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J-M Matagne's Candidacy for the EELV Primary

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Saintes, 26 August 2016
Dear friends,
Dear comrades,

I write to you all, councillors, members, cooperators of the EELV Party (Europe Ecology Greens), to declare my candidacy for the EELV Primary, five days before the deadline. Why, and why so late ?

Why I am standing as a candidate

Because I am just home from Geneva, where last Friday 19 August I attended an unprecedented and almost unhoped-for historic event - an event that makes me think that the struggle I have been waging (or rather that has been driving me) for over thirty years has at last a chance of succeeding. That success needs to happen through a political victory, in France, for the ideas which I have championed for fifty years, and which are, or ought to be, closely bound to the great ecological project. I say « ecological » rather than « ecologist » because the ecologist movement and naturally the EELV Party have no monopoly over it, even though they have the notable responsibility of carrying this project and bringing it to political success.

On August 19, then, in Geneva, the « Working Group » meeting to advance multilateral negotiations on nuclear desarmament, a UN body specially constituted to prepare recommendations for the upcoming General Assembly, recommended, with « broad support » from at least 107 states, that the UN should « convene in 2017 a conference open to all states, with the participation and contribution of international civil society organisations, to negotiate a legally binding judicial instrument to ban nuclear weapons and bring about their total elimination.

That recommendation was adopted in Geneva by governmental delegations with 68 votes for, 22 against, and 13 abstentions. It has a very good chance of being supported by even more states at the GA in New York when it meets in November-December 2016.

There's nothing like it since Hiroshima et Nagasaki, i.e. 71 years ago.
At this Working Group, I represented ACDN (Action des Citoyens pour le Désarmement Nucléaire) and was able to speak in its name in the last two sessions: in May to declare that « The UN should proclaim the Right of People to Survival », and in August to emphasise that we absolutely must « Escape from the NPT's Hypocritical Game. »

Voilà. I would like the EELV candidate for France's Presidential Elections to bear that message loud and strong : our world risks self-destruction unless we abolish nuclear weapons and shut down nuclear power-plants as soon as possible.

For a France, a Europe, a World without nuclear weapons or nuclear power-plants

Concerning Europe, this was the call issued in 2008 by the 3rd International Gathering for Nuclear Disarmament - Nuclear, Biological and Chemical - organised in Saintes by ACDN : Pour une Europe sans armes ni centrales nucléaires

But that was already the goal that I had championed in the presidential campaign of 2002, when I stood as a candidate under only the colours of ACDN (I failed to get on the ballot, because I was short of... about 490 sponsor signatures).

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If now I become EELV's candidate, that is the priority message I will carry, as an uncompressible, integral, incorruptible demand. Why so ?

Because everything else : friendship between peoples and cooperation between states, the meeting of humanity's basic needs, energy transition, the reduction of climate change, against pollution and poverty and misery and ignorance and fanaticism and terrorism and endemic diseases, yes, all the rest depends on it. Peace in the Near East with the solution of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the liberation of Gaza requires it, of course. Not to mention other examples. If you doubt this, I hope to convince you during the EELV Primary campaign... provided I get to take part in it.

Nuclear weapons are the capstone of a system of domination, exploitation, oppression, and dictatorship over human beings, human groups and nature, a system of intimidation and existential threat, of state terror. It is a system that we all undergo, that we finance unwillingly, a system that gives a dozen individuals that power to annihilate their fellow-humans and all of humankind just by pressing a few computer buttons. The US is planning to spend on its nuclear weapons a thousand billion dollars over the next 30 years. France alone, with her 300 bombs that have cost 300 billion euros yet amount to only 1.5% of the destructive power of current arsenals, could cause a billion deaths. Yet our strategists speak of France's « strict sufficiency ». This huge structure absolutely has to be demolished stone by stone before it falls on our heads. We have to say « Hiroshima, Nagasaki, never again », but also : « Tchernobyl, Fukushima, never again ». And take action to prevent them !

For a livable nuclear-free world

Our world clearly needs to be nuclear-free completely - and as soon as possible. But more is required, of course. That is merely the necessary condition for a different world, one that is more secure, more free and equitable and fraternal. But it's not a sufficient condition, it's not a panacea.

