

A reckless, dangerous attack

Ludo De Brabander, Belgium

US President Trump gave permission for a "decisive defensive action" in Iraq to assassinate Qasem Soleimani, an important Iranian military leader. A new escalation is imminent in the already very unstable region.

The attack happened in Baghdad, where Soleimani, of the Quds force, had just arrived. Quds is an elite unit of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, which is responsible for military operations outside of Iran. He is seen as one of the most powerful figures in Iran. There, a large number of people

have taken to the streets to protest against the execution of their leader.

The attack on Soleimani threatens to further escalate the situation in the already highly destabilized Middle East. Trump thereby underlines his reputation as a reckless president, who is unable to estimate the consequences of his actions. He has already ordered several military attacks in the Middle East, although he repeatedly promises to withdraw the US from expensive foreign conflicts.

In reality, the US military presence is almost as large as in recent months under President Obama. His approach threatens to inevitably lead to an even greater military deployment in the Middle East. Only recently did Washington send 750 extra soldiers to Iraq. The responses to this new American provocation are predictable.

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**NO WAR ON
IRAN!**



European Nuclear Disarmament: 2020 and beyond

If 2019 saw the development of further global dangers, from the wrecking of arms control deals to the threat of new nuclear weapons, it also saw the development of important, if modest, steps towards confronting these dangers.

Amongst the ongoing and inspiring efforts of peace and disarmament organisations across the continent of Europe, the idea of 'European Nuclear Disarmament' has had a hearing and the urgent need for coordinated effort to confront the nuclear threat has been acted upon.

European peace groups convened in Brussels twice in 2019 to plan and discuss. The first meeting, in mid-September, resulted in the agreement

of a 'European call for nuclear disarmament' signed by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, International Peace Bureau, International Network of Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility, Abolition 2000, International Trade Union Confederation and International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War (see *END Info 8*, October 2019 for the text). This meeting also agreed a common action against US bases housing nuclear missiles in Germany, Holland and Belgium. Details of this common action will be released in the next few weeks.

The second meeting took place in the European Parliament on 17 October. This meeting, titled 'Nuclear

Disarmament - how to make Europe and the World nuclear weapons free', was hosted by the GUE/NGL group of MEPs. As well as being an opportunity for a more in-depth discussion of the situation, this meeting was significant in being the first event of its kind in the European Parliament for some time (see *END Info 9*, November 2019 for more information).

The European movement will need to do a great deal more talking, thinking, debating and discussing in 2020. We will also need to rapidly increase our joint actions and other forms of cooperation. The reasons for this should be clear. 2020 opened with another clear demonstration of the great risks that

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Iran: continued from page 1...

Earlier this week, Washington threw oil on the fire with several drone attacks on five positions of Kataib Hezbollah, a pro-Iranian Shiite militia. 25 militants were killed. That in turn was a retribution for an attack on a US base in Iraq where an American soldier was killed. Abu Mahdi al Muhandis (the 'engineer'), the leader of Kataib Hezbollah, was one of the other victims of the American attack in which Soleimani died. Furious pro-Iranian paramilitaries responded to the drone attacks with an attack on the US embassy in Baghdad. In this vicious circle of violence, the chances are that the 25,000-member militia will avenge the death of its leader with attacks on US targets in the region.

The US is not well prepared for a large-scale escalation of the confrontation with Iran. Officially, it is said that Soleimani was responsible for numerous American deaths and that he planned new attacks. American military action ensures that the risk has risen sharply. Washington may have hoped to take advantage of the growing discontent among the Iraqi people, who have been taking to the streets for weeks against corruption, the dire economic situation and growing Iranian influence in Iraq. It is questionable whether the recent attack will weaken Iran's influence. On the home front, Trump is sitting with an

impeachment procedure on the eve of new presidential elections. The killing of Soleimani might not only provide a necessary distraction, but also strengthen the position of the American president by uniting the population against the 'threat' of Iran.

Israel has been driving for a hard confrontation with Iran for some time because of an alleged nuclear program in that country. Prime Minister Netanyahu, whose country has an extensive nuclear arsenal of its own, was one of the biggest opponents of the nuclear agreement that Iran concluded in 2015 with the P+1 (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council + Germany) and the EU. In May 2018, President Trump announced that the US is withdrawing from the nuclear agreement.

The US government recognized Jerusalem – against international law – as the capital of Israel, moved the US embassy to this symbolically holy city, recognized Israeli sovereignty on the Syrian Golan Heights and stated that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories will no longer all be illegal. In February 2019, US Secretary of State Pompeo echoed the message from the Israeli Prime Minister that peace and stability in the Middle East would not be possible without confronting Iran. After his re-election as leader of the Likud party at the start of 2020, Netanyahu promised

even more "historic achievements" in a six-point plan, including full US recognition of Israeli sovereignty in "Judea and Samaria" (the West Bank), a historic defense alliance with the US and a halt to Iran and its allies.

In recent years, Israel has intensified its attacks on pro-Iranian targets in Syria (more than 200 in 2017 and 2018). The Iraqi government accused Israel of several similar attacks in Iraq.

Finally, the Israeli and American unrest about growing Iranian influence in the region plays an important role. In Syria, President Bashar al-Assad rushed to help recapture the opposition areas. In Iraq, Tehran supports various political parties and militias and has developed an arsenal of short-range missiles. In Yemen, Iran provides support to the Houthis against Saudi Arabia. The country is also the mainstay of Hezbollah, a powerful Shiite militia in Lebanon. Tehran is trying to maintain the balance of power vis-à-vis Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates whose military spending is seven times higher (together \$90 billion in 2018) than Iran's (\$13 billion), while the other major opponent, Israel, is a nuclear weapons force with a defense budget of 16 billion dollars.

First published on www.vrede.be on 3 January 2020

Iran: Statements from Europe and Beyond

International Peace Bureau
**No to War – Statement on the
U.S. Assassination of General
Soleimani**

The illegal assassination of Iranian General Soleimani was an act of war by the United States that must not be tolerated. Whatever the crimes of Soleimani have been, the United States has no legal or moral right to take such unilateral action or for the recent bombings of five Iranian related facilities in Iraq and Syria. Iraq, Syria and Iran are sovereign nations and these U.S. attacks have been gross violations of international law, which prohibits such aggression. They have also humiliated and outraged the government and people of Iran. How

would the U.S. respond to its military installations in Japan or Korea being attacked or to the assassination of the U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

There is some concern that Soleimani's murder may prove to be the equivalent of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914 – that triggered World War I. Once the fires of war are lit, containing them is less than easy. We should have learned from the past that WAR IS NOT THE ANSWER.

Our task now is to do all that we can to prevent an escalation, a wider war, or even a nuclear war, in response to what will certainly be Iran's retaliation. We call immediately for urgent actions of the peace movement worldwide.

The U.S. is far from being an

innocent in the Middle East. We have witnessed 70 years of U.S. aggression – military, diplomatic, economic, cultural and otherwise – to enforce hegemony/control over our oil under their sands. The people of the Middle East continue to suffer the price of conflict and proxy wars. They deserve the support of the world for a new peace process.

Donald Trump argues that the preemptive assassination was necessary, but it should be remembered that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (the Iran nuclear deal) provided the foundation for a diplomatic resolution of U.S.-Iranian tensions. It is Trump's and Bolton's violation of this U.N. Agreement that has opened the maw into which the world may now be

falling. In response to a militia killing of a U.S. contractor, Trump and company have bombed and destroyed five military targets in Iraq and Syria, which resulted in a militant protest at the U.S. embassy, and that forces were gathering to retaliate.

Instead of initiating a war through the assassination of Soleimani, more rational leaders would have attempted to reverse the spiraling of military escalation through diplomacy, not murderous escalation.

We totally reject and abhor the foolhardy, belligerent and seriously dangerous actions of the U.S. in bringing the world even closer to a global conflict which would undoubtedly include the use of nuclear weapons. More war is not the answer. In April 1982 the 'Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues' – also known as the 'Palme Commission' – introduced the idea that "States can no longer seek security at each other's expense; it can be obtained only through cooperative undertakings". This concept of 'common security' is needed now more than ever as we face together the existential threats of climate change and nuclear war.

Furthermore, IPB calls on the UN Security Council to condemn the aggression of the U.S. IPB also urges the EU to refuse to support any war, to declare it is against any military attack on Iran and not to allow the U.S. to use military facilities and military bases on the territory of EU Member States.

It is time for action by the peace movement! Let us unite despite any political or social borders to avoid this disastrous war!

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

No War On Iran

Kate Hudson, CND General Secretary

The US killing of Iranian general Qasem Soleimani and six others in a drone strike in Iraq was an act of state terrorism – extra-judicial killings that are illegal under international law. The US acted as a rogue state and our government's support for this crime –



on the basis of the US right to self-defence – makes a mockery of international legal norms.

Trump's most recent statement – of 52 targets in the event of any Iranian retaliation – is shocking in the extreme, exposing the true level of barbarism of the Trump administration and putting him on a par with the Taliban and ISIL in terms of their war crimes against historic and cultural sites. The targets, says Trump, include 'some at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture.'

We remember the global horror at the Taliban's destruction, in 2001, of the 6th century Buddhas of Bamyan, protected by UNESCO world heritage status. That atrocity was intensified a hundred-fold by the subsequent actions of ISIL in Iraq, Syria and Libya. They destroyed countless cultural and religious sites, libraries, statuary and artifacts; the devastating and irreplaceable loss of a significant part of our shared global heritage.

Going down this same path, Trump has reached new depths of degradation. Each and every one of us must be mobilised in whatever way we can to oppose these atrocities.

Meanwhile, social media talks of World War 3, as Trump's political assassinations further destabilise the region. Maybe that is a premature speculation, but it is not without possibility. We should be in no doubt that the US has created the conditions for a much wider conflict, and their actions must be condemned by the entire international community.

The Middle East has been a war zone since the US/UK-led war on Iraq in 2003 – a war for oil and strategic regional control – justified by lies and trumped-up charges. At that time, Bush and Blair's case for war was based on supposed Iraqi possession of WMD, a false accusation. They soon moved to accuse Iran of similar

crimes, relating to nuclear weapons. IAEA inspectors proved that false, but since those days, the US has pursued that track in order to have an excuse to bring Iran down. With the signing of the Iran nuclear deal, the US could no longer ratchet up tensions against Iran on that basis, so it didn't take long for the US to withdraw from the deal, attempting to destroy the Iranian economy. Now they have simply resorted to murder, to provoke Iran and drive the region to war.

The great danger now is that Iran will finally decide that it needs to develop nuclear weapons to ensure its own security – much as North Korea did when it found itself part of Bush's Axis of Evil. It is profoundly to be hoped that it does not do so.

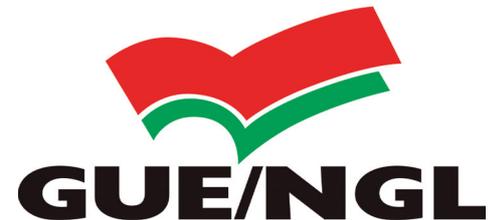
If the international community values peace and security – and indeed the future of our planet – then it must act to reign in Trump and put a stop to his fast track to disaster.

Our movement has opposed a war on Iran since it was first mooted after the disastrous attack on Iraq. Because of the strength and scale of the peace and anti-war movement at that time, we were able to get war off the agenda. But now it's back, and we must step up to the plate, nationally and internationally. Putting pressure on our government to oppose war on Iran is the key first step.

www.cnduk.org

*GUE/NGL Group, European
Parliament*

**Trump must be restrained to
prevent another Middle East War**



Left MEPs have called for continued dialogue with Iran as the nuclear deal was put on life support following the US strike that killed Iranian general Qassem Suleimani.

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MEP Connie Ernst (DIE LINKE, Germany), chair of the European Parliament's delegation for relations with Iran, said that Trump's sanctions and clandestine assassinations have emboldened conservative forces in the country:

"Trump is tearing down what has taken a lot of effort to build in the last 15 years. This is leading to increased insecurity from nuclear threats. In Iran, ultra-conservative forces are again on the rise.

"We demand an end to the United States' policy of escalation and call on European governments to continue engagement and dialogue."

GUE/NGL co-President Manon

Aubry (France Insoumise, France) called on the EU to end its silence and acquiescence with Trump's adventurism:

"Trump's irresponsible behaviour is threatening world peace. The European Union must firmly condemn this violation of international law and put all its weight behind avoiding any further escalation of violence."

Co-President Martin Schirdewan (DIE LINKE, Germany) warns of a catastrophic war otherwise:

"It is essential to prevent further escalation of violence or else there is a risk of full-blown war across the region with devastating consequences for

Europe.

"All parties have to abide by applicable international law and human rights. The same applies to the Trump administration. I urge Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to spare no effort in the cause of peace," Schirdewan concluded.

