



## International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War Canada

*We are committed to the abolition of nuclear weapons, the prevention of war, the promotion of non-violent means of conflict resolution and social justice in a sustainable world.*

### IPPNWC Medical Student Reflection

The following was written by IPPNWC Student Member Walusungu Mtonga, who is a medical student at the University of Zambia. In this reflection, Walusungu addresses the [Resolution on the links between Nuclear Power and Nuclear Weapons](#).

Firstly Africa as you may know is very rich in minerals including uranium with countries Namibia, Niger and South Africa contributing to about 18% of the annual world production .

Allow me to describe what I call “the lethal chain of disaster” with regards the climate crisis in Africa.

According to SOAS University of London over 400 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa live in Rural areas. Their source of energy is firewood and charcoal burning and this has led to massive deforestation of trees . On the other hand Africa has depended on renewable energy especially hydroelectric power for so many years. However the massive deforestation of trees has led to reduction in the rainfall amount in the last few years leading to massive droughts, starvation and reduced capacity to generate hydroelectric power.

The last 2 years have seen periods in which power supply to homes has been reduced to about 6 hrs or even less per day in the urban towns because power generation depends on the water depleted hydropower stations . This has prompted the Urban community (by default) to resort to fire wood and charcoal as an alternative source of energy creating this vicious cycle worsening the climate crisis.

With the description above, Nuclear energy is being looked at as a solution to the climate crisis. “Why should we continue to languish in poverty when we have land rich in uranium” has been the cry for most of our leaders and has been widely accepted by the general public who’s first priority is to ensure that their families are fed. The long term effects of uranium mining are downplayed and totally ignored. Africans are looking for immediate solutions to poverty and the climate crisis and are willing to explore all alternatives at their disposal without fully understanding the long term consequences.

Back home in Zambia, the government has gone ahead to give a green light to uranium mining and power generation set to start in the next 5 years.

We find ourselves in a very difficult situation as activists of renewable energy. The resolution passed in Mombasa will be a great tool for IPPNW Zambia in trying to explain the sad reality that will be if we embark on this route of disaster.



## International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War *Canada*

*We are committed to the abolition of nuclear weapons, the prevention of war, the promotion of non-violent means of conflict resolution and social justice in a sustainable world.*