



The Rt Hon James Cleverly MP
Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

25 January 2021

Dear Mr Cleverly,

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (the Ban Treaty)

The International Relations and Defence Committee continues to follow developments relating to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, building on the conclusions of the report *Rising nuclear risk, disarmament and Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty*.¹ We note that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (the Ban Treaty) came into force on 22 January.

In our report, we found that:

262. The Ban Treaty has little chance of achieving its goals in the short to medium term, not least because none of the nuclear possessor states are signatories. While we welcome evidence from its proponents that it will not undermine the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, we believe the Ban Treaty risks exacerbating existing polarisation between Nuclear and Non-Nuclear Weapon States while delivering no immediate disarmament benefits. We understand and accept that the Government will remain opposed to the Ban Treaty.

263. We also believe however that the increasing signs of division between Nuclear and Non-Nuclear Weapon States are matters of concern, and that the dissatisfaction of the Ban Treaty's proponents with the status quo on disarmament should be taken seriously. We therefore recommend that the Government should adopt a less aggressive tone about this treaty and seek opportunities to work with its supporters towards the aims of Article 6 of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which concerns disarmament.

We have two questions for your response, please.

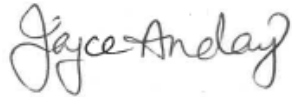
- I. Now that the Ban Treaty has come into force, what further consideration has the Government given to our recommendation that it should adopt a less aggressive tone about the treaty?

¹ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201719/ldselect/ldintrel/338/338.pdf>

2. How is the Government engaging with the Ban Treaty's supporters, including but not limited to its States Parties, on disarmament in the run up to this year's Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty?

We look forward to your response.

Yours, as ever

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jayce Anelay". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a large initial 'J' and a stylized 'A'.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns
Chair, International Relations and Defence Committee