



Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development

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April 8, 2009

The Honorable Hillary Clinton
Secretary of State
Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, I welcome the Administration's recent commitments to seek reductions in the number of nuclear weapons and to advance nuclear non-proliferation with an ultimate goal of seeking a nuclear-free world. Our Conference supports President Barack Obama's announcements to secure loose nuclear material, strengthen the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, push for ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and negotiate a follow-up to the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.

Consistent with Catholic teaching, the bishops have long supported securing nuclear materials from terrorists and reducing the number of nuclear armaments. For decades we have promoted the policy goals of preventing proliferation of these horrific weapons and ultimately eliminating them. Nuclear war is rejected in Church teaching because the use of nuclear weapons cannot insure noncombatant immunity and their destructive potential and lingering radiation cannot be proportionate in a meaningful sense. Pope Benedict XVI said in a January 2006 statement, "In a nuclear war there would be no victors, only victims."

We welcome the Administration's leadership in taking steps toward a nuclear-free world. It is our hope that by adopting deep cuts in the U.S. nuclear arsenal, our nation can move toward meeting its obligations under the Nonproliferation Treaty and encourage other nations to do the same while strengthening our nation's credibility on the issue of nonproliferation.

We look forward to working with the Administration and the Congress in supporting legislation to advance the goal of ridding our world of nuclear weapons.

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend Howard J. Hubbard
Bishop of Albany
Chairman, Committee on International Justice
and Peace