



# West Midlands

CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

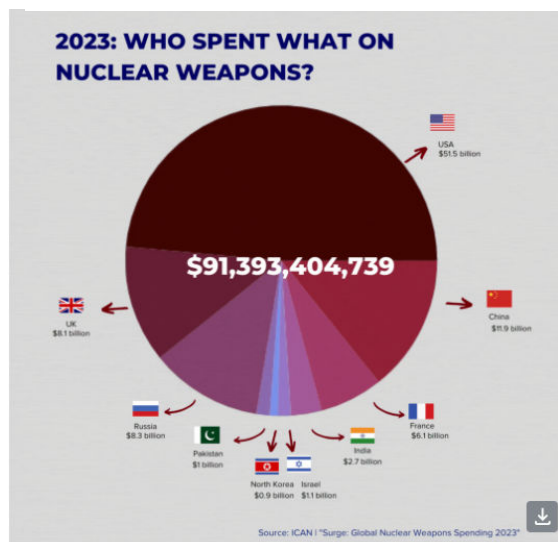
## Mailing

July/August 2024

### Nuclear Weapons Spending in 2023

The nine nuclear-armed countries spent more than \$10 billion more on their nuclear arsenals last year than the year before, as ICAN shows in “[Surge: 2023 Global Nuclear Weapons Spending](#)”. Between them, they pumped \$91.4 billion into the nuclear arms race, or \$2,898 per second.

The biggest spender, also with the largest one-year increase, is the United States, which spent \$51.5 billion, more than all other nuclear-armed countries combined. China expended \$11.9 billion and Russia spent the third largest amount at \$8.3 billion. The United Kingdom’s spending increased significantly for the second year in a row, to \$8.1 billion.



The twenty corporations profiled in the report earned over \$30 billion for nuclear weapons related work in 2023, about a third of overall nuclear weapons spending. These companies have \$335 billion in contracts lined up, in some cases, until 2040 and spent more than \$123 million buying influence through lobbyists and think tank contributions.

Have a look at ICAN’s video here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aB7\\_uPrLBbY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aB7_uPrLBbY)

**More information to follow about the global week of action “No Money for Nuclear Weapons”, 16<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> September**

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## **BITS FROM ABROAD**

**Iran** has further increased its stockpile of uranium enriched to near weapons-grade levels, according to a confidential report on Monday by the United Nations' nuclear watchdog, the latest in Tehran's attempts to steadily exert pressure on the international community.

*Associated Press 27<sup>th</sup> May 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/yk264w56>

As **Texas** wildfires burned toward the primary nuclear weapons facility, workers hurried to ensure nothing flammable was around buildings and storage areas. When the fires showed no sign of slowing, Pantex Plant officials urgently called on local contractors, who arrived within minutes with bulldozers to dig trenches and enlarge fire breaks for the sprawling complex where nuclear weapons are assembled and disassembled and dangerous plutonium pits - hollow spheres that trigger nuclear warheads and bombs - are stored.

*The Columbian 25th May 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/3u2hpyd5>

President Putin could order the use of a tactical nuclear weapon if Russia's army is routed in Ukraine, the head of Kyiv's national security council has told The Times. Oleksandr Lytvynenko's comments came after G7 leaders warned at a summit in Italy that any use of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons by Russia would be met with "severe consequences".

*The Times 16th June 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/mr2apehe>

As the world's nations prepare for the 11th Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) conference to be held at the U.N. in New York in 2026, the prospects for proliferation should anchor their deliberations... There is a distinct possibility South Korea, Japan, the UAE, Egypt, Turkey, and Iran will all have nuclear weapons. After that, Algeria, Finland, Sweden, Ukraine, and Australia will be tempted to do the same. There could be more. What will drive this charge? Several things: Increased Russian, Chinese, and North Korean nuclear threats, unrestrained forward basing of nuclear weapons beyond Russia's deployment to Belarus, waning allied confidence in the credibility of U.S. nuclear security guarantees, and an increasing acceptance of dangerous civilian nuclear activities that can bring states to the brink of bomb making.

*NPEC 21st June 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/5es6m8k7>

## **FROM THE MEDIA**

More than 500 workers at the Dounreay nuclear site have gone on strike in a dispute over pay. Unite and GMB members have walked out after rejecting a revised offer from Nuclear Restoration Services (NRS) made earlier this month. Prospect union members accepted the deal after previously being involved in the dispute at the complex near Thurso. Unite and GMB are planning a further 24-hour strike on 19 June.

