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Five questions for Alain Juppé, the new French Defense Minister

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Alain Juppé, currently Mayor of Bordeaux and now Defense Minister, said about himself, when he was Prime Minister of France, that he was *"droit dans ses bottes", "a man with an easy conscience".*

Now is a good time to recall the "viewpoint" article that appeared in *Le Monde* on 14 October 2009:

For worldwide nuclear disarmament, the only way to respond to anarchic proliferation
by Alain Juppé, Bernard Norlain, Alain Richard, Michel Rocard.

Now is also a good time to put five questions to France's new Minister of Defense:

1. How does he propose to reconcile the conviction that *"the five nuclear powers recognised by the 1968 Treaty (...) need to embark on a process leading in a well-planned manner to complete disarmament, and to fully associate the three de facto nuclear states with that, and to rule out all projects for developing new weapons"*

(a) with President Sarkozy's very different conviction, announced in his letters to ACDN on 26 March and 18 April 2007 considering his future defense programme,
a conviction that he emphasized again on 10 June 2010 on board the aircraft-carrier "Charles de Gaulle": *"Deterrence remains an absolute imperative for France. Nuclear deterrence is for us the Nation's life-insurance policy"* ?

(b) and with France's programmes to develop new nuclear weapons: the 4th SNLE-NG (new-generation nuclear sub); the M51 missile; the ASMP-A (air-to-surface missile); the new nuclear warhead; the squadrons of nuclear-armed Rafales; the Laser MégaJoule facility devoted to military research and intended for the production of a new generation of "battlefield" thermonuclear weapons?

2. In a few days the UN General Assembly will examine a resolution calling for transparency in the use of depleted uranium weapons. This resolution was adopted by an overwhelming majority by the UNGA's First Committee (disarmament matters). **Does Alain Juppé agree that France should vote for this resolution now,** after having rejected it in the committee stage with only three other nations (USA, UK and Israel)?

3. Will France at the UN support the call for an impartial inquiry into the use of radioactive weapons in the Gaza Strip during "Operation Cast Lead" (27 Dec. 2008- 18 Jan 2009)?

ACDN was one of three NGOs that wrote to the UN Secretary-General as early as 18 January 2008 saying that the UN must launch an inquiry into the possible use of uranium
At the same time in Vienna (Austria) the ambassadors of the Arab nations made a similar request on the IAEA. The IAEA promptly promised to conduct an inquiry, but either failed to do so or never revealed the results. This inquiry has been made even more urgent by an increase in birth deformities and a strong rise in cancers in the Gaza Strip. What is France, the "homeland of Human Rights", going to do to interrupt what could well be a concealed genocide?

4. Will France finally, without stinting or shillyshallying, make just reparation to all the victims, military and civilian, of her nuclear testing, of the « Gulf War », and of her « humanitarian interventions » in the Balkans

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and in Afghanistan?

5. Will the new Miniter of Defense see fit, in the best Gaullist traditions, to support the organising of a referendum on the following question:

« Do you wish France to propose to all nations that she will renounce her nuclear strike-force and dismantle all its component parts in the framework of nuclear, biological and chemical disarmament - disarmament that is comprehensive, universal and verified - and of a genuine system of international security ?"

To hear the answers, ACDN requests here and now to be received by the Minister. The President of ACDN, Jean-Marie Matagne, Ph.D, formerly candidate for the 2002 presidential elections, will give a

PRESS CONFERENCE on these matters on
THURSDAY 18 NOVEMBER at 6pm in Poitiers,
at the Maison du Peuple.

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