

THE CASE FOR A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CONVENTION?



They said it couldn't be done! But landmines, chemical weapons and biological weapons have already been outlawed. Now we need to ban the worst weapons of all. Already progress has been made. Nuclear weapons stockpiles have gone down from some 70,000 warheads at the height of the Cold War to around 23,000. But we haven't stopped the nuclear arms race and most nuclear weapons states - including Britain - are planning to modernise their existing weapons. That's why getting rid of the remaining weapons and establishing a negotiated, legally binding and verifiable ban on these weapons is so urgent.

There are approximately 23,000 nuclear weapons in the world today, posing a direct and constant threat to global security and human survival. Thousands are kept on hair-trigger alert - ready to be launched within minutes. They divert funds from health care, education and other services. The United States alone spends enough on its nuclear weapons to end world poverty by 2030.

Unless we get rid of all nuclear weapons, it is likely that they will be used again - by accident or design - and the effects would be catastrophic. The two nuclear bombs dropped on Japan in 1945 killed hundreds of thousands of innocent people. Today nine countries have nuclear weapons, and five more have US nuclear weapons on their soil. The overwhelming majority of the world's people and governments want them abolished, and support for a global ban is growing rapidly across the world. *Scotland's for Peace* is working to build a campaign in Scotland for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

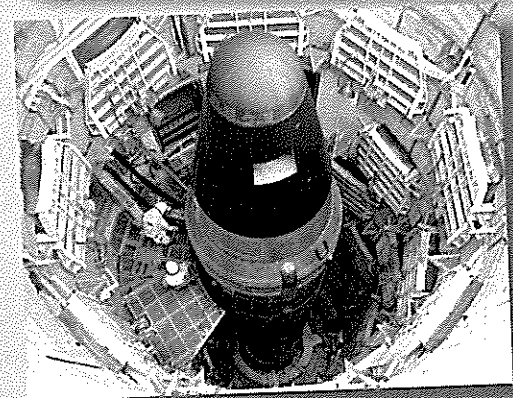
A Convention to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

Scotland's for Peace supports the call for all nations to negotiate a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) to ban nuclear weapons and ensure their elimination. There exists a legal obligation to negotiate such a treaty, and experts have already produced a draft text. A NWC is more likely to succeed than a series of fragmented and piecemeal approaches to nuclear disarmament. Incremental steps such as the new START Treaty between Russia and the United States are, of course, welcome, but they are not enough. Without a comprehensive approach drawing in all nuclear weapons states, with a clear end point of nuclear weapons abolition, a timetable and built-in verification procedures, such steps would quickly lose momentum. The draft treaty is modelled on similar conventions outlawing chemical weapons, biological weapons and anti-personnel landmines. It would complement existing nuclear weapons treaties, such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Indeed, it would provide the means of achieving the crucial Article VI of the NPT which deals with nuclear disarmament. It is feasible, necessary and long overdue.

WHAT IS IT?

A Nuclear Weapons Convention is a **global and permanent ban** on the possession of Nuclear Weapons. It would prohibit the development, testing, production, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons, as well as the production of fissile material suitable for making them (highly enriched uranium and/or separated plutonium). It would require all nuclear-armed countries to destroy their nuclear weapons in stages:

1. **Take nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert**
2. **Remove nuclear weapons from deployment**
3. **Remove the warheads from their delivery vehicles**
4. **Disable the warheads by removing the explosive "pits"**
5. **Place the fissile material under United Nations control.**



HOW WOULD IT BE VERIFIED?

The NWC would establish an agency to ensure that countries comply with the terms of the treaty. This body would receive progress reports from nuclear-armed states, conduct inspections of weapons facilities, acquire data via satellite photography and remote sensors, and monitor the production and transfer of nuclear materials. Additional plans would protect whistleblowers and deal with countries which attempt to cheat.



WHO SUPPORTS A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CONVENTION?

At the UN General Assembly on 5th December 2007 a resolution calling for a Nuclear Weapons Convention was adopted by 127 countries voting 'yes', 27 abstaining and 27 voting against. Those voting for a NWC included several nuclear weapons states - China, India, Pakistan and North Korea. In addition a Nuclear Weapons Convention is supported by the 116-strong Non-Aligned Movement and the New Agenda Coalition comprising Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, New Zealand, Mexico, South Africa, and Sweden.



UN Building, New York

Those who oppose a NWC include four of the original five nuclear weapons states - namely Britain, the United States, Russia and France. Almost all the other votes against the 2007 resolution were NATO member states. NATO is an exclusive military alliance committed to the first use of nuclear weapons.

Of the states that possess nuclear weapons, the US, France, Russia and Israel have all argued that even thinking about an NWC is premature. They are unwilling to provide a time reference for beginning, let alone concluding, a NWC. Instead they want to retain their nuclear weapons arsenals indefinitely and are planning replacement and modernisation programmes to ensure long-term possession. The governments of India, China and Pakistan support the commencement of negotiations on a NWC, but have taken no action to advance such negotiations. The UK government has undertaken some preparatory work on verification requirements. But it argues that a NWC is 'idealistic and premature' and that it is too early to start any negotiations. It is also planning to replace its Trident nuclear weapons system.



UN General Secretary Ban Ki-moon

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NUCLEAR DETERRENCE 'UNSTABLE'

Robert MacNamara, US Secretary of Defence during the Cuban Missile Crisis, says that nuclear deterrence is inherently unstable and it is only good luck that has prevented a nuclear disaster to date. The British Government continues to argue that nuclear weapons bring security and deter aggressors, despite clear evidence to the contrary. And if we insist that nuclear weapons are essential for our security, then other countries are likely to follow our example, causing nuclear proliferation. Nuclear disarmament and stopping nuclear proliferation are inseparably linked.

MSPS ENDORSE NUCLEAR ABOLITION

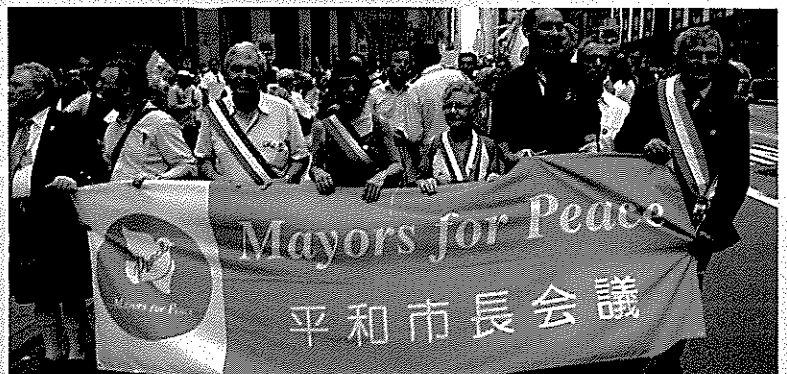
On 7 January 2010 Marlyn Glen MSP lodged a motion in the Scottish Parliament encouraging parliamentarians to endorse the Parliamentary Declaration Supporting a Nuclear Weapons Convention. The motion was co-sponsored by MSPs Bill Butler, Elaine Smith, Jamie Hepburn, Bill Kidd, Patrick Harvie, Hugh O'Donnell, Robin Harper, Malcolm Chisholm, Trish Goodman, Christina McKelvie, Dave Thompson, Cathy Peattie and Cathy Jamieson.



MAYORS FOR PEACE TAKES OFF!

Over 4,000 towns and cities in 144 countries have now signed up to Mayors for Peace making it the world's fastest growing peace organisation and now enjoying the support of a majority of the world's population. A key demand is the **2020 Vision** campaign calling for global nuclear disarmament within 10 years. On 21st September 2009 *Scotland's for Peace* launched an effort to increase the number of Scottish council provosts who are Mayors for Peace. This campaign has led to another nine provosts signing up to join the original three of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Shetland Islands. There are thirty two Scottish local authorities so we are well on the way to a majority supporting the campaign for global disarmament by 2020. The Scottish local authorities that are now part of this campaign are:

Dundee, East Dumbarton, East Lothian, Edinburgh, Falkirk, Fife, Glasgow, Perth and Kinross, Renfrewshire, Shetland, South Ayrshire, Midlothian.



OTHER PARLIAMENTS WHO SUPPORT A NWC

In the past few months parliamentary resolutions supporting a Nuclear Weapons Convention (or the UN Secretary-General's Five-Point Plan for Nuclear Disarmament which promotes a Nuclear Weapons Convention) have been adopted by national parliaments in Austria, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Germany, Italy, New Zealand, and the European Union.

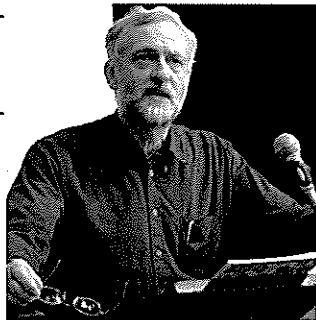


On April 9 the 120th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), which represents over 150 parliaments, adopted a resolution on the role of parliamentarians

to advance the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and promote nuclear disarmament. The resolution calls on parliaments and parliamentarians to ensure universal ratification of the CTBT, and also to promote the UN Secretary-General's five-point plan for nuclear disarmament. It also calls for support for a number of concurrent steps such as reductions in nuclear stockpiles, establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, and commencement of negotiations on a fissile materials treaty.

UK PARLIAMENT

On 19 November, Jeremy Corbyn MP submitted Early Day Motion 144 to the UK Parliament, supported by 103 Members of Parliament, which: "notes the forthcoming



Jeremy Corbyn MP

ing nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in May 2010 and the opportunities it presents for progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation; further notes growing international support for negotiation of a Nuclear Weapons Convention to outlaw all nuclear weapons; and calls on the Government to give full support to negotiating a Nuclear Weapons Convention and to make this position absolutely clear at the NPT Review Conference."

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The highest court in the world on general questions of international law is the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the judicial branch of the UN. In 1996, the ICJ applied international law to nuclear weapons, and determined unanimously that the threat or use of nuclear weapons is generally illegal, and that there exists an obligation to pursue and conclude negotiations leading to complete nuclear disarmament.

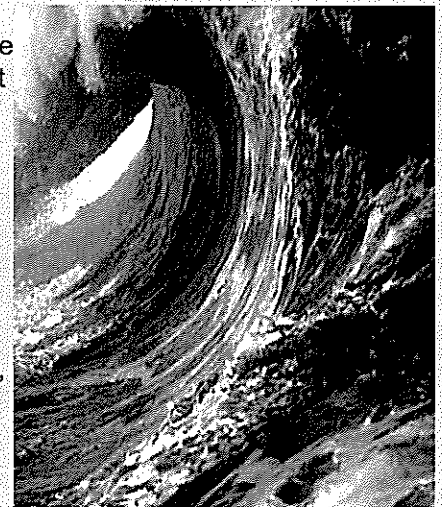
The judges unanimously found that not only were states required by law to begin negotiations on disarmament, but also they must achieve complete nuclear disarmament through good faith negotiation. The court insisted that talking is not enough; the talk must lead to achievement of a successful outcome. The Court also de-linked the obligation to achieve nuclear disarmament from the objective of comprehensive demilitarization (general and complete disarmament) and insisted that the obligation to achieve nuclear disarmament applies universally to all states, not just the states with nuclear weapons.

In arriving at this conclusion, the ICJ took into consideration the "dictates of public conscience", which are mentioned in the Hague and Geneva Conventions as an important indication of the legal status of particular weapons systems for which there is no specific treaty prohibition. The ICJ was presented with nearly four million "declarations of public conscience" in 40 different languages, along with evidence of widespread public condemnation of nuclear weapons.



INVEST IN SCOTLAND'S FUTURE

Today all Britain's nuclear weapons are based in Scotland. Yet Scotland's people and parliament have spoken out against them. We now spend over £2 billion a year on Trident at a time when millions are being cut from spending on health, education and local authority services. That money could be used instead to tackle the real problems we face - poverty, unemployment and climate change. Scotland is ideally situated to harness the enormous potential of wind, wave and tidal energy. Without Trident we could create more jobs, invest in renewable energy and make Scotland and the rest of the world a safer place.



ABOUT SCOTLAND'S FOR PEACE

This folder was compiled by **Scotland's for Peace**. Scotland's for Peace is a broadly based campaign intended to project Scotland as a force for peace and international justice rather than a launch pad for war.

For further information on a Nuclear Weapons Convention contact:
The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) www.icanw.org;
Reaching Critical Will www.reachingcriticalwill.org;
Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy www.acronym.org.uk;
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) www.wilpf.org.uk



CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS AND MISSILE DEFENCE

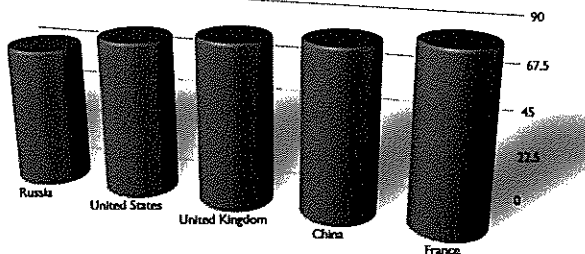
The huge expansion of missile defence systems which are now being exported across the world by the United States is likely to destabilise the existing strategic balance and could make further agreements on nuclear weapons reductions more difficult. Developing sophisticated missile defence systems is expensive and the technology is unproven. But it will, in the short term, produce a response from other nuclear states who will develop measures to deceive or overwhelm the new systems thus restoring the strategic balance.



PUBLIC OPINION SUPPORTS NUCLEAR ABOLITION

Public opinion solidly supports the abolition of nuclear weapons. Opinion polls conducted in 21 countries in 2008 revealed that, on average, 76% of people would be happy for their government to sign up to a Nuclear Weapons Convention, with just 16% opposed to the idea. An absolute majority of respondents in all of the nuclear-armed states expressed support for a convention, except in Pakistan, which had a plurality of people in favour. In the United States, 77% endorsed the idea; in Russia, 69%; in the United Kingdom, 81%; in France, 86%; and in China, 83%.

Opinion Poll support for a Nuclear Weapons Convention by country - 2008



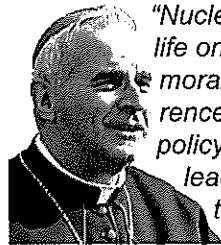
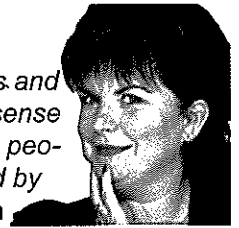
4 COUNTRIES HAVE GIVEN UP NUCLEAR WEAPONS

These include South Africa, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Ukraine. More than a dozen other countries have abandoned nuclear weapons programs.

WHAT THEY SAY

"Nuclear weapons are expensive, dangerous and unnecessary. A global ban makes so much sense and should be supported by all right thinking people. The British government could take a lead by scrapping Trident."

Elaine C Smith



"Nuclear weapons are capable of destroying all life on earth, and their use or threatened use is morally reprehensible. Policies of 'nuclear deterrence' are a moral failure, and the only viable policy on nuclear weapons has to be one which leads to their complete elimination. To attain this end all unilateral, bilateral and multilateral actions to eliminate nuclear weapons must be pursued; a binding Nuclear Weapons Convention will provide the most comprehensive means of achieving this aim."

Cardinal Keith O'Brien

RESULTS OF THE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY REVIEW CONFERENCE 2010

Hopes were high for the NPT Review Conference in May 2010. Buoyed by President Obama's vision of a nuclear free world, the recent START agreement between Russia and the US and growing support across the world for nuclear abolition, many delegates and campaigners thought that a breakthrough on nuclear disarmament was possible. For almost a month representatives of almost every country were locked in negotiation, but the signs were not good. Four of the nuclear weapons states (NWS) - the US, UK, Russia and France - had dug in their heels and were refusing to attach timelines to nuclear disarmament obligations. Last minute concessions did mean that we got a final document, but the key idea of a Nuclear Weapons Convention with binding obligations on nuclear weapons states was not part of it. The idea of a NWC was, however, referred to twice in the document in the context of the UN Secretary General's five point plan for nuclear disarmament - a sign of the strength of opinion on the subject. The NWS did agree to 'accelerate concrete progress' towards nuclear disarmament and the proposal for a conference on a Nuclear-Free Middle East in 2012 was agreed. Clearly the nuclear weapons states are still not willing to relinquish their nuclear monopoly 40 years after the Treaty came into force. The most positive thing that came out of the conference was clear evidence that the idea of a Nuclear Weapons Convention now has, for the first time, overwhelming support among the great majority of nations. In addition to the support of the 116-strong Non-Aligned Movement, 28 nations also called for a NWC in their statements. They include:

Algeria, Austria, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Egypt, Holy See, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Norway, Phillipines, Qatar, Senegal, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia and Yemen.

