



West Midlands

CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Mailing

September/October 2024

NPT Prepcom ends without an agreement

Once again the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 11th Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference (due to take place in 2026) concluded in Geneva without an outcome which could be agreed to by all states parties

The Chair's Summary was adopted as a working document (Chair of the session was Ambassador Akan Rakhmetullin of Kazakhstan) and can be found in the link below.



The risks of nuclear sharing were highlighted, both by Kazakhstan and by ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) whose statement was delivered by Naomi Zoka from Pax Christi Flanders.

Many diplomats included suggestions from ICAN's briefing papers in their presentations, and during the session, ICAN organised several regional briefings, including with diplomats from Central Asia, Africa and Asia-Pacific, in order to provide information about the current context and to encourage their support for progress on disarmament and the TPNW. ICAN also held a small workshop on victim assistance and environmental remediation to discuss how to best integrate civil society engagement into implementation of these obligations of the TPNW.

The nuclear weapons states and their allies responded by deflecting responsibility and pointing at each other. NATO members in particular, relentlessly repeated the fiction that nuclear sharing has always been accepted by NPT states parties, and that it was not until very recently that anyone objected to it.

Read the detailed account from ICAN here:

https://www.icanw.org/second_npt_prepcom_closes_without_agreed_outcome

WMCND, 54, Allison Street, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 5TH

e-mail: wmcndall@gmail.com; website: www.wmcnd.org.uk

Follow us on Twitter: @westmidlandscnd

BITS FROM ABROAD

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that **Iran**'s breakout time – the amount of time needed to produce enough weapons grade material for a nuclear weapon – “is now probably one or two weeks” as Tehran has continued to develop its nuclear program. The assessment marks the shortest breakout time that US officials have ever referenced and comes as Iran has taken steps in recent months to boost its production of fissile material.

CNN 19th July 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/4ns5hd3a>

Nuclear-weapon states (NWS) are disregarding political commitments accepted under the nuclear **Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)** to “further diminish the role and significance of nuclear weapons in all military and security concepts, doctrines and policies” and increasing nuclear risks by boosting the salience of nuclear weapons. The NPT is inclusive, nearly universal, and connects the disarmament and non-proliferation dimensions of the global nuclear order. These factors make it a good place to address nuclear weapons salience. In a polarised international environment, the NPT can also link up other contexts where nuclear weapons are discussed. ... But the growing role and significance of nuclear weapons is both the result and a driver of rivalry between the NWS.

European Leadership Network 16th July 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/4hm6ypwf>

Japan and the **United States** have a “special responsibility” to lead efforts to abolish nuclear weapons, the head of a U.S. nongovernmental organisation told a 30th international peace symposium. Ivana Hughes, president of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, was speaking at the “International Symposium for Peace: The Road to Nuclear Weapons Abolition” held at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum on July 27. She said damage from radiation is still an issue in the Marshall Islands in the Pacific Ocean 70 years after the largest U.S. hydrogen bomb test at Bikini Atoll. “... the United States and Japan both have a special responsibility to not only join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, but to lead efforts toward its full and complete implementation and total elimination of nuclear weapons,” Hughes said as she wound up her keynote speech.

Asahi Shimbun 28th July 2024

<https://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/15365650>

FROM THE MEDIA

Just off the coast of **Georgia (USA)**, an unexploded nuclear bomb lurks at the bottom of the water. The 7,000-pound undetonated explosive was deposited at the mouth of the Savannah River, during a “Cold War simulation” according to NPR. On February 5, 1958, a B-47 collided with another US military Air Force jet, causing the B-47 to let the bomb loose. Over sixty years later, the warhead has never been found. The Air Force claims the bomb if left undisturbed poses little threat to the area.

Daily Star 31st July 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/ys7wc6ck>

An SNP MSP has made a statement to the **United Nations** on reducing the risk of nuclear weapons. Bill Kidd, in an address at the UN Preparatory Committee of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, called on states to work together to reduce the risk of nuclear war. Kidd is co-president of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) - an international organisation comprising 70 parliaments and over 800 members from around the world.

The National 24th July 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8xmrmr>

The risks of a serious nuclear incident affecting the **Channel Islands** are ‘very small’, according to a new review. It was carried out by the UK Health Security Agency on behalf of the Guernsey and Jersey governments to ensure they were ready for all potential incidents. The review looked at the worst-case scenario of a nuclear incident involving radioactive waste dumped in the Hurd Deep as well as the risks from incidents at the nuclear sites on the Cotentin Peninsula – the Orano La Hague nuclear fuel reprocessing site, Flamanville nuclear power station and nuclear submarines at the Cherbourg dock yards.

Guernsey Press 24th July 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/4kadmkyy>

Defence services firm Serco has landed a \$320m (£250m) contract to build an emergency power station at a secret nuclear monitoring base in **Thule, Greenland's northernmost town**. The deal will see Serco boost the capacity of a backup power plant at a US space base, where sensors are in place to detect nuclear attacks from intercontinental ballistic missiles fired over the North Pole.

Telegraph 22nd Aug 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/4svbe8w8>

TRIDENT AND RELATED NEWS

Replacing the UK's Nuclear Deterrent: Progress of the Dreadnought Class. Briefing paper examines the Dreadnought SSBN programme as it advances. It does not examine the Government's overall nuclear policies, the synergies between the civil and military nuclear sectors, broader programmes within the nuclear enterprise, or the UK's position on disarmament.

