

BOOK LAUNCH / PANEL DISCUSSION

BRIDGE BUILDING IN THE NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT DISCOURSE

Nuclear Deterrence and the Humanitarian Approach to Nuclear Weapons

WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2021, 11H00 – 12H30 VIA ZOOM

INVITATION

Efforts toward nuclear disarmament have stagnated in recent years, worse even deteriorated. The international arms control and disarmament architecture is falling apart, the withdrawal from the INF, the JCPOA close to a collapse, and the New Start saved just last minute being evidence to this. The question of how to deal with nuclear weapons has been one of the most contentious global issues since the dawn of the nuclear age among deterrence believers and disarmament supporters. Are nuclear weapons a *necessary evil* or are they the *ultimate evil*?

In July 2017, 122 states adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) banning the only weapon of mass destruction not yet forbidden under international law. The Treaty, which challenged the already established nuclear order, entered into force on 22 January 2021 and is the result of efforts of cooperation between several states, disarmament academics, and civil society organisations. However, it has brought the divide in the international community into an even sharper focus.

Against this background, we would like to discuss what are the chances of overcoming the fundamental divide that characterises the nuclear weapons discourse? What are the necessary steps to achieve a world without nuclear weapons and how can they be achieved politically? While the different perspectives may ultimately prove difficult to resolve, a constructive, broader, and more inclusive dialogue would in itself be a positive contribution to the nuclear weapons debate. The EU office of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is organising a panel discussion to contribute to the effort to build bridges across these contentious issues. Alexander Kmentt will start the discussion with an introduction to his latest book *The Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons. How it was Achieved and Why it Matters*, an account of the seven-year process, known as the Humanitarian Initiative, which led to the TPNW.

The event will be held exclusively in English.



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SPEAKERS

Ambassador **Alexander Kmentt**, is an Austrian diplomat and President-designate of the 1st Meeting of States Parties of the TPNW. Prior to his current role as the Director of Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-proliferation at the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he was a Senior Visiting Research Fellow at King's College, London, and Permanent Representative to the Political and Security Committee of the EU.

Clara Portela is a Professor of Political Science at the University of Valencia. Previously she was Senior Associate Analyst at the EU-ISS. Her research focuses on arms control, Non-proliferation, and disarmament, as well as on multilateral sanctions policies. Other affiliations include the OSCE Academy in Bishkek and the College of Europe as well as the Asia-Europe Foundation.

Teri Schultz will moderate the panel. Schultz is a recognized Brussels-based journalist covering the EU and NATO with considerable expertise on foreign policy and security issues.

PROGRAMME

11:00 WELCOME REMARKS

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung EU-Office

11:10 PRESENTATION BY AMBASSADOR ALEXANDER KMENTT

*»The Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons:
How It Was Achieved And Why It Matters«*

*Followed by a panel discussion with
Clara Portela, Professor of Political Science
at the University of Valencia*

*Moderated by
Teri Schultz, Freelance Reporter for NPR, CBS News,
and Deutsche Welle*

12:00 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

12:30 END OF THE EVENT

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING TECHNICAL AND PROCEDURAL ASPECTS

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