

Nuclear weapons timeline

 www.icanw.org/the-facts/the-nuclear-age/



1940s

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| August 1942 | Manhattan Project established in US | The US sets up the Manhattan Project to develop the first nuclear weapon. It eventually employs more than 130,000 people and costs US\$2 billion (\$25 billion in 2012 dollars). |
| 16 July 1945 | US conducts first ever nuclear test | The US government tests its first nuclear weapon, code-named "Trinity", in New Mexico. Its yield equals 20,000 tonnes of TNT. The date of the test marks the beginning of the nuclear age. |
| 6 August 1945 | US drops atomic bomb on Hiroshima | The US detonates a uranium bomb over the Japanese city of Hiroshima, killing more than 140,000 people within months. Many more later die from radiation-related illnesses. |
| 9 August 1945 | A second bomb is dropped on Nagasaki | The US explodes a plutonium bomb over Nagasaki. An estimated 74,000 people die by the end of 1945. Little can be done to ease the suffering of the victims who survive the blast. |
| 24 January 1946 | UN calls for elimination of atomic weapons | In its first resolution, the UN General Assembly calls for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and sets up a commission to deal with the problem of the atomic discovery. |
| 29 August 1949 | Soviet Union tests its first nuclear bomb | The Soviet Union explodes a nuclear weapon code-named "First Lightning" in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan. It becomes the second nation to develop and successfully test a nuclear device. |

1950s

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| 3 October 1952 | UK tests nuclear weapon in Australia | The UK conducts its first nuclear test at Montebello Islands off the coast of Western Australia. It later conducts a series of tests at Maralinga and Emu Fields in South Australia. |
| 1 November 1952 | US tests the first hydrogen bomb | The US raises the stakes in the nuclear arms race by detonating the first hydrogen bomb at Enewetak Atoll in the Marshall Islands. It is 500 times more powerful than the Nagasaki bomb. |
| 1 March 1954 | US conducts massive “Bravo” test | The US detonates a 17-megaton hydrogen bomb, “Bravo”, at Bikini Atoll in the Pacific Ocean, contaminating a Japanese fishing boat, <i>Lucky Dragon</i> , and residents of Rongelap and Utirik. |
| 9 July 1955 | Russell–Einstein manifesto issued | Bertrand Russell, Albert Einstein and other leading scientists issue a manifesto warning of the dangers of nuclear war and urging all governments to resolve disputes peacefully. |
| 17 February 1958 | UK disarmament campaign formed | The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in the UK holds its first meeting. Its iconic emblem becomes one of the most widely recognized symbols in the world. |
| 1 December 1959 | Nuclear tests banned in Antarctica | The Antarctic Treaty opens for signature. It establishes that “any nuclear explosion in Antarctica and the disposal there of radioactive waste material shall be prohibited”. |

1960s

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| 13 February 1960 | France tests its first nuclear weapon | France explodes its first atomic bomb in the Sahara desert. It has a yield of 60–70 kilotons. It later moves its nuclear tests to the South Pacific. These continue up until 1996. |
| 30 October 1961 | Largest ever bomb test conducted | The Soviet Union explodes the most powerful bomb ever: a 58-megaton atmospheric nuclear weapon, nicknamed the “Tsar Bomba”, over Novaya Zemlya off northern Russia. |
| 16–29 October 1962 | Cuban Missile Crisis occurs | A tense stand-off begins when the US discovers Soviet missiles in Cuba. The US blockades Cuba for 13 days. The crisis brings the US and Soviet Union to the brink of nuclear war. |

