



14 February 2019

Hon Bill Shorten MP
Leader of the Opposition
Parliament House ACT 2600

Dear Mr. Shorten,

On behalf of Australian Quakers, I write to express our significant concern over the decision by the United States to withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) between the USA and Russia and urge you to press for this decision to be reversed.

The Treaty was established in 1987 after a period of great tension, especially in Europe, over the nuclear arms race. It was negotiated and signed in good faith by two leaders (Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev) who were prepared to provide some hope to the world that nuclear weapons could be curbed. It followed the Partial Test Ban Treaty (1963) and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968), and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (1972), continuing a pattern that was later followed up by successful SALT and START negotiations on a range of arms control measures.

Australia contributed to the nuclear weapons/arms control debate through the Canberra Commission and the later International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. More recently the UN General Assembly has responded to widespread concern among people in many countries and passed the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons Treaty in 2017.

We are deeply concerned that the decision by the leaders of the USA and Russia to reject the INF Treaty will create instability especially in Europe and reverse the trend to control nuclear weapons. We believe it is essential that negotiations continue between USA and Russia, and be extended to others if necessary, to preserve the gains made under the INF Treaty.

We urge you as Leader of the Opposition to make representations to USA and Russia to reverse any decision to leave the Treaty and commit to ongoing dialogue, for the sake of world peace.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J.R. Jordan" with a long, sweeping underline.

Jo Jordan
Presiding Clerk
The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia

Copy to Senator Penny Wong

Australia Yearly Meeting

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