*BBC 28th May 2024*

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cevkvzpz0lzo>

There are some decent arguments in favour of unilateral disarmament. So it's a pity then that Carla Denyer did not make any of those when she appeared on LBC to give a car-crash interview earlier today. The Green co-leader decided that the best way to convince the British people to get rid of their Trident submarines at this election was to liken nuclear Armageddon to, er, knife crime. Host Lewis Goodall began by asking Denyer whether 'We would be less of a target if we didn't have nuclear weapons?' pointing out that 'Poland doesn't have nuclear weapons, it's still a target'.

*Spectator 9th June 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/mhwt5eaz>

Nuclear disarmament of the UK is something "we all should be aiming for", according to Plaid Cymru's leader Rhun ap Iorwerth. But he said the UK's defence force should be "well-funded", able to "play their part in defending ourselves in peacekeeping roles" and ensures the welfare of military personnel after they leave service.

*BBC 9th June 2024*

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cj551318eilo>

The world's nine nuclear-armed states continue to modernise their nuclear weapons as the countries deepened their reliance on such deterrence in 2023, a Swedish think tank said today. Wilfred Wan, director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (Sipri) weapons of mass destruction programme, said: "We have not seen nuclear weapons playing such a prominent role in international relations since the cold war."

*Morning Star 17th June 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/bunhysk6>

## **TRIDENT AND RELATED NEWS**

Sir Keir Starmer will pitch Labour as the “party of national security” as he seeks to switch attention to defence matters during the general election campaign. The Labour leader is expected to meet with forces veterans and a group of his party’s candidates when he campaigns in the North West. Sir Keir will reaffirm his commitment to a “nuclear deterrent triple lock” as well as his ambition to increase defence spending to 2.5 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP).

*Independent 2nd June 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/mr364ueh>

Anas Sarwar has defended Labour’s Trident “triple lock” ... Keir Starmer on Monday sparked fierce criticism from the SNP as he said Labour’s commitment to Trident was “absolute” and insisted he would press the nuclear button. This was questioned by First Minister John Swinney, who said “nobody’s going to use” nuclear weapons. Asked about the Labour leader’s comments, Sarwar said: “The world is a much more unsafe place than it was even a few years ago, never mind a decade or two decades ago, that’s why our commitment to Nato is resolute, our commitment to national security is resolute and not up for negotiation”.

*The National 3rd June 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/ym8a88ye>

‘A dangerous waste’: CND condemns Starmer’s commitment to nuclear weapons and militarism.

*CND 3rd June 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/5drt7hsf>

Labour’s commitment to the UK’s nuclear arsenal has been branded an ‘obscene and immoral waste of money’ by the Scottish Green Party. The party’s external affairs spokesperson Ross Greer went on to say that nuclear weapons are a ‘moral evil’ and urged voters who support a nuclear-free world to vote Green. Greer said: “Nuclear weapons are a moral evil and an obscene and immoral waste of hundreds of billions of pounds. It is a vast money pit that could be far better spent eradicating poverty, tackling the climate crisis and transforming public services like the NHS.

*Bright Green 9th June 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/382spvp7>

Labour makes general election commitment for new UK nuclear deterrent based on the Clyde. Keir Starmer has said that his party will renew Trident, with the Labour leader committed to building four new nuclear submarines.

*Daily Record 3rd June 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/29ae94mu>

Two nuclear bomb bases on the Clyde recorded 174 security breaches over five years, according to information released by the Ministry of Defence (MoD). Between 2018 and 2022 there were 130 breaches reported at the Trident submarine base at Faslane, near Helensburgh, and a further 44 breaches at the nearby nuclear weapons store at Coulport.

*The Ferret 10th June 2024*

<https://theferret.scot/security-breaches-clyde-nuclear-bases/>

## **NUCLEAR POWER**

Recent data acquired under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA 2000) unveils a number of drone sightings over UK nuclear facilities from 2021 to 2023.

*UK Defence Journal 29th May 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/3ty3xajz>

An Italian energy start-up is pursuing plans to build 20 mini reactors across the UK, as it seeks to capitalise on the country’s nuclear power expansion. Newcleo ... has said it wants to build near dense population centres after the Government recently relaxed rules restricting nuclear developments to remote locations.

*Telegraph 9th June 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/2kpms6jp>

Governments and others promoting the use of high-assay low-enriched uranium (HALEU) for nuclear power have not considered the potential terrorism risk that widespread adoption of this fuel creates, nuclear scientists have warned.

*Chemistry World 12th June 2024*

<https://tinyurl.com/2h5nvwj7>

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