



**RICHARD MARLES  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR DEFENCE  
MEMBER FOR CORIO**

**CHAPTER 11: NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT**

**TUESDAY, 18 DECEMBER 2018**

**48<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY,  
ADELAIDE**

**\*\*\*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY\*\*\***

I'd like to acknowledge the work of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, who have provided renewed energy to the cause of ridding the world of nuclear devices.

And I'd like to acknowledge the Australian branch of ICAN in their campaign which is why we have today, before this Conference, a resolution that we can all agree upon which seeks to build on Labor's proud record of being at the forefront of nuclear disarmament.

And I'd also like to acknowledge my friend and colleague, Anthony Albanese, who has had a lifelong commitment to this issue, particularly through being the Patron of the Tom Uren Foundation: a foundation named after a man who was Anthony's mentor, and who witnessed the first nuclear explosion at Hiroshima.

We can all agree on the aim of the Ban Treaty to remove nuclear weapons from the world. And the normative value of this statement in the Ban Treaty is really significant.

It's no secret though that for many of us there are some practical issues about the implementation of the Nuclear Ban Treaty.

The American Alliance remains central to Australia's strategic policy, and this resolution absolutely makes clear that fundamental point. It is critical that the Ban Treaty can operate for Australia in a way which is consistent with the Alliance.

We need to be certain that the Ban Treaty operates in a way that does not undermine the significance of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

It is this treaty which has been the principal way by which Australia, and the world, including the nuclear powers, have dealt with the question of disarmament.

Whatever frustration people might express about the functioning of the Non-Proliferation Treaty now, over its history it has been remarkably successful. During the period of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, we have seen the global stockpile of nuclear weapons drop from their peak by 90 per cent.

And it is only through the Non-Proliferation Treaty that the nuclear powers have committed to a world free of nuclear weapons.

It is critical that there is a proper verification regime within the Ban Treaty so that it has the teeth to ensure that any nuclear power in the future which agrees to it actually removes its nuclear arsenal.

And it is essential that there is realistic pathway to involving the nuclear powers in the Ban Treaty. Right now, not a single nuclear power is participating in it.

And while the non-nuclear world making a statement is good, ultimately to rid the world of nuclear weapons, we need to change the behaviour of the nuclear powers themselves.

But after these issues are addressed, the world signing and ratifying a treaty which removes nuclear weapons from the globe forever would be a profound gift from the present to the future of humanity.

**ENDS**

**Authorised by Noah Carroll, ALP, Canberra.**