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French Presidential Election

Jean-Luc Mélenchon replies to ACDN and commits to a referendum on France's participation in the abolition of nuclear weapons

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In 2017 as in 2012, ACDN sought the views of presidential candidates on France's participation in the abolition of nuclear weapons: François Fillon and Alain Juppé on the occasion of the primaries for the right and centre; then the 14 left-leaning (or supposedly left-leaning) candidates in the Socialist Party primaries, the so-called "citizens' primaries", adding there a question about the phasing-out of nuclear power-plants; Benoît Hamon again after his win in those primaries; and Marine Le Pen on 20 February. Except for Nathalie Arthaud and Yannick Jadot when he was still in the race, no candidate had replied.

Now Jean-Luc Mélenchon has done so, entrusting to Charlotte Girard, co-head of programme for the France Insoumise group, the task of providing us his answer in the name of La France Insoumise.

Our three questions were :

1. Do you want France to negotiate and ratify with all the states concerned a treaty to ban and completely eliminate nuclear weapons, with mutual and international control that is strict and effective ?

2. Do you undertake, if elected President of the Republic, to put that question to the French people in a referendum, to be held without delay after your election?

3. In order to avoid a French Chernobyl or a French Fukushima, do you commit to France programming a closure of all nuclear power reactors and setting up during the next five years a fastest transition possible towards electric power generation without nuclear energy?

The letters below answer these questions.

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Paris, 27 March 2017

Monsieur le Président,

I thank you for your interest in the proposals I bring to the current campaign in the name of La France Insoumise.

Our programme is published in book form by the Editions du Seuil (3Euros) and the booklets that complete it are available on line avenirencommun.fr. You are asking what my position is on nuclear disarmament.

Please excuse me for not answering personally. I am very much taken up by campaigning.

Jacques Généreux, an economist and Charlotte Girard, a lawyer, have coordinated the elaboration of our programme "*The Future in Common*" and the thematic booklets that go with it. They are university people engaged in the progressive struggle through their intellectual contributions and their personal actions. I have entrusted to them the task of replying to you as precisely as possible.

Republican greetings,

Jean-Luc Mélenchon

[\[PDF - 496.8 kb\]](https://acdn.net/spip/IMG/pdf/reponse_acdn_jlm2017_02042017.pdf "PDF - 496.8 kb")

Paris, 31 March 2017

Jean-Marie Matagne
Président
Action des Citoyens pour le Désarmement Nucléaire

Monsieur le Président,

You have asked Jean-Luc Mélenchon what his position is on nuclear power and global nuclear disarmament. We thank you.

To begin, we fully share your diagnosis and assessment of nuclear power generation. Whereas none of the promises made in 2012 by the candidate François Hollande has been kept by the Socialist Party in power, our positions are firm ones, and we will implement them.

For example we propose in our programme *l'Avenir en commun* to set up an ecological transition to 100% renewable energy in 2050, along with an exit from nuclear. Our strong will on that last point is guaranteed by our commitment to

- [-] close Fessenheim immediately while guaranteeing work and training to the employees;
- [-] abandon the planned major overhaul which aims to prolong the life of the power-plants beyond forty years;
- [-] abandon the EPR projects (Flamanville et Hinkley Point) and the burying of nuclear wastes at Bure;
- [-] publish the data on burial of nuclear wastes over the last 60 years and inform the public of proven and/or possible health dangers.

Also, in line with our policy for France, we are visibly committed to nuclear disarmament on the global level. Humanity cannot create the conditions necessary for peace without organising collective security and disarmament.

Jean-Luc Mélenchon was already committed to this in 2012, and will conduct a very active programme for multilateral disarmament. As you request, he will propose in the name of France that the other nuclear states (signatories or not of the NPT of 1968) should open negotiations with a view to eliminating all nuclear weapons, under strict and effective control within the framework of a genuine international security system.

To attain realistically this objective of global nuclear disarmament, we must necessarily bring together all the nuclear states in the NPT, notably USA, Russia and China who hold permanent seats on the UN Security Council. As you will agree, it would therefore be counterproductive for France as a nuclear-armed state to commit to unilateral disarmament in a solitary way.

However, to give momentum to this movement, we wish for France to set an example, such as by reducing the number of nuclear weapons in her airborne component. From these commitments you will see that our plan is well-considered, serious and pragmatic.

You suggest that we also should consult the French people without delay by a referendum on the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Our programme *'l'Avenir en commun* sets out how we plan to strengthen and amplify the people's direct sovereignty: we will among other things hold a referendum on the constitution process, we will establish a citizens-initiated referendum and the right for citizens to propose a law, and we will make recourse to a referendum compulsory for revising the constitution or ratifying any new European treaty.

Referenda are thus instruments for permanent popular involvement which we are very attached to. In this framework a referendum, initiated or not by popular initiative, could make it possible to legitimise and further strengthen the plan that we propose and that JeanLuc Mélenchon has already committed to.

We hope we have fully answered your questions and hopes which we share, we wish you well, and we invite you to find the full exposé of our programme L'avenir en commun, on the website <https://laec.fr/> or in bookstores, and the thematic booklets on our site: <https://avenirencommun.fr/>.

Charlotte Girard

Co-head of programme for La France Insoumise