

One year later after the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW): Reviewing Legal Impact and Implementation

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Abstract : The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) will mark in January 2022 one year since the entry into force of the treaty. TPNW provides that within one year of entry into force, the 86 countries that have signed it so far will convene to discuss and take decisions on the treaty's implementation at the first meeting of states-parties. Austria has formally offered to host the meeting in Vienna in the spring of 2022. At this first meeting, the States Parties would need to work. Among others, on the interpretations of some of the provisions of the Treaty, disarmament timelines under Article 4, and address universalization of the Treaty. The main objective of this paper is to explore the legal implications of the TPNW for States-Parties and discuss how these will impact non-State Parties, particularly the United States. In a first part, the article will address the legal requirements that States Parties to this treaty must adhere to by illustrating some of the progress made by these states regarding the implementation of the TPNW. In a second part, the paper will address the challenges and opportunities for universalizing the treaty and will focus on the response of Nuclear Weapons States, and particularly the current US administration. Since it has become clear that TPNW has become a new and important element to the nonproliferation and disarmament architecture, the article will provide a number of suggestions regarding ways US administration could positively contribute to the international discourse on TPNW.

Keywords : disarmament, arms control and nonproliferation, legal regime, TPNW

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