

## Great leap forward for Ban Treaty!

MAW is delighted that the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), supported by two-thirds of the UN's membership when it was adopted in 2017, received its 50<sup>th</sup> ratification on United Nations Day 24 October, and will now enter into international legal force on 22 January 2021.

This ground-breaking Treaty bans the production, testing, possession and use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and prohibits those nations which have signed up to it from allowing nuclear weapons to be based on their territory or from assisting or encouraging others to acquire such weapons. It will sit alongside the other major global treaty on nuclear weapons, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Together they will drive forward the international community's shared vision of a world free of nuclear weapons, sending a clear message to nuclear-armed nations that inaction is no longer acceptable, real progress towards disarmament must be taken now.

The UK refused to participate in the negotiation of the Treaty and does not intend to join, so will therefore not be bound by the Treaty's obligations. However, the entry into force of the Treaty will mark the beginning of the end of the military hegemony of the nuclear armed powers, as nation after nation asserts its right to live in a world free of the threat of nuclear annihilation. The financing of these now 'controversial' weapons is likely to become increasingly difficult as global financial institutions refuse to invest in them.

MAW is immensely proud of the herculean efforts over decades of our co-founder and President, Bruce Kent, which have contributed immeasurably to the successful movement built by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).

***"This Treaty is a massive encouragement for all of us. The nuclear weapon states, like ours, are now out of step with the rest of the world,"*** said Bruce. ***"The Treaty raises a real hope for a nuclear-free and peaceful world. It encourages us all to continue to do everything we can to reach that target."***

MAW will continue to be an active participant in ICAN UK Partners, striving to convince the UK government of the need to reconsider its outdated position or risk increasing international isolation and stigmatisation as a nuclear pariah.

It is very fitting that, as part of the UN75 celebrations, the UN Secretary General will on 10 January 2021 visit Methodist Central Hall, Westminster, venue for the first meeting of the UN General Assembly. And the first resolution passed in January 1946? To ensure *'the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction'*!

26 October 2020