping Israel from the map." In the US and Israel, 'hotheads' call openly for "swift military action", while 'responsible' leaders speak of "no option being ruled out." President Bush, we heard these same two formulations used just months before the invasion of Iraq. We urge that the explorations of military or nuclear options cease immediately, and support IAEA General Director, Mohamed ElBaradei in calling for this belligerent talk from all parties to stop now.

The United States and other Nuclear Weapon States and de facto nuclear weapon states -nations that already possess nuclear weapons- have made little progress toward the internationally mandated goal of the total and unequivocal elimination of those weapons. Although there has been some limited progress in lowering total nuclear stockpiles, the established nuclear weapons possessors continue to rely on those weapons in their security doctrines, and do not envisage change in that posture 'for the foreseeable future'.

This continues in spite of a clear international consensus to the effect that nuclear weapons are a continuing threat to civilisation and life, in spite of repeated calls by the international community for progress toward their total and unequivocal elimination.

Nations that possess large nuclear arsenals cannot consistently or credibly call for others to eliminate or cease the pursuit of nuclear weapons arsenals of their own while not moving to eliminate their own nuclear weapons. A global commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons, and applies equally to all parties. There can be no exceptions. Those who now posses nuclear arsenals are obliged to eliminate those arsenals. Those who do not have them must not pursue them.

Similarly, the violation of the goal of a nuclear-free Middle East by one party does not in any way excuse its violation by another party. However, the renunciation of the nuclear option by one party will facilitate its renunciation by another party.

Israel's nuclear arsenal and the pursuit of nuclear weapons by Iran - if indeed that is taking place - are dangerous per se and open the gate for further proliferation by other Middle Eastern nations, and for a middle eastern arms race that

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would be dangerous in the extreme. This must not happen.

Serious concerns exist over the possibility that US nuclear doctrine may envisage strikes against other nations that involve a first use of nuclear weapons, or possibly the use of nuclear weapons against nations that are not themselves nuclear - armed. We note with approval the recent letter by US senators and others in this matter.

A third use of nuclear weapons must never take place. It would be a catastrophe not only for Iran or Israel but for the entire region and even for the entire world, because of its radioactive fallout, its chaotic effects, and because it would break the taboo against the use of these weapons that has so far held place for the last 60 years. Breaking this taboo could result in the further use of nuclear weapons, with a lower and lower bar for such use. The widespread use of nuclear weapons would be catastrophic for the world. We urge all parties to renounce the pursuit of nuclear weapons, and to adopt policies that rule out their use.

The Parliamentarians, civil society organisations, and prominent individuals signed below hereby urge a solution to the crisis in relations between the US and Iran, Israel and Iran, based on the following clearly defined principles:

- 1) No use of any military option whatsoever by any party for any reason.
- 2) A clear commitment by all nuclear-armed parties not to use nuclear weapons in this situation, and a broader commitment to the doctrine of no first use of nuclear weapons.
- 3) The implementation of the 1995 Non-Proliferation Treaty Resolution on a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East, implementation of the annual consensus-adopted General Assembly resolutions on 'Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the region of the Middle East', and particularly the full implementation of this years resolution on nuclear proliferation in the middle -east.
- **4)** A clear commitment by all parties to the global elimination of nuclear weapons, including through reaffirming the Final Declaration of the 2000 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, and relevant General Assembly resolutions.
- **5)** A diplomatic path to the removal of tensions between the US, Israel, and Iran, involving compromise on both sides, recognition of the legitimate security concerns of all parties including both Israel and Iran, and refraining from inflammatory statements or the exploration of military options by any party.

