Looking at nuclear weapons from a number of different angles, it remains clear that there is no clear prohibition against possession, transfer, production or use. International environmental law remain applicable in armed conflict and can pertain to nuclear weapons, but do not specifically regulate them. Likewise, international health regulations would cover effects of nuclear weapons in various ways, but only implicitly.

The new evidence that has emerged in the last two years about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons casts further doubt on whether these weapons could ever be used in accordance with the rules of IHL. It remains a paradox in international law that the use, possession, transfer and production of the other weapons of mass destruction are clearly and explicitly prohibited, while nuclear weapons are not subject to such prohibitions.

As was the case with torture, which defeats humanity and is now unacceptable to all, the suffering caused by nuclear weapons use goes beyond the law and necessitates a moral position. Also the risks caused by possessing the weapons must be subject to moral appraisal.