



International Physicians for the  
Prevention of Nuclear War  
**GENEVA LIASON OFFICE**

# IPPNW MEETS WITH WHO DIRECTOR-GENERAL

## DR. TEDROS GHEBREYESUS SUPPORTS UPDATE TO 1987 REPORT AND ADVOCATES FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS ABOLITION



*IPPNW-Geneva Liaison Office Director, Chuck Johnson (in hat), meets Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General and ICAN Executive Director Melissa Parke (5th and 6th from left), and WHO and ICAN staff.*

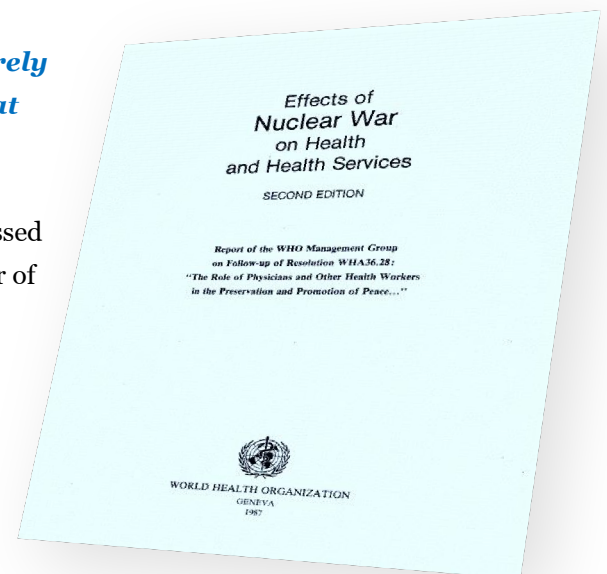
In 2023 IPPNW-Geneva Liaison Office Director, Chuck Johnson, began asking colleagues and other experts about whether to act on something that had been on IPPNW's agenda for a while, wondering, is now the time to encourage the World Health Organization (WHO) to update their decades-old report "Effects of Nuclear War on Health and Health Services?"

WHO's previous report has not been touched since 1987 and a new report has been needed for some time to include, among other things: extensive new computer modeling of the climatic, environmental, agricultural and nutritional effects of nuclear war; conclusions about the capacity of emergency responders to nuclear detonations, studies of health effects upon second generation survivors, and on ionizing radiation's impact upon women, girls, and children; updating the status and risks of current nuclear arsenals; and, emphasizing the responsibility of health professionals in preventing nuclear war.

***An update of this baseline report from WHO now will be a clear message to the world that the nuclear weapons threat is not merely a relic of the Cold War past, but a current existential danger that health professionals prioritize and take seriously.***

Chuck spoke with scientists at WHO's radiation and health unit, who expressed interest in the much-needed update. Our team also reached out to an author of the original report (and the only one still living), Dr. Frank von Hippel, who agreed to serve as an advisor to the new report.

On April 12, Chuck and staff from ICAN met with Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization. We were thrilled by his enthusiastic response. Without prompting, Dr. Ghebreyesus stated he will prioritize the update of WHO's 1987 report on the health impacts of nuclear war -and offered to join our advocacy for nuclear weapons abolition.



As the United Nations' agency charged with spearheading international public health efforts, WHO's involvement will undoubtedly impact our movement in a transformative way. WHO advocating by our side to do away with the most destructive force on our planet as we hold aloft an updated scientific report will amplify our message. During our meeting, Dr. Ghebreyesus shared his oft repeated quote, "We cannot have peace without health and we cannot have health without peace." We could not agree more!



We look forward to working with WHO to bring a resolution for the report's updating to the floor of the World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva the last week of May. On May 31, IPPNW will host a side-event at the WHA, where we will brief delegates on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons and the urgency and importance of an updated WHO study. Our team was thrilled by his enthusiastic response. Without prompting, Dr. Ghebreyesus stated he will prioritize the update on WHO's 1987 report on the health impacts of nuclear war- and offered to join our advocacy for nuclear weapons abolition.



Chuck Johnson, IPPNW-Geneva Liaison Office Director

IPPNW's presence in Geneva is strengthening our alliances with global partners, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), World Medical Association (WMA), World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA), International Federation of Medical Student Associations (IFMSA), and International Council of Nurses (ICN). Having a presence in the center for medicine and world peace is facilitating IPPNW's ability to better coordinate with the like-minded organizations located here.