House of Commons Library 2nd Aug 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/mprv6zf9>

Almost a quarter of Keir Starmer's Cabinet voted against renewing UK's Trident nuclear deterrent when Jeremy Corbyn was Labour leader. Senior figures including Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner and Foreign Secretary David Lammy opposed the multi-billion-pound renewal of Trident when Jeremy Corbyn was leader. And they were joined by fellow frontbenchers Louise Haigh, Lisa Nandy, Jo Stevens and Ian Murray in voting against funding it in July 2016, analysis by the Telegraph found.

Daily Mail 21st July 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/ycpw8vu6>

There was a significant rise in security lapses at the body responsible for the UK's nuclear weapons last year, prompting calls for an investigation. There were 83 security incidents at the Defence Nuclear Organisation (DNO) between April 2023 and March 2024. It is the arm of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) responsible for all aspects of the UK's nuclear weapons programme except military operations. This includes maintaining nuclear warheads, delivering the replacement warhead programme and conducting scientific research into nuclear weapons.

The Ferret 22nd July 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/bdfef44n>

According to a Prior Information Notice published on 15 August 2024, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has unveiled a £3.3 million Nuclear Deterrence Fund to "enhance research and expertise in nuclear deterrence". This is designed to address the "growing and diversifying set of threats" facing the UK, including those posed by major nuclear-armed states, emerging nuclear powers, and state-sponsored nuclear terrorism.

UK Defence Journal 18th Aug 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/ytd5s6m4>

NUCLEAR POWER

Next-generation nuclear reactors are heating up a debate over whether their fuel could be used to make bombs, jeopardising efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Uranium in the fuel could theoretically be used to develop a nuclear weapon. Older reactors use such low concentrations that they don't really pose a weapons proliferation threat. But advanced reactors would use higher concentrations, making them a potential target of terrorist groups or other countries wanting to take the fuel to develop their own nuclear weapons, some experts warn

The Verge 20th July 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/27kfcd8>

Stop Sizewell C [has] applied to the High Court for permission to challenge the Sizewell C Nuclear Site Licence, on the basis that the boundary of the Nuclear Site Licence (NSL) does not cover the sea defences and proposed new flood barriers, which are critical for future site safety. This legal action concerns the safety of the Sizewell C site in the age of climate change, with sea levels potentially rising further and faster than previously thought, but we consider it urgent to be challenged given Sizewell C's push to achieve a Final Investment Decision.

Stop Sizewell C 29th July 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/4xdsezdb>

Representatives from an American nuclear energy company have visited South Yorkshire as it explores options for a new Small Modular Reactor (SMR) facility. Earlier this year, Holtec - which has been working at Sizewell B for more than 15 years - shortlisted South Yorkshire as a potential location for its new SMR factory in the UK. The factory would present a major £1.3bn investment and job creation opportunity. Representatives from Holtec and senior officers from the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority visited three potential factory sites in the region. The mayor and the Holtec delegation also met with senior business representative in the region to gain an insight into the region's industrial heritage, strengths and potential for future growth.

Insider Media 29th July 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/25fm67uj>

Follow us on twitter
@westmidlandsrnd

What's On

September/October 2024

The next **Mailing** is due to be sent out at the beginning of November.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 24th September at 19.30. Please e-mail wmcndl@gmail.com for the zoom link.

Hereford Peace Council – Meetings at 11 – 12.30 on the second Monday of the months of January, April, June and September, at Friends Meeting House, King Street, Hereford.

Malvern Churches Justice and Peace group Prayers for Peace, 12 noon on 2nd and 4th Monday of the month (except Bank Holidays), Lyttleton Well Prayer Room, Church Street, Great Malvern.

This year's CND AGM and Policy Conference will take place online on Saturday 5 October.

Details and registration here: <https://tinyurl.com/2us6y5uu>

Read the latest CND magazine here: <https://tinyurl.com/4vap6hyu>

The House of Commons Library has produced a document outlining the cost of the UK's nuclear deterrent.

Read it here: <https://tinyurl.com/4abe3nxa>

The NUCLEAR INFORMATION SERVICE has produced a briefing on the US-UK Mutual Defence Agreement, which reveals that 955 non-nuclear parts of nuclear weapons were transferred from the US to the UK under the treaty in the years 2020-2023. Read about this and much more at <https://tinyurl.com/5fy3u52u>

Noticeboard

Peace posters: Hereford Peace Council produces monthly posters on peace topics, to be displayed as widely as possible. The posters are not dated.

The current poster is:

Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal. Martin Luther King Jr.

Please contact jennywmcnd@gn.apc.org if you would like to use these posters.

Lakenheath Peace Camp in the news: Nuclear war has never been closer as NATO and Russia fight a proxy war in Ukraine and Gaza remains under siege, peace campaigners warned yesterday as they began a 10-day encampment outside a US airforce base believed to be preparing for an "ongoing nuclear mission." Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) activists told of how history was repeating itself as they rallied near RAF Lakenheath in Suffolk.

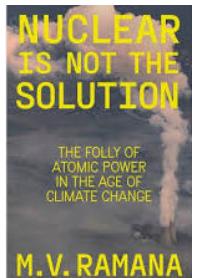
Morning Star 15th July 2024

<https://tinyurl.com/bdenz3sn>

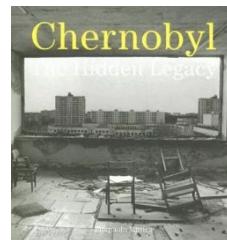
NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION AT LAKENHEATH **Saturday 2nd November – details to follow**

New books

Nuclear is not the Solution – the folly of nuclear power in the age of climate change by M.V. Ramana



<https://www.counterpunch.org/2024/08/02/the-folly-of-atomic-power>



<https://tinyurl.com/2nd6bdty>

Chernobyl by Pierpaolo Mitica – photographs from the still populated exclusion zone