

WHAT DO NUKES HAVE TO DO WITH CLIMATE CHANGE?

LET'S TALK ABOUT: VULNERABILITIES



Week Five: Sept. 5—11

Nuclear weapons and climate change are two of the greatest threats facing the world. With nearly 14,000 nuclear weapons, nine nuclear-armed states possess the capacity to destroy humanity and devastate the environment through war. Climate change threatens all life and responding to it involves shifting priorities and resources away from militaries and war, toward just and sustainable peace.

In the Clinton Franciscans' Laudato Si' Action Plan for 2022, a commitment was made to "Research harmful environmental effects of the production of nuclear weapons and make Information available to the public in 2022." This is in keeping with the Corporate Public Stands taken by the Clinton Franciscans on Care for Creation and Nuclear Disarmament.

From August 8 – September 5, the Franciscan Peace Center will be sharing a weekly series of infographics created by Pax Christi International which highlight the relationship between the threat of nuclear weapons and the threat of climate change.

THE VULNERABLE SUFFER

The most vulnerable people have little to do with climate change and nothing to do with nuclear weapons, yet they suffer the most. Indigenous communities, intergenerational survivors, and racially marginalised people, disproportionately suffer from the destructive effects of climate change and the harmful impacts of nuclear weapons testing and use.

CASE IN POINT

The nexus between nukes, climate, and vulnerability is perhaps most potent in the Marshall Islands. Now their islands face rising sea levels caused by global warming. The people also suffer from radiation-related illness and death since US nuclear tests in the 1950s. These tests disproportionately impact women and girls with alarmingly high rates of stillbirths, miscarriages, and birth defects.

HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Rich countries have polluted the most, including through nuclear testing. They have the historic responsibility to help those vulnerable to climate change and victims of nuclear tests. They should make resources available to poor countries affected most by these threats.

AGENTS OF CHANGE

Despite challenging circumstances, vulnerable people have shown great strength in dealing with nuclear and climate disasters. We can support them in their search for justice and reparations. Also, we can partner with them in innovative national climate solutions and global nuclear disarmament.

WHAT NOW?

The issues that vulnerable countries and populations face with regard to nuclear weapons and testing should be addressed at the United Nations Climate Change Conferences and at the Meetings of States Parties to the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Policy makers should not only talk about vulnerable people, but also with them. They should have a seat at the table!

Sources
https://www.icanw.org/nuclear_tests



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