

# campaign



## Preventing nuclear use requires nuclear abolition

Two years after its entry into force, CND Vice-President and current chair of ICAN's International Steering Group **Dr Rebecca Johnson** assesses where we are with the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

**THE WORLD** was shocked to hear nuclear threats issued by Russia's President Vladimir Putin after he ordered the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Against this background, the first meeting of States Parties (1MSP) to the TPNW was held in Vienna in June. Attended by over 100 governments, along with many civil society activists, parliamentarians and security specialists from around the world, 1MSP took decisions on deadlines for destroying existing arsenals and developed a strong 50-point Action Plan, as a

'framework to guide the implementation of the Treaty'.

Six months later, as the TPNW enters its third year since entering into legal force on 22 January 2021, where does this nuclear prohibition treaty stand, and what are the key tasks for the coming year?

As of 1 January 2023, the TPNW has 91 signatory states, of which 68 have become full parties to the Treaty. Four intersessional working groups are being convened, covering Treaty universalisation; victim assistance,

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environmental remediation, international cooperation and assistance; implementation of Article 4 on eliminating nuclear arsenals and ensuring competent, effective verification and compliance mechanisms; and cooperation initiatives for mutually strengthening the TPNW, the NPT and other relevant agreements. Work is also underway to establish an international scientific advisory group.

The challenges are immense. The Austrian government has handed the diplomatic baton to Mexico to guide states parties into the second MSP, which will be

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held at UN headquarters in New York in November. While much work will be undertaken by governments and experts in these intersessional groups, civil society needs to keep focussed on bringing our own governments into the nuclear prohibition regime and preventing nuclear weapons being fired, deployed and proliferated.

With Russia and NATO responsible for around 12,000

of the nuclear weapons in the nine arsenals, it would not take many political or military miscalculations, decisions or mistakes to trigger nuclear war. We must not lose sight of what is at stake. Militarists and their pundits are twisting themselves in knots to normalise the existence of nuclear weapons in this war. They urge governments to get more nuclear weapons, while arguing that if Putin (or whoever) were to use 'tactical' nuclear weapons it might not be so bad.

This is mad, risky nonsense. Reality has long exposed the dangerous holes in established deterrence

narratives about nuclear weapons as peacekeepers. All aspects of militarism and war harm our lives, security, biodiversity, globally shared environment and climate with massively destructive emissions and chemicals. As nuclear war nightmares return, it is up to all of us to prevent nuclear use, work for peace, and campaign for the abolition of nuclear weapons through fully implementing the TPNW.

## Spotlight

### This month Wallasey CND



The year has started with worrying reports of crises at hospitals across the country. CND stands in solidarity with NHS staff who face enormous challenges in light of mis-spending by successive governments. Wallasey CND was just one of our groups to organise a 'Nurses not Nukes' action outside their local hospital in the past few months, and these protests will continue in 2023.

Wallasey CND describe themselves as a friendly group of people who are campaigning to raise awareness of the dangers of nuclear weapons. If you live in the area, why not get in touch and join them at their next event?

■ Get in touch by phoning 0151 638 3967 or emailing [barb.hardcastle@gmail.com](mailto:barb.hardcastle@gmail.com).

# Space is being militarised

**Dave Webb**, Chair of Yorkshire CND, responds to the first space launch attempt from the UK, which took place this week.

**VIRGIN ORBIT** this week attempted, but failed due to an ‘anomaly’ after take-off, to launch nine small satellites into orbit from Spaceport Cornwall in Newquay. Cosmic Girl, a modified Boeing 747 jumbo jet, was trying to carry LauncherOne, a two-stage rocket, under its wing to 35,000 feet. There it was released, and would have carried nine mini-satellites into orbit, had the second stage of the rocket not failed.

This attempt was the first ever satellite launch from the UK and had been highlighted as important for the UK space industry and for the scientific payloads – but little was discussed about the four military satellites on board. Two were for Prometheus 2 – a joint Ministry of Defence and US National Reconnaissance Office communications and surveillance project, and two others were for CIRCE – jointly developed by the UK Defence Science and Technology Laboratory and the US Naval Research Laboratory to help develop long-range communications and radar.

