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Will we draw the right lessons from Russia's military accidents?

Nine individuals ready to blow up our planet. What is the French parliament doing to neutralise them?



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[https://acdn.net/spip/local/cache-vignettes/L400xH251/mallette_atomique-2-ffb71.jpg]

As far as we know, nine men have a finger on the atomic button. Nine Heads of States possessing nuclear weapons ([and perhaps Saudi Arabia has some too](#)) are ready to explode them at any moment if a good reason comes along - their notion of a good reason, of course.

Will they hear the terrible warning shot fired on August 8 by the Russian experimental missile, a nuclear-powered one which Nato calls the "Skyfall", which caused 5 deaths on the Nyonoska base, not far from Severodvinsk? That is far from certain. The explosion and fire which, a month earlier in the same region, had killed 14 officer on board the ultra-secret research submarine AS-12 « Locharik » (likewise nuclear-powered) had not been enough to catch their attention.

Reacting to the accident, Derek Johnson, the executive director of the international movement Global Zero for the elimination of all nuclear weapons, has just published a statement which says, most significantly:

"When it comes to nuclear weapons, the United States and Russia are the world's worst offenders - both countries are lavishing hundreds of billions of dollars to upgrade their massive arsenals - but this accident in Nyonoska suggests Russia is taking it to the next level. A nuclear warhead capable of incinerating an entire city is bad enough, but slap it on a nuclear-powered delivery system and you've got something truly volatile on your hands - to the point of idiocy. There's a reason the United States abandoned development of similar nuclear-powered cruise missile half a century ago: these things are wildly dangerous, too dangerous even to test.

"Vladimir Putin is pursuing this fantastical weapon to overcome U.S. missile defenses - systems that are oversold to the American public and foreign governments despite their spotty track record. And while Donald Trump's claim that the United States already possesses a more advanced version of this cruise missile is devoid of fact, his administration is likely to respond by doubling down on unreliable capabilities and dangerous weapons systems that only increase the already unacceptably high risk of nuclear conflict.

"What happened last week in Nyonoska brings into focus just how dramatically Russia and the United States are moving in the wrong direction. We are straying far and fast from the principle that 'a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.' Washington and Moscow would do well to recall the hard lessons of the Cold War - and stop undermining the steady progress that brought global nuclear stockpiles down from a peak of 70,000 in 1986 to fewer than 14,000 weapons today. More nuclear weapons does not mean more security; we have to quickly change our course."

Changing course is what 85% of French citizens want, according to an IFOP poll. They want France to "participate in abolishing nuclear and radioactive weapons and engage with all the states concerned in negotiations aimed at establishing, ratifying and implementing a treaty to ban and completely eliminate nuclear and radioactive weapons, under mutual and international control that is strict and effective." **And they want to be able to say so in a referendum.**

MPs and senators can enable them to do so by replying to the [Appeal to the French Parliament](#) which was issued to them in the city of Saintes on 6 August 2019.