GUE/NGL MEPs have written to EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell calling on the EU to take a strong lead to de-escalate the situation, and their comments come on the heels of the Iraqi parliament's vote on Sunday which compelled the country's government "to work towards ending the presence of all foreign troops on Iraqi soil".

US Subs now armed with new Tactical Nuclear Warheads

The 2020 defence budget, now approved by the United States Congress and Senate, includes a relatively small spending commitment, but the consequences of that commitment are of some significance. \$19.6 million has been set aside to buy W76-2 warheads. This amount would be enough to purchase a fraction of one F-35A stealth fighter, yet the inclusion of this item delayed the passing of the budget by three months. Why the delay?

The W76-2 warhead is a less powerful version of the W76-1 warhead that is already deployed on US Trident II missiles. These missiles are in turn carried by the US Navy's Ohio-class submarines. The W76-1 warheads are roughly six times as powerful as the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

The W76-2 warhead is thought to be between a third and half as powerful as the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

Writing in *The National Interest* (21 Dec 2019), Sebastian Roblin explains the difference between the two versions of the W76 warhead: "the W76[-1] is a strategic weapon designed to obliterate hardened nuclear missile silos and annihilate large populated areas in an apocalyptic nuclear war - and more pointedly, to deter foes [sic] from initiating such a war - while the W76-2 is a tactical nuclear weapon

designed to hit individual military bases and formations on the battlefield."

This seems to be the definition of the 'usable' nuclear weapon that has been threatened by Trump and his military aides for some time. Roblin reports that the W76-2 has been "championed by officials ... as a means to give the U.S. military an additional tool with which to retaliate rapidly and proportionally [sic] to the tactical nuclear weapons possessed by Russia."

There are multiple issues with the deployment of such weapons. First, tactical nuclear weapons are not regulated by any treaty, so we should expect to see the Pantex plant in Texas kept busy. Second, it is likely that the threshold for using a tactical nuclear weapon of this type will actually be much lower than for bomb-carried nuclear devices with similar power or for strategic nuclear weapons.

Is it, for instance, beyond imagination that President Trump would use such a weapon to demonstrate 'superior power'? It is not. This is all the more concerning as any 'tactical nuclear strike' will surely trigger a strategic strike, not only because this is the twisted logic of nuclear escalation but because the missiles on which they are carried are identical to those carrying the W76-1 strategic warheads. This deployment is a dangerous turn of events.

Pax Christi



The decision by the Trump Administration to assassinate Iran's General Soleimani on Iraqi soil, reportedly by drone strike, has only succeeded in escalating tensions in the Middle East and put in jeopardy the lives of innocent men, women and children who will bear the brunt of back-and-forth retaliation between the US and Iran. This is another in a long string of failures by this administration to pursue diplomacy and act with prudence in addressing the complicated problems of the region, many of which have been exacerbated by or are the direct result of decades of bad decisions undertaken by the U.S. in the Middle East ...

We continue to demand that our political leaders seek real diplomatic and humanitarian solutions to the current crisis and refrain from further military confrontation with Iran. Actions like the assassination of General Soleimani only serve to destabilize the region further, fuel anti-American sentiment, and stoke the fires of extremism. Such actions go against everything we stand for as people of faith and are incompatible with the message of Jesus.

Call for protests against the Munich Security Conference on 15 February 2020

Everything must change!

No to war and destruction of the environment!

The Munich Security Conference (Siko) will be held from February 14th to 16th. Heads of state and government will be meeting with representatives of big business and the arms industry, with the military, intelligence agencies, and politicians. When they speak about 'security', it is not about peaceful solution to conflicts, as the conference chairman Wolfgang Ischinger claims, not about the security of people here, and not about the security of people elsewhere in the world, but about the dominance of the West with its capitalist economic system, based on the exploitation of human beings and nature.

We oppose the dominant policies because peace can only be achieved with democracy, social welfare, and environmental action. Everything must change! We are fighting for a society of solidarity, in which the focus is on the interests of the many, not the profits of the few. Our campaign alliance is part of worldwide movement for justice and peace. We reject all military threats and every war of aggression.

Our protest is directed first and foremost at the German government, which participates in illegal wars of aggression as part of NATO. There will be no peaceful and just world of

solidarity as long as NATO exists. But such a world is necessary and possible.