That is why in October 2011, in Saintes, ACDN called a large gathering (along with six other organisations : ATTAC, the Farmers Confederation, the Teachers League, the League of Human Rights, the Nuclear Phase-Out network, the Foundation for a human earth). This was the States-General for a livable world. I had written the preamble for it, which hasn't dated, alas (see below). But there were 150 of us working on a charter, over just 4 days, and we adopted unanimously, despite our differences, the Charter for a Livable World, which has 7 sections and 103 articles. That Charter was proposed for signing to all the declared candidates in the 2012 Presidential Campaign. Two of them agreed fully and signed : Eva Joly et Philippe Poutou. Now, of course, I take it as my own charter and invite each of you to make it yours.

I would also like, particularly, for the parliamentarians (MPS and senators) on the EELV list to sign at the same time theCall for a referendum on France's participation in the abolition of nuclear weapons (attached) and the Referendum Bill Proposal (attached). Last July, as you may know, 60 French parliamentarians called for the abolition of nuclear weapons and proposed a referendum under a provision called « shared initiative ». Today they number 76 (see attachment) but we need 185 signatures to reach the 20% threshold required by the Constitution. Half of the ecologist parliamentarians have signed, but all could and should do so, in conformity with the resolution adopted on 24 June 2012 by the Frederal Council - unanimously save one abstention (http://eelv.fr/52535/).

My links with EELV

I have always acted as a citizen, as an activist or office-holder in an association or union, refusing to take the label of any party. But I made an exception for EELV, for one year. When it was created at the Lyon Congress on 9 November 2010, I joined EELV, thinking that the adventure was worth trying. Soon after that I was elected as one of

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the federal councillors representant the Poitou-Charentes region; and was on the Federal Council from February to June 2011. Later I was deeply disappointed by the electoral agreement between the EELV and the Socialist Party : it seemed from the start to be a fools' deal: Accord PS-EELV : la soupe et les lentilles seront radioactives. In 2012 I didn't renew my sub, yet I continued to cooperate... as a cooperator, that's the word. Today I am no longer that, although I retain my friendship and esteem for numerous Green activists and office-holders.

If my candidacy gets the support of the necessary 36 federal councillors, I will gladly participate in the Primaries. I certainly don't have the ambition to become President of France. I don't wish that, even if I think I could handle the duties (except that of the nuclear button...), were some unlikely circumstances to give it to me. No, my ambition is different, and in fact greater : despite my age (born in Paris during the German Occupation, see my CV), I want to blow a breeze of youth across France's ecologist movement by reactivating its fundamental values and thus contributing to prepare for a new era.

Please find below my CV and the Preamble mentioned above, along with attachments of the Call for a referendum and the List of signatories. I thank all those federal councillors for whom I touch a chord or who wish to discuss this - please send your sponsorship and copy me in.

Cordialement.

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Jean-Marie Matagne - CV

Member of the World Council of « Abolition 2000 ». President of ACDN.

Born in Paris 1944. I studied philosophy and psychology. Teacher of psychopedagogy at the Ecole Normale from 1969 to 1978, then philosophy teacher at Lycée général et technologique. Various responsibilities in teaching and unions. After Gaby Cohn's initiative in Saint Nazaire, obtained in 1982 the opening of the Lycée Expérimental, Polyvalent et Maritime in Oléron (LEPMO, now called the CEPMO). I was preparing a doctoral thesis when the subject changed when I heard Mikhail Gorbachev's 1986 call for « No more nuvlear weapons by the year 2000 ! » In 1991 defended a thesis on « Power and strength » and « balance and terror ».

In 1996, I founded ACDN, which persuaded Saintes and St Pierre d'Oléron to affiliate with the Abolition 2000 network and with Mayors for Peace, and which took multiple initiatives : The first Nuclear Disarmament Days (2001), International Gatherings for Disarmament, nuclear, biological and chemical (2004, 2006, 2008), The « Saintes Appeal » For a Europe without nuclear weapons or power-plants (2008), States-General for a Livable World (2011), Gatherings for a Livable Nuclear-free World (October 2015), and others.

In 2002, I declared my candidacy for the Presidential Elections, on a platform of nuclear disarmament and phase-out of nuclear power. I asked the Constitutional Council to invalidate the candidacies of Chirac and Jospin (and later of Sarkozy and Hollande in 2012) on the grounds of preparing crimes against humanity, non-respect of international treaties, and non-respect of the Constitution.

