



21 September 2021

The Hon Scott Morrison MP  
Prime Minister of Australia  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

**Re: Nuclear-powered submarines**

Today marks the International Day of Peace, with this year's theme being "Recovering better for an equitable and sustainable world."<sup>1</sup> We are all required to creatively and collectively consider how we can make peace with one another and make peace with nature, as the world recovers from the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Australia's recently announced nuclear-powered submarine deal with the United States and the United Kingdom threatens the construction of a genuine culture of peace. Whilst you have declared that Australia is not seeking to establish nuclear weapons or establish a civil nuclear capability, this declaration can only be guaranteed by the government ratifying the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Australia having nuclear-powered submarines crosses a threshold by nuclearising our military for the first time, and without a firm commitment to the UN Treaty, Australia will be susceptible to the future escalation of nuclear development through collaboration with our nuclear-armed allies.

Also of concern is the proposed development and placement of military nuclear reactors in Australia, both of which threaten human and environmental health. The development of these submarines will require the use of highly enriched uranium, and its mining, processing, and testing threatens disease in mine and industry workers and nearby inhabitants, including cancer and genetic damage. Significantly, it also contaminates the environment.<sup>2</sup> Historically, uranium mining and nuclear testing in Australia have been carried out in close proximity to Indigenous communities, who were offered little to no-protection from the resultant harmful effects.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, the nuclear reactors themselves risk becoming nuclear targets and sites of potential nuclear accidents. Even through normal use, nuclear reactors can emit radiological contamination into surrounding air, water and soil.<sup>4</sup>

At a time when Australia should be focussing on recovering from the COVID-19 Pandemic in a way that "transforms our world into one that is more equal, more just, equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and healthier,"<sup>5</sup> the production and maintenance of nuclear-powered submarines will require the use of public

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, "International Day of Peace," <https://www.un.org/en/observances/international-day-peace>

<sup>2</sup> ICAN Australia, "Nuclear Weapons Production," [https://www.icanw.org/nuclear\\_weapons\\_production](https://www.icanw.org/nuclear_weapons_production)


<sup>3</sup> ICAN Australia, "Humanitarian Impacts: Impact on Australia," <https://icanw.org.au/learn/humanitarian-impacts/>

<sup>4</sup> ICAN Australia, "Nuclear Weapons Production," [https://www.icanw.org/nuclear\\_weapons\\_production](https://www.icanw.org/nuclear_weapons_production)

<sup>5</sup> United Nations, "International Day of Peace," <https://www.un.org/en/observances/international-day-peace>

funds that could and should be utilised in the vital services of health care, education, climate change mitigation, disaster relief, and social services. On the International Day of Peace, CRA calls on the Australian government to end its complicity in the global nuclear problem, by ratifying the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and pledging not to develop, test, acquire, or use nuclear weapons. Only by doing so can we truly build a culture of peace between nations and peoples and with the planet.

Yours faithfully,



Peter Carroll FMS  
President



Anne Walker  
National Executive Director