Signed

- John Hallam, Friends of the Earth Australia Sydney Australia
- Dimity Hawkins, Executive Officer, Medical Association for the Prevention of War (MAPWA), Australia
- Ak Malten, Global Anti Nuclear Alliance (GANA) The Hague, Netherlands
- Jean-Marie Matagne, Action des Citoyens pour le Désarmement Nucléaire (ACDN), France
- Peter Nicholls, Chair, Abolition 2000 UK
- Kate Hudson, Chair, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) London, UK

PS:

List of signatories, as of 15 May 2006:

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International NGOs / Associations internationales

- Tadatoshi Akiba Mayor of Hiroshima President, Mayors for Peace,
- Abolition-2000 Global Council,

Ron Mc Coy, President, Dr. Mary-Wynne Ashford,

- International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW),
- Jennifer Nordstrom, WILPF Reaching Critical Will Project, NY,
- Nicky Davies, Global Disarmament Campaign Coordinator, Greenpeace Int.
- Alfred L. Marder President, International Association of Peace Messenger Cities,
- Margaret Melkonian, Vice Pres, Hague Appeal for Peace, UN Plaza, NY,
- Hans von Sponeck, UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq (1998-2000)
- Nouri Abdul Razzak Hussain, Secy-General Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) Egypt,
- Bahig Nassar Coordinator, Arab Coordination Center of NGOs, Egypt,
- Douglas Mattern, President, Association of World Citizens
- André Bouny, President, International Committee of Support to the Vietnamese Victims of the Orange Agent
- Susan Zipp, Advisor, Communications Coordination Committee for the United Nations
- Angelika Beer, MEP, President of the European Parliamentary delegation on Iran,
- Fiona Dove, Transnational Institute

ALBANIA - ALBANIE

Ali Eltari President, Albanian Ecological Club,

AUSTRALIA - AUSTRALIE

- John Hallam, Friends of the Earth Australia Sydney Australia
- Jo Vallentine, People for Nuclear Disarmament, Western Australia,
- Cameron Schraner, PND-NSW,
- Surry Hills, NSW, Dimity Hawkins, Executive Officer, Medical Association for the Prevention of War (MAPW),
- Sue Gilbey, Australian Peace Committee, Adel, SA.,
- Dr Stella Cornelius, Conflict Resolution Network, Chatswood, NSW,
- Hillel Freedman, Nuclear-Free Australia, Melb,
- Dr R. J. Hunter, President, Scientists for Global

Responsibility(SANA) (Sydney Univ, Aust)

- Rev Allan Thompson, General Secretary, Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania,
- Nick Chesterfield, West Papua National Authority, Melb,
- Dr Vacy Vlazna, ACHEH PAPUA MALUKU, Fairlight,
- Vikki John, Bougainville Freedom Movement, Vic,
- Peter Carrol, SCRAP, Holsworthy, NSW,
- Chris Hamer, President, World Citizens Association (Australia)
- VeeSpak, NicNacTheatre, Randwick NSW,
- Doug. N. Everingham, Australian Minister for Health 1972-75 Parliamentary Adviser, Australian delegation, 1982 UN Assembly Senator
- Lyn Alison, Leader, Australian Democrats,
- Senator Natasha Stott-Despoja, Australian Democrats, SA
- Senator Andrew Bartlett, Democrats, Qld,
- Senator Kerry Nettle, Greens, NSW,
- Kelly HoareMP, Member for Charlton NSW,
- Carmen Lawrence MP, Member for Fremantle, President, ALP,
- Julia Irwin MP Federal Member for Fowler,
- Lee Rhiannon Greens MLC, NSW, Giz Watson MLC Greens, North Metropolitan Region, W. A.,
- Rt. Hon Malcolm Fraser, former Prime Minister of Australia

AUSTRIA - AUTRICHE

- OBAL 2000, Silva Herrmann, Energy Campaigner, Austria,
- Elvira Plöschko, Antiatom Szene, Pasching, Austria,
- Heinz Stockinger, Chair, PLAGE-Salzburg, (Independent Salzburg Platform Against Nuclear Dangers, Austria)
- Doris Holler-Bruckner, Editor-in-chief Oekonews.at, Austria

BANGLADESH

Amir Hossain Chowdhury Exec.Secy. Institute for Environment and Development Studies, Dhaka, Bangladesh

