



CND Annual Conference

18-19 October 2008

University of Westminster, Regent Street, London

RESOLUTIONS AGREED 2008

Trident and global nuclear disarmament

Notes:

1. The call from former US secretaries of state, including Henry Kissinger and George Schultz, for a reduction in global nuclear weapons – citing the US and Russia as the biggest nuclear stockpilers.
2. The support of both US presidential candidates for such an initiative.
3. In February, Defence Secretary Des Browne's statement that 'the international community needs a transparent, sustainable and credible plan for multilateral nuclear disarmament' and that Britain would host a conference on verification of nuclear disarmament before the 2010 NPT Review Conference.
4. In June, the backing of the Kissinger statement by former Defence Secretaries George Robertson, Malcolm Rifkind, former Foreign Secretaries Douglas Hurd and David Owen.
5. The strong support of 125 countries – including nuclear states China, India and Pakistan – for a Nuclear Weapons Convention.
6. Spending on Trident is doubling to £2bn a year at a time when ordinary people are facing rising prices for food, fuel and housing and public sector wage settlements are well below inflation.
7. MoD documents reveal plans "...to replace the entire Vanguard Class submarine system, including the warhead and missile..." despite claims that no decision would be taken until next Parliament.
8. AWE costs increased from £24m to £420m between 2000/1 to 2007/8.

Believes:

1. Whilst the Kissinger et al initiative is welcome, it is crucial that such statements are backed up by governments of nuclear weapons states taking concrete steps towards disarmament.
2. The initiative is threatened by the US development of the aggressive Missile Defence System, which is exacerbating international tensions, driving a new arms race and undermines such opportunities for global nuclear disarmament.
3. Whilst the British government's statements are welcomed, its actions – to replace the Trident nuclear weapons system and support the use of bases for US Missile Defence – are in direct conflict with such goals.

Resolves to:

1. Continue our campaigning support for the nuclear weapons convention, a global treaty to ban nuclear weapons, and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN); work closely with sister organisations internationally for nuclear disarmament, against US Missile Defence and for the expansion of nuclear weapons free zones.
2. In light of the changed attitudes to nuclear weapons reduction maximise the opportunities for influencing government actions. In particular, building pressure for a parliamentary debate to rethink Trident's replacement in 2009, through intensifying our parliamentary campaign, local

group activities and strengthening our work with the trade unions, faith communities and wider society.

3. Build on the very successful mobilisation at Aldermaston AWE, and continue to support protest and direct action at bases such as Faslane and Devonport.
4. To support the 27 October Aldermaston Big Blockade.
5. Launch a campaign to highlight the economic costs of replacing Trident.

Social care not nuclear weapons

Conference notes:

1. Adequate social care for older people, those with learning difficulties, disabled people and other vulnerable groups, including asylum seekers and refugees, is essential in a civilised society, where citizens rightly expect such services to be provided on the basis of need, free-of-charge and paid for by fair and progressive taxation.
2. Maintaining the existing Trident nuclear missile system already costs an estimated £1.5 billion per year.
3. Government plans to upgrade the Trident system will cost at least £25 billion and probably in excess of £76 billion.
4. In April 2008, the UK government asked for views on how to pay for essential non-medical care for older people, in view of its claim that there is a shortfall of £6 billion in funding available.
5. Britain's nuclear weapons programme puts public money into large corporations manufacturing illicit instruments of death. Conference finds such activity by the state totally despicable.

Conference, therefore, resolves:

1. To remind the UK government that its citizens need decent care not ever more dangerous nuclear weapons of mass destruction.
2. To advise the UK government to find the money it says it needs to pay for social care by immediately decommissioning the Trident nuclear weapons system and scrapping all plans to upgrade it.
3. To seek alliances with the disability and older people's movements on this issue.

