



Extract of www.acdn.net

<https://acdn.net/spip/spip.php?article492>

DOSSIER

The Nuclear Issue: Disarm and Live

- Homepage - Background papers -

Publication date: Wednesday 1 July 2009

Copyright © www.acdn.net - All rights reserved

« *Disarm and Live* », beginning by liberating humankind from the threat of self-destruction by nuclear weapons, is the objective pursued by ACDN since its foundation in 1996 and by the international « Abolition 2000 » network. Now in 2009 it is more topical than ever.

ACT FOR TOMORROW

"*Disarm and live*" was the theme of the 3rd RID-NBC (Rally for International Disarmament, Nuclear, Biological and Chemical) organised on 9-11 May 2008 by ACDN, with the support of the city of Saintes (a member of the "Abolition 2000" network and of "Mayors for Peace") of the Poitou-Charentes Region, and the collaboration of several NGOs.

The Rally brought together activists of some twenty nationalities, some from the Antipodes, to survey the current state of existing weapons and current or likely defense policies, to clarify objectives and steps to disarmament, and to see possibilities for "[making an end to the nuclear threat](#)", and for "building a different kind of globalisation, a different world, and a different Europe". Before the end of the gathering, the participants launched an [appeal "for a Europe without nuclear weapons or nuclear power-plants"](#), in a totally nuclear-free world.

No nuclear weapons or power-plants: this slogan may seem surprising. It deserves to be explained.

"WITH THE BOMB, WE GET PEACE" - BUT DO WE?

Theoretically, atom bombs are not built to be used but to prevent their use. French strategy claims that they would even deter any enemy (if we had one) from attacking us by "conventional means", and thus would make our territory a "sanctuary". According to France's current president, "*nuclear deterrence*" is "*the Nation's life insurance policy*" (see the [letters from Nicolas Sarkozy to ACDN, dated 26 March & 18 April 2007](#)). But what is the concrete worth of this notion (inspired by the ancient saying "if you want peace, prepare for war")?

Historically, it is far from proven that the bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6 & 9 August 1945 were necessary to force Japan to make peace. In fact the US Government had known with certainty from 13 July, that the Japanese Emperor and most government ministers wanted to surrender, provided that they could do so honourably with the Emperor staying on his throne (as he did). The surrender was delayed, in fact, by the "unconditional surrender" formula knowingly maintained by President Truman (on the insistence of his new Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes) in his "Potsdam Ultimatum" broadcast to Japan on 26 July 1945. The prolonging of hostilities enabled the USA to hastily assemble two bombs and then test them on two of the four Japanese cities that had been selected as targets at the end of April 1945 (and then had not been bombed in May, June or July) - these were the two atomic bombs they then possessed, one a uranium bomb (Hiroshima), the other a plutonium bomb (Nagasaki)... These bombings, carried out despite opposition from dozens of the nuclear scientists associated with the Manhattan Project and despite the opposition of some high-ranking military and political leaders (including General Eisenhower), were therefore primarily **scientific experiments**. Their other objectives were essentially **political, not military**. (cf. [Hiroshima, Nagasaki : une histoire méconnue](#) or [Hiroshima, Nagasaki - an unknown story and a lesson for today](#))

After the Second World War was over, atom bombs multiplied during the Cold War - reaching 70000 in the 1980s - without in any way preventing "ordinary massacres" : worldwide, from 1945 to 1985, there were more than twice as many war casualties as in the First World War. The pattern is continuing. Today some 27000 nuclear weapons are still in service, many of them ready to be used at any moment, but they are not preventing "conventional" wars, or

guerrilla wars, or genocides, or terrorist attacks: the US nuclear arsenal did not prevent 9.11. 2001, nor could they prevent an act of nuclear terrorism.

On the other hand, they do risk provoking wholesale slaughter. It nearly occurred during the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962. There are other moments in the last fifty years when catastrophe came close, sometimes for mind-boggling technical reasons. For example, in the night of 26 September 1983, rays of moonlight reflected by clouds upon US silos were interpreted by Soviet radar as US missile launches. Fortunately the man on duty, Lt-Col. Petrov, treated it as a "false alert". Only his cool head and ill-discipline (punished later by the army) prevented the Soviet Politburo (dragged from their sleep), from having to decide within minutes on a Soviet preemptive retaliation. Apart from Gorbachev, these men were a group of old Brezhnevians haunted by the fear of a US nuclear attack.

