

## Asia-Pacific former leaders encourage U.S. to adopt “No First Use” nuclear policy and call on Pacific allies to support it

In a rare and possibly unprecedented joint statement, forty Asia-Pacific former leaders and experts from fourteen countries – including U.S. allies Australia, Japan and South Korea, and nuclear weapons possessing states China, India and Pakistan – encourage the United States to adopt “No First Use” nuclear policy and call on its Pacific allies to support it.

They are responding to [reports](#) that the Obama administration is considering how to re-energize the nuclear arms control agenda by executive action. One initiative that has been flagged would see Washington pledge not to be the first to use nuclear weapons.

Noting that President Obama’s bold vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world, with which he entered office, seems to have stalled, Asia-Pacific opinion leaders – including former prime ministers, foreign ministers, army and air force chiefs, ambassadors, columnists, scientists – say that a No First Use policy would have both symbolic value and practical implications. It would encourage a shift away from high-risk doctrines and nuclear weapons deployments through related initiatives also under consideration.

If adopted by all nuclear-armed states, the No First Use policy could become the centrepiece of a global nuclear restraint regime, strengthen strategic stability, solidify the boundary between nuclear and conventional weapons, and entrench the norm against the use of the bomb that has held since August 1945.

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