Nuclear weapons on hair-trigger alert status

Conference notes:

1. A large number (considered to be around 5000) of nuclear weapons worldwide are on hair-trigger alert and so can be launched within minutes of an order being given. Governments deny this but independent sources confirm it.
2. In May 2006 the report of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, chaired by Hans Blix, was published. Among the actions which need to be taken by nuclear weapons states, one was to 'take nuclear weapons off high alert status, to reduce the risk of launching by error'.
3. The US Natural Resources Defense Council (an NGO with 1.2 million members) released a report on 13 February 2008 which it had co-authored with analysts from the Federation of American Scientists, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and independent experts with long experience of nuclear weapons policy issues. According to this report, the US has 550 long range nuclear missiles that can reach Moscow in half an hour and the US nuclear war plan (the Single Integrated Operational Plan) 'keeps many of these on hair-trigger alert'.
4. Taking weapons off hair-trigger alert would reduce the risk of accident and also give more time for the decision making process.

Conference resolves:

1. UK CND urges the British government to undertake to do all in its power to ensure that all nuclear weapons, worldwide, be taken off hair-trigger alert status, (also referred to as high-alert status). This means that the weapons could no longer be launched within minutes of an order being given, thereby reducing the possibility of launch by accident, misjudgement or unauthorised actions.
2. UK CND urges the British government to pursue this goal in the United Nations Security Council and the General Assembly, the First Committee on Disarmament, and in negotiations with all the nuclear weapons states and in all other appropriate forums.

Missile Defence

Conference notes:

1. NATO plans to integrate theatre missile defence systems with US plans for Missile Defence bases in Europe to allow the US to pursue a programme to further their military and economic interests.
2. As described in the 2002 US Nuclear Posture Review, Missile Defence forms part of a "Strategic Triad" of "offensive" and "defensive" nuclear and non-nuclear high-tech weapons systems, enabling the prompt projection of overwhelming military power anywhere on earth.
3. Major goals of these policies and programmes include the protection of US troops, bases and interests world wide and to make threats of force, including nuclear threats, more credible.
4. Russia continues to oppose US Missile Defence in Europe and any Czech or Polish support for it and is pulling back from international treaties as a consequence.

Conference believes:

1. International tensions are increasing as a result of the US determination to develop Missile Defence in Europe.
2. The proposed integration of NATO missile defence systems with US Missile Defence does not contribute to true security and is being used to justify continued development and deployment of the programmes.
3. The US development of missile defence is integral to US nuclear weapons strategy and plans for the further militarisation and eventual weaponisation of space.

Conference resolves:

1. Continue to prioritise 'No US Missile Defence, No Star Wars' campaigning as a central part of CND's campaigning strategy.
2. Continue to campaign against missile defence and the weaponisation of space wars at bases in the UK, especially at Menwith Hill and Fylingdales.
3. Continue to build links with groups and individuals opposing missile defence, especially across Europe and in the US.
4. Challenge any proposals endorsing a NATO-led missile defence System in Europe and to debunk the idea that bringing Europe on board makes the system more acceptable.
5. Support the work of the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space and Keep Space for Peace Week.
6. Organise a national day of action at relevant bases around the country, around June 12th 2009 (anniversary of US withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty).

Developments at RAF Lakenheath

Conference welcomes the findings of the authoritative report from the Federation of American Scientists to the effect that all 110 tactical nuclear weapons sited at the RAF (USAAF) airbase at Lakenheath in Suffolk have been removed. This represents the first time since 1954 that no US nuclear weapons will be sited in Great Britain, although we should never overlook the continued presence of British nuclear weapons at Faslane in Scotland.

The removal of the weapons follows years of campaigning by CND and the Lakenheath Action Group against the deployment of freefall nuclear bombs at the base. However, we are keenly aware that Lakenheath may now be used for the installation of interceptor missiles for the US Missile Defence system.