Most of the world's people are more sensible than their leaders (*see the poll findings below*) and wish to see the countries possessing nuclear arsenals renounce these inhuman and suicidal weapons. Apart from a few powerful Christian sects in the USA that dream of witnessing the « Apocalypse », nobody seriously wishes the nuclear final solution to be used as a response to the world's geopolitical conflicts.

ABSURD AND CRIMINAL WEAPONS

Nuclear armaments, used by politicians for their own ends, are the subject of lively debate in limited circles, but in France this debate becomes invisible at every presidential election, despite the President being the chief of the armed forces and the sole decision-maker in nuclear matters. Is it not staggering that we entrust to one man (or someday one woman?) the power to execute millions of people simply by pushing a button, like Caesar who executed gladiators by a movement of his thumb? Yet today we hear voices raised, sometimes unexpected ones, calling for heads of state to be deprived of the famous nuclear button. Thus, General Lee Butler, former head of the Strategic Air Command during the Cold War, who would have had the duty of activating US nuclear weapons if the President had so ordered, spoke about these weapons in 1996, defining them as: « **fundamentally dangerous, extraordinarily expensive, militarily ineffective, and morally indefensible** ».

They are morally indefensible, since they rely on the threat of mass slaughter, i.e. a crime against humanity. It makes no sense for a nation like France, which has abolished the death penalty for individuals, to maintain a collective death penalty for millions of foreign civilians and to entrust its execution to one person, the Head of State, who will be simultaneously judge and executioner and who will, without legal process, pronounce and execute the sentence in under ten minutes. That is pure barbarism and tyranny.

They are militarily ineffective, as President Giscard d'Estaing implicitly recognised in his memoirs: he would have preferred France to be occupied rather than be annihilated by an invader who could retaliate by nuclear means to France's atomic "final warning". He would therefore not have used ours, he says, except to avenge France for a destruction that the enemy "*had already begun*" - in other words after France had suffered a first strike - and then he would have dragged the rest of France into a general annihilation. It is clearly brilliant deterrent if you have to suspend it when the threat of aggression becomes concrete and which in the worst case scenario (that of an atomic attack) achieves nothing except the widening of the catastrophe!

They are extraordinarily expensive: 1500 billions of francs (at 1997 values) simply for France's nuclear strike force up until 1998, and that cost continues, but the figures are "classified" (meanwhile in 2008 alone, the less secretive Americans spent over 52 billion dollars solely on nuclear weapons). Obviously, this money is totally wasted - not that a few people don't profit, admittedly - it cannot be used to satisfy human needs. We can add that this arms expenditure plays a key role, albeit a systematically hidden role, in the world economic crisis, both by its direct inflationary effect (giving shareholders, intermediaries and employees of the arms sector an unbalanced purchasing power in the market of goods and services) and by increasing the budget deficits of the states in question, chiefly the

USA. However, it is true that the dialectics of armaments is contradictory and diabolical, since their destructive potential opens new markets to capital - today for the reconstruction of Iraq or tomorrow for the reconstruction of Gaza.

These weapons are also fundamentally dangerous. 1) *The risk of an accident is permanent* (thus in February 2009 the French nuclear sub "Le Triomphant" and the British nuclear sub "HMS Vanguard", each with 16 missiles and dozens of warheads, collided on the floor of the Atlantic). 2) *A nuclear war today could bring about the disappearance of the human species*: if all the warheads exploded, they could annihilate humankind 5 or 10 times over. France alone, with her 348 declared nuclear warheads (each having 8 to 22 times the power of the Hiroshima bomb) could cause between 700 million and a billion deaths. Not counting the French citizens killed in retaliation...

If we don't act now, one day or other we will be accomplices or victims of this crime against humanity.

THE LINKED ATOMS OF THE NUCLEAR COUPLE

There are very close links between nuclear power generation and nuclear weapons. They go hand in hand.

° **Technically, the same plants that produce fuel for power-generation can also make possible the manufacture of bomb explosive.** To be usable, the uranium ore has to undergo various transformations. The "natural" uranium extracted at the start contains 0.7 % of U235, which is the uranium isotope that can provoke a nuclear chain reaction. To serve as fuel for reactors, uranium has to be "enriched" in U235 so as to reach 3.5%. But continue the enrichment to 90% U235 (or even less), and you get the explosive for the Hiroshima-type bomb.