BELGIUM - BELGIQUE

NGOs / ONG

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- Pol D'Huyvetter, Voor Moeder Aarde vzw Friends of the Earth
- Roel Stynen, Forum voor Vredesactie
- Jo Hanssens, chair Pax Christi Vlaanderen
- Walter Baeten, chair.IJzerbedevaarcomitée
- Georges Spriet, Vrede vzw
- Philippe Haeyaert, chair Verbond VOS, Vlaamse Vredesvereniging
- Bart Horemans, Mayors for Peace
- Enrique Ferro, Association Belgo-Palestinienne, Brussels
- Parliamentarians / Parlementaires

CD&V = Christian democrats

- *ECOLO & Groen! = Green Party
- *PS = Social democrats
- *sp.a = Social democrats
- *NV-A & Spirit = Flemish regionalists
- *VLD = Liberal party
- * Jos Ansoms, mayor Wuustwezel & MP (CD&V)
- * Tony Beerten, mayor Heusden-Zolder (Nieuw)
- * Jean-Pierre Brouhon, alderman Elsene (ECOLO)
- * Hugo Casaer, mayor Beersel (CD&V)
- * Camille Dieu, MP (PS)
- * Dirk Claes, mayor Rotselaar & MP (CD&V)
- * Danny Claes, mayor Nazareth (CD&V)
- * Ir. Roland CRABBE, mayor Nieuwpoort (CD&V)
- * Jean Cornil, Senator (Parti Socialiste)
- * Luc Dehaene, mayor leper (CD&V)
- * Herman De Loor, mayor Zottegem (sp.a)
- * Roel Deseyn, Député (CD&V)
- * Raf Drieskens, mayor Neerpelt (CD&V)
- * Hans Eyssen, mayor Holsbeek (CD&V)
- * Pierre Galand, Sénateur (PS)
- * Eloi Glorieux, MP (Groen!)
- * Yvon Harmegnies, MP & Mayor DOUR (PS)
- * Patrick Janssens, mayor Antwerp (sp-a)
- * Roger Heyvaert, mayor Meise (VLD)
- * Geert Lambert, Député & Président SPIRIT
- * Anne-Marie Lizin, Sénateur & mayor Huy (PS)
- * Jean-Pierre Maeyens, 1° échevin Hoeilaart (Groen!)
- * Willy Minnebo, mayor Zwijndrecht (Groen!)
- * Marcel Mondelaers, mayor Beringen (CD&V)
- * Patrick Moriau, MP & mayor Chapelle-lez-herlaimont (PS)
- * Jan Peumans, mayor Riemst & MP (N-VA)
- * Katrien Schryvers, mayor Zoersel & MP (CD&V)
- * Benny Spreeuwers, mayor Opglabeek (CD&V)
- * Willy Taminiaux, mayor La Louviere (PS)
- * Erika Thijs, Senator Bilzen (CD&V)
- * Koen T'Sijen, MP (SPIRIT)
- * Annemie van de Casteele, Sénateur (VLD)
- * Dirk Van der Maelen, MP (sp-a)
- * Paul Van Grembergen, mayor Evergem (PVG-Spirit)
- * Patrik Vankrunkelsven, Mayor & Senator (VLD) & vice-chair 'Mayors for Peace'
- * Mark Van Roy, alderman te Tervuren
- * Magda Van Stevens, alderman Vilvoorde (Groen!)
- * Hendrik Verbrugge, mayor Alken (CD&V)
- * Roger Verduyckt, mayor Begijnendijk (VLD)

CANADA

- Steven Starr, Physicians for Global Survival, Canada,
- Joanna Santa Barbara, Centre for Peace Studies, Mc Master Univ, Ont,
- Ray Morris, Co-Chair, KAIROS, Salmon Arm, BC,
- Libby Davies, Member of Parliament, Vancouver East, Canada

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CONGO-KINSHASA (RDC)

Celeste Hito Kanyinda Matamba, président national de l'Agence pour le Développement Communautaire

CROATIA - CROATIE

Prof. Ivo SLAUS, President, PUGWASH-Croatia.

