

# campaign



## Nuclear dangers: high alert

CND General Secretary **Kate Hudson** writes about the continuing implications of the war in Ukraine.

**AS THE RUSSIAN INVASION** of Ukraine began, on 24 February, around 1,000 Russian nuclear weapons – and a similar number of US, British and French nuclear forces assigned to NATO – were on ‘prompt-launch’ (high-alert) status. Regrettably this is their ‘normal’ status. Most high-alert missiles are armed with strategic nuclear weapons with yields of at least 100 kilotons. They can be launched in

15 minutes and the nominal flight time of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles carrying these weapons, travelling between the US and Russia, is around 30 minutes.

On 27 February, Putin publicly announced that he had put Russia’s nuclear weapons on ‘special alert’. It’s not clear what this means, given that so many nuclear weapons are already held on prompt-launch high alert. But it spelt a

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willingness on Putin's part to put nuclear use on the table in this war.

So what is the possibility of the Ukraine war turning nuclear? If the war expands into a direct conflict between NATO and Russia then it becomes a likelihood rather

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than a possibility. Imposition of a NATO-imposed no-fly zone over Ukraine could be a rapid route to a direct Russia/NATO war. Massively increased militarisation and a reluctance to address wider security issues could be another – longer but potentially no less dangerous.

The war has already altered the political balance in Europe and is accelerating its militarisation; this will have a profoundly negative impact on our societies, engendering a culture of violence and nationalism. For years there had been talk of the increasing militarisation of the EU, fortunately with little progress, but that has now changed. Germany for example, has undertaken a huge about-turn towards war and militarism. So more and more of the people's money will be

squandered on weapons and war, instead of being invested in health, jobs and education, or cooperating globally on the climate catastrophe.

Rather than turning to greater militarisation, we need a new set of values in public life and across society as a

whole, that seek to ensure that all human needs are met with equality and justice. This is where our resources should be placed, not into weapons and war which bring ever greater dangers of nuclear annihilation. CND – along with the rest of the international peace movement – has long argued instead for a new common security framework in Europe, not massively increasing militarisation.

Despite the fog of war it is vital that we work towards outcomes that enable a just and lasting peace in the region – and in the wider world. Only dialogue and negotiation, taking into account the wider context of this conflict can bring that about in a way that will enable a genuinely secure future for humanity.

## Spotlight

**This month  
Youth and Student  
CND**



With the threat of war at its highest in decades, growing the movement for a world without nuclear weapons is imperative. If you are 25 and under, and concerned about the rise in nuclear rhetoric and want to help make the world a safer place, get involved with Youth and Student CND.

■ Email [yscnd@riseup.net](mailto:yscnd@riseup.net) or follow on social media:  
Twitter  
[@youthstudentcnd](https://twitter.com/youthstudentcnd)  
Instagram  
[@youthandstudentcnd](https://www.instagram.com/youthandstudentcnd)  
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# Military tensions to run high in South Korea

**A-Young Moon** is the founder of PEACEMOMO, a South Korean education organisation specialising in peace activism. Here she updates CND supporters on the recent presidential election in her country.

**ON 9 MARCH**, Yoon Suk-Yeol, the conservative candidate and former prosecutor general, was elected president of South Korea. Yoon won the election by 0.73% against Lee Jae-Myung the candidate of the Democratic Party. Throughout the election, Yoon heavily criticised incumbent President Moon's foreign policy initiatives as too North Korea-centric, idealistic, and premature actions, and persistently emphasised 'peace through strength'.

Yoon soon added additional deployment of THAAD and 'preemptive strike' against the North Korean missile system as part of South Korea's three-pronged defense strategy which includes a 'Kill Chain'. His remarks were based on a hypothetical scenario of combat against DPRK, following the DPRK's several alleged hypersonic missile tests. He and his party ignored that North Korea's violation on the missile moratorium is related to the inconsistency of reciprocal actions by the US.

He pledged to deploy additional units of the United

States' THAAD anti-missile system, which China sees as a threat to her security, in the metropolitan area to protect Seoul. However, both South Korea and US declined on the addition to THAAD. His commitment to 'peace through strength' seems consistent. Some call him a strong leader while others call him a warmonger.

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During the public debate, Yoon had argued that international treaties are useless, quoting Ukraine as a failing case to pursue peace by peaceful means. His point was clear that Ukraine's decision to denuclearise was the key failure that invited the Russian invasion. According to him, to prevent this, Ukraine should have not chosen nuclear disarmament in 1999.

However, the war did not occur because of Ukraine's decision to denuclearise. The significant failure of respecting

the signed treaties is also serious, and so is the lethargy of international society in promoting commons interest of Russia and the NATO members.

It is worrisome that a majority of South Koreans chose Yoon as the new leader. He seems ill-equipped in international relations and diplomacy but stresses the power of lethal

arms. He showed ease at saying 'I do not know' about certain key topics during the public debate. I suspect that he is likely to be a warmonger in a pretense of an innocent. If Yoon does not change his agenda on North Korea, his beloved 'preemptive strike' agenda will surface for real, creating serial impacts on intensifying the arms race and fortifying the belief in the traditional concept of security.

With such a debut of Yoon, military tension in Northeast Asia is expected to run high again.

### Faringdon Peace Group meeting

**6 April** 7:30pm

Online.

■ For link to join contact [steve.jenny@hotmail.com](mailto:steve.jenny@hotmail.com)

### NatWest Divestment Day of Action

**8 April**

Across the country.

■ For more details contact [pressoffice@cnduk.org](mailto:pressoffice@cnduk.org)

### Day of action against the war in Ukraine

**9 April**

Across the country.

■ For more details contact [information@cnduk.org](mailto:information@cnduk.org)

### Abingdon Peace Group meeting

**19 April** 8pm

Online.

■ For a link to join contact [abingdonpeace@gmail.com](mailto:abingdonpeace@gmail.com)

### Crawley CND AGM

**20 April** 7:30pm-9pm

Location TBC.

■ For more details contact [keaveney753@gmail.com](mailto:keaveney753@gmail.com)

### End Apartheid Free Palestine demonstration

**14 April**, assemble 12 noon

Meet at Portland Place, London.

■ Contact [information@cnduk.org](mailto:information@cnduk.org)

## Stop the war in Ukraine

### Get involved with CND's actions:

- Write to the Prime Minister
- Download CND's petition and collect signatures in support
- Get your No Nuclear War poster
- Print your own poster at home

■ **Find out more at [cnduk.org](http://cnduk.org)**

### Meet the staff

This month:

#### **Pádraig McCarrick, Press and Communications Officer**

'Hello CND friends. I'm delighted to introduce myself as CND's new Press and Communications Officer. I joined the team in the same week Russia invaded Ukraine, so needless to say my first month has been a busy one!

My role includes reviewing the press for nuclear-related news and processing information requests from journalists looking for comments on the threat of nuclear war and the work of CND. I also proactively secure coverage in the media with press releases and by writing news items for our website. I create content for national CND's social media accounts, to inform the public of our events, actions, and positions, and to generally promote what we do.

Moving forward, I'd love to hear from CND groups and sections, so I can best-support our members. If you'd like to get in touch my email is [pressoffice@cnduk.org](mailto:pressoffice@cnduk.org). Peace!'