° **In any reactor (be it a research or a productive one), the chain reaction creates plutonium**, a radioactive element which is not present in nature and which is salvaged, with other by-products of combustion, at the so-called "retreatment plants" like La Hague (France), Sellafield (UK) and Rokkasho-Mura (Japan). Like U235, plutonium is fissile, and it too makes possible the fabrication of bombs (of the Nagasaki type).

° **The enrichment process produces, simultaneous with « enriched uranium », a waste-product: « depleted uranium »** (it is depleted only in U235, comprising 99.8% U238). This "DU", which is something of a problem, has been given a military use: valued for its density, hardness and incendiary effects, it forms the « penetrators » of numerous munitions (bullets, shells, bombs, missiles) that have been used since the 1991 Gulf War. Some 20 countries possess them; at least 4 states have made them, including France.

° **Depleted Uranium weapons, like nuclear weapons, are genocidal.** The tiny nanoparticles created when DU ignites on impact fly up, fall back to earth, contaminate the soil or subsoil, or are carried off in the atmosphere. They add their radioactivity to that of the fallout from over 540 atmospheric nuclear tests in the 20th century (10% done by France), which remains radioactive decades later. These radioactive particles are also a violent chemical poison comparable to arsenic. They constitute a major threat to all living beings that inhale or ingest them, particularly for humans, since they attack cells, DNA and genetic material, causing a steep increase in cancers, serious illnesses and monstrous births. This health catastrophe is already happening (in Iraq, the Balkans and Afghanistan...). But the interests of the financial and political powers have meant a conspiracy to deny any causal link and to make this humanitarian catastrophe as invisible as the radioactivity that causes it.

° **Historically, nuclear energy was developed first for military purposes, and only later for civilian uses**, by the 5 nuclear-armed states - USA, Russia, UK, France and China - that are signatories of the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty). But with the ban on proliferation, and even before the treaty entered into force in 1970, the link went into reverse: now civilian research and industry served as an alibi and access-path to nuclear weapons for several

countries - Israel, India, Pakistan (non-members of the treaty) and North Korea (which signed, took advantage and then withdrew).

° **Politically, today, the acquisition of so-called "civilian" nuclear know-how and the fissile materials that go with it, is a possible concealment for military ambitions.** Iran is accused of such ambitions, but numerous other countries might gladly do likewise. To sell nuclear technology (at a loss!), as France is doing now for short-minded and wrongly calculated benefits, amounts to fuelling the proliferation which France elsewhere claims to be combatting... France makes efforts to justify this while at the same time flouting Article VI of the NPT which requires the nuclear states to eliminate their own arsenals. (*See below on NPT.*)

In short, the worst vice of civilian nuclear technology is that it is intrinsically linked to nuclear weapons. Both have already caused terrible radioactive fallout.

What is more, civilian nuclear technology is condemned by its own defects.

THE DEAD-END OF THE NUCLEAR POWER INDUSTRY

° **Like military nuclearism, the nuclear power industry is incompatible with democracy.** Its extreme centralisation, its technical complexity and the wide consequences of its development lead the industrial, financial and political decision-makers in charge of it to violate the majority of democratic principles. In it we observe hegemony, an absence of debate, a confusion of roles, a diversion of interests, a non-respect for the norms of environmental impact management, a systematic minimisation of incidents and a concealment of serious accidents. For example: during the storm of 27 December 1999, over 100 000 cubic metres of water from the Gironde invaded the plant at Le Blayais (in the Bordeaux region), causing short-circuits, knocking out several cooling pumps, pushing one production unit close to a "major accident"... but the news was quickly stifled, and did not get out beyond the local level.

° **Nuclear energy is a non-renewable fossil energy.** In about fifty years at current consumption levels (and sooner if more reactors are built) the known reserves of uranium will be exhausted. Already the price of uranium ore keeps rising: the « uranium wars » have begun, on top of the current « oil wars ».

° **The so-called « energy independence » which French authorities vaunt is non-existent,** since all the uranium used in France now is imported.

° **The so-called « competitive return » of the « nuclear kilowatt-hour » is a lie:** The quoted figure does not pass on to the customers or competitors of EDF (Electricité de France) that share of the industry's huge research and construction costs which the nation paid for (via taxation). Furthermore, it includes only a ridiculously low fraction of the costs - likewise enormous - of the future dismantling of power-plants and the perpetual surveillance of the radioactive wastes (which they would like to bury even deeper so as to avoid ever mentioning them).

