



**CHALLENGE
INJUSTICE.**

22 September 2021

Hon. Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister of Australia
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA

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CC. Hon. Peter Dutton MP, Minister for Defence

Dear Prime Minister Morrison

RE: UNITED NATIONS TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

I am writing to you regarding your recent announcement of the creation of an enhanced trilateral security partnership with the United Kingdom and the United States, AUKUS.

Amnesty International welcomes your confirmation that “Australia has no plans to acquire nuclear weapons”, and your recommitment to nuclear non-proliferation. **To strengthen this position, I call on you to sign the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.**

The treaty came into force on 22 January 2021. It makes it illegal under international law to develop, test, possess, host, use, or threaten to use nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons have been the only weapons of mass destruction not subject to a global ban treaty, despite the catastrophic harm they inflict. The treaty brings us one step closer to abolishing the nuclear threat for good.

Two-thirds of UN member states have adopted the treaty. It is disappointing that Australia has not.

The *2016 Defence White Paper*, *2017 Foreign Affairs White Paper* and *2020 Defence Strategic Update* each defend the need for nuclear capacity - primarily through using the US’ capacity on Australia’s behalf - but each is misguided. Only prohibition will lead to safety.

There is no good reason for Australia not to support a nuclear-weapon-free world. The use of nuclear weapons is incompatible with the protection of human rights, including the right to peace¹² and the right to life.³ It is also a threat to people’s right to be free from torture.⁴

Particularly in light of your recent announcement to add nuclear-powered submarines to Australia’s military capacity, I urge you to sign the treaty to send a strong message to the world that it is the right thing to do to aim for a nuclear-free-world.

¹ United Nations, *Universal Declaration on Human Rights*, Art. 28, Art. 33

² United Nations, *Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace*

³ United Nations, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, Art. 6(1)

⁴ United Nations, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, Art. 7

For further information, or to discuss and organise a meeting, please contact Joel MacKay at joel.mackay@amnesty.org.au or 0424 242 112.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SKlintworth', written in a cursive style.

Sam Klintworth
National Director
Amnesty International Australia