



Stakeholder submission for the 43rd session of the Universal Periodic Review

Report on Tonga

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.

Tonga has not yet signed or ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

Tonga has abstained from voting on an annual UN General Assembly resolution since 2020 that welcomes the adoption of the TPNW and calls upon all states to sign, ratify, or accede to it “at the earliest possible date”.

Tonga participated in the negotiation of the TPNW at the United Nations in New York in 2017 and was among 122 states that voted in favour of its adoption. In 2016, Tonga voted in favour of 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”.

ICAN now calls upon Tonga to sign and ratify the TPNW, as a matter of international urgency.