CZECH REPUBLIC - REPUBLIQUE TCHEQUE

Hnuti Duha, FOE-Czech Republic, Brno,

DENMARK - DANEMARK

- John Avery Chair, Holger Terp, Danish Peace Academy, Copenhagen,
- John Avery, Chairman, Danish Pugwash Group
- Povl Revsbech, MD Chair, IPPNW, Danish Affiliate
- Birgit Lindsnæs Deputy Director General, DIHR, Copenhagen

FINLAND - FINLANDE

- Juhani Mastokangas Friends of the Earth Finland
- Heidi Hautala MP, Chairperson of the Green Parliamentary Group of Finland,
- Kati Juva, Chair, Dr. Jouni Ylinen Physicians for Social

Responsibility, Finland (PSR-Finland)

- Network Institute for Global Democratization (NIGD)
- Peace Union of Finland
- The Committee of 100 in Finland

FRANCE

- Jean-Marie Matagne, Action des Citoyens pour le Désarmement Nucléaire (ACDN)
- Arielle Denis / Pierre Villard, Mouvement de la Paix
- Philippe Brousse, Jean-Yvon Landrac, Réseau "Sortir du nucléaire" (725 associations)
- Dominique Lalanne, Abolition of Nuclear Weapons/Stop Essais France
- Jean-Pierre Morichaud, Le Forum Plutonium
- Fabrice Flipo, Vice-président, Amis de la Terre-France
- Jeanne-Henriette Louis, Quakers-France
- Simone Landry & Solange Fernex, Ligue Internationale des Femmes pour la Paix et la Liberté (WILPF-France)
- Roger Schenegg, Vivre entre-Deux Mers
- André Bouny, D.E.F.I. Viêt-nam, président du Comité international de soutien aux victimes vietnamiennes de l'Agent Orange
- Miho Shimma-Cibot, Institut Hiroshima-Nagasaki (IHN)
- Anick Sicart & Jacques Trélin, Appel des Cent pour la Paix
- Patrick Hubert, Mouvement pour une Alternative Non-violente (MAN)
- Gérard Lévy, Commission « Paix et Désarmement », Les Verts
- Xavier Renou, GREENPEACE-France
- Prof. Jacques Joly, président, Association Démocratique des Français à l'Etranger (ADFE/ Français du Monde), section du Japon de l'Ouest
- Jean Yves Chetail, Arts, Cultures et Humanités
- Patrick Chapus, ASPCVS
- Ahmed Manaï, Institut Tunisien des Relations Internationales (ITRI)
- Madeleine Guyot, Mouvement pour le Desarmement, la Paix, la Liberté (MDPL)
- Gérard Onesta, député européen, Vice-président du Parlement Européen
- Roland Jourdain, navigateur
- José Bové, porte-parole de Via Campesina
- François Dufour, ancien porte-parole de la Confédaration Paysanne
- Guy Nicolai, Directeur technique, VAE BTS-GPN
- Pierre Coulomb, ingénieur ECL, conférencier de l'Université Rose-Croix Internationale
- René Wadlow, éditeur, Transnational-Perspectives, France
- André Larivière, permanent du Réseau « Sortir du nucléaire »
- Roland Desbordes, enseignant retraité
- Hervé Desplat, ancien militaire et vétéran de la 1e guerre du Golfe
- Hervé Loquais, ingénieur Arts et Métiers
- Joëlle Penochet, universitaire...

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· (...)

GERMANY - ALLEMAGNE

- Xanthe Hall, (Ab2000 Global Council/IPPNW Germany)
- Dr. Angelika Claußen, M.D.IPPNW-Germany,
- Greenpeace Germany
- Elias Michaels, "Aktion Völkerrecht / International Law Campaign"
- Irmgard Heilberger, Director, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)Germany,
- Julia Kramer, BANg European Youth Network for Nuclear Disarmament, Friedens- und Begegnungsstätte Mutlangen
- Gewaltfreie Aktion Atomwaffen Abschaffen (GAAA), Germany,

Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft - Vereinigte KriegsdienstgegnerInnen (DFG-VK),