° **The nuclear industry belongs to the past, it has no future.** It is deemed too risky by all insurers, who refuse to cover it, and by small investors, who prefer to go elsewhere. Were it not that the State develops it for reasons of prestige and pays for it with our taxes, it would be already have gone bankrupt.

° **The real impact of nuclear energy on climate change is scarcely less than that of other fossil energies (e.g. gas)-** not if we include the energy used in constructing and fuelling the plants and the heat expelled into rivers by the water from cooling circuits and into the atmosphere by the cooling towers. This consideration means that its health

and environmental consequences are far from justified, and that it cannot in any way constitute a credible global response to today's energy challenges.

° **In total, nuclear-generated energy provides less than 3% of the world's energy consumption**, despite the 438 plants in operation. To do without it, humankind would have to reduce this consumption by only 3%. With 58 « productive reactors » currently managed by EDF producing 80% of France's electricity (though only 17% of our total energy consumption), France is the world's most nuclearised nation per capita. This particular « French exception » is completely falsifying our vision of the problem on the global level.

° **To solve - even partially - the world's energy problem by nuclear means, we would have to build thousands of reactors.** This would create insoluble problems, such as: financing them (especially in poor countries, which would have to take on debts for ever); building them (which devours energy for 5 to 10 years before producing a single kWh); supplying them (in a competitive market with the resources running out); cooling them (a problem soon to be insoluble in summer with inadequate river levels, already forcing the EDF to close some plants and import power ... produced by foreign non-nuclear plants); maintaining them (frequent incidents, risks of accidents and attacks); dismantling them (which means exorbitant costs, devours energy and produces a huge mass of radioactive waste); and finally monitoring of the radioactive wastes for eternity... One is tempted to shout: *"Stop, you're crazy!"*

° **The exposure of living beings to radioactivity is indissociable from the chain of operating nuclear plants, even without accidents.** It affects health and even the human genome. Widespread nuclearisation would endanger not just millions of people but the human species as a whole. That is the primary danger.

° **The lessons of the Chernobyl catastrophe have not been learned.** Huge resources were summoned then - not to tend the victims, but to conceal their existence. Hundreds of thousands of sick people, tens of thousands of dead were reduced to less than sixty official deaths by the WHO (World Health Organisation), which is totally subordinated to the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) by a secret agreement of 1959. Nuclear accidents, unlike other industrial accidents, are veritable slow-action bombs whose invisible effects continue for thousands of years. It takes 24 400 years for a mass of plutonium - a violent radiological and chemical poison - to lose half its radioactivity, and for U238 the figure is 4.5 billion years.

° **Nuclear technology is an ideal target for terrorist attacks**, which can target nuclear plants, or other base nuclear facilities, or the transport of nuclear fuel and waste. Thus, even with no accidents, it can lead to catastrophic contamination.

° **The total absence of solutions for managing nuclear waste after nearly 60 years research - and after pollution in many regions, of France as elsewhere - condemn the nuclear-power option.** So do the huge risks they impose on humankind in the short, medium and long term. **It is a colossal error of human history** and we must not continue it. Humanity coped without this source of energy for thousands of years. We will have to renounce it anyway in a few decades when the uranium mines are exhausted, at about the same time as the oilwells run dry.

The profits earned by the great nuclear and military-industrial groups financed by the French State are no reason for bequeathing unmanageable wastes to future generations, or running the continuous risk of destroying the planet or polluting it with radioactivity.

CONCLUSION

We must exit from the era of military and civilian nuclear technology, methodically, but as fast as possible, limiting nuclear energy to strictly defined uses in the medical and industrial domains.

To achieve a lasting world-wide solution for the energy problem, the only way is to change our production and consumption model, to economise on energy and to turn to renewable energies that cause no or very little pollution: the only ones that will be available in the long term. This truth has been understood - with a few exceptions such as France - by the 75 governments that had recently founded IRENA (See below).

The only way to respond to the many challenges which humankind absolutely has to meet (climate, demographics, food, health etc...) is to establish international cooperation of a calm and peaceable kind by banning the threat of mutual destruction by nuclear weapons, and banning war as a means of resolving conflicts of interest - in conformity with the UN Charter. The spirit of international relations needs to change fundamentally. This change in mentality requires nuclear disarmament, which will be both the sign and the means of this change.

