

Nobel Peace Prize winners urge Canada to join UN nuclear ban treaty

ICAN PRESS CONFERENCE, TORONTO

Date: Friday, 27 October 2017, 1:00PM

Location: Canadian Council of Churches, 47 Queen's Park Cres E, Toronto

Speakers:

- [Setsuko Thurlow](#), ICAN campaigner and Hiroshima survivor
 - [Ray Acheson](#), ICAN international steering group member
 - [Cesar Jaramillo](#), ICAN campaigner
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Canadian citizen Setsuko Thurlow, a survivor of the 1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima, will jointly accept this year's Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).

Thurlow was 13 years old when the United States attacked her city, killing more than 140,000 people. She will receive the prize together with ICAN's executive director, Beatrice Fihn, at a ceremony in Oslo on 10 December.

Thurlow has been a leading figure in ICAN since its launch in 2007. She played a pivotal role in the United Nations negotiations that led to the adoption of a landmark treaty on 7 July that outlaws nuclear weapons categorically.

She and other Canadian ICAN campaigners are appealing to the Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, to sign this historic accord. At the behest of the United States, Canada boycotted the negotiating process earlier this year.

"I was dismayed and heartbroken when the Prime Minister dismissed the new treaty as 'sort of useless'," said Thurlow, referring to a statement that he made in the Canadian parliament on 7 June.

"Such callous language to describe the prohibition of the most horrific weapons humankind has ever known. The Prime Minister seems to wilfully ignore the fact that the majority of Canadians want a world without nuclear weapons.

"As a living witness to Hiroshima, I beseech Justin Trudeau to change course," she said. A former social worker, Thurlow has lived in Toronto since 1955. She was made a member of the Order of Canada in 2006.

Canadian activist Ray Acheson, who serves on ICAN's international steering group as a representative of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, said that Trudeau is listening to the US president instead of the Canadian public.

"It's a shame that so far the Trudeau administration has not held up Canada's historical and moral support for humanitarian disarmament, but there is a chance for it to embrace the nuclear ban as part of a feminist foreign policy," she said.

ICAN campaigner Cesar Jaramillo, the executive director of Project Ploughshares, said that Canada's nuclear disarmament policy is "patently out of sync with the views and expectations of most states in the international community".

"Canada continues to embrace NATO's overt nuclear deterrence policy as a valid security doctrine, effectively legitimizing the weapons held by its nuclear-armed allies," he said, urging the government to reject this policy and sign the new treaty.

Thurlow, Acheson and Jaramillo will speak at a press conference in Toronto on Friday, 27 October, about the Nobel Peace Prize win and their efforts to secure the Canadian government's support for the UN nuclear weapon ban treaty.

Further information:

Setsuko Thurlow (Toronto):

Further biographical information about Setsuko Thurlow, including details of her involvement in ICAN, can be found on our website. We have published a selection of photos and videos for use (with attribution) by media outlets.

<http://www.icanw.org/setsuko-thurlow>

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Ray Acheson (New York/Toronto):

Ray Acheson, a Canadian national, is the director of Reaching Critical Will, the disarmament programme of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. She serves on ICAN's international steering group.

<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/about-us/staff>

(+1 917 442-5214; ray@reachingcriticalwill.org)

Cesar Jaramillo (Waterloo):

Cesar Jaramillo is the executive director of Project Ploughshares, one of several Canadian organizations that are part of the ICAN coalition. He regularly speaks at the United Nations on a range of disarmament issues.

<http://ploughshares.ca/media/experts/>

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Erin Hunt (Ottawa):

Erin is the Program Coordinator of Mines Action Canada and has campaigned with ICAN since 2013. She regularly speaks nationally and internationally on humanitarian disarmament issues.

<http://informedopinions.org/view-expert-profile/?expert-id=868>

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