



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

information

NFLA English Forum media release - for immediate release, 5th December 2013

NFLA Annual Policy considers nuclear security, the nuclear weapons debate for 2014 and 2015 and building up a Parliamentary coalition of support

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) are holding a UK & Ireland Steering Committee, Annual General Meeting and Annual Policy Seminar in Cardiff County Hall tomorrow, 6th December. The afternoon seminar will see three leading speakers on nuclear weapons and nuclear security issues consider the risks to the public, and the strategy required to change the debate, to encourage positive medium term nuclear phase-out. (1)

The Annual Policy Seminar will bring NFLA Councillor representatives from across Wales, England, Scotland and Ireland together in Cardiff for the 33rd NFLA AGM.

The seminar will focus on three issues of real interest to NFLA representatives:

- Are nuclear security risks under control both in the UK and Ireland and internationally?
- How will the nuclear disarmament debate change in 2014 and 2015 with the major political discussions of the Scottish independence referendum debate and the 2015 UK general election campaign? And how can groups like the NFLA influence that debate?
- How can a wider and more influential cross-party Parliamentary coalition be put together to challenge the need for nuclear new build and the replacement of the Trident nuclear weapons programme?

Nuclear security is a matter of concern in the UK's National Security report and is of major concern at the global level. Only yesterday, the International Atomic Energy Authority has announced that medical nuclear materials being transported in Mexico have been stolen on route to a waste storage site. The truck contains materials including Cobalt-60 and police are looking exhaustively for it. (2) This is just one of an alarming number of incidents recorded around the world. Could such materials ever be used in malicious ways in the UK or Ireland? Dr David Lowry, former Director of the European Proliferation Information Centre will consider such matters and related nuclear security issues.

The recent interim agreement between Iran and the 'P5' nuclear weapon states provides a positive indication of potential progress in the talks to reduce and eventually abolish all stocks of nuclear weapons. (3) Dr Rebecca Johnson, Co Chair of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and Vice President of CND, will consider how the two major political campaigns in the UK – Scotland's independence debate and the 2015 UK general election campaign – will discuss the nuclear weapons issue and potentially change the national and international debates on nuclear disarmament.

Paul Flynn, MP for Newport West, will conclude the seminar by considering how to influence and change the debates at Parliament over both nuclear power and nuclear weapons. Is the UK Parliament out of step with public opinion on nuclear issues? How can MPs be better informed? What could the different perspectives of the Irish Government and devolved Scottish and Welsh Governments have on these debates?

Councillor Mark Hackett, Chair of the NFLA, said:

"I am delighted we have three prominent and highly respected speakers to the NFLA's Annual Policy Seminar as it moves into its 34th year of challenging the nuclear policy status quo. I look forward to hearing from David Lowry, Rebecca Johnson and Paul Flynn about the major risks and concerns in

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nuclear security and nuclear proliferation. 2014 is a major year for the debates in nuclear weapons, nuclear reactor new build, radioactive waste management and nuclear safety. This seminar will very much assist NFLA to be fully informed to challenge governments, national and international nuclear agencies in the wider campaign to shift public opinion fully behind the need for nuclear disarmament and sustainable energy alternatives to nuclear power.”

Ends

For more information please contact Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary on 0161 234 3244 or 07771 930196.

Notes for editors:

- (1) NFLA Annual Policy Seminar, Cardiff County Hall, 6th December 2013, Final Programme:
 - 1.30pm Welcomes by NFLA Chair and Cardiff City Council's NFLA representative.
 - 1.35pm Nuclear security and proliferation – key issues of concern. Dr David Lowry, Former Director of European Proliferation Information Centre
 - 2.00pm The Trident replacement debate in the international nuclear ban debate: prospects for 2014 and 2015 – Dr Rebecca Johnson, Executive Director of Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy
 - 2.25pm Developing a stronger cross-party Parliamentary voice to challenge new nuclear build & nuclear weapons development, Paul Flynn MP, Newport West
 - 2.50pm Panel Discussion (for a 3.30pm finish).
- (2) BBC News Online, 4th December 2013
<http://bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-25212648>
- (3) See NFLA Media Release, 25th November 2013
http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/news/NFLA_Iran_nuclear_programme_agreement.pdf

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