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# **"Red Alert": the world is heading in the direction of a 3rd World War, a nuclear one.**

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On March 16, the United Kingdom released its Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development, and Foreign Policy, in which it announced that it will increase the cap on its nuclear stockpile by over 44 percent, from 180 warheads to 260. The report also states the UK will no longer provide information about the size of its stockpile or its deployment, thus embracing deliberate ambiguity in its nuclear strategy. These two very dangerous moves increase the risk of nuclear escalation and undermine global security.

But those measures of so-called "vertical proliferation" merely follow the example of France, whose intention is to increase from 4 to 6 billion euros per year from 2019 to 2025, the funds spent solely on modernising her nuclear weapons (not counting their upkeep and servicing).

Vertical proliferation is done also by the three other nuclear-armed states with permanent seats on the UN Security Council: USA, Russia and China. It is obvious that this can only encourage the phenomenon called "horizontal proliferation", i.e. the multiplication in the number of states wishing to obtain these weapons more or less secretly. In such circumstances, at a time when points of tension are also increasing, the world is heading for disaster. That is what the Atomic Scientists meant when they placed the long hand of the Doomsday Clock at 100 seconds to midnight. We have never been so close to nuclear catastrophe, and the deterioration of the earth's climate increases the risks.

To stop this race to the bottom, the only solution is to force the nuclear-armed states to honour the policy they are bound to by Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which they have signed (France did in 1992): to negotiate the elimination of their nuclear weapons, gradually and under appropriate controls.

Unfortunately, President Macron declared at Le Creusot on 8 December 2020: *"No nuclear power without nuclear weapons, no nuclear weapons without nuclear power"*. He is determined to pursue both, denying the lethal danger of the estimated 13 000 atomic warheads currently stocked.

And yet, according to an IFOP poll in 2018, 85% of French citizens would reply YES to this question:

*« Are you in favour of France taking part in the abolition of nuclear and radioactive weapons and engaging with the other states concerned in negotiations aiming to draw up, ratify and implement a treaty to ban and completely eliminate nuclear and radioactive weapons, under mutual and international control that is strict and effective? »*

The people want to be consulted by referendum. A Parliamentary Bill (PPL in French) exists intending to organise a referendum on that very question, and has already been signed by 50 MPs and senators (it needs 185) belonging to 14 different parliamentary groups.

**This referendum could change the world by imposing on France and on the other nuclear states the obligation to negotiate the total elimination of their arsenals. ACDN calls on MPs, senators and all peace-loving citizens to mobilise for the success of this Bill, a commonsense policy which can help humankind to survive. The French people can open the path to another world.**