

NO TO TRIDENT REPLACEMENT Yes to a Nuclear Weapons Convention

Nuclear weapons are weapons of mass destruction. They kill indiscriminately on a colossal scale, both from the immediate explosion and from radioactive fallout, having an impact for generations to come. In 1996, the International Court of Justice declared that to use, or threaten to use, nuclear weapons is illegal in almost all conceivable circumstances. Yet no legislation currently outlaws these weapons. Legally-binding, international agreements to ban other weapons of mass destruction such as chemical and biological weapons have already been agreed. It is vital for the security of our world that a similar agreement, a Nuclear Weapons Convention, to ban nuclear weapons is negotiated. Without this, nuclear proliferation and nuclear weapons use are ever-increasing dangers. Now is the time to outlaw nuclear weapons worldwide.

The Nuclear Weapons Convention

The nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) (1970) requires both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Until recently, it has been relatively successful in terms of non-proliferation – at the time the Treaty was introduced there was widespread fear that dozens of countries would pursue nuclear weapons, and this has not happened. But there has been little success in achieving progress on disarmament and this failure is now increasing the danger of proliferation. To deal with this problem, in 1997 a draft treaty for the abolition of nuclear weapons

'The abolition of nuclear weapons is essential for human survival and sustainability; the current situation of planned indefinite retention of their nuclear weapons by the NWS [nuclear weapon states] feeds proliferation, is unstable, dangerous and unsustainable.'

Securing our Survival (SOS) The Case for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, 2007



Over 340,000 people died and generations were poisoned as a result of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

was drawn up by an international team of legal, scientific, disarmament and negotiation experts. This model Nuclear Weapons Convention was submitted by Costa Rica to the United Nations for discussion. Unlike the NPT, the Convention provides a concrete framework to accomplish a nuclear weapons-free world with practical detail on difficult issues such as verification and inspection.

Why we need to ban nuclear weapons

A nuclear weapon has the capacity to indiscriminately kill hundreds of thousands of men, women and children – we know this from the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. There are over

Nuclear Weapons Convention

General obligations

The Model Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibits development, testing, production, stockpiling, transfer, use, and threat of use of nuclear weapons. States possessing nuclear weapons will be required to destroy their arsenals according to a series of phases. The Convention also prohibits the production of weapons-usable fissile material and requires delivery vehicles to be destroyed or converted to make them non-nuclear capable.

Phases for elimination

The Convention outlines a series of five phases for the elimination of nuclear weapons:

1. take nuclear weapons off alert,
2. remove weapons from deployment,
3. remove nuclear warheads from their delivery vehicles,
4. disable the warheads, removing and disfiguring the 'pits' and
5. place the fissile material under international control.

In the initial phases, the U.S. and Russia are required to make the deepest cuts in their nuclear arsenals.

27,000 nuclear weapons in the world today – more than enough to completely destroy our planet many times over. The US and Russia hold 95% of them. Nuclear weapons make the world a much less secure place. Whether by accident or intention there is always the danger they will be used. They are extremely expensive, and no use whatsoever in tackling the real threats facing our world today, such as terrorism, climate change, disease and poverty. In the UK alone the Trident nuclear weapons system costs more than £1.5 billion every year just to run and a proposed replacement system will cost us more than £76 billion to acquire and run – money that would make a substantial difference in other areas such as tackling carbon emissions, healthcare and education.

Other indiscriminate weapons

International treaties have already banned other weapons of mass destruction and other categories of indiscriminate weapons. Land mines also indiscriminately injure and kill civilians and combatants alike but an international Mine Ban Treaty entered into force in 1999. Other weapons of mass destruction have been banned by the Biological Weapons Convention (1975) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (1997). Enough political will means negotiations can be concluded quite rapidly. The Chemical Weapons Convention required ten years of negotiations to build up confidence in the treaty and its verification processes. The Mine Ban Treaty was negotiated in just a year.

Widespread support for a nuclear-weapons free world

Fortunately, although there are many nuclear weapons in the world, there are only nine states in the world that possess them: the five officially declared nuclear weapon states (all signatories to the NPT) the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China, and four more states, Israel, India, Pakistan and North Korea, which have developed nuclear weapons outside the NPT. 39 states have the capacity to develop nuclear weapons, through their possession of nuclear power technology or research reactors, but have chosen not to.

Large parts of the world, including South East Asia, the South Pacific, Latin America, central Asia and Africa, are now covered by treaties declaring them nuclear weapon-free zones.

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In recent years there have been increasing calls for a Nuclear Weapons Convention. In a recent YouGov opinion poll, 64% of the UK population said the government should support a Nuclear Weapons Convention. In 2006, 125 out of 181 governments voted in the UN General Assembly for negotiations to commence immediately, including nuclear-armed China, India and Pakistan.



The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)

The demand for a Convention is being pursued by civil society organisations, as well as states. ICAN is a new international campaign to promote the Nuclear Weapons Convention. Initiated by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), ICAN was launched at the 2007 NPT Preparatory Committee meeting in Vienna. CND has joined with Medact – the British section of IPPNW – to launch the campaign in the UK, which is now supported by an increasing number of organisations. Many other groups all over the world are launching the campaign in their own countries, with particular support from Mayors for Peace. A revised Nuclear Weapons Convention with an updated report *Securing our Survival (SOS): The Case for a Nuclear Weapons Convention* was submitted by Costa Rica and Malaysia to the recent NPT PrepCom.

Negotiations must start now

The UK government has recently reaffirmed its commitment to multilateral nuclear disarmament through good faith negotiations as required by the NPT. To honour its commitments CND calls on the government to cancel any preparations for a new nuclear weapons system to replace Trident after 2024 and to work to progress multilateral negotiations with the aim of achieving implementation of a Nuclear Weapons Convention by 2020.



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