The MoD sees space as ‘fundamental to military

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operations’ and the UK is becoming part of a space arms race which is increasing global instability. But the UK cannot do it alone – last year the UK and US Space Commands signed an agreement for deeper military cooperation in space. US aerospace giant Lockheed Martin is also establishing its own spaceport in the Shetland Islands.

However, 56 years ago, on 27 January 1967, both countries signed the Outer Space Treaty (OST) which states that ‘the exploration and use of outer space shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries and shall be the province of all [hu]mankind.’ It was meant to preserve the space environment – but the rapid growth of space activities is causing overcrowding and pollution problems for that environment. Military goals to dominate space and commercial competition to exploit it have become the major driving forces

and major users are acting according to their own self-interests, contrary to the common good.

The militarisation of Spaceport Cornwall has not gone unopposed, however. ‘*For Heaven’s Sake*’, a joint CND/Drone Wars publication about the UK’s role in the militarisation of space was launched in 2022 and, last October concerned Newquay residents gathered at the spaceport to protest at the proposed launch.

The dangerous arms race in space must continue to be opposed – the reliance on space and development of anti-satellite weapons increases the danger to key military satellites (including those used for early warning), which could have disastrous consequences. The ideals of the OST provide a cooperative and peaceful vision for space which must be taken seriously.

### New Cold War Challenges – London CND conference

**14 January** 11:30am-2:30pm

■ To register contact [info@londoncnd.org](mailto:info@londoncnd.org)

### West Midlands CND meeting

**18 January** 7:30pm

■ To register contact [wcdall@gmail.com](mailto:wcdall@gmail.com)

### Yorkshire CND AGM

**21 January**, 12 noon-4pm  
Common Space, 1-3 John Street, Bradford BD1 3JT

■ Contact [info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk](mailto:info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk)

### 'The Mistake' – new play

**31 January-4 February**

Arcola Theatre, 24 Ashwin Street, London E8 3DL

■ Contact [information@cnduk.org](mailto:information@cnduk.org)

### Youth and Student CND away day

**4 February**, 10am-4pm

The Warehouse, 54-57 Alison Street, Digbeth B5 5TH

■ Contact [yscnd@riseup.net](mailto:yscnd@riseup.net)

### CND Bradford fundraiser gig

**10 February**

1 in 12 club, 21-23 Albion Street, Bradford BD1 2LY

■ Contact [info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk](mailto:info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk)

### Yorkshire CND strategy meeting

**18 February**

The Golden Ball, 2 Cromwell Road, York YO1 6DU

■ Contact [info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk](mailto:info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk)

## Urgent action required

If you know any members of the National Education Union (NEU), please contact them as a matter of urgency to ask them to attend their district meeting where motions for their annual conference will be decided.

There is a 'Peace is union business' motion being put forward – we need district NEU branches to prioritise it to go forward – the deadline is February 6th so time is of the essence. The motion proposes:

### Conference instructs the Executive to:

- stand in solidarity with trade unionists and workers in all countries opposing war and wasteful, environmentally harmful, military spending;
- oppose the development of nuclear submarines in Australia, NATO expansion and to further increases in military spending by the UK government instead of seeking peace, averting climate breakdown and addressing global development;
- reaffirm NEU affiliation to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND).

## Meet the staff

This month:

### Andrew Moffatt, Trust and Major Donor Fundraiser

"I work alongside the membership team, leading on our applications to trusts and foundations, researching their criteria and writing applications, mainly for CND's Peace Education work. I've also been involved with a new online recruitment campaign, aimed at younger people which we hope will be launching very soon.

I grew up in Northern Ireland in the 1970s/80s and became involved with the peace movement there, joining the Peace People as a teenager. At one of the rallies, Joan Ruddock came to speak, so I also joined CND as a member, which I have been (on and off) since then. It's great getting to contribute to the anti-nuclear movement".

