

# The Nuclear Threat and Arms Race - 1983

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## Issue

To speak out as citizens against the dangers of nuclear war and the continuing arms race, as well as to recognize that limited nuclear warfare is neither feasible nor survivable. The potential loss of millions of lives and the destruction of nations demand informed and responsible citizen action to avert such overwhelming catastrophe.

## Background

The ever-increasing development and stockpiling of weapons of ultimate destruction by the U.S.S.R. and the US, exacerbated by their efforts to increase nuclear and military capabilities of their allies, pose grave threats to the survival of nations, peoples and even the planet. The expenditure of vast sums of preparations for war distort national economies, decrease needed funds for social programs and heighten tensions between nations. The religious leaders of many faiths have questioned the morality of nuclear weaponry and the escalating arms race.

“The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.” We are custodians who are responsible for the study and action necessary to preserve peace, to increase justice, to further the possibilities of a safer, better life for all, freed from the threat of nuclear holocaust.

## Resolutions

In accordance with the Jewish command “to seek peace and pursue it,” the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods has long been concerned about the arms race. Today, in a world with an increasing number of nations with nuclear capabilities, there is an ever-spreading as well as escalating threat of annihilation for the planet earth, all its civilizations and life, whether by design, accident, miscalculation or terrorism.

Therefore we firmly declare:

1. A universal, verifiable nuclear freeze as a first step toward true reduction in nuclear arms is urgently required.
2. Negotiators at the Geneva arms control talks and their governments must be urged by the peoples of their respective nations and the world to strive, through flexibility and compromise, to reach a successful agreement.
3. The ever-increasing economic burden on countries and people of the continuing build up of nuclear and conventional weaponry demands that new strategies for arms control be considered by all people and governments.
4. The United States and the U.S.S.R. should promptly ratify the treaties already negotiated and signed which include Salt II.
5. New international agreements are immediately necessary to assure that:
  1. The testing of nuclear weaponry in all elements—land, sea, underground or space—shall be banned.
  2. Nerve gases or other poisons to injure persons, whether civilian or military, or the environment, shall neither be developed, manufactured, stored or used.
  3. The development of added nuclear weaponry in either the United States or other countries should be held in abeyance pending further intense efforts between the nuclear super powers to de-escalate the arms race.

6. Since some peaceful uses of nuclear energy can too readily be converted to military purposes, funds should be increased to research and develop other sources of power.