Today, more than ever, military and civilian denuclearisation of the planet is a matter of great urgency: artificial radioactivity, of whatever origin, continues to rise, as do the risks of catastrophe. We are threatened by proliferation, since 40 countries have the potential to become nuclear-weapons states. Fortunately, the indispensable act of abolishing nuclear and radioactive weapons has now become possible. The leaders of several nuclear-weapons states, including US President Obama, say that they want abolition. The other states, including France, must seize this opportunity.

These objectives are those of ACDN and of the [Appeal for a Europe without nuclear weapons or nuclear power-plants](#). We invite you to adopt them as your own by making a citizen's commitment.

ACDN (Action of Citizens for the total Dismantling of Nuclear Weapons /Action des Citoyens pour le Désarmement Nucléaire), 10 March 2009

WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT ?

There are various initiatives that can be supported by ordinary citizens and their elected representatives:

- ▶ Joining ACDN, and giving your moral and financial support to expand its action.

ACDN, 31 Rue du Cormier - 17100 - Saintes - France

- ▶ Taking a Citizen's Commitment.
- ▶ Signing the petitions on ACDN's website <<http://www.acdn.net>> www.acdn.net : and disseminating them, along with the present document on your networks; printing them and obtaining signatures.
- ▶ For a Europe without Nuclear Weapons or Nuclear Power-plants
- ▶ World Appeal to liberate the Planet from all Weapons of Mass Destruction
- ▶ Appeal for a Referendum for total, comprehensive, universal and controlled nuclear disarmament.
- ▶ For the unconditional abandoning of Depleted Uranium weapons by France and the universal banning of all radioactive arms.
- ▶ Pacific Pact
- ▶ Planetary State of Emergency
- ▶ Contacting mayors and city councillors with an explanatory dossier (available from ACDN) to invite them to

affiliate their town to:

- a. The international « Abolition 2000 » network (see its Charter)
 - b. The « Mayors for Peace » group and its « Vision 2020 » campaign for the elimination of all nuclear weapons by 2020.
- ▶ Inviting MPs and political leaders of all parties to commit to act at their level so as to make France commit actively to a process for eliminating nuclear weapons.
 - ▶ Participating in the « Europe for peace » campaign (<<http://www.europeforpeace.eu/>> www.europeforpeace.eu) initiated by the Mouvement humaniste to oppose the US anti-missile shield project in Central Europe.
 - ▶ Linking with the *World March for Peace and Nonviolence* initiated by World without War, from 1 October 2009 to 2 January 2010, which gives prominence to the making people realise the urgency of nuclear disarmament.
-

QUOTATIONS

"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, to prevent proliferation to new states, and to ultimately achieve a world that is free from nuclear weapons."

Gordon Brown, Delhi, 21 janvier 2008

"I will restore America's leadership to reduce the role of nuclear weapons and to work for their ultimate elimination. A world freed from nuclear arms is a world in which the possibility of their use will no longer exist. As long as nuclear weapons exist, I will retain a deterrence that is strong, safe, secure and reliable in order to protect us, and our allies as well. But I will not authorise the development of new nuclear weapons or the capabilities linked to them. And I will make the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons worldwide a central element of United States nuclear policy."

Barack Obama, reply to "Arms Control Today", 10 September 2008

"Had I been told just two or three years ago, I wouldn't believe that it would be possible, but I believe it is now (...) quite possible to liberate humanity from nuclear weapons... Why should we be keeping the world constantly in apprehension of some nuclear disaster? Especially when there are so many aspirations on behalf of other states to acquire nuclear weapons. We believe that we should better close this Pandora's box."

Vladimir Putin, meeting with the Valdai Debating Club, September 11, 2008.

- And what about France?

"Nuclear deterrence is in my view the Nation's life insurance policy, the guarantee that another State will have to reflect before taking on France since it would be risking an immediate sanction. If I am elected President, I undertake to guarantee the political and technical credibility of our arms systems, while respecting the principle of strict sufficiency of means deployed."

Nicolas Sarkozy, letter to ACDN, 26 March 2007

"To advance on the disarmament path implies that the will to progress is shared unanimously."

