



THE HON BEN MORTON MP
MINISTER ASSISTING THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET
MINISTER FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE
SPECIAL MINISTER OF STATE

Reference: MC21-112523

Brother Peter Carroll FMS
President
Catholic Religious Australia
PO Box 1518
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2059

Dear Brother Carroll

Thank you for your letter dated 21 September 2021 to the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, on Australia's acquisition of a nuclear-powered submarine capability. The Prime Minister has asked me to respond on his behalf. I sincerely apologise for the delay in responding.

As the Prime Minister has stated, the Australian Government will not acquire nuclear weapons nor establish a civil nuclear-power industry in Australia. However, the Australian Government does not support the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (the Treaty), as we believe it will not eliminate a single nuclear weapon. The Treaty creates parallel obligations to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), has not engaged states that possess nuclear weapons, ignores the realities of the global security environment and has weaker safeguards provisions than the existing NPT.

Over the next 18 months, we will work with the US and the United Kingdom to ensure the full suite of requirements that ensure Australia is a responsible and reliable nuclear steward are in place, including safety, environmental protection, disposal and regulation.

I have copied the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Marise Payne, and the Minister for Defence, the Hon Peter Dutton MP, to this response.

Thank you again for writing to the Prime Minister.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Ben Morton', written in a cursive style.

BEN MORTON

9/11/2021