



**Asia Pacific Leadership Network for
Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament**

MEDIA RELEASE

ASIA PACIFIC LEADERS CALL FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

CANBERRA 22 OCTOBER 2013. Thirty political, diplomatic, military and scientific leaders from fourteen Asia Pacific countries – including twelve former prime ministers, foreign and defence ministers – have signed a joint statement strongly supporting a nuclear weapons free region and world, and calling on policymakers to urgently re-energize the disarmament agenda.

The statement (attached) expresses grave concern that the Asia Pacific is the only region in the world where the number of nuclear weapons is actually now growing, and challenges the “Cold War habits of mind” which are leading policymakers to place far too much reliance on unsubstantiated or highly questionable arguments about the utility of nuclear weapon, and far too little on the risks associated with them.

The statement calls for very specific steps toward disarmament to be taken by each of the nuclear armed states in the region – the US, Russia, China, India, Pakistan and North Korea – and the US allies and partners who shelter under its nuclear umbrella.

The Convenor of the group, former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans, said in releasing the statement:

The optimism generated by President Obama’s 2009 Prague Speech, and successful initial US-Russia disarmament negotiations, has begun to fade. It is critical that we recapture a sense of urgency about the scale and gravity of the risks posed by the world’s 17000 remaining nuclear weapons. APLN leaders have shown the way in this very strong and sharply worded statement. It’s time for leaders to listen, and act.

About the APLN

The Asia Pacific Leadership Network for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (APLN) is an advocacy group, formed in 2011, of former senior political, diplomatic and military and scientific leaders from around the region, from South Asia to East Asia and Australasia. The objective of the network is to inform and energize public opinion, and especially high-level policymakers, to take seriously the very real threats posed by nuclear weapons, and do everything possible to achieve a world in which they are contained, diminished and ultimately eliminated.

The network is modelled on a European counterpart (the ELN), established in 2010 and convened by former UK Defence Minister Lord Des Browne, which has already been active and visible in calling for urgent changes to NATO nuclear policy. The creation of both networks, and a more recently established Latin American Leadership Network (LALN) has been made possible by seed grants from the US-based Nuclear Threat Initiative, co-chaired by former Senator Nunn.

APLN is convened by former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans, who previously served as co-chair of the International Commission for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (ICCND) with Yoriko Kawaguchi, former Foreign Minister of Japan, also a member of APLN, and is designed to build upon the work of that Commission.

APLN members contribute to the nuclear debate by making public statements from time to time, engaging in direct advocacy with regional governments as both public and private opportunities arise, commissioning research and hosting regional seminars and conferences as resources permit, and maintaining an active website (www.apln.org) through its Secretariat based at the Australian National University in Canberra.

Media Enquiries

Media enquiries should be addressed in the first instance to the Convenor, Professor Gareth Evans at ge@gevans.org or the Head of Secretariat, Professor Ramesh Thakur at ramesh.thakur@anu.edu.au Tel +61 447 727 797

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