



**COUNCIL OF BISHOPS**  
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

December 14, 2010

Honorable Senators of the United States Senate  
Honorable Harry Reid and Honorable Mitch McConnell

I write to implore you to bring the New START Treaty to a floor vote now.

On behalf of the sixty-nine bishops of The United Methodist Church and over eleven million members in over 40,000 congregations, we pray you will not delay taking this measured, verifiable step to nuclear arms safety.

The United Methodist Church has articulated its moral objections to the use of nuclear weapons as one of the greatest threats to God's creation in official statements of our General Conferences (our quadrennial synods) and by the Council of Bishops' Pastoral Letters in both 1986 and 2009.

The benefits of this Treaty are too significant to delay your vote in a rush to return home for the December holidays. It will reduce the number of weapons and potentially encourage future nuclear non-proliferation, something which is extremely urgent in this era of terrorism. It will resume U.S. inspections of Russian weapons, a matter of high importance for both national and global security. United Methodists include the broad spectrum of political perspectives, just like the experienced public servants of both major parties who have endorsed the immediate endorsement of this Treaty – Henry Kissinger, James Schlesinger, George Shultz, William Perry and San Nunn.

Over the long term, the eventual elimination of these weapons is an imperative to protect the earth, its ecosystem, and human life. Until this happens, the world remains in peril for future generations. While we must hope for the "Berlin Wall" to fall, obviously it is necessary to realistic and constructive steps forward as this treat would do.

Thank you for your action on this critical vote. We join others in praying for you and all the members of the U.S. Senate as you exercise your powerful office as a service to our country.

Blessings of Peacemaking,

Bishop Larry M. Goodpaster, President  
The Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church

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