Conference resolves:

1. To intensify our campaign against NATO nuclear weapons in Europe, particularly the proposed redeployment of the weapons removed from Lakenheath to bases in Italy and Turkey.
2. To work with sister organisations in the US for the decommissioning of the 110 nuclear weapons previously stored at Lakenheath.
3. To launch a vigorous campaign in Britain against the use of Lakenheath for the US Missile Defence system.
4. To continue to support the crucial work of CND and the Lakenheath Action Group in maintaining a strong presence at the base and building opposition to the role of Lakenheath in US military strategy.

NATO

On 4th April 2009, NATO will commemorate its 60th anniversary with large scale events and meetings of heads of the 26 member states and the 24 'partners for peace'. NATO has not changed its policies from those outlined in the Strategic Concept, adopted in 1999, of maintaining a 'minimum nuclear deterrent'; keeping the option of first use of nuclear weapons and operating 'nuclear sharing' which includes deploying US nuclear weapons at bases across Europe from Belgium to Turkey. It should also be noted that the Trident nuclear armed fleet is 'integrated' into NATO. The UK government still has a policy of 'first use of nuclear weapons' because of its 'obligations to NATO'. (Geoff Hoon, the then Minister of Defence, House of Commons, 2005). The recent crisis in Georgia has illustrated the importance of this resolution in CND's work.

Bearing in mind the huge dangers of the above policies to the citizens of the UK and to world stability, we ask CND to:

1. Raise awareness of the dangers of NATO's nuclear and missile defence policies and the block posed by these policies to reaching a global ban on nuclear weapons;
2. Raise awareness of the inconsistencies of the UK stated policies on nuclear weapons, for example, that the UK is committed to NATO's policy of 'first use' of nuclear weapons while claiming it would not attack a non-nuclear state. (negative security assurances);
3. Open debate on the relationship between the European Security and Defence Policy outlined in the Lisbon Treaty and its 'compatibility with NATO'.
4. Prepare new material, including a pamphlet, new briefings, articles for the web site and leaflets for street campaigning;
5. Co-operate with other anti NATO groups and individuals in NATO member states and beyond;
6. Call on the UK government to take the opportunity of the 60th anniversary of NATO to oppose further NATO expansion, to plan for the dissolution of NATO, a military nuclear-armed alliance, and look to strengthening inter-governmental alliances for non-military solutions to conflict.

Military research funding in UK universities

Conference:

1. Alarmed at the extent of military sponsorship of UK university research programmes
2. Concerned about the complex cross-Atlantic and cross-military/industrial/academic partnerships that direct UK academic research toward US military ends
3. Aware of the ethical complexities associated with the "dual use" character of much of this research that often hides its links with nuclear weapons
4. Recognising the enormous task for small local CND groups of campaigning on this issue in their local universities
5. Aware of the involvement of the Open University in the proposed Military Academy at St Athan in South Wales

Resolves:

That National CND should raise the critical profile of military sponsorship on University campuses, and the involvement of the Open University in the proposed Military Academy at St Athan in South Wales and adopt this as a national campaigning issue with a view to engage and mobilize member academics to demand from their universities transparency with regard to such sponsorship.

Grassroots campaigning

Conference is encouraged by the growing public opposition to Trident, US Missile Defence and the war and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan as shown by opinion polls and media comment.

Conference notes that 139 MPs voted against the Iraq war and 95 MPs voted against replacing Trident.

Conference urges members and groups to continue to lobby their local MPs, MEPs, Welsh Assembly members and MSPs to increase the pressure for change in the Government's policies. Strong campaigns from the grassroots can be linked with local issues and will help promote our campaigns well before the coming European and General Elections.

Russia

This Conference notes Russia's recently declared intention to upgrade its nuclear arsenal.

Conference believes that this has come about as a result of US determination to control the oil and gas resources of the Gulf region and the Caspian Basin – a project in which Britain and NATO are closely implicated – together with US plans to station inceptor missiles and radar guidance facilities in the Czech Republic, Poland and Britain.

Conference calls on the Government to reject the US plans for Missile Defence in Europe and to work with our European partners for a Nuclear Weapons Convention and to promote dialogue with Russia in order to prevent a new nuclear arms race.