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50 years of French nuclear weapons, 50 years too many!

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Action of Citizens for the total Dismantling of Nukes ([ACDN](#)) and World without War or Violence (Monde sans Guerres et Sans Violence, [MSGSV](#)) are launching a campaign "THE VERY LAST ATOM!", and are calling on the French government to organise a referendum on the future of France's nuclear forces.

Fifty years ago, on 13 February 1960 in the Sahara, France exploded her first official atom bomb ("Gerboise Bleue"), thus becoming the world's fourth nuclear power. Subsequently, with 210 military tests which caused numerous indirect victims, France would play a major role in the proliferation of nuclear weapons: by her own example (followed two years later by China, then by Israel, India, Pakistan, North Korea ... and tomorrow perhaps Iran); by her theory dubbed "deterrence by the weak against the strong" which legitimises the access of any nation to nuclear weapons; and also by her sales of so-called "civilian" nuclear technology to numerous countries (including Israel, Iraq and Iran).

Today the nuclear states that are co-signatories of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) are at last saying that they are ready to implement Article 6, which obliges them to eliminate their arsenals. That will be one of the objectives of the 8th NPT Review Conference, this coming May. But France still does not consider that this concerns her. Setting the worst possible example to the 185 states that are still non-nuclear, France is modernising her arsenal, with a 4th nuclear-missile-launching submarine, with the M51 missile (which was tested again on 27 January 2010), with a new airborne missile (the ASMP-A), with a new nuclear bomber (the Rafale), with new nuclear warheads, and with research on thermonuclear fusion at the Laser Méga Joule aimed at creating a new generation of weapo...

Nuclear weapons are *"fundamentally dangerous, extraordinarily costly, militarily ineffective and morally indefensible"* (according to general Lee Butler, former head of US strategic forces), and they must be abolished. Between 1945 and 1998, France spent 1500 billion francs (at 1998 values) and is continuing, despite the economic crisis, to spend 5 billion euros per year on developing new ones. But what will all these weapons be able to achieve, if ever they are used (and "deterrence" depends on the hypothesis of use)? A billion deaths altogether... not counting the millions of French people killed by atomic retaliation and radioactive fallout. Let's invest instead in education, health, and protection of the environment... Let's invest in life !

But nuclear questions, military and non-military, are always reserved for the Head of State, and he is inspired by a caste of supposed experts, all of them pro-nuclear. This one individual - today it is Nicolas Sarkozy - has in his hands the power to trigger a catastrophe at any moment. When a nation's defense rests on the threat of committing - and herself suffering - a crime against humanity, and when it entrusts that decision to one man... does this nation still deserve the name of « democracy » ?

We invite all of our compatriots to make a [CITIZENS' COMMITMENT](#) for a France, [a Europe](#) and [a planet free from nuclear weapons](#).

We invite French citizens to write to the President, the government, the members of parliament, and each of their elected representatives, demanding that the French people be consulted at last through a referendum on this question which is crucial for our future, our children's future and that of all human beings.