# CALL FOR CEASEFIRE IN ISRAEL-PALESTINE



*Al Ahli Arab Hospital-Gaza*

IPPNW calls for a ceasefire in the Israel-Palestine war. Our goal is the health, peace and security of all people, whether they live amid the terror and destruction of war. Our profession has its roots deep in our ethical obligation to provide care to all on the basis of their shared humanity and their need.

The targeting of hospitals, ambulances and health professionals undertaking their vital work is a heinous crime and a violation of the Geneva Conventions. Depriving health

services of the electricity, water, fuel and other supplies that they need to work is inhumane and a war crime. The UN has been clear that attacks on these facilities with the excuse that they may be in close proximity to combatants is also a violation of international law.

We express our support and deep gratitude and concern for our health professional colleagues in Gaza. Moreover, we are deeply disturbed by the irresponsible threat of nuclear weapons use made by the Heritage Minister of Israel. The risks of this war escalating uncontrollably to use nuclear weapons is a real and present danger.

**We strongly support** the consistent calls of the United Nations General Assembly and Secretary-General and humanitarian organisations for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, for the immediate and unconditional release of all civilians held hostage by Hamas, many of whom need urgent medical attention, and for the protection of civilians and the infrastructure they rely on.



## ***IPPNW AND MEDICAL JOURNALS ISSUE URGENT CALL FOR ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS***

More than 150 medical journals, including the Lancet, the British Medical Journal, the New England Journal of Medicine, and JAMA have issued a joint call for urgent steps to decrease the growing danger of nuclear war and to move rapidly to the elimination of nuclear weapons. At a time of expanded fighting in Ukraine and Gaza, and increased tensions in Korea, leaders of the global health community underscore that any use of nuclear weapons would be catastrophic for humanity.



## NUKEEXPO KICK-OFF A SUCCESS: IPPNW Speaks and Hosts Booths at First Nuclear Disarmament Fairs



IPPNW Team in Brussels

**Brussels and Oslo:** IPPNW physicians, medical students, and staff members gathered in Brussels and Oslo in April for *NukeExpo*, an immersive and interactive conference on the dangers of nuclear weapons, hosted by International Committee for the Red Cross and Norwegian People's Aid. IPPNW Co-President, Dr. Carlos Umaña, addressed the first plenary in Brussels, defending the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as ultimately more realistic and reliable than continuing to depend upon nuclear deterrence and unstable leaders to prevent nuclear war indefinitely. IPPNW ran education stalls in the “impacts” and “response” sections of the exhibition, focusing on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons and the inability of health services to adequately respond to any use of these indiscriminate weapons. We hope to replicate the expo in other key countries.

## IPPNW JOINS HEALTH PARTNERS: Describing dangers of Nuclear War, and Health Professionals' Responsibility in Its Prevention

**Rome:** Building upon years of partnership, Dr. Ira Helfand, Secretary of IPPNW-Geneva Liaison Office, spoke to a packed plenary of the World Congress on Public Health - A World in Turmoil - for the World Federation of Public Health Associations in May, 2023 – educating a stunned audience on the nuclear winter climate dangers of even a limited nuclear war using 3% of the world's arsenal - threatening up to 2 billion people world wide with starvation.



**WMA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Kigali, Rwanda  
4 - 7 October 2023



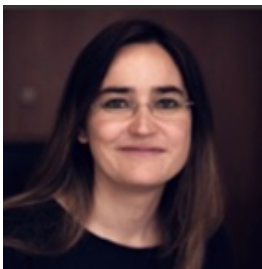
**Kigali:** In October, 2023 Dr. David Onazi of Nigeria, co-President, Dr. Sally Ndung'u of Kenya, immediate past co-president, presented to the General Assembly of the World Medical Association, our long-time health and medical partner, in Kigali, building support among WMA leadership for our efforts within the WHO.

**Seoul:** Dr. Ruth Mitchell, IPPNW Board Chair (Australia), and Walusungu Mtonga, IPPNW International Student Representative (Zambia), presented to the World Medical Association's Annual Council Session in Seoul. Walu, son of the late, revered Dr. Bob Mtonga, also presented to the WMA Junior Doctors Network, and is continuing his father's tradition of arms control advocacy.

