



66-70 UNION SQUARE, #204  
SOMERVILLE, MA 02143  
USA

TEL: 617.440.1733  
FAX: 617.440.1734  
WEB: WWW.IPPNW.ORG

IPPNW@IPPNW.ORG

## IPPNW response to the May 25, 2009 nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War regrets the nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

As an organization of doctors, we deplore the squandering of scarce resources of all the nuclear powers in the time of world wide economic recession on the development of weapons — especially weapons of mass destruction — instead of investing in health, education, economic development and other social needs that provide true security.

Our research has shown how even a small amount of nuclear bomb explosions in a limited nuclear crisis will destroy the crops globally for decades and lead to a world wide famine. Thus, this test is a backward step for regional and global security at a time of renewed international commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons.

This new test explosion of a nuclear device, coupled with short-range missile tests, does nothing to improve the DPRK's security. To the contrary, the predictable response from North Korea's neighbors and from countries around the world has been to further isolate the country and to demand punitive actions.

IPPNW calls for increased contact and communication with the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), and will work with our affiliate, the Korean Anti-Nuke Peace Physicians (KANPP) towards that end. We also call on all parties to show restraint so that this situation does not escalate into a military confrontation.

If the DPRK nuclear tests provoke a nuclear arms race in the region, either through the increased presence of US or other nuclear forces, or through the acquisition of nuclear weapons by other countries in North Asia, the net effect will be greater regional tension and instability, and the risk of an armed conflict that could lead to the use of nuclear weapons.

The government of the DPRK has said it wants to work for a nuclear-weapons-free Korean peninsula. Proposals for a North Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone — which would include Japan and would have the backing of the United States, China, and Russia — have been on the table for several years. We are convinced that the DPRK's own security interests would be best served by halting the development of nuclear weapons and by entering good faith negotiations to bring this nuclear-weapon-free zone into existence.

At the same time, the double standard by which some states have claimed that nuclear weapons are essential to their security while denying that right to others is both reprehensible and unsustainable. The urgent need for a global nuclear-weapon-free zone through the negotiation and adoption of a Nuclear Weapons Convention is the real lesson of this unfortunate decision by a tragically isolated state.

Ime John

Sergey Kolesnikov

Vappu Taipale

Co-presidents of IPPNW

**Founding Co-Presidents:** Bernard Lown, USA; Evgueni Chazov, Russia **Co-Presidents:** Ime John, Nigeria; Sergei Kolesnikov, Russia; Vappu Taipale, Finland **Vice-Presidents:** Caecelie Buhmann, Denmark; Livtar Singh Chawla, India; Michael Dworkind, USA; Jans Fromow-Guerra, Mexico; Vladimir Garkavenko, Russia; Ahmed Geneid, Egypt; Ruth Mitchell, Australia; Walter Odhiambo, Kenya; Shizuteru Usui, Japan **At-Large Members:** Khagendra Dahal, Nepal; Bjørn Hilt, Norway; Ron McCoy, Malaysia; Tilman Ruff, Australia; Gunnar Westberg, Sweden **Medical Student Representatives:** Agyeno Ehase Sunday, Nigeria; Wenjing Tao, Sweden **Speakers of the International Council:** Herman Spanjaard, Netherlands; Ira Helfand, USA; **2010 Congress Secretary:** Andi Nidecker, Switzerland **Executive Director:** Michael Christ, USA

