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Fantastic News!

Gordon Brown: London is ready to work for total nuclear disarmament.

- Homepage - News - News Articles -

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After the statements in July 2006 and 2007 by [Margaret Beckett](#), then Foreign Affairs Minister under Tony Blair (and now without cabinet responsibility), and then the statement last October from [Alex Salmond](#), First Minister of Scotland, who intends to rid Scotland of the Faslane nuclear base and by the same stroke to rid the UK of all nuclear weapons, this latest statement made in India by British PM Gordon Brown is a fantastic piece of news.

It is nearly 40 years since the UK signed the NPT along with the US and the USSR, and this is the first time one of them has said: "I am ready to renounce all my nuclear weapons, as was promised 40 years ago"! The UK will now be the first of the "Five Horsemen of the Apocalypse" to respond to the [appeal made in Geneva by Ban Ki-moon](#) (UN Secretary-General) and to open the path to the abolition of nuclear arms!

Will France fall into step, or will she be the last of the nuclear states that signed the NPT to do so? After the British PM's visit to India, France's President, for his part, has gone there to try to sell the Indians some nuclear plants and "non-military" fuel that will enable them to keep their illicit nuclear arsenal and increase it by conserving its own uranium for military purposes...

And everywhere, Mr Sarkozy tries to disseminate nuclear technology, a technology which, as Gordon Brown rightly said, "carries with it an increased risk of proliferation for military purposes". In the first instance he is offering it to Muslim countries like Algeria and Egypt, but also to Morocco, Libya, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Abu Dhabi -which are not among the 44 nations listed under the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty designated as having the technical capability to develop nuclear arms. So France, led by a friend of the AREVA nuclear corporation, is attempting to give them that capability...

And this is the man to whom the French people have entrusted the atomic button. Just before the first round of the 2007 Presidential Elections, in a Letter to ACDN (which we promptly published and commented on, but which the media completely ignored), Nicolas Sarkozy had announced that he would not hesitate to use that button. Today, will he be able to renounce it, in time and on his own initiative, in order to lead the other heads of nuclear states (real or virtual, official or not) to renounce it also for their part?

ACDN, 26 January 2007

ARTICLE FROM LE MONDE

Translation ACDN. Original article: [Londres est prêt à oeuvrer à un désarmement nucléaire total](#)

During his recent visit to India, the British PM Gordon Brown broached the question of military and civilian nuclear technology. Several days before Nicolas Sarkozy's visit there, he declared on Monday 21 January at the Delhi Chamber of Commerce that his nation will be "*at the vanguard of the international campaign to accelerate disarmament among the countries possessing [nuclear arms], so as to prevent their proliferation to further states, and to eventually achieve a world freed from all nuclear weapons.*" Great Britain is ready to place her expertise at the service of a "**genuine**" elimination of nuclear warheads, he added.

Such a statement, extremely rare from any head of government of a nuclear-armed nation, can be seen in relation to the next NPT Revision Conference, which must be held in 2010. This Treaty, dating from 1968, theoretically forbids

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countries not possessing nuclear arms at that time from ever acquiring them, while, as a counterweight, enjoining the five nuclear powers (USA, UK, USSR, China and France) to make progress towards complete disarmament.

Although limitation agreements were signed between Washington and Moscow - the nations with the biggest arsenals - the objective of eliminating nuclear weapons has never been seriously considered.

"THE RACE IS OVER"

That failure [to honour article VI] is one of the arguments put forward by the states that do not respect the NPT, either because they never signed or because they do not honour its principles. Now Mr Brown, by announcing that London has decided to fulfil all its obligations, wants to *"send a strong signal to all members of the international community: the race to accumulate ever vaster stockpiles of nuclear means of destruction is over."*

The PM also drew attention to the fact that the growing interest in nuclear power plants in an increasing number of states carries with it *"an increased risk of nuclear proliferation for military means."* In his view, the supply of civilian nuclear technology to these states - including uranium enrichment plants - must be conditional on a *"firm undertaking"* by these countries to respect the strictest norms of military non-proliferation, under the strengthened surveillance of the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency).

Article by Daniel Vernet, appearing in Le Monde 27 Jan. 08

[Translator's note: Brown's words are here back-translated from French. This preserves meaning, but does not produce verbatim acc]

[Editor's note: Just below are the original quotations of Prime minister Gordon Brown.]

Brown calls for end to nukes

[Daily News and Analysis](#)

Wednesday, January 23, 2008

NEW DELHI: In a radical departure from the existing British position, Prime Minister Gordon Brown spoke for a nuclear weapon-free world and called on the US and Russia to reduce their stockpiles.

However Brown did not spell out the way forward or whether Britain would be willing to take the initiative and eliminate its own nuclear arsenal. Addressing leaders of Indian and British industry here on Monday, Brown highlighted the threats to world peace posed by nuclear weapons.

"Facing serious challenges from Iran and North Korea, we must send a powerful signal to all members of the international community that the race for more and bigger stockpiles of nuclear destruction is over."

He said the time had also come for the US and Russia to further reduce their stockpiles of nuclear warheads. He called for the stalled fissile material cut-off treaty and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to be taken up urgently.

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"And let me say today, Britain is prepared to use our expertise to help determine the requirements for the verifiable elimination of nuclear warheads.

And I pledge that in the run-up to the Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference in 2010 we will be at the forefront of the international campaign to accelerate disarmament amongst possessor states ... and to ultimately achieve a world this is free from nuclear weapons," Brown said.

Britain is a member of the exclusive club of declared nuclear powers, which includes US, Russia, China and France.

"We certainly welcome Gordon Brown's statement. He puts the issue of nuclear disarmament on the global agenda. Although if he wants to score a major diplomatic and political point he should set an example and destroy Britian's nuclear weapons. That would have given Brown an unprecedented leverage to call the shots in the disarmament debate," says Praful Bidwai, one of India's leading anti-nuke campaigners.

But even those who have for decades called for a nuclear armed India, like leading analyst K Subrahmanyam, have welcomed Brown's initiative.

Subrahmanyam also drew attention to the small but influential group in the US that included former secretaries of state Henry Kissinger, George P. Schulz, William J. Perry and Sam Nunn who were surprisingly now promoting universal disarmament. *"There is a change of attitude on nuclear weapons and I welcome this,"* said Subrahmanyam.

Ironically, the first world leader to promote this idea was an Indian. When prime minister Rajiv Gandhi spoke at a special session of the UN in 1988 calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons, the world just shrugged off his appeal as an idealistic and impractical suggestion.

"Nuclear war will not mean the death of a hundred million people. Or even a thousand million. It will mean the extinction of four thousand million: the end of life as we know it on our planet earth. We come to the United Nations to seek your support. We seek your support to put a stop to this madness," Rajiv Gandhi had said

Kissinger and the rest of the world gave him short shrift. Today these same people are recalling Rajiv's speech at the UN to promote the idea of world-wide nuclear elimination. In a signed statement released on January 15 this year, Kissinger, Schultz, Perry and Nunn talked of the dangers of nuclear weapons. Last year too they had made a similar appeal.

Ironically the Congress-led UPA government has abandoned virtually abandoned the doctrine of nuclear disarmament.
