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# Good Wishes and Good Proposals for 2013

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Saintes, 1 January 2013

Dear Friends from all around the world,

We wish you and your loved ones a Happy New Year in 2013. May it spare you the worst hazards of life and bring you joy and the fulfilment of your dearest wishes.

Beyond our respective individual fates, we wish, as you surely do too, for the ending of all the world's current wars, and the retreating of those wars that are threatening in various parts of the planet. May men and women instead unite their forces to push back all forms of injustice, oppression, violence and poverty, and prevent all kinds of catastrophes, natural or man-made.

We also hope that you will share a wish that is close to our hearts : that the voice of the people should prevail over the ruling elites of all nations and especially our own, so that we can proceed as fast as possible towards a world without nuclear weapons or nuclear power.

Admittedly the article from *Sud Ouest* copied below suggests that this wish cannot be achieved. But far from being a reason for renunciation, that is an extra motive of uniting our strength so as to make it happen.

Accordingly, we invite you to join the RAHAN CAMPAIGN for a French Referendum on the Historic Abolition of Nuclear Weapons. The attached Appeal indicates several paths of action : to complete, sign and return the open letter to President Hollande ; to approach elected representatives and well-known personalities that you know ; to join in the movement of rolling fasts... We invite you to see and choose, in the Appeal paper, the form or forms of action that suit you best...

Finally, if you wish to join or renew your membership of ACDN, let us know and give your postal address. We will send the ACDN membership papers, which contain the form for joining.

Again please accept our warm greetings for 2013.

The ACDN committee:

Alain, Daniel, Jean-Marie, Jean-Philippe, Julie

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**Sud Ouest, 28/12/2012**

**A Hunger-Strike and a Meagre Outcome**

**The president of ACDN (J-M. Matagne of Saintes) wanted a meeting with François Hollande. He is still waiting.**

[PHOTO Sud Ouest](#)

**Jean-Marie Matagne (on the left of the photo) and Luc Dazy did not win much from their hunger-strike.**

For forty-two days, from 15 May to 26 June 2012, the president of ACDN, Jean-Marie Matagne, took no food. His hunger-strike was motivated by his wish to meet the new President of France and persuade him to renounce the nuclear deterrent force. He also sought a referendum asking the French people their opinion on this subject.

He obtained neither. Along with Luc Dazy, a fellow-campaigner who went without food for twenty-five days, he was sent packing from outside the Presidential Palace on 25 June, just when they thought they had obtained an interview with François Hollande or a member of his entourage. Police officers intercepted them before they could even enter the gates.

« Yet we had been told by the Prefecture of Charente-Maritime that it was all set up », says Jean-Marie Matagne, still aggrieved, although he has regained some of his lost weight. "I had shed twenty kilos", he admits, "and if it had to be repeated I would do it again, but with better preparation so as to ensure national media coverage."

### **No true national echoes**

For Matagne, the failure of his hunger-strike is largely due to the lack of interest by national newspapers and TV. « Yet I had written an Open Letter intended to be published in Le Monde. Apparently they were not interested. »

Jean-Marie Matagne admits that forty days without food is the limit. "Luckily I have a good constitution. This technique is one of the last-resort tools available to peace activists. We only wanted the French people to be consulted about nuclear disarmament. We were not suggesting that it should be imposed" he insists. He did at least get his message through to the federal council of Europe Ecologie-Les Verts (the EELV party), last June.

« That was a great emotional moment for me," he says, having received a standing ovation at that gathering. "The ecologists, who are a part of the government's majority, took on board the need for this referendum."

But since then water has flowed under the bridge, and there's no chance of the ecologists in the cabinet of PM Jean-Marc Ayrault having their voices heard on that subject. "They have closed ranks. It's a pity," says Matagne.

Conversely, Jean-Marie Matagne reports that three archbishops have supported him, including the Archbishop of Aix-en-Provence, who has written directly to François Hollande. For his part, Luc Dazy, who lost fourteen kilos in the struggle, declares that he will not repeat it "I was scandalised by President Hollande's contempt for us," he says with feeling.

### **An insulting gesture**

How do things stand now? « The movement we launched has spread. Since we stopped our hunger-strike, there is always, almost every day, in France or elsewhere someone who is fasting. People continue to fast to call for this referendum," says the president of ACDN, although at present he is not expecting anything much from the Presidential Palace.

« François Hollande's office eventually wrote to us inviting us to contact the Minister of Ecology... who has no say at all on these matters," says Matagne sadly. "He sent that letter the very day when the President was winched down onto the nuclear sub "Le Terrible". For us that was a hand-gesture, a deliberate insult. »

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**Stéphane Durand**

### FOOTNOTES by ACDN:

On the day when Hollande visited "Le Terrible », the Minister of Defense, Jean-Yves Le Drian, was at the Ile-Longue submarine base justifying the nuclear strike-force.

Luc Dazy adds that: « The President's contempt is incompatible with his promises during the campaign that there would be change and greater public consultation. »

Jean-Marie Matagne adds that : « His contempt is contempt for France's citizens - our votes are gleaned and our taxes are gathered without concern for the people's opinions about what is done on essential questions. »

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### ANOTHER GRAND PIECE OF INSANITY: FRANCE'S NUCLEAR STRIKE FORCE!

### TO PUT AN END TO IT, LET US DEMAND A REFERENDYUM ON FRANCE'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ABOLITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Today more than 20 000 atomic bombs are threatening to annihilate humanity at any moment. Each one is on average ten times more powerful than the one that exploded on Hiroshima on 6 August 1945 and killed over 200 000 people. It is urgent that we eliminate all these massacre weapons, these weapons for crimes against humanity, with no exceptions. That imperative was proclaimed by the International Court of Justice on 8 July 1996, but successive leaders of France have deliberately ignored it, flouting international law. That is why it is urgent and indispensable for France's people to be consulted on the following simple and crucial question :

*« Are you in favour of France participating with the other states concerned in the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, under a system of mutual and international monitoring that is strict and effective ? »*

Since its foundation in 1996, Action des Citoyens pour le Désarmement Nucléaire (ACDN) has been calling for such a referendum, the only means whereby the French people can exercise their sovereignty on a matter they have never been asked about, a matter on which governments have imposed their answer - and have already spent 300 billion euros.

Since 1996, ACDN has done all it can to make France's leaders match their actions to France's word, France's values and simple good sense. In desperation the president of ACDN went on hunger-strike from 15 May to 26 June 2012, for 42 days, while a colleague accompanied him for 25 days. Sympathisers have joined them, linking short fasts ever since in various parts of France and elsewhere (Cf. [www.acdn.net](http://www.acdn.net)). The support committees have given birth to a national collective leading a campaign for a Referendum the Historic Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (RAHAN).

Citizens of the World,

ACDN and the RAHAN Collective invite you to affiliate with this national and international campaign by the means that best suit you personally.

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[ - ] SURNAME :

[ - ] First Name:

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- Age :
- E-mail :
- Phone :
- Address :

I am signing the [Open Letter to the President of the French Republic](#) asking for a referendum on France's participation in the abolition of nuclear weapons ; I will send it to him and will send you a copy in a stamped envelope.

I will invite the following elected representatives

of my town : .....

of my state: .....

of my country: .....

to sign the Open Letter and will inform you of their replies.

I will support the RAHAN campaign and make a tax-deductible contribution of ..... Euros (made out to ACDN)

I wish to join or create a RAHAN committee in my town or region.

I wish to join the movement of rolling fasts by fasting  occasionally. Next date(s)

.....

regularly :  one day per week  whatever day  preferably on .....

once every two weeks  once every month on the ..... day

I want to receive information . Registration and fasting info : + 33 6 20 35 58 48

Other actions that I propose :

Please return this form filled in to :

ACDN

31 Rue Cormier

17100 Saintes

[contact@acdn.net](mailto:contact@acdn.net)

06 73 50 76 61

[www.acdn.net](http://www.acdn.net)