# WELCOME NEW GENEVA TEAM MEMBERS!



*IPPNW-Geneva Liaison Office Staff and Board Members Meeting at Geneva Office in March  
L to R: Jenny Cole, Treasurer Urs Rüegg, Alex Reidon, Illian Halbertsma, Molly McGinty, Secretary Ira Helfand*



We are happy to announce that IPPNW has a new staff member: **Alexandra (Alex) Reidon** is, as of 1 May, 2024 the Administrative and Financial Manager for the Geneva office. She is focused on administrative duties, while assisting Chuck and Development Director Cynthia Hurst with program and fundraising. Alex brings with her the experience of serving in this same role for ICAN, in their organizational start-up in Geneva. She also guided Chuck and Treasurer Urs Rüegg, in navigating Swiss bureaucracy to establish our Geneva association. Now she is poised to help IPPNW-GLO rise to the next level.



Our team now has a fabulous new volunteer member - **Jennifer (Jenny) Cole**. Jenny was recommended to us by her neighbor Dr. JJ Fasnacht, and his wife Bea, a leader in Swiss IPPNW/PSR. She jumped right in and is helping to coordinate IPPNW's upcoming side event at the World Health Assembly. Ms. Cole speaks German, is originally from Australia, and has worked in several countries, including establishing Brink's Global Services' start-up in China.

AND, we have **Illian Halbertsma**, a student at the University of Geneva who joined our ranks this year and hit the ground running, serving as Chuck's "scout" during proceedings at the Human Rights Council, the Committee on Disarmament. His thorough approach and lack of fear in speaking with UN High Commissioners and Directors-General is remarkable.



**Dr. Urs Rüegg**, our Treasurer, has been indispensable since day one. As the International Representative of IPPNW/PSR Switzerland, Urs welcomed Chuck and Rebecca to Geneva and has opened doors for them and for IPPNW from the beginning. His extensive contacts from years of pharmacological research at universities (including the University of Geneva) and for private companies make him an invaluable and tireless networker on our behalf. His work ethic, eye for fine detail, and unfailing kindness and good humor make us very glad he has chosen to serve as our Treasurer. Thank you, Urs!

*Urs Rüegg is also an enthusiastic mushroom hunter, here seen with the day's biggest find near his family cabin in Feldis.*

# Join With Us in Geneva

IPPNW's Geneva Office is growing in size and impact because you and other members like you care about the future of our planet. Thank you for your ongoing support, which made it possible for our numerous achievements since last year's opening.

You helped us meet the final challenge grant of \$100,000, which has given us the financial stability to ensure we can continue to have an impact in this international center for diplomacy and advocacy. Our 2024 budget for the Geneva Liaison Office is \$350,000.

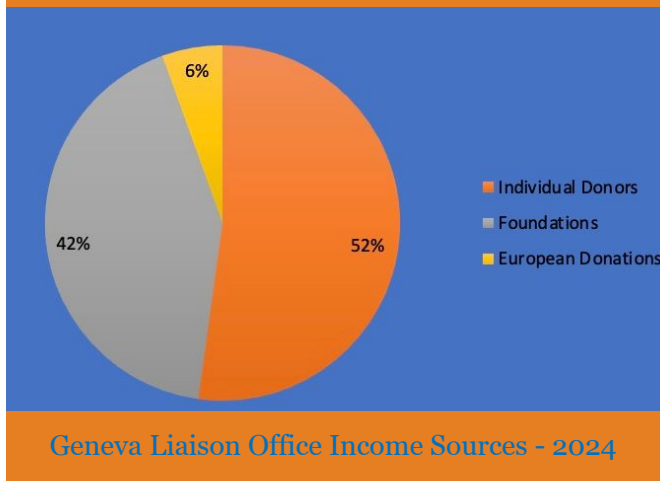
Thank you for your continued support for this important work.



Cynthia Hurst,  
Director of Development

**Your support makes a difference.  
Please consider making a donation that is significant to you today.  
Thank you!**

Your support is critical to the success of the nuclear weapons abolition movement. The majority of our funding comes from individuals like you.



Whether you choose to return your gift in an envelope, to donate online at [IPPNW.org](http://IPPNW.org), or simply scan this code with your smartphone to contribute, you have our deepest gratitude.

~Chuck, Cynthia and the entire IPPNW Team



*Newton's third law of motion - for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction - fits this moment of extreme danger perfectly. We are all part of the necessary shift of our human momentum away from destruction and back toward life and hope. Thank you for doing your part, in whatever way that is, to help make this happen.*