

campaign



No ceasefire! No vote!

CND General Secretary **Kate Hudson** writes on why the humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in Gaza must mean we increase the political pressure for a ceasefire.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres last week took the rare step of invoking Article 99 of the UN Charter, so he can bring the Gaza catastrophe directly to the attention of the Security Council.

In his letter to the Council, Guterres said that: “facing a severe risk of collapse of the humanitarian system in Gaza, I urge the Council to help avert a humanitarian catastrophe and appeal for a humanitarian ceasefire to be declared.” He warned that the situation is “fast deteriorating into a

catastrophe with potentially irreversible implications for Palestinians as a whole and for peace and security within the region.”

That Guterres is absolutely right can hardly be in doubt.

Intensive attacks are underway in south Gaza, yet what of the two million civilians imprisoned there? There is talk of local evacuations, of ‘safe zones’ but how can that really be possible in such a densely populated area? The media coverage is too tragic to bear, and it is beyond belief that such crimes can be allowed to take place.

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Blockade at Eaton Mission Systems in Bournemouth

The UN has warned of increased risk of death from disease, among the war-weakened, hungry population of Gaza. It says that the return to full scale hostilities will 'precipitate and accelerate large-scale dying'.

Bringing a political settlement based on peace and justice has never been more crucial. We must help bring this war, this slaughter, to an end, and ensure that Palestine is free and sovereign.

Worldwide protests are already on a mass scale, crossing all continents and millions are mobilising. We are also seeing a powerful response globally to the appeal from Palestinian trade unions – to stop the Israeli war machine, blocking arms transports and building related forms of solidarity action. This has resulted in significant developments: among many examples – at the ports of Barcelona, Naples and Genoa,

of Oakland and Melbourne; Indian trade unions have called for a refusal to handle Israeli cargo; in Britain, trade unionists have blocked arms factories exporting to Israel. Last Thursday there were four blockades involving 1,000 trade unionists, at BAE systems in Glasgow, and other factories in Lancashire, Brighton and Bournemouth, which produce components for the F35 fighter jet, being used in Israel's bombardment of Gaza. Big respect to all those involved.

And we do also have some political power that we must recognise: that we will never vote for a politician who has not called for a ceasefire. That is now a powerful rallying cry of this movement: No Ceasefire – No Vote! We must make that power count at the ballot box - and bring political change. Politicians are supposed to represent us; let's make sure we have politicians that do.

No ceasefire - no vote: Join the protests

16 Dec: Nationwide day of local actions

13 Jan: National march in London

Spotlight

This month Abingdon Peace Group



So many CND groups have achieved wonderful things in 2023, and it's good to see one in particular getting recognised for their efforts.

Congratulations from all at CND to Abingdon Peace Group! While celebrating 40 years of peace-making with a well-attended tea party this year, they were awarded the Pax Christi Peace Award from their CEO Andrew Jackson. A huge well done to you all for all your hard work over the years.

If you live locally and want to get involved with the group to help campaign on all the challenges ahead, please get in touch – they would love to hear from you. Contact 01235 526265, 07786 055195 or abingdonpeace@gmail.com.

How's the nuclear ban treaty doing?

CND's Chair, **Tom Unterrainer**, attended the recent meeting at the UN in New York, of states that back the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Here Tom reports on the event.

THE non-nuclear majority of the world met between 27 November and 1 December for the Second Meeting of States Parties (2MSP) to the TPNW. This coming together was not simply 'non-nuclear' but decidedly anti-nuclear in outlook and approach.

The TPNW represents many things: a 'work in progress', a part of international law, a mechanism for the eventual abolition of nuclear weapons and similar. What it represents politically, at the time of coming into force and since, is a full-frontal rejection of 'nuclearism' and a challenge to the nuclear-armed world. 2MSP saw discussion and decision making on how to embed this aspect of the Treaty.

The theme of 'universalisation' was prominent at 2MSP, with a series of working papers, proposals and speeches made to address the concept.

A working paper submitted by the government of Austria goes into more detail, with specific reference to concepts of security: "the argument that opponents of the Treaty



frequently employ in their criticism of the Treaty is that it 'does not take today's security environment into account' or that 'the security environment is not conducive to nuclear disarmament.'" In response to these 'arguments', Austria is clear that "there has been little readiness by opponents of the Treaty, especially by the nuclear-armed States, to engage constructively with the legitimate security concerns formulated in and through the Treaty."

What does this mean? That State Parties to the TPNW are not simply rejecting nuclear-weapon possession for the obvious moral and ethical reasons but because they fully reject the 'security' arguments

of nuclear-possessor states and are clear that the destructive humanitarian impact of any nuclear use must be fully recognised and accounted for.

There were many similar contributions and discussions at 2MSP, both on the floor of the meeting and in a series of lively side events. These events ranged from addressing the issues of 'nuclear secrecy' to more in-depth discussions and seminars on nuclear risks and global politics.

What is clear is that CND can and will play an important role in pressing forward with 'universalising' anti-nuclear ideas, including those embodied in the TPNW. It is also clear – and this is one of the more positive aspects of such international meetings – that CND and our supporters are the representatives of majority non-nuclear and anti-nuclear thinking in the UK. Given Britain's nuclear-armed status and nuclear alliances, our work – and the work of the TPNW community globally – is as important as ever.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all our supporters!

While the world is undoubtedly a dangerous place at the moment, CND wants to thank all our members and supporters who have this year campaigned for peace.

In villages, towns, and cities across the country; in every region and nation; in a broad range of political parties, trade unions and other organisations, you have been working relentlessly to raise the alarm on nuclear risks. This is not always easy work but, as we know, it is absolutely essential.

And this work will continue in 2024. But for now, we hope you all enjoy a safe and happy festive season!

Yorkshire CND AGM

6 January 1:30pm-4:15pm
Quaker meeting house, 188
Woodhouse Lane, Leeds.
Contact:
■ info@yorkshirecnd.org.uk

'No wars, no nukes' – London CND annual conference

14 January 12 noon-2:30pm
Online, to register contact:
■ info@londoncnd.org

Peace Poetry Night with Scottish CND

25 January 7:30pm
Kirk Lounge at The Renfield
Centre, 260 Bath Street,
Glasgow G2 4JP. Contact:
■ scnd@banthebomb.org

For a Nuclear-Free Middle East - GM&D CND AGM 2024

27 January Bridge 5 Mill, 22A
Beswick Street, Manchester.
■ Contact gmdcnd@gn.apc.org

Meet the staff

This month:

Sigrid Gaimster, Membership and Fundraising Officer



"I've just joined CND as the new Membership and Fundraising Officer. I lived in Auckland, in beautiful Aotearoa/ New Zealand for four years and have recently returned home to South East London with my family. I've previously worked for membership organisations in London such as Historic Houses and the Creative Industries Federation.

At CND I'm responsible for the project management and administration of CND's fundraising appeals to supporters and new audiences, as well as growing the membership. I also promote and manage the sale of CND merchandise.

For me there's no question that we should live in a world without nuclear weapons, but the Wages not Weapons campaign resonates with me particularly during the cost of living crisis that affects so many of us. I'm so grateful for the tireless work of CND and its members, who I look forward to getting to know better!"

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