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Gathering for a Livable Nuclear-Free World: Final Declaration

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Saintes, France, 25 October 2015.

We, anti-nuclear activists gathered from all over France, meeting on 23-25 October on the initiative of ACDN (Action des Citoyens pour le Désarmement Nucléaire) wish to address with the activists and organisations that are anti-nuclear, environmentalist and humanitarian, and to all our fellow-citizens, and to tell you the results of our deliberations, which have had as their main objective the definitive abandoning of nuclear weapons and nuclear power-plants, as is clear from this slogan : "No nuclear arms, no nuclear power !"

Despite the differences that exist between us about the fastest ways of attaining this double objective, our workshops and plenary sessions enabled us to see that we were in agreement on the essential points.

First of all, we wish to emphasise the indissoluble link - historical, technical and political - that connects nuclear weapons and nuclear power generation. Without the weapons, used at Hiroshima and Nagasaki and then during the Cold War, the power plants would not have been built. (1) They developed the civil nuclear industry either as an alibi to keep these weapons or as a means to obtain them. For this reason they serve to keep this industry afloat despite some huge problems that should have forced its abandonment.

But nuclear energy for military or civilian use is lethal and fearsome. It has since 1945 caused millions of victims, notably through the 500 atmospheric tests that raised the level of ambient radioactivity. The use, accidental or not, of some of the 16000 nuclear weapons in existence now, 2000 of which could be launched at any moment, could cause a brutal end to humanity. At any moment also, one or several accidents to nuclear reactors could make entire regions uninhabitable, even a whole country, even the world.

It is inadmissible that after the catastrophes of Chernobyl and Fukushima this industry has not been questioned by our governments. Yet not content to refuse to learn from them, the French nuclear lobby would like to take advantage of the COP 21 conference, which opens in Paris in December, to promote nuclear power generation as if it could be a solution to climate change.

That is a lie. Nuclear energy too contributes to global warming throughout its process. [You don't cure plague by propagating cholera](#). On the contrary, we must link the struggle for climate and the struggle against nuclear technology. Reduction in our energy consumption, an end to waste, energy efficiency, renewable energies - these are some of the sustainable solutions to the two problems.

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Global warming, its disastrous effects on the polar regions and the oceans, the rivalry between States on these territories and the greed of the great multinationals who are responsible for 80% of greenhouse gas emissions, are matters extreme concern.

The waste from nuclear weapons and power generation constitutes an accursed heritage. The stocking of waste on the Bugey site (ICEDA), its burial deep underground at Bure (CIGEO), the retreatment of waste at La Hague - these are current struggles. We must stop their production by stopping the whole nuclear process, and we must stop their retreatment and transport by stopping the plutonium process, which passes through Saintes and represents an immense danger for the population.

As for the ruinous and inept nuclear projects that have imposed on us - i.e. the EPR reactors, ITER, the ASTRID project called « fourth generation plant » and the Laser Méga Joule - they must be stoped immediately.

Finally, France's citizens have never been consulted on any decision concerning nuclear matters, military or not. Nuclear technology can be imposed only in a non-democratic society.

This is obvious for nuclear weapons. According to a poll conducted by IFOP on 7-9 October 2015: [three-quarters of citizens want to abolish them](#). And three out of four want a referendum on this question and would be willing to make a personal step to get it. This is a clear and massive rejection of France's policies.

For this reason (and not ruling out any other form of nonviolent action that might hasten an exit from nuclear technologies) we call on our fellow-citizens to approach their MPs and senators and make them lodge a referendum bill on this precise question: « Do you want France to negotiate and ratify with all the other states concerned a treaty to ban and completely eliminate all nuclear weapons, under mutual and international control that is strict and effective ? » (2)

For the first time the French people could make known whether or not they actually wish to entrust their security to nuclear arms and thus remain accomplices in the preparation of crimes against humanity, which could result in themselves being victims. That would be a start in reconquering democracy from the dictatorship of a handful of lobbyists who for decades have been taking decisions without us, in many domains, decisions that determine our living conditions and even our survival.

We want to live in a livable world, without nuclear weapons and nuclear plants.

(1) USA, Russia, UK, France and China officially ; Israel, India, Pakistan and North Korea unofficially.

(2) To this question, 74 % of those polled answered OUI, 26 % NON.

For a referendum bill to be declared valid by the Constitutional Council, it needs to be presented by at least 20% of parliamentarians (i.e. 185 MPs and senators out of 925) and have gathered electronically the support of at least 10% of enrolled voters. When informed of this situation and asked « Do you think you would support a referendum bill on the question you have just answered ? » 27% of those polled replied « yes certainly », and 47% replied « yes probably », which makes a total of 74% in favour.

PS:

Photograph taken on Sunday, 25 October 2015, after the departure of a part of the 70 participants.