

A Nobel Effort:

Opportunities for Switzerland to advance nuclear risk-reduction and disarmament in 2026, the 125th anniversary year of the First Nobel Peace Prize.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction:

On 27 January 2026, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists set the hands of the ‘Doomsday Clock’ to [85 Seconds to Midnight](#), indicating how close humanity is coming to a civilizational catastrophe from climate change, nuclear war or a global war triggered by rising authoritarianism, militarism and acts of aggression.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has elevated the risk of nuclear war in Europe and has resulted in a strengthened adherence to nuclear deterrence by NATO countries to prevent further aggression. There have also been acts of aggression and threats of aggression involving nuclear-armed States in other regions such as in the Middle East and East Asia. This is putting additional strains on nuclear arms control and disarmament processes and treaties including the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) which will have its 5-yearly review conference in April-May 2026. The New START Treaty, the last remaining nuclear arms control agreement between the Russian Federation and the United States, expired on February 5, 2026.

This political environment makes it difficult to make concrete progress on nuclear risk reduction and disarmament initiatives, unless these are accompanied by diplomatic and legal approaches to effectively prevent aggression and to resolve international disputes peacefully, i.e. through strengthening common security.

The food-for-thought paper *A Nobel Effort* explores opportunities to advance such a common security approach to nuclear disarmament through the 2026 NPT Review Conference, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Inter-Parliamentary Union, UN General Assembly, UN Human Rights Council, International Court of Justice and International Criminal Court.

The role of Switzerland:

Switzerland has played important roles nationally, at the United Nations and in other forums to help reduce the risks of nuclear war and promote global nuclear disarmament. This has included, amongst other things,:

- [Terminating a nuclear weapons research and development program](#) and joining the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a non-nuclear State in 1977;
- Leading a successful initiative at the 2010 NPT Review Conference on international humanitarian law and the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons;
- Adopting legislation to prohibit the financing of nuclear weapons and other prohibited weapons in 2013 (Swiss War Materials Act);
- Being an active member of the De-Alerting Working Group and the [Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament](#);
- Hosting nuclear arms control deliberations and negotiations such as the [Biden-Trump Summit](#) and the negotiations for the [Joint Comprehensive Plan for Action](#) (Iran Nuclear Deal).

In addition, through its active neutrality policy and [Good Offices](#), Switzerland has played important roles in assisting in international conflict resolution through negotiations and third party mediation.

In this food-for-thought paper, we explore possibilities for Switzerland to take additional measures to advance nuclear risk reduction, disarmament and common security that might gain significant traction or make a substantive impact in 2026 and beyond.

Recommendations:

Switzerland could consider undertaking the following:

Nuclear risk reduction:

1. Offer to host talks between Russia and USA on START renewal agreement and on its implementation.
2. Support the adoption of NFU policies by nuclear-armed and allied countries, including the Chinese proposal for a P5 agreement and the adoption of NFU by NATO.

Common Security:

3. Introduce the common security versus nuclear deterrence framework to the 2026 NPT Review Conference, through a statement or working paper, in order to demonstrate to the nuclear armed and allied countries ways in which they can reduce their reliance on nuclear deterrence.
4. Continue its work promoting universal acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ, including by producing an updated version of the [Handbook on accepting the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice](#) which Switzerland published in 2014.
5. Support the proposal for an International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on the legal limits to the use of the veto.
6. Support a fast-track process for the amendment to harmonise jurisdiction on the crime of aggression with the jurisdiction on other core crimes in the Rome Statute.
7. Liaise with both parties to the Russia/Ukraine conflict and with like-minded states in the UNGA on a potential referral to the International Court of Justice on the legal status of Crimea, the Donbas region and the other occupied territories;

Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones:

8. Elevate its support for a Middle East Zone free from Nuclear Weapons and other WMD including through providing its Good Offices for confidential talks between key parties.
9. Employ its Good Offices to support talks and negotiations for a Peace Treaty to permanently end the Korean War and include the proposal for a NE Asia NWFZ in these negotiations.
10. Support exploratory work on a European NWFZ and the security guarantees that would make such a zone credible for European countries to join.

Nuclear abolition:

11. Call on the nuclear armed and allied states to commit to achieving the global elimination of nuclear weapons no later than 2045. Switzerland could make this call at the 2026 NPT Review Conference, UN High Level Meeting on the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (September 26), in a resolution/s in the UN General Assembly, and at the UN Human Rights Council.
12. Join the TPNW and encourage other States Parties to the TPNW to end all public financing of nuclear weapons in their national/federal jurisdictions and to prohibit the transit of nuclear weapons across their territories.
13. Promote the start of multilateral negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention or a framework treaty for global nuclear disarmament. This could be proposed at the 2026 NPT Review Conference through a statement or working paper, and at the UN General Assembly through a UNGA resolution.

Divestment from the nuclear weapons industry:

14. Encourage additional States to adopt regulations to end public investments in the nuclear weapons industry, and provide its experience in implementing the Swiss War Materials Act as evidence of continued investment portfolio strength under such regulations (see also recommendation 12).

Nuclear weapons and human rights:

15. Endorse the joint statement *Right to Life Without the Threat of Nuclear Weapons*.
16. Engage in the Universal Periodic Reviews of the nuclear armed and allied states in order to question the implementation of their obligations under international human rights law to refrain from the threat or use of nuclear weapons, destroy existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons and engage in negotiations for nuclear abolition.