

Title: Healthy development through a peaceful environment – the next generation’s need for peace policies

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Background: WHO states that: „War is a major source of disease causing: death and injury, the breakdown of and reduced access to health systems, the increase incidence of communicable diseases, reduced water and sanitation and disease prevention, psychosocial effects, malnutrition, etc“. These consequences have an extremely high impact on children causing not only death and injuries, but also on disabilities, illnesses, psychological suffering, disruption of moral conceptions and of the social and cultural embedment. There are many ways on how the impact of war on children can be reduced, however looking at it more closely one must conclude that prevention is actually the only effective way how to address the issue. War could be seen as major a public health constraint. So, imperatives of public health such as primary prevention can be applied. Health-Care workers play an important role in preventing war and establishing a peace system in which a healthy development of children is possible. As Rudolph Virchow said: “Medicine is a social science. And politics is nothing more than medicine on a grand scale. But how can the approach of Primary prevention be applied to the issue of war?”

Method: The question will be answered by taking the work of IPPNW and ICAN as an example.

Results: IPPNW and ICAN are currently one of the best examples to answer this question. Concerning the issue of nuclear weapons primary prevention is even more essential. Analyzing the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons on local and international scale the researcher concluded that primary prevention is the only way to care for the victims sufficiently. After the foundation of ICAN in 2007 by the IPPNW the movement steadily grew its impact by focusing on the humanitarian impacts of such weapons and by forming a network of NGOs and supportive governments. The campaign reached the level of international in July 2017, when the nuclear ban treaty was adopted in the UN.

Discussion: The adoption of the nuclear ban treaty was a great achievement. However, the journey to a nuclear free world and thereby to the full prevention of a nuclear war still remains long. Opportunities resulting from the nuclear ban treaty and remaining obstacles will be discussed in the session.