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Thinkers Lodge Summit:
A Call to Action for and with Humanity
on the Twin Nuclear and Climate Crises

Pagweak/Pugwash, Mi'kma'ki/Nova Scotia, Canada
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At a time of a global pandemic, we discussed the possible extinction of humanity and how we can survive ongoing climate catastrophes and prevent any future nuclear catastrophes and their cascading effects. It is essential to our survival to have a reciprocal relationship with Mother Earth and see ourselves as part of an interconnected web of all existence.

Nuclear weapons and climate change pose existential threats to the human race and our ecosphere. It is urgent that humanity deal with these current and complex challenges in a holistic and definitive manner.

Reaffirming our Responsibilities to Mother Earth and Humanity

We, as humans, have survived through millennia due to our relationship with Mother Earth. Our relationship necessarily includes reciprocity and acknowledgement of Mother Earth as a living being, which would include all [rights associated with personhood](#). We need to be accountable for all of our behaviour and decisions that affect the holistic health and wellbeing of humanity and Mother Earth as a whole, coming together in respectful, egalitarian, and collaborative relationships to understand our interconnectedness and interdependence.

In order to survive, we need to reawaken our intrinsic capacity for ecological relating through forming meaningful connections with each other, the land and water, our pasts, future generations, and all of creation. The forces of capitalism, heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, ableism, colonialism, slavery, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and other forms of domination have created and normalized enormous inequities and have produced widespread levels of distancing, separation, overwhelm, and trauma. These interlocking forces continue to complicate collaborative ever-evolving equitable and ecologically rooted alternatives. We require large shifts in existing cultural landscapes currently dominating our shared human existence to enable us to reaffirm our responsibilities to honour our ancestors' struggles for survival, and continue to support the surviving and thriving of present and future generations, and All Our Relations on Mother Earth.

We call on Scientists, Business Leaders, Military and Law Enforcement, Spiritual and Political Leaders, Law and Policy Makers, Educators, Students, Media and other Influencers, and all of humanity to carefully examine our own roles in history and the ongoing processes of destruction of fragile and resilient webs of ecological interconnection, and to take all wise and ethical steps necessary to align with powers of creation, restoration and sustainability.

To reach this vision of a regenerative and interconnected world requires ongoing and deep work on many levels, including interpersonal relationships, building inclusive and justice-oriented communities and larger structural changes to systems and institutions. The following Calls to Action are some of the many possible steps that can be taken now to move us in life affirming directions. Immediate action toward this vision is essential for the survival and wellbeing of all life.

Calls to Action for Systemic Change

- Foster community care within and amongst diverse communities through respect, collaboration, appreciation, and reciprocity.
- Immediately fully implement the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) in its entirety.
- Immediately implement in Canada the [94 Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action](#), the [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry](#) report, and the [Sixties Scoop Class Action Settlement Agreement](#).
- We must implement protections for whistleblowers and frontline activists across Mother Earth, ensuring that we are protecting the lives of those who are defending land, water, and All Our Relations.
- We must acknowledge and attribute personhood and the legal and moral rights attributed to all persons and give equivalent rights to all beings living on Mother Earth.
- We must also acknowledge and attribute personhood and the legal and moral rights attributed to personhood to all ecosystems.

The Nuclear Weapon Elimination Imperative

The explosion of nuclear weapons, whether by accident, miscalculation or intention, including by terrorist act, would constitute an attack on all humanity. A nuclear exchange would be the most damaging climate event in human history, with mass destruction and mass murder, and the spectre of a nuclear winter. In the past, one single nuclear bomb test (Tsar Bomba in 1961) had an explosive yield that was ten times larger than all the explosive power of World War 2. We say that nuclear weapons must never be used and must urgently be eliminated, with all appropriate safeguards against their re-introduction.

While Nuclear Energy and the supply chain and storage of associated hazardous materials does possess a threat to Mother Earth, this dimension was not considered in depth by this group.

Recognizing the potential role of nuclear energy as part of the transition from fossil fuels to renewables, a thorough and transparent risk assessment is required. Transparency of information are needed for all people to be able to understand and evaluate the health, social, environmental impacts of nuclear energy.

