



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

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NFLA Media release - for immediate release, 1st July 2014

NFLA support joint letter to 'The Guardian' raising concerns around the disappointing Trident Commission report

The Chair of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) is amongst the authors of a joint letter of leading groups advocating nuclear disarmament who are broadly disappointed with the final report of the Trident Commission.

The Trident Commission, made up of former Defence and Foreign Affairs spokespeople from the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrats, and the great and good from the academic and military establishment, have spent 3 years considering a joint response taking forward the debate over whether the UK Government should renew the Trident nuclear weapons programme.

Their final report has some encouraging recommendations, but the letter signatories are disappointed with the overall conclusion, that Trident should be renewed. (1)

The joint letter sent to 'The Guardian' reads as follows:

"The Trident Commission's conclusions that the UK does not need nuclear weapons to maintain international status or as an 'insurance policy' against a global crisis are to be welcomed. Unfortunately, the report's headline finding that Trident should be replaced is mistaken and, we believe, out of step with international developments and Britain's own security needs.

Not only has British public opinion moved steadily away from support for Trident replacement over recent years, but the UK's efforts to replace Trident are ridiculed internationally.

When the UK failed to participate in multilateral discussions on nuclear disarmament at talks mandated by the UN General Assembly in Geneva last year, the government was widely condemned. The vast majority of members of the United Nations, which feel no need to develop their own nuclear arsenals and see the nuclear-armed states as a threat to global security, have become increasingly frustrated with growing proliferation and the irresponsibility of the nine nuclear-armed states.

Britain's national security is inseparable from international security. The Commission's backing for Trident replacement is outdated, regardless of how many submarines it advocates. This hugely expensive project is already being overtaken as other nations become willing to take further legal measures to ban nuclear weapons and achieve nuclear disarmament.

The Trident Commission has correctly concluded that the UK needs to do more to show it is serious about disarmament, and needs to prepare a 'glide-path' for reducing its reliance on nuclear weapons. But the Commissioners need now to pressure their respective parties and the government into taking part in good faith in multilateral initiatives aimed at abolishing nuclear weapons, rather than sticking its head in the sand and pretending that the world has not changed in thirty years."

The letter has been approved and signed by the NFLA Chair (2) and representatives from CND-UK (3), the UK branch of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICANw-UK) (4), Nuclear Information Service (5), Scientists for Global Responsibility (6) and Medact (7).

Ends

For more information please contact Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary on 07771 930196.

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Notes for editors:

- (1) Trident Commission Final Report, BASIC website, 1st July 2014
<http://www.basicint.org/tridentcommission/reports>
- (2) Nuclear Free Local Authorities
[http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A206_\(NB92\)_Trident_Commission.pdf](http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A206_(NB92)_Trident_Commission.pdf)
- (3) CND – UK
<http://www.cnduk.org/cnd-media/item/1945-trident-commission-is-stuck-in-the-past-says-cnd>.
- (4) ICAN-UK <http://www.icanw.org>
- (5) Nuclear Information Service <http://nuclearinfo/article/uk/uk-trident/trident-commission-calls-delay-replacement-decision>
- (6) Scientists for Global Responsibility <http://www.sgr.org.uk>
- (7) Medact <http://www.medact.org>

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