Let us act together for it! Stop the extremely dangerous policy of confrontation and marshaling of troops on the Russian border. Instead of saber-rattling, we need negotiations and civilian conflict resolution without blackmail and military threats. Peace in Europe is only possible together with, and not against Russia.

The madness of the arms race must be stopped. Disarmament is what is needed now. Instead of splurging billions on military armament and preparations for war, our tax money should be invested in the social-security systems, in education, and in climate protection.

Germany must not be an accomplice in any form in criminal wars of aggression. The US air base Ramstein, the other US military bases, and all the other US and NATO command centers in Germany must be closed down.

Stop all the arms exports! The deadly deals of the arms dealers and war profiteers must be stopped and forbidden. Instead of tolerating hate campaigns against people who are fleeing the wars waged with German weapons, we stand in solidarity with the refugees.

Germany must not participate in the nuclear-war strategy of the USA. The German government must not permit the stationing of intermediate-range missiles here; it must prohibit the stationing of American nuclear weapons, and sign the UN treaty banning nuclear weapons.

International law must be observed, and the United Nations, as the institution of collective security, must be strengthened.

Join the demonstration on
Saturday, 15 February 2020, at 1
p.m. at the Karlsplatz/Stachus in
Munich!

See:

www.sicherheitskonferenz.de/en/Call-Protests-Against-SIKO-2020
for more information.

alles muss sich ändern
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Verantwortlich im Sinne des Pressesetzes: Claus Schwan, Jährl.-Werk-Str. 3, 8000 München, Eigendruck im Selbstverlag; Gestaltung: Web und Verwertungskunst, Mainz von Thomas J. Richter

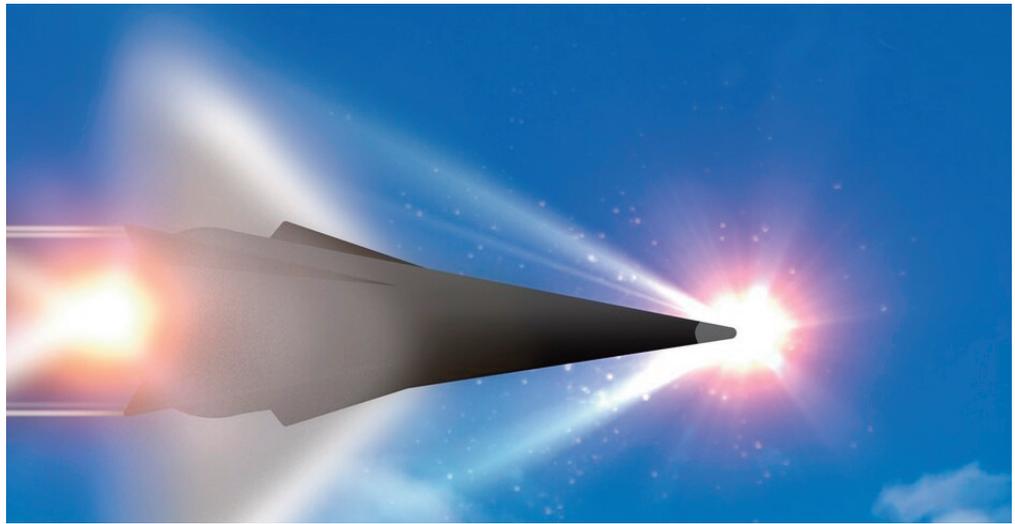
Hypersonic Missiles and the Arms Race

The U.S. “Defense Department is making headway to build a hypersonic weapons industry in the United States, and the Army is spearheading the manufacturing of a key component that will be used by all the services – the Common Hypersonic Glide Body” reported the *defensenews.com* website in late 2019.

On 27 December 2019, it was announced that Russia’s first regiment of Avangard hypersonic missiles has been put into service.

Although some doubts have been raised about whether the Avangard system is fully operational, or whether it’s in an advanced stage of testing, these reports highlight a major and concerning development in the developing arms race.

It is not simply the case that the U.S. and Russia are competing to rush such weapons into operation. On Russia’s part, it seems that the development of such weapons is a direct response to the development and extensive deployment of anti-missile defence capabilities by the U.S.



Hypersonic weapons are designed to be highly manoeuvrable in addition to travelling at a hypersonic speed (20 times faster than the speed of sound). Such a combination would make the Avangard “invulnerable to intercept by any existing and prospective missile defence means of the potential adversary”, as the Russian President