

On the U.S. Bombing of Iranian Nuclear Facilities

JUNE 23, 2025

Project Ploughshares condemns in the strongest possible terms the June 21–22 U.S. airstrikes on Iran's declared nuclear facilities at Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan. We firmly believe in a world without nuclear weapons, but aggression and the use of force are not the way to get there.

These attacks, carried out by a nuclear-armed state against a non-nuclear signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), set a dangerous precedent. They follow earlier strikes by Israel, which is widely believed to possess nuclear weapons yet remains outside the NPT, on Iranian nuclear and military targets, further heightening regional tensions.

Iran's nuclear sites are declared facilities under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). While Iran has limited some monitoring measures in recent years, its nuclear program remains legally under international oversight, and its right to pursue civilian nuclear activities under safeguards is protected by the NPT. Striking these facilities undermines the spirit and letter of the Treaty, which remains the cornerstone of global nuclear non-proliferation efforts.

We are also concerned by the shifting narratives regarding Iran's intentions. Before the attack, both U.S. intelligence assessments and IAEA reports concluded that Iran had not taken steps to build a nuclear weapon and was still months away from any possible weapons capability. Reframing this assessment after the fact only weakens confidence in evidence-based, multilateral approaches.

Further, this military action risks undermining its stated objective of reducing the nuclear threat. Rather than deterring proliferation, it may instead encourage other states to view nuclear weapons as the sole reliable deterrent against attack, prompting withdrawals from international safeguards and inspections. It also significantly heightens the risk of regional escalation and deepens an already severe humanitarian crisis. As a result, sustaining diplomatic efforts to resolve concerns peacefully has become even more difficult.

War is not the path to peace. It leaves behind harm and bitterness that persist for generations. We urge all nuclear-armed states to fulfil their Article VI obligations under the NPT and begin an open, credible, and verifiable process of nuclear disarmament. We also call on all parties to uphold international humanitarian law and to protect civilians from harm. Peace must be built through dialogue, cooperation, and trust – not by force.