Nicolas Sarkozy, letter to the UN Secretary-General, 5 December 2008

NPT, IAEA, IRENA

NPT: the Non-Proliferation Treaty is one of the most universal treaties. It was signed and ratified by all the member-states of the UN except three (Israel, India and Pakistan); North Korea withdrew in 2002. The NPT distinguishes between Nuclear Weapons States (NWS) and the others. The NWS undertook under Article VI to eliminate all their nuclear weapons; the others undertook not to acquire any, in exchange for the chance to obtain nuclear technology "for peaceful purposes". The NPT is revised every 5 years. The revision in 2010 is likely to be crucial for better or worse. The best outcome would be for the NWS to start the implementation of Article VI, for proliferation to cease, and for the dissemination of "civilian" nuclear technology to stop. The worst outcome would be for the treaty to collapse.

IAEA: International Atomic Energy Agency. This UN agency's mission is to disseminate nuclear technology while ensuring that it is not diverted to military purposes. It failed in the case of North Korea. Instead of "selling" nuclear technology, it ought to exercise better monitoring to prevent proliferation, and to supervise the dismantling of nuclear arms and of military and civilian nuclear installations.

IRENA: the International Renewable Energy Agency, founded in Bonn on 26 January 2009 in the presence of official representatives of 125 countries, 75 of which joined immediately. France is a member, but intends to maintain nuclear energy ("unshakable, infallible and odourless") and keep giving pride of place in its "energy bouquet".

GLOBAL ZERO

"We the undersigned believe that to protect our children, our grandchildren and our civilisation from the threat of nuclear catastrophe, we must have universal elimination of each and every nuclear weapon. For this reason we undertake to work to have all nations adopt a legally binding and verifiable agreement aimed at eliminating all nuclear weapons by a predetermined date."

Anyone may sign this declaration (translated into French and published on ACDN's website).

It has already been signed by over 130 political, diplomatic, military, civilian and religious personalities of all nations and tendencies, including **Jimmy Carter**, former president of the USA, **Queen Noor of Jordan**, **Mikhail Gorbachev**, former president of the USSR, **Mikhail Margenov**, current president of the Russian Senate's Foreign Relations Commission, **Robert McNamara**, formerly Kennedy's Secretary of State at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, **Michel Rocard**, former PM of France, **Margaret Beckett**, former Foreign Minister to Tony Blair and now a member of Gordon Brown's cabinet, **Mario Soares**, former president of Portugal, **Hans-Dietrich Genscher**, formerly German Foreign Minister, **Archbishop Desmond Tutu** of South Africa, and **high-ranking military leaders** from the USA, India, Pakistan etc.

Under the auspices of « Global Zero », a hundred of these people gathered in Paris on 8-9 December 2008 to launch a long-term action for eliminating all nuclear weapons.

They see this as the only realistic way to end the risks of nuclear proliferation and terrorism. They know that this

ambitious goal will not be reached without difficulties or overnight.

They have defined the "key points" thus:

- ▶ Massive reductions in the Russian and US nuclear arsenals,
 - ▶ Reduction down to zero in the nuclear weapons of Russia, the US and all other states,
 - ▶ Establishment of systems for the monitoring and international management of the nuclear fuel cycle so as to prevent any new development of nuclear weapons.
-

POLLS

"Suppose there was a future international agreement to eliminate all nuclear weapons. All the countries possessing them would be required to eliminate them within a precise time-frame. All the others would be required to not obtain any. All countries, including yours, would be monitored to ensure they respect this agreement. Would you be favourable or opposed to such an agreement?"

In response to this question, an international poll commissioned by « Global Zero » from WorldPublicOpinion.org and carried out in 21 countries between January and August 2008 clearly indicates that a very strong majority of public opinion is favourable or very favourable to the abolition of nuclear weapons: on average 76%. This proportion is reported to be as high as 69 % in Russia, 77% in the USA, 81 % in the UK, 83 % in China... and 86 % in France (where 58 % said they are very favourable), this being the highest proportion in any of the states possessing nuclear weapons. This result comes despite the kind of taboo which surrounds the nuclear weapons question in France! Does this perhaps explain why the citizens of France have never been consulted on the subject ? There's one more reason to call for a referendum.

The French people's must be heard!

â€" > Sign, disseminate, and get others to sign the Appeal for a Referendum for Comprehensive, Universal and Verified Disarmament, nuclear, biological and chemical..

â€" > Invite your elected representatives to sign this Appeal and to make a CITIZENS' COMMITMENT for the French population to be consulted by referendum on France's participation in the process for abolishing nuclear weapons.
