

Abolish War 2045 Campaign

Abolish War Now! Abolish All Armies by 2045!

A global campaign calling on all countries to adopt the following provision in their constitutions by 2045:

*[Country Name] shall renounce war, and commit to settle international disputes by peaceful means only and to abolish the national armed forces as a permanent institution.**

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Contacts: Anselmo LEE alee7080@gmail.com. Roberto Zamora Bolaños robertozamorab@gmail.com and Alyn Ware alyn@pnnd.org

Background

The *Abolish War 2045 Campaign* aims to fulfil the vision of the UN Charter to end the scourge of war by encouraging member states to adopt provisions in their constitutions by the year 2045 to renounce war, and resolve international disputes by peaceful means and abolish their national armed forces.

The United Nations was established to 'save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.' As such, the UN Charter requires member states to 'settle their international disputes by peaceful means' (Article 2.3) and to 'refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations' (Article 2.4).

However, war has not been eliminated due to the reluctance of nation states to abolish their standing armed (military) forces, by their continued recourse to military action in 'self-defence', which is not comprehensively prohibited by the UN Charter, and by the reluctance of many states to prevent or resolve armed conflict through UN mechanisms including adjudication by the International Court of Justice.

The Abolish War 2045 Campaign aims to fulfil the vision of the UN Charter to end the scourge of war by encouraging as many member states as possible to adopt provisions in their constitutions by 2045 to renounce war, resolve international disputes by peaceful means only, and abolish their national standing armed forces.

This Campaign is also a way to implement the principal objective of the Hague Appeal for Peace Conference in 1999 which adopted "Time to Abolish War" as the agenda and slogan.

This 25-year-long Campaign is launched on the 75th anniversary of the UN in 2020 to prepare for the 100th anniversary of the UN in 2045.

Examples

As of today, 22 countries do not maintain standing military forces. However, many of these accept military protection from neighbouring countries or regional defence arrangements, such as NATO or the Caribbean Regional Security System.

The campaign is inspired, in particular, by the examples of Costa Rica, Kiribati, Liechtenstein and Panama, which are not in military alliances and which in their constitutions renounce war, and prohibit the establishment of a standing armed force.

The Costa Rican example is particularly inspiring as the government and courts have interpreted it to require Costa Rica to take a pro-active role in advancing regional and international peace and disarmament. In addition, Costa Rica has been able to repel two military invasions against them, and resolve other serious international disputes by using legal and political mechanisms including the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and Organisation of American States (OAS) rather than re-establishing a standing army.

There are a number of countries that have adopted constitutional obligations to resolve their international conflicts peacefully and to renounce the use of armed force. However, most of them allow for the right of military force in self-defence.

One of the best-known examples of these obligations is Article 9 of the Japanese constitution which affirms that 'the Japanese people renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.' The constitution has not prevented Japan from establishing an army for self-defence of its territory. However, until 2015, when a new law was adopted in parliament, this constitutional provision prevented Japan from being involved in any military action beyond its territorial borders.

Resolution of international conflicts by peaceful means

Governments are able to utilise a range of peaceful means for resolving international conflicts as outlined in Article 33 of the UN Charter including negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, referral to the UN Security Council or other peaceful means of their own choice.

However, countries in conflict often neglect these mechanisms and rely instead on the threat or use of force. By adopting constitutional measures renouncing war, and by fully utilising these mechanisms for the resolution of international conflicts, the current reliance on the law of force can be replaced by the force of diplomacy and law.

All governments should, in particular, accept the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for disputes that they are unable to resolve by other peaceful means. 74 countries currently already accept such jurisdiction.

* The campaign recognizes that national armed forces may be required by some countries for an interim period to ensure national security until they can rely on legal and political mechanisms. The campaign therefore calls for a commitment to abolish the armed forces as a permanent institution without specifying the timeframe by which each country should implement this obligation. The campaign relates to national armed forces established for defence purposes or for waging war, and not to police forces established for domestic law enforcement.

Peace-related Articles in the Selected Constitutions

Country / Organization	Articles
Japan:	<p>Article 9 Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. (2) In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized</p>
Costa Rica:	<p>Article 12 The Army as a permanent institution is abolished. There shall be the necessary police forces for surveillance and the preservation of the public order.</p>
Lichtenstein	<p>Article 44 No armed units may be organised or maintained, except so far as may be necessary for the provision of the police service and the preservation of internal order. (Lichtenstein army was disbanded in 1868)</p>
Kiribati	<p>Article 126. Disciplined forces. No disciplined force shall be established other than the Kiribati Police, the Prison Service, the Marine Protection Service and the Marine Training School.</p>
Panama	<p>Article 310: Security Forces (Fuerza Pública) The Republic of Panama shall not have an Army.</p>
United Nations	<p>Article 2 (1)–(5) “The Organization and its Members, in pursuit of the Purposes stated in Article 1, shall act in accordance with the following Principles. 1. The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members. 2. All Members, in order to ensure to all of them the rights and benefits resulting from membership, shall fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed by them in accordance with the present Charter. 3. All Members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered. 4. All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations. 5. All Members shall give the United Nations every assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the present Charter, and shall refrain from giving assistance to any state against which the United Nations is taking preventive or enforcement action.</p> <p>Article 33 1. The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice. 2. The Security Council shall, when it deems necessary, call upon the parties to settle their dispute by such means.</p>

Countries which accept the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice

(See www.icj-cij.org/en/declarations)

Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Dominica, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Finland, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea Republic, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Senegal, Slovakia, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Togo, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay.

Note: There are also some multilateral treaties that provide for compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ between states parties.