

As faith communities across the United States, we write to urge you to put pressure on the administration to pursue a diplomatic, negotiated follow-on agreement to the **New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START)** before it expires on **February 5, 2026**. Our diverse traditions differ in creed and practice, yet we are united in a shared moral conviction: the sanctity of human life requires that our nation take urgent steps to prevent a new nuclear arms race.

New START, which entered into force in 2011, is the last remaining treaty limiting the world's two largest nuclear arsenals. It caps the number of deployed long-range nuclear weapons that the United States and Russia may possess and provides for inspections and data exchanges that allow each nation to verify the other's compliance. These limits and verification measures reduce the risks of miscalculation, escalation, and catastrophic war. For more than a decade, New START has anchored global stability and demonstrated that diplomacy can succeed even in times of tension.

If New START expires without a replacement, the United States and Russia would be free—within months—to expand their arsenals without any limits or transparency. Such a vacuum would heighten mistrust, increase the likelihood of dangerous misunderstandings, and invite a costly and destabilizing arms race. From a moral standpoint, this is unacceptable. Our faiths teach us to prevent needless suffering, steward resources wisely, seek peace over violence, and protect future generations from avoidable harm.

Across many faiths—including Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, Indigenous, and Humanist traditions—moral teachings converge on a shared conviction: nuclear weapons violate the dignity of life, the integrity of creation, and the foundations of peace. From churches and Quaker meetings, synagogues to mosques, gurdwaras to temples, sanghas to Indigenous councils, communities of faith affirm that humanity is capable not only of inflicting apocalyptic harm but also of choosing cooperation, justice, and peace.

Arms control is therefore not an end in itself but a necessary step toward a world where nuclear weapons no longer threaten humanity or creation. A world free from nuclear weapons is not merely a political aspiration—it is a moral imperative rooted in our deepest spiritual commitments and in our shared responsibility to safeguard life, protect creation, and build a future grounded in justice and peace.

We are deeply concerned that, absent congressional leadership, the world is drifting toward a moment of avoidable peril. Nuclear weapons—whose destructive power threatens all life on Earth—cannot be treated as ordinary instruments of national competition. Their use, whether intentional or accidental, would inflict indiscriminate and irreversible devastation. The mere pursuit of arms racing diverts public resources from urgent human needs, undermines global cooperation, and corrodes the trust essential for lasting peace.

We therefore call on Congress to:

1. **Publicly affirm the continued value of arms control**, including limits and verification measures on U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals.
2. **Encourage the Administration to begin immediate negotiations** on a New START follow-on agreement that maintains or strengthens existing limits.
3. **Support diplomatic engagement with Russia and other nuclear-armed states** to reduce nuclear risks and build pathways toward a safer world.

At this critical moment, we ask Congress to act with moral clarity. The decisions made in the coming months will shape whether future generations inherit a world marked by escalating nuclear danger—or one guided by courage, restraint, and a commitment to peace.

Sincerely,

All Souls Church Unitarian, Washington DC

Alliance of Baptists

American Friends Service Committee

Archdiocese of Sante Fe

California Council of Churches

Catholic Worker, Norfolk, VA.

Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces

Episcopal Peace Fellowship

Felician Sisters of North America

First Presbyterian Church

Franciscan Action Network

Franciscan Peace Center, Clinton, Iowa

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Grace St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Hindus for Human Rights

Hope 4 All Interfaith Community

Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace

Madison Mennonite Church

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Mennonite Central Committee U.S.

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd

National Council of Churches

New Neighbors Interfaith Alliance, Pax Christi

Norfolk Catholic Worker

Northern Lancaster County Nichiren Buddhist Community

PCAN (Pax Christi New England Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons)

Pax Christi Long Island New York

Pax Christi New York State

Pax Christi Pacific Northwest

Pax Christi Pittsburg

Pax Christi USA

Presbyterian Church (USA), Office of Public Witness

Religions for Peace USA

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Justice Team

Soka Gakkai International - USA

Sowers For Justice Hampton Roads

The Episcopal Church

United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society

Unitarian Universalist Association

United Church of Christ

Voices for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons