



Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

1. The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) campaigns to rid the world of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and to create genuine security for future generations.
2. This submission will focus on how the upcoming Integrated Review can reflect and meet the real security needs of the UK; it will highlight the leading role that Britain can play in addressing the key international and defence challenges of our time.

Assessing our security needs

3. The government's 2015 National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review had sensibly identified 'a major human health crisis' as a tier one threat to our security. And the UK's Biological Security Strategy published in 2018, declared that 'significant outbreaks of disease are amongst the highest impact risks faced by the UK'. But insufficient preparation was made to ensure that the UK had enough equipment to cope with a pandemic such as the current strain of coronavirus, Covid-19. In particular, there were shortages of ventilators and personal protective equipment (PPE) for medical and care staff. This while the government continues with a programme to replace the UK's nuclear weapons at a cost of at least £205 billion. A nuclear attack is designated a tier two threat. This discrepancy between planning for a pandemic and planning for nuclear war exposes a flaw in the government's strategic thinking.
4. It is a government's priority to keep its citizens safe. But the concept of true security in the 21st century must be re-evaluated as part of the Integrated Review. Point 3 above has already referenced that a health crisis is listed as one of the main threats facing the UK today. The other Tier 1 threats listed include cyber-attacks and natural hazards. Climate change and its repercussions also pose a serious threat to international stability. The Integrated Review should reflect that our security is no longer focused on military scenarios, but rather on increasingly complex and ever-changing factors.
5. As the world becomes more inter-linked than ever before, it is becoming the norm to cooperate with other states on the challenges facing us, rather than battle against each other. Very significant global changes are taking place which require global solutions; we would like to see the British government taking a lead with the kind of new and open thinking that is required at such a time. CND wishes to see a transition in the reality and perception of Britain's role in the world, both within the UK and internationally, away from old dogmas and notions of status based on military might, towards a diplomacy, dialogue and problem-solving approach. This should build upon and underpin the international rules-based, humanitarian architecture, supported by the overwhelming majority of the international community through the United Nations. An outward-facing Britain should take practical steps to support and develop an international culture which values and promotes peaceful, humane, just and equal relations between states. Any strategy developed by the British government on its role in the world should first and foremost be based on how it can best contribute to a safer and more peaceful world. In a world where states are more connected than ever before and where we face common threats such as climate change and terrorism, it is imperative we consider how our actions impact upon the wider international community.

6. The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists announced in January 2020 that the hands on their infamous Doomsday Clock have moved 20 seconds closer to midnight and now stand at 100 seconds to midnight. It is the closest the clock has been to midnight since the atomic scientists' annual assessment began in 1947. This indicates a very high and increasing risk of nuclear warfare and environmental catastrophe.
7. A large part of the reason for the current situation is the erosion of confidence in and the devaluing of multilateral treaties. Since his election as US President, Donald Trump has shown contempt for working collectively on an international level. In the nuclear sphere alone, he has withdrawn the United States from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran, and is now threatening the New START treaty due to expire in 2021. Signed in 2010, the New START treaty limits the number of nuclear warheads of Russia and the US to 1,550. This treaty is therefore fundamental for preventing a global arms race and ensuring nuclear de-escalation. These treaties brought about greater global stability after the Cold War, and are crucial to preventing a new arms race. It is essential that they must be protected to provide global stability, ensure nuclear de-escalation and eventual disarmament. As an immediate priority, the UK government should encourage and support efforts to continue the New START treaty.
8. Britain should use its relationships across the world to urge a return to an international order based on the rule of law and rational, evidence-based decision-making. Britain should also reach beyond traditional alliances and recognise the global nature of problems in order to build global solutions.

A world without nuclear weapons

9. All of the world's nine nuclear weapons states are in the process of modernising or upgrading their nuclear arsenals, including Britain. This is underpinned by the false view that a nuclear 'deterrent' provides the best way of convincing other nuclear powers to engage in meaningful arms control initiatives. Nuclear weapons states should take into consideration how other countries might perceive and react upon their own nuclear policies, both in words and deeds. In 2016, MPs voted in favor of building four submarines for a new nuclear weapons system. A replacement nuclear weapons system will have a lifetime cost of at least £205 billion. This is misplaced expenditure with an unacceptable opportunity cost, for a system that can no longer protect the UK against modern security threats.
10. The UK is committed to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which it signed in 1968, and which came into force in 1970, following widespread international concern about the risk of nuclear weapons proliferation. It is a binding multilateral treaty with the goal of general and complete nuclear weapons disarmament. The NPT is reviewed every five years but the Review Conference of 2015 ended with no agreement and no progress. The 2020 Review Conference has been postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and is tentatively scheduled to take place in January 2021. CND calls on the government to do all it can to inject new life into the NPT process and to use the Integrated Review as an opportunity to plan a range of initiatives which will advance global nuclear disarmament. As initial steps, the government should make strenuous efforts to achieve progress on global nuclear stockpile reduction, the development of nuclear-weapons-free zones, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty.
11. Largely because of the lack of disarmament progress with the NPT, the United Nations adopted the TPNW, a historic international treaty banning nuclear weapons in July 2017. The treaty opened for signature in September 2017 and will enter into force once ratified by 50 states, a development expected in the next few months. 122 countries supported the treaty in the UN General Assembly. The new treaty will make it illegal under international law to develop, test, produce, manufacture, acquire, possess, stockpile, transfer, use or threaten to

use nuclear weapons. It also makes it illegal to assist or encourage anyone to engage in these activities. The TPNW acknowledges and supports the NPT, reinforcing the commitments made in the original treaty and adding to them. It was designed to reinforce the impact of the disarmament pillar of the NPT and should be seen as such. There is no basis in the criticism from nuclear weapons states that the TPNW undermines the NPT. The treaty is a breakthrough in international disarmament efforts and will be of enormous support in achieving a world without nuclear weapons. The importance of the treaty was highlighted when the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to ICAN (of which CND is a partner organisation) for its work in campaigning for this momentous achievement. The award of this prestigious prize is an essential recognition of the global majority against nuclear weapons – and the movement that has done so much to advance it. The UK government refused to participate in the treaty negotiations and even issued a hostile statement, while maintaining that it shares CND's goal of a nuclear weapons-free world. The British government should constructively engage with the TPNW process and work towards signing the treaty, thus supporting the global dynamic towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The precarious current situation in regards to international nuclear agreements is making the world a more dangerous place. The TPNW is an opportunity to engage in a productive way with nuclear disarmament.

12. While work is undertaken to engage with the TPNW, the UK government should look at interim ways it can contribute to de-escalating its nuclear position. At a time of high global tensions, Britain should reconsider its Continuous At Sea Deterrence (CASD) posture, ending the practice of having a nuclear-armed submarine constantly on patrol; reduce the number of submarines and warheads in its arsenal; and give a clear statement of negative security assurance, confirming it will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against a non nuclear-armed state in any circumstance. These measures would be a welcome step towards eventual complete disarmament.

Trident, Britain's nuclear weapons system

13. The government has started work on building new submarines for Britain's nuclear weapons programme, the first step in replacing the current one, commonly referred to as Trident. The four new submarines could cost up to £41 billion, with a total lifetime cost of a new programme at least £205 billion. Trident takes up a significant portion of the defence procurement budget.
14. Points 3 and 4 above have already referenced the fact that government spending on a multi-billion weapon of mass destruction does not align with its stated national security priorities. In addition, experts are increasingly questioning the technological viability of Trident, as developments in underwater drone technology could soon render the system obsolete. The vast amounts of money being poured into drone technology means that eventually Trident will be both detectable and targetable, meaning the government is wasting money on weapons with built-in redundancy. Many supporters of Trident claim that nuclear weapons keep the peace by acting as a 'deterrent'. This is the false belief that we will dissuade an 'enemy' from attacking if they know that we could retaliate with nuclear weapons. But the nuclear powers have been involved in hundreds of wars since the atomic bomb was first invented in 1945. In addition, possessing nuclear weapons did not defend France, the US or the UK from terrorist attacks: one of the actual threats we face today. In fact, replacing Trident might encourage more countries to get nuclear weapons and so increase the danger of nuclear war. If countries like the UK and others insist that they need these weapons for security, other countries will come to the same conclusion.
15. Scrapping Trident and its replacement does not have to mean the loss of high skill employment. If there is the political will to fully engage with defence diversification, far more

high skilled jobs can be created in the engineering sector for example. The skills of the workers would be welcome in building conventional ships or in rapidly developing industries such as renewable energy. A government-led economic diversification plan would minimise the job losses in the event of Britain deciding to scrap its nuclear weapons. A Defence Diversification Agency should be established to ensure the skills of the workers would be transferred to other industries, such as building conventional ships or producing renewable energy. To address the need for health supplies because of the coronavirus pandemic, a consortium of UK companies came together to produce medical ventilators. Several arms companies – including a number involved in nuclear weapons production – joined the consortium, which won a contract to manufacture 10,000 ventilators. Staff who routinely work on defence contracts were redeployed to work on the ventilator project. Workers at the Barrow shipyard, where BAE Systems is building the Dreadnought submarines, have also been put to work on producing medical equipment. This development shows that it is possible to redeploy workers to more socially useful parts of the economy. When CND has previously called for Trident to be scrapped, this has been challenged on the grounds of the job losses this would entail. However, when necessary, a defence company such as Babcock, and its workforce, was able to diversify and produce something different. There is no reason why this cannot be replicated on a wider scale, especially when the diversification is pre-planned and factored into Ministry of Defence – or wider economic - planning.

16. Britain's nuclear weapons contribute to the ever-worsening climate crisis. Trident uses massive energy and resources in research, production, operation, dismantling and eventual waste storage, never mind the environmental catastrophe that would be created if it was ever deployed. This is in addition to the environmental devastation wreaked by decades of uranium mining, nuclear testing and nuclear waste dumping. Consecutive British governments have also struggled with the question of what to do with the toxic, radioactive nuclear waste produced.

Time to re-assess alliances

17. The Integrated Review is an excellent opportunity to re-evaluate the so-called 'special relationship' with the United States – particularly its nuclear elements. There is widespread recognition that President Trump poses an increasing nuclear threat to the world. He has encouraged proliferation and a new nuclear arms race, and calls for a major increase in the US nuclear arsenal, including the development of so-called 'usable' nuclear weapons, which are already produced and deployed. This is a disastrous direction for US foreign and military policy – and for ours too, as we are tied to the US in the Mutual Defence Agreement. Signed in 1958, this is the most extensive nuclear sharing agreement in the world. It has never been more important to break out of this potentially catastrophic nuclear collaboration. President Trump has repeatedly promised to cancel the JCPOA nuclear deal with Iran, saying 'it's one of the worst deals ever made'. This agreement was a huge achievement which came about after a decade of talks and could be a springboard for the international community to enter a new phase in how to deal with future threats. A new, more positive, era in United States-Iran relations could be launched, not as a result of military attack but through negotiation. Abandoning the agreement may well push Iran down the road to nuclear weapons, potentially opening the door to Egypt and Saudi Arabia going down the nuclear route as well. Trump has said on multiple occasions that more countries should get nuclear weapons to counter the threat from North Korea, implying the US President would be happy to have a nuclear arms race in east Asia. Trump has effectively called into question what has been a bipartisan policy in the United States for the last 70 years: making sure more countries do not acquire nuclear weapons. And this is not only a US position but a globally endorsed position. If the US President sanctions nuclear proliferation then we are heading down a very dangerous path.

Britain should aim to play a more co-operative and constructive role in the world rather than find ourselves tied into an increasingly aggressive US foreign policy underpinned by nuclear weapons. Britain should be forging a new role for itself with a foreign policy that promotes co-operation and peace.

18. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is a nuclear-armed military alliance which is an obstacle to a peaceful world and global nuclear disarmament; UK membership should be re-considered as part of the Integrated Review. Since its inception, it has expanded both its sphere of influence and the scope of its activity, destabilising international relationships as it does so. The UK's membership of NATO does not make the country more secure, but in fact the opposite. NATO encourages a more militarised and confrontational international system. Its global expansionism increases international tension and jeopardises disarmament initiatives. Britain should withdraw from the alliance and take a vital step towards less confrontational global affairs. NATO should be disbanded with resources and funding instead invested in the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Defence and security policy should be coordinated through the OSCE.
19. The UK's nuclear weapons system is assigned to NATO. Ultimately, this means that the UK's nuclear weapons could be used against a country attacking (or threatening to attack) one of the NATO member states since an attack on one NATO member state is seen as being an attack on all member states.
20. The UK government has pledged to meet NATO's target of spending 2% of national income on defence every year. NATO should not be in a position to impose spending 'guidelines' on independent nations, which should be determining their own funding priorities based on genuine need. A commitment to adhere to an arbitrary spending 'guideline' undermines Britain's sovereignty and ability to respond to world events. The government should therefore oppose any spending 'guideline' set by NATO and determine its own level of defence spending based on what is necessary for Britain's security.

UK military action

21. Recent history shows that US and UK military action in the Middle East and North Africa has been ill-conceived, leading to death and destruction for innocent civilians, and shattered states where terrorists including ISIL have since been able to organise. Military action in a third state is precisely the situation where a new approach to foreign policy and Britain's global role should apply. Britain 'doing something' should cease to be thought of in military terms; our diplomatic and peace-building skills must play a full role and help make the kind of transition to a more peaceful world that we all ultimately wish to see.
22. The government's priority will always be to ensure the safety of its citizens, but going to war can actually put us at greater risk as well as endangering and killing people in other parts of the world. Britain's illegal war in Iraq, its continuing involvement in the 'war on terror', extrajudicial killings and the ongoing replacement of Trident, are all examples of how we have made the world less peaceful, less safe. We should be promoting dialogue and negotiation; understanding other nations' concerns and addressing these, rather than threatening, invading and upgrading our ability to kill their populations indiscriminately.

The alternative – how Britain could lead the world

23. One of the most important decisions Britain could take is to scrap Britain's nuclear weapons system, cancel its replacement and instead become a world leader in nuclear disarmament. Disarming could not only provide political leadership to the rest of the nuclear-armed states, but would be a practical guide for how to do it, a blueprint for the rest of the world drafted by our experts and politicians. Britain disarming could even provide impetus to the United

Nations' plans for a nuclear weapons-free world. Britain needs to disarm or provide a plan of its intention to disarm before it can sign the TPNW. Until then, the government should adopt a constructive approach towards the treaty, and acknowledge it as part of the rules-based international system. Within such an approach it should provide technical expertise and other input within the TPNW framework where relevant, for example on: discussions of verification issues that will take place and on which the UK continues to do substantial work; and on activities to address ongoing human and environmental harm from past nuclear testing. The government should condemn, and not participate in, any attempts to pressure other countries not to sign the treaty.

- 24.** Britain should be using its diplomatic leverage to re-invigorate the international order by bringing back confidence in international treaties. International cooperation is essential to maintaining a stable and just world order, and the UK government should do all it can to ensure that all states play their part in this process.
- 25.** The world has the opportunity to get beyond the current hostile and destructive international atmosphere before it's too late – Britain must play its role in this, starting with scrapping its own nuclear weapons system.

Submitted by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, September 2020

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