



anf position
statement

australian nursing federation

peace

Peace is defined by the Australian Nursing Federation as not merely the absence of war, but the presence of conditions in which people can live and develop in freedom and justice within and between nations. Living in peace means enjoying freedom of thought, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of association, freedom of movement and the right to self-determination. Access to adequate health care, food and shelter constitute a minimum humanitarian requirement which underpin the ability of people to live in dignity and exercise their human rights in a peaceful environment.

The Australian Nursing Federation calls on all governments to respect the legitimate aspirations of people to live in dignity and with full human rights and freedoms. Peace can only be a reality when all people enjoy basic dignity and human rights.

All the peoples of the world have the right to live without fear of aggression or subversion by a foreign power, by military force or other means. The use of force to resolve political or economic problems is opposed, however nations and people should be able to defend their values, their way of life and their culture.

The poverty of large sections of the world's population, authoritarian governments who are intolerant of the diverse opinions of their own people and those of other nations, and the continued upgrading and stockpiling of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction, are a threat to peace.

Trade unions have an important role to play in the alleviation of world poverty and the development of freer and more tolerant societies. Achievement of these objectives provides the necessary foundations for creating a more peaceful world.

It is the position of the Australian Nursing Federation that:

1. The pursuit of peace should have priority over all political objectives.
2. All serious efforts for peace are supported and encouraged.
3. Poverty and the oppression of individuals, people and nations is a threat to peace.
4. Health, food, water and shelter are a minimum humanitarian requirement.
5. The production and use of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction as a means of defence is condemned as their deterrent effect is outweighed by their threat to world security, peace and health. There should be programs initiated immediately to disable and dismantle existing nuclear weapons and an immediate cessation of any further development, production and testing of nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction.

6. The production and use of landmines is condemned.
7. The use, stockpiling, production and transfer of cluster munitions is condemned.¹
8. Effective national and international control of trade in weapons should be in place.
9. Nurses and midwives should raise awareness about the potential political, social, environmental and health consequences of the use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.
10. Nurses and midwives are encouraged to critically appraise expenditure on health and welfare at a national and global level in relation to that spent on conventional weapons, nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.
11. Nurses and midwives should be involved in developing strategies of action to contribute to national and international peace.
12. Education for peace and disarmament is supported.
13. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is supported.²

endorsed june 1998

reviewed and re-endorsed february 2006

reviewed and re-endorsed may 2009

reviewed and re-endorsed february 2011

references

1. <http://www.clusterconvention.org> and <http://www.stopclustermunitions.org>
2. <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr>