



Office of Hon Murray McCully

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Associate Minister for Sport and Recreation

29 JAN 2016

Edwina Hughes
icanz.xtra.co.nz

Dear Edwina Hughes

Thank you for your letter of 6 August 2015 requesting that New Zealand endorse Austria's 'Humanitarian Pledge.' New Zealand has been a leader of the Humanitarian Initiative on Nuclear Weapons since its outset, and has significantly helped to expand its support base to 159 countries.

We have not signed the Austrian Pledge, now renamed the Humanitarian Pledge, which has come to mean different things to different people. To some, it means pledging to continue working towards the elimination of nuclear weapons – a goal that New Zealand has been committed to for a long time. But others interpret the Pledge as a pre-commitment to join negotiations on a nuclear weapons ban treaty.

Successive New Zealand Governments have supported the negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention when circumstances give it a realistic chance of success. But no New Zealand Government has taken a formal position on the merits of moving forward on a ban treaty process outside the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

New Zealand continues its work to strengthen the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. As part of the New Agenda Coalition and nationally, New Zealand advocates serious consideration of the legal pathways to advance 'effective measures' on disarmament, as promised in Article VI of the Treaty.

Yours sincerely

Hon Murray McCully
Minister of Foreign Affairs