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**International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
Wins Nobel Peace Prize
NukeWatch Calls on New Mexico Politicians and Santa Fe Archbishop
To Support Drive Towards Abolition**

Santa Fe, NM – Nuclear Watch New Mexico strongly applauds the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (as disclosure, NukeWatch is one of ICAN’s ~400 member groups around the world). This award is especially apt because the peoples of the world are now living at the highest risk for nuclear war since the middle 1980’s (with the possible exception of a regional nuclear war between India and Pakistan). During President Reagan’s military buildup the Soviet Union became convinced that the United States might launch a pre-emptive nuclear first strike. Today, we not only have Trump’s threats to “totally destroy” North Korea and Kim Jong-un’s counter threats, but also renewed Russian fears of a US preemptive nuclear attack.

NukeWatch also applauds the shrewdness of the Nobel Prize Committee in making this Peace prize award to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, in distinct contrast to its award to President Obama early in his first term. Ironically, Obama went on to launch a one trillion dollar-plus rebuilding of the US nuclear weapons stockpile, its delivery systems and production complex, which Trump now seeks to accelerate.

Generally unknown to the American taxpayer, our government has quietly tripled the lethality of the US nuclear weapons stockpile though increased accuracy (including more precise heights of burst). The American taxpayer has been constantly told that the purpose of the US nuclear weapons stockpile is for deterring others. However, only a few hundred nuclear weapons are necessary for just deterrence. Instead, the official (but not well publicized) policy declared by the Department of Defense following a 2010 “Nuclear Posture Review” is:

The new guidance requires the United States to maintain significant counterforce capabilities against potential adversaries. The new guidance does not rely on a “counter-value” or “minimum deterrence” strategy. *

In other words, the US keeps thousands of nuclear weapons in order to fight a nuclear war, which even President Reagan admitted cannot be “won.” Nevertheless, the Trump Administration is now conducting a new Nuclear Posture Review, which is expected to endorse new lower yield, more “usable” nuclear weapons and a new nuclear-armed cruise missile well suited to be the proverbial “bolt out of the blue.”

In 1970 the original five nuclear weapons powers (the US, USSR (now Russia), UK, France and China) pledged in the NonProliferation Treaty (NPT) to enter into serious negotiations leading to global nuclear disarmament, in exchange for which all other countries agreed to not acquire nuclear weapons (the exceptions were Israel, India, and Pakistan, and later North Korea which

withdrew). Out of frustration with the lack of progress under the NPT, this last July 7 at the United Nations 122 countries passed a Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which bans nuclear weapons development, production, possession, use, threat of use, and deployment of any country's nuclear weapons in another country. The Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to ICAN for being the lead nongovernmental organization shepherding the Treaty, which the United States and other nuclear weapons have adamantly opposed.

As past Nobel Peace Prize winner Martin Luther King put it, "the arc of history bends towards justice." Given the nuclear weapons powers refusal to enter into negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament, the NonProliferation Treaty has always been unjust in that it instituted global nuclear "apartheid" between the haves and have nots. Nuclear Watch calls on New Mexican politicians to get on the right side of history and end their unquestioning support for expanded nuclear weapons programs in our state.

Forty per cent of all National Nuclear Security Administration funding for nuclear weapons research and production programs is spent in New Mexico alone (around \$4 billion annually). Despite that, our state remains mired in poverty and at the bottom of socioeconomic metrics (except for Los Alamos County, which is the second richest county in the USA, next to some of the poorest communities in the country).

Given that New Mexico has the second highest unemployment rate, our congressional delegation should push for cleanup that can create far more jobs than nuclear weapons programs. At the Los Alamos Lab nuclear weapons programs largely center around expanded plutonium pit production, which has endemic nuclear safety problems and is for a new nuclear weapons design that the Navy doesn't want anyway. Our senators are particularly key, as Tom Udall sits on the very budget committee that former Sen. Pete Domenici used to funnel money to the Los Alamos and Sandia Labs, and Martin Heinrich sits on the Armed Services Committee.

In addition, Nuclear Watch calls on Santa Fe Catholic Archbishop John Wester, whose diocese includes the Los Alamos and Sandia Labs, to become more vocal in following the lead of the Vatican against nuclear weapons. The Holy See was instrumental to the passage of the nuclear weapons ban treaty, and is hosting a global nuclear disarmament conference November 10-11 in Rome as a direct follow-on. It is our hope that Archbishop Wester goes to that conference.

Jay Coghlan, Nuclear Watch New Mexico Director, commented, "The fact that we live in a world with unpredictable national leaders that could start a nuclear war at any time should not be used as an excuse against the nuclear weapons ban treaty. Instead, that is exactly why we must have a nuclear weapons ban treaty, just like we already have for chemical and biological weapons. Nuclear weapons abolition will be long and hard in coming, but just like the abolition of slavery, it will come. New Mexicans have a special responsibility to help win this historic struggle. So let's roll up our sleeves and get the job done, in large part by pressuring our politicians and religious leaders for a future world free of nuclear weapons."

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* Report on Nuclear Implementation Strategy of the United States Specified in Section 491 of 10. U.S.C., Department of Defense, June 2013, page 4 (quotation marks in the original)

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/policy/dod/us-nuclear-employment-strategy.pdf>

For past Soviet Union fears of a nuclear first strike by the US, see for example

<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/a-cold-war-conundrum/source.htm>

For the increased lethality of the US nuclear weapons stockpile, giving it unparalleled first strike capabilities, see <http://thebulletin.org/how-us-nuclear-force-modernization-undermining-strategic-stability-burst-height-compensating-super10578>

For information on the November 10-11, 2017 Vatican disarmament conference see <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/vatican-conference-aims-to-build-momentum-for-nuclear-disarmament-69412>