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| 5 August 1963 | Partial Test Ban Treaty opens for signature | A treaty banning nuclear testing in the atmosphere, outer space and under water is signed in Moscow, following large demonstrations in Europe and America against nuclear testing. |
| 16 October 1964 | China conducts its first nuclear test | China explodes its first atomic bomb at the Lop Nor testing site in Sinkiang Province. In total, China conducts 23 atmospheric tests and 22 underground tests at the site. |
| 14 February 1967 | Latin America becomes nuclear-free | A treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons in Latin America, the Treaty of Tlatelolco, is signed at Mexico City. Parties agree not to manufacture, test or acquire nuclear weapons. |
| 1 July 1968 | Non-Proliferation Treaty is signed | Under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, non-nuclear-weapon states agree never to acquire nuclear weapons, and the nuclear-weapon states make a legal undertaking to disarm. |
| 1970s | | |
| 18 May 1974 | India conducts first nuclear test | India conducts an underground nuclear test at Pokharan in the Rajasthan desert, codenamed the "Smiling Buddha". The government falsely claims it is a peaceful nuclear test. |
| 22 September 1979 | Nuclear explosion in Indian Ocean | A nuclear test explosion occurs over the South Indian Ocean off the Cape of Good Hope. It is thought to have been conducted by South Africa with the assistance of Israel. |
| 1980s | | |
| 12 June 1982 | A million people rally for disarmament | One million people gather in New York City's Central Park in support of the Second United Nations Special Session on Disarmament. It is the largest anti-war demonstration in history. |
| 10 July 1985 | Rainbow Warrior ship destroyed | The Greenpeace ship <i>Rainbow Warrior</i> is destroyed in New Zealand on its way to the Murorua Atoll to protest French nuclear tests. New Zealand later enacts nuclear-free legislation. |
| 6 August 1985 | South Pacific becomes nuclear-free | The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty is signed at Rarotonga in the Cook Islands. The treaty prohibits the manufacturing, stationing or testing of nuclear weapons within the area. |

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| 10 December 1985 | Anti-nuclear doctors win Nobel | The International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War receives the Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts to bridge the cold war divide by focusing on the human costs of nuclear war. |
| 30 September 1986 | Israel's nuclear programme revealed | The <i>Sunday Times</i> publishes information supplied by Israeli nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu, which leads experts to conclude that Israel may have up to 200 nuclear weapons. |
| 11–12 October 1986 | US and Soviet leaders discuss abolition | US President Ronald Reagan and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev meet at Reykjavik, Iceland, where they seriously discuss the possibility of achieving nuclear abolition. |
| 8 December 1987 | Intermediate-range missiles banned | The Soviet Union and US sign the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty to eliminate all land-based missiles held by the two states with ranges between 300 and 3,400 miles. |
| 1990s | | |
| 10 July 1991 | South Africa joins Non-Proliferation Treaty | South Africa accedes to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The government claims to have made six nuclear weapons and to have dismantled them all. |
| 15 December 1995 | Southeast Asia becomes nuclear-free | The nations of Southeast Asia create a nuclear-weapon-free zone stretching from Burma in the west, the Philippines in the east, Laos and Vietnam in the north, and Indonesia in the south. |
| 11 April 1996 | Africa becomes a nuclear-free zone | Officials from 43 African nations sign the Treaty of Pelindaba in Egypt establishing an African nuclear-weapon-free zone and pledging not to build, test, or stockpile nuclear weapons. |
| 1 June 1996 | Ukraine becomes a nuclear-free state | Ukraine becomes a nuclear-weapon-free state after transferring the last inherited Soviet nuclear warhead to Russia for destruction. Its president calls on other nations to follow its path. |
| 8 July 1996 | World Court says nuclear weapons illegal | The International Court of Justice hands down an advisory opinion in which it found that the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to international law. |
| 24 September 1996 | Total nuclear test ban is signed | The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty opens for signatures at the United Nations. China, France, the UK, Russia and the US all sign the treaty. India says it will not sign the treaty. |

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| 27 November 1996 | Belarus removes its last nuclear missile | Belarus turns its last nuclear missile over to Russia for destruction. It joins Ukraine and Kazakhstan as former Soviet republics that have given up all their nuclear arms. |
| May 1998 | India and Pakistan conduct nuclear tests | India conducts three underground nuclear tests, its first in 24 years. One is a thermonuclear weapon. Later in May, Pakistan tests six nuclear weapons in response to India's tests. |
| 2000s | | |
| 9 October 2006 | North Korea conducts nuclear test | The North Korean government announces that it has successfully conducted a nuclear test, becoming the eighth country in the world to do so. It provokes international condemnation. |
| 30 April 2007 | ICAN is launched internationally | The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons is founded in Australia. It calls for the immediate start of negotiations on a treaty to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons. |
| 2010s | | |
| 4-5 March 2013 | Norway hosts first humanitarian conference | The Norwegian government hosts the first-ever intergovernmental conference to examine the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, bringing together diplomats from 128 states. |
| 14 February 2014 | Mexico conference calls for ban | The chair of the Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Mexico, concludes that the time has come for a diplomatic process to ban nuclear weapons. |
| 9 December 2014 | Austria issues landmark pledge | As host of the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, Austria issues a landmark pledge to stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons. |
| 27 March 2017 | Nuclear ban treaty negotiations begin | At the United Nations, the overwhelming majority of the world's governments begin negotiations on a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination. |