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On 15 May 2012, I began an open-ended hunger-strike in order to be received by President François Hollande amd to ask him to set up a referendum on France's participation in the abolition of nuclear weapons. Several members and sympathisers of ACDN joined this strike temporarily, including Luc Dazy who began fasting on 1 June. On 24 June we were told we would both be received at the Elysée Palace on June 26. On the 25th the EELV's Federal Council mandated its parliamentarians and ministers to help achieve this referendum. But on the 26th the police barred our way 50m from the E lysée. We decided to stop our hunger-strike then, Luc on day 26, I on day 42. But that is not stopping us from continuing work for the same objective.

On 8 March 2016, a dozen parliamentarians launched the procedure called « shared-initiative referendum », which is running now. The referendum question is: « Do you want France to negotiate and ratify with all the States concerned a treaty to ban and completely eliminate nuclear weapons, under international and mutual control that is strict and effective? »

I have written texts of various kinds, historical, philosophical, political, pedagogical, several plays, numerous activist texts signed or anonymous, and of articles on the bilingual site www.acdn.net. I understand and speak more or less well French, English, German, Spanish and Russian. I have five children and six grandchildren. I live in Western France in the Charente-Maritime.

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Charter for a Livable World

Preamble

The Earth is our Home. Every human being must take care of her. Yet she is threatened with ruin. In her basement there are stocks of nuclear weapons inherited from the Cold War that could blow her up at any moment and wipe out her six billion inhabitants ten times over. Higher up there are some tenants waging war permanently, killing and massacring each other, and there are others threatening to do the same. The privileged few indulge in feasting and flaunt their luxurious lifestyles under the eyes of their starving neighbours. Some people waste water while others don't even have enough to drink.

Crippling and lethal epidemics are spreading in a context of general indifference, sometimes being provoked by the negligence or greed of public health officials. Basic services to the people are sold off to private corporations.

Speculation ensures what a Nobel-Prize economist has called "the triumph of greed". The gap between rich and poor is becoming a chasm. A handful of predators with the slogan "All for us, nothing for others" can even cause the collapse of whole states.

The environment too is being degraded. Landscapes become ugly, become arid, become concrete; wastes pile up and chemical pollution increases. Invisible radioactive contamination, of civil and military origin, is making whole regions unlivable and heightens everywhere the risks of cancers, heart disease and deformed babies. The genetic heritage of all life human, animal and vegetable is being attacked everywhere. Animals are treated as vile matter. Many humans have the same fate. Species keep disappearing, biodiversity is regressing or falling into the hands of cynical multinationals. Natural resources, raw materials, and fossil fuels are all being depleted.

The climate is deteriorating. In recent decades, the rise in average temperatures across the globe has provoked worrying phenomena, some insidious, some extreme: ice melting, sea-levels rising, floods, hurricanes, droughts and

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fires... The damage is huge, the victims are numerous, the future climate predictions are frightening. Migrations are developing, erratic and tragic movements of population, driven by necessity.

The current crises are ecological, economic, financial, social, political, military, medical, demographic, cultural, humanitarian... The list of worries is long.

And yet we are not necessarily doomed.

There are many reasons for hope. The world still has astounding beauty, and so does the human heart. When disasters come, we see solidarity between neighbouring countries and even nations far apart. In the most unexpected forms and places, peoples are stirred by indignation and revolt to push for democracy, freedom and justice. Today's media, which can promote subservience, can also help to promote these liberations. In numerous countries, a significant proportion of youth is mobilising and seeking to grasp its own destiny. Even in quiet everyday ways, alternative means of production, consumption and exchange, alternative modes of living are coming into being.

Politics and technology can offer solutions, provided they are subject to a humanist ethic that cares about freedoms, equity and solidarity.
It is still possible to give our shared Home better foundations and a renovated structure, to make it a convivial dwelling for those who live in it and a welcoming one for future generations.

The Consultative Gathering for a Livable World, meeting in Saintes (France, Charente-Maritime) on 27- 30 October 2011, gave itself the goal of establishing a new charter inspired by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and other existing texts like the Earth Charter of 2002 a Charter for a Livable World setting out the principles that should be basic to any political agenda that aims at the common good.

As from November 2011, this Charter is being placed online for signing by our fellow-citizens, and (in France) by the candidates in the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2012. In addition, these candidates will be presented with a series of precise commitments that translate these principles into practical measures.

Citizens, readers, voters, it behoves each one of us to make our voice heard, before, during and after the elections. For our horizon is not limited to one electoral cycle, even an important one. Each individual is invited to sign the present "Charter for a Livable World" and also to act on it. Before, during and after the elections. WE are the world, it is our desires and what we create from them.

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