

**Briefing on the  
HUMANITARIAN INITIATIVE in Nuclear Disarmament:  
The Vienna Conference and beyond**

**1 December 2014 at 14:00 - 15:30**  
Room A1E1 – European Parliament – Brussels

The briefing will provide information about the **3rd Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons** (Dec. 8-9) as well as the ICAN Civil Society Forum “The courage to ban nuclear weapons” (Dec. 6-7) in Vienna. Speakers will talk about their **expectations of the events’ outcome**, and lay out pragmatic and achievable steps to bring forward nuclear disarmament in the context of the Humanitarian Initiative and the upcoming 2015 NPT Review Conference.

**SPEAKERS:**

- Welcoming remarks by Julie Ward, MEP
- Amb. Alexander Kmentt, Head of Disarmament and Non-proliferation, **Austrian Foreign Ministry**
- Frédéric Casier, **Red Cross Belgium**
- Krista van Velzen, **PAX Netherlands**
- Silvio Heinze, **ICAN Austria**
- Leo Hoffmann-Axthelm, **ICAN**

In 2010, the Review Conference of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) expressed “deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons”. Ever since, the so-called Humanitarian Initiative has generated **new momentum in the international nuclear disarmament debate**. After conferences hosted by the government of Norway in March 2013 and Mexico in February 2014, the **Austrian government** will hold the 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference on the **Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons** in Vienna on December 8-9, 2014. Immediately before the conference, on December 6-7, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) will hold a Civil Society Forum.

Just a few weeks ago **155 States supported the Humanitarian Initiative's joint statement** at the United Nations General Assembly, demanding that the humanitarian concerns of the continued existence of nuclear weapons be placed at the center of nuclear disarmament. A growing number of States call for their prohibition. With the **NPT Review Conference** scheduled for spring 2015, the December events are likely to contribute to **meaningful progress in the field of nuclear disarmament**, overcoming decades of stalemate.

**THE ROLE OF ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES**

Elected representatives have a vital role to play in promoting the humanitarian approach to nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament, and challenging decades-old discourses on mutually assured destruction, and **billions of tax payer money wasted** on weapons of mass destruction which must never again be used, under any circumstances. ICAN and its partner organizations invited you to sign the attached **Parliamentary Appeal to Ban Nuclear Weapons**.

The Vienna conference seeks to engage elected representatives, as part of national diplomatic delegations as well as in parliamentary side-events hosted by the Austrian Parliament. The involvement of the **European Parliament** in particular will be decisive in keeping nuclear disarmament on the EU’s agenda and in amplifying awareness of the opportunities generated by the humanitarian discourse on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

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