The Climate Response Imperative

At the same time, climate change poses urgent security threats:

- Rising ocean levels are causing inundation of small island states and large coastal areas, including populated cities with important transportation and marine infrastructure, including air and naval bases, and coastal nuclear reactors;

- Disproportionate impact on marginalized communities and conflict-affected nations, including the creation of “climate refugees” trying to escape increasing conflict and food scarcity from floods, fires and storms; and
- Energy shortages from inadequate transition to renewables from fossil fuels, impacting both the economy and employment, possibly causing armed conflict.

Call for Action on the Interconnected Nuclear and Climate Threats

We urgently request that the following steps be taken:

- All states, including the nuclear weapons states and their alliances move away from reliance on nuclear weapons.
- The reduction of nuclear weapons restart immediately, reversing the demise of many arms control treaties and increased tension between Russia, China, the United States and all other nations with nuclear weapons.
- All nations sign, now or in the near future, the [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#) (TPNW). States that have not yet signed the TPNW support and contribute constructively to the first meeting of states parties in 2022. Nuclear weapons states give their non-nuclear allies the freedom to sign the treaty.
- States contribute constructively to the [2022 NPT Review Conference](#), seeking progress in all aspects, including implementation of [Article 6](#), which requires disarmament of the nuclear weapons states.
- Municipalities, cities, and schools adopt declarations on Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zones (NWFZ) and cities sign on to the [ICAN](#) cities appeal. Youth and other groups adopt resolutions supporting NWFZ’s and nuclear disarmament.
- Schools and all educational environments regularly offer materials and courses to educate on the nuclear and climate threats and foster a culture of peace. Awareness of environmental racism needs to be included to enhance understanding of the disproportionate impacts on marginalized communities. Encourage students to consider studies, careers, and leadership opportunities in addressing these global threats. Governments allocate funds for education in schools and more broadly in the population on the social implications of both climate change and the dual nature of nuclear-related technologies.
- Transparency is needed on nuclear policies and funding, including on any nuclear weapons upgrades (so called “modernization”) and the proposals for Small Modular Reactors, as new technologies.
- Governments at all levels enable access to information from their departments related to climate change and nuclear regulation, particularly in their respective budgets and expenditures.
- Governments at all levels adopt and enforce best practices for whistleblower protection, including for public officials, private individuals, and civil society.
- The long-term effects and threats of nuclear waste be recognized. For instance, Plutonium-239 has a half-life of 24,000 years, longer than the length of recorded human history. It is imperative that

these radioactive substances be kept out of the biosphere. This poses not only a scientific challenge but a civilizational one as well, given the long time-span of the radioactivity.

- Learning from best practices of past nuclear treaties, robust mechanisms should be created to support new climate and disarmament treaties. The verification and compliance mechanisms of the [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty](#) (NPT) and the [Chemical Weapons Convention](#) (CWC) can provide valuable lessons and institutional models for new treaties.
- Since the military and defense departments typically emit more Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) than other government departments, military emissions must not be excluded from the climate targets. These pollutants are no less harmful and, in some cases, much more harmful and destructive.
- Drastic measures will be needed to meet the Paris Climate Accord goals, so new coal, oil, and gas exploration must be immediately curtailed (see, for example, the [Proposal](#) for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty).
- To bring about the elimination of nuclear weapons and reverse climate change, it will be necessary to divert military expenditures. With world military expenditure reaching a record US\$2 trillion, the future of the planet depends on reorienting and repurposing this massive resource. Disarmament and ecological sustainability must go hand in hand.
- Since climate change is a primary security threat at both the national and international levels, expenditures on nuclear weapons are an obvious target for resources to be shifted to deal with the climate crisis such as a [bill under consideration](#) by the US Congress. Furthermore, a reduction in military activity and procurement, along with the conversion of military expenditures, is needed for climate change mitigation.
- Finally, stronger local and global governance is needed because nations on their own cannot meet all of these challenges individually. A multi-stakeholder approach is needed, with international institutions holding governments, corporations and all centres of power to account. This requires robust verification and compliance powers to create global transparency and accountability.

Though the challenges of nuclear weapons and climate change are formidable, much can be done. The future of humanity depends on our bold actions—individual, collective and systemic—and on reaffirming our responsibility to Mother Earth.

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