Getting your message into the media

We want to drum up media interest in the second meeting of TPNW states parties so here are some tips on getting the story in national or local media.

When you pitch the story, give it a headline telling them what should come out of the meeting rather than just that the meeting is happening as that is not really an interesting story for most journalists. E.g.

“States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons meet at the UN to strengthen the ban”

Give them a short paragraph explaining what is happening. E.g.

The states parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) will be meeting at the UN in New York from 27 November to 1 December to review progress on the treaty’s implementation and agree on action to further strengthen it. With the Manhattan Project, New York was where nuclear weapons began; the second meeting of TPNW States Parties is where their end is being designed.

Then give them a short background on the TPNW and why the treaty is topical i.e. the current level of nuclear threat.

Then tell them what your organisation expects to come out of the meeting as this is the crux of the story. Below are ICAN’s key expectations which you can tailor to best suit your national situation. I hope they will be helpful to shape your own talking points, or to use as is.

In addition to reporting on what they have done to implement the Vienna Action Plan, countries will strengthen the treaty with decisions on high stakes matters such as the verification regime and assistance to victims of nuclear use and testing which will boost the implementation and impact of this young treaty.

ICAN has these specific expectations from the meeting:

- More states will sign and ratify the TPNW, encouraged by the leadership of the states that are already members. Currently 97 states have either signed, ratified or acceded to the treaty which is the same number as the NPT had at the same stage in its life. The states parties have also been urging nuclear-armed states and their allies to, at the minimum, start engaging with the TPNW by being observers at this meeting, following the example of NATO members Belgium, Germany, Norway and The Netherlands, as well as Australia, which all observed the first MSP last year.
- The meeting will hear reports from states on their work to implement the Vienna Action Plan agreed at the first meeting of states parties last year demonstrating the seriousness of their normative and practical work that is strengthening the treaty.
- The meeting will reiterate the call on all states to abandon nuclear deterrence theory as an unacceptable threat to humanity and the planet and will call for an end to deployment of nuclear weapons in third states, so-called nuclear sharing
  - Deterrence is an unproven gamble, based on the implicit threat to use nuclear weapons, that has brought the world close to nuclear war on a number of occasions, whereas nuclear sharing is a dangerous practice that further
exacerbates the risks of proliferation and nuclear use. Both of these activities are banned by the TPNW.

- The meeting will call for all states to commit not to resume nuclear testing and urge the eight states that have yet to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States) to do so, and for Russia to reverse its recent de-ratification of the CTBT.

- States attending will listen to the survivors of nuclear weapons use and testing who have seen these weapons cause harm across generations, and act on their calls for assistance, justice, environmental remediation and an end to these weapons of mass destruction, and ensure space for their participation in this process.

- Everyone has a right to get involved in the work to eliminate nuclear weapons, and this meeting provides all different sectors of society with the space to do so. The meeting will bring in a variety of sectors – from government and civil society to the financial community – each acting on their own area of responsibility such as health, finance, environment and climate change.

You can also tell them about the Nuclear Ban Week actions. E.g.

At least 30 events will be taking place for Nuclear Ban Week alongside the meeting at the UN, ranging from marches and rallies, to art exhibitions and concerts, as well as debates and presentations. A full list of events is available here.

Finish by telling them what we can do for them such as facilitating interviews and providing background briefings.

If you do get journalists interested, let Alistair Burnett (alistair@icanw.org) know and he can add their names to our list for press releases and email briefings for 2MSP.