Interfaith Leaders' Statement for Nuclear Weapons Disarmament and Building a Just and Sustainable Peace

Initiated as part of the *Rebuilding the Anti-Nuclear Weapons Movement Together Conference* held in Seattle, Washington on April 11-12, 2025, we members of the ecumenical faith community issue this Statement:

We support Pope Francis' 2019 declaration in Hiroshima that "the use of atomic energy for purposes of war is immoral, just as the possessing of nuclear weapons is immoral." We therefore call upon the current Administration to bring about disarmament of nuclear weapons in the United States within the coming four years via multilateral diplomacy and all other means as necessary.

We issue this Statement based upon the current state of nuclear build-up in the U.S. and around our world today. According to global estimates, there are currently more than 12,400 warheads worldwide, with Russia and the U.S. controlling nearly 90% of this number. The others are held by China (600), France (290), the United Kingdom (225),India (172), Pakistan (170), Israel (90) and North Korea (50). As troubling as these figures are, statistical transparency in these times of chaos and war has not been prioritized either by the U.S. or other world powers.

In 2023, the nine nuclear-armed states spent a total of $91.4 billion on their nuclear arsenals, $10.8 billion (13.4%) more than the prior year. The U.S.

alone spent $51.5 billion, more than all of the other nuclear-armed states combined. The U.S. is poised to spend roughly $1.7 trillion to enhance its nuclear arsenal in the next two decades. ***Spending these amounts on weapons of mass destruction at a time of such need across our country and the world is contrary to our moral values.***

Therefore, we call upon the Administration and Congress to ensure that the following occur immediately:

1. The U.S. restrain the $1.7 trillion plan to "modernize" its nuclear arsenal. (There is nothing "modern" about nuclear weapons.)

2. The Administration and Congress agree to extend the New Start Treaty between the U.S. and Russia, which is scheduled to expire on February 4, 2026, for another five years, including its verification and transparency measures, pending complete abolition of nuclear weapons.

3. The Administration and Congress ratify the 2017 United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). This Treaty, which has been signed by 94 countries and ratified by 73, continues the spirit of the very first Resolution of the United Nations in 1946, which recognized the need to eliminate atomic weapons and "all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction."

We call on the Administration and Congress to promptly take the actions above so that the U.S. can lead the world in creating a just and sustainable

peace and ensure the safety and security not only of its own people, but of all persons throughout the world.

We intend to have this Statement presented at the *Rebuilding the Anti-Nuclear Weapons Movement Together Conference* on April 11, 2025 and to continue collecting signatures of leaders from the ecumenical faith community until the above-stated goals are achieved.

They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Is. 2:4.

Adopted By:

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Archbishop John Wester, Archdiocese of Santa Fe, New Mexico

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Rabbi Daniel Weiner – Senior Rabbi, Temple De Hirsch Sinai in Seattle and Bellevue

Bhiksuni Thubten Chodron - Abess, Sravasti Abbey in Newport WA.

Rev Dr. Joyce Martin Emery - East Woods Presbyterian Church in Vancouver

Rev. Jenn Hagedorn - Pastor at Spirit of Peace United Church of Christ

Rev. Laura Nile Tuell - Lakewood Presbyterian Church

Rev. Terry Oliver - ELCA/Mason County

Rev. Nancy Reid-McKee - Unitarian Universalist Association

Rev. Kathleen Bellefeuille-Rice - Roman Catholic Women Priest

Rev. Diane S. Whalen - RCWP, Holy Wisdom Inclusive Catholic Community, Olympia

Rev. Mary Gear - Olympia Unitarian Universalist

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(Revised 5-15-26 to reflect NewStart Treaty expiration)