- Roland Blach, Trägerkreis "Atomwaffen abschaffen", Germany,
- Henning Droege, Arzt für Allgemeinmedizin, Homöopathie,

Naturheilverfahren, (Haslach) Germany,

- Axel Mayer, BUND Regionalverband Südlicher Oberrhein, Freiburg, Germany,
- Hans-Peter Richter, German Peace Council
- Angelika Schneider Versoehnungsbund/International Fellowship of Reconciliation, German branch,
- Peter Wahl, ATTAC-Germany
- Eva Quistorp, (FmrMEP), Women for Peace, Germany
- Uta Zapf, MP, Social Democratic Party

Ulrich Maurer, MP, Left Party

- Wolfgang Gehrke, MP, Left Party
- Paul Schafer, MP, Left Party,
- Joern Wunderlich, Left party
- Heike Haensel, Left party

GREECE - GRECE

- Thanassis ANAPOLITANOS, MEDITERRANEAN ANTI NUCLEAR WATCH, GREECE,
- Wayne Hall, ATTAC-Hellas
- Michalis Modinos, Inter-Scientific Institute of Environmental Research
- Panos Trigazis, Observatory of International Organizations and Globalization
- George Papadimitriou, Professor of Constitutional Law at the University of Athens (member of the Scientific Board of the periodical "Law and

Nature")

INDIA - INDE

- Achin Vanaik, Sukla Sen, Smitu Kothari, Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace, India, (CNDP), ND, India,
- Sandeep Pandey and Arundhati Dhuru, National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM),
- Prof N.N. Murthy, IBRF, India,
- Mahipal Singh, Peoples Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), Delhi,
- Syed Shahabuddin, (ex-MP, fmr Amb.), President, All India Muslim
- Majlis-e-Mushawarat, New Delhi, India,
- Smitu Kothari, Intercultural Resources, New Delhi, India,
- Harsh Kapoor, South Asians Against Nukes (SAAN) France/India,
- Prof. J.G. Krishnayya, Systems Research Inst, Pune,
- Prahlad Singh Shekhawat, Alternative Development Centre, Jaipur, India
- Maj. Gen. S. C. N. Jatar, Retd Pres, Nagrik Chetna Manch (Citizens' Awareness Front), Pune, India,
- Centre for Science and Environment, N. Delhi, India,
- KALYANI MENON-SEN, Coordinator, JAGORI WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE, NEW DELHI,
- Dr. Prakash Louis, Bihar Social Institute, Bihar, India
- S. P. Udayakumar, People's Movement Against Nuclear Energy, Nagercoil TN, India.
- D. Gabriele, National Convenor, National Alliance for Peoples Movement Madurai , TN, India,
- Wilfred D'costa Gen. Secy, Indian Social Action Forum (INSAF) INDIA

ISRAEL

- Dorothy Naor, New Profile, Israel
- Pnina Feiler, Physicians for Human Rights. Kibbutz Yad-Hanna, Israel
- Itamar Mann Israeli Union for Environmental Defense Tel Aviv Israel
- Ofra Ben-Artzi Jerusalem Israel

ITALY - ITALIE

- Enrico Peyretti, Giuliano Martignetti Movimento Nonviolento Torino, Italy
- Paolo Scampa, Parti Italien Progressiste

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JAPAN - JAPON

- Yayoi Tsuchida, Japan Council against A and H Bombs (Gensuikyo)
- Hiromichi Umebayashi, President, Peace Depot, Japan,
- Hideyuki Ban, Citizens' Nuclear Information Center (CNIC) Tokyo, Japan

KOREA - COREE

Kim Hye-Jeong, Secretary General, KFEM-FoE Korea

MEXICO - MEXIQUE

- Efraín Cruz Marín, Vocal de Prensa y Propaganda de Académicos de Ciencias y Humanidades, Plantel Sur,
- Asociaición Civil, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. México.

NETHERLANDS - PAYS-BAS

- Ak Malten, Global Anti Nuclear Alliance (GANA) The Hague, Neth,
- Peer de Rijk, World Information Service on Energy(WISE), Amst, Neth,
- Fiona H. Dove, Director, Transnational Institute, Amst, Neth,
- Martin Broek, Dutch Campaign Against Arms Trade, Neth.

Leo Platvoet Senator GREENLEFT,

NEW ZEALAND - NOUVELLE ZELANDE

- Robert White, Centre for Peace Studies, Univ. Auckland, NZ,
- Hugh Steadman, The Sapiens Movement, Blenheim, New Zealand.
- Gordon F Copeland MP United Future the Family Party NZ,
- Keith Locke MP, Foreign Affairs spokesperson, Green Party, New Zealand.
- Michael Hemmingsen, President, Society for Global Philosophy, Wellington, NZ,

NORWAY - NORVEGE

- Hallgeir H. Langeland, MP Norway,
- Bjørn Hilt Regional vice president of IPPNW in Europe, Norway,
- Tordis Sørensen Høifødt NLA chair, IPPNW-Norway,

PAKISTAN

- Zia Syed, All Pakistan Federation of United Trade Unions (APFUTU), Gujrat, PK,
- A. H. Nayyar, President, Pakistan Peace Coalition

PHILIPPINES

- Sonia S. Mendoza Chair, Mother Earth Foundation Philippines,
- Clemente G. Bautista Jr, Coord, Kalikasan-Peoples Network for the Environment, Philippines

ROMANIA - ROUMANIE

- Constantin S. Lacatus, President, People of Sibiu for Peace (Sibienii Pacifisti)
- Eng. Constantin Cretu, 'Carpathians Genius' Bucharest/Romania

RUSSIA - RUSSIE

Sergey Kolesnikov, Deputy chairman for Committee of State Duma (Russian parliament) for education and Science, Vice-Pres IPPNW

SOUTH AFRICA - AFRIQUE DU SUD

- Maya Aberman, Earthlife Africa, Cape Town, RSA,
- Prof. Faisal Suliman, ISLAMIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

SWEDEN - SUEDE

Barbara Brädefors, Swedish Peace Committee,

SWITZERLAND - SUISSE

- Bernhard Piller, Swiss Energy Foundation, Zurich, Switzerland
- Claudia BurglerPSR/IPPNW Switzerland,
- Ueli Leuenberger, Vice-président des Verts Suisses,
- Rudolf Rechsteiner MP (Soc Dem) Switzerland,

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TANZANIA - TANZANIE

Diodorus Kamala MP, Tanzania,

TURKEY - TURQUIE

Prof. Dr. Leziz Onaran, President, Umur Gürsoy (MD)NUSED (IPPNW-Turkey)

UNITED KINGDOM - ROYAUME-UNI

- Peter Nicholls, Chair, Abolition 2000 UK,
- George Farebrother, World Court Project, UK,
- Kate Hudson, Chair, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) Lond, UK,
- Jill Stallard, CND Cymru, Wales,
- Jenny Maxwell, Chair, West Midlands CND, Birmingham UK,
- Angie Zelter, Reforest the Earth, UK,
- Frank COOK MP (uk)
- LYNNE JONES MP (Birmingham Selly Oak), UK,
- David Chaytor, MP for Bury North,
- Dr. Caroline Lucas MEP Green Party, South East England,
- Jean Lambert MEP Green Party, London,
- Jill Evans, MEP, Cymru,(Wales),

UNITED STATES - ETATS-UNIS

- Steve Leeper, Mayors for Peace United States,
- Bruce K. Gagnon Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space,
- Alice Slater, co-founder Abolition2000 Global Council,
- Phyllis Bennis Institute for Policy Studies, Washington DC, U.S.
- Patrick Groulx founder Iron John & Mary With A Snugly US,
- Helen Caldicott, President, Nuclear Policy Research Institute (NPRI),
- James Galbraith, Chair, Economists for Peace and Security,
- Daniel Ellsberg, Truth Telling Project, USA,
- Dr. Sadik Alsaraf, Professor, Roundlake, IL, U.S.A.
- Judy Treichel Exec. ,Dir, Nuclear Waste Task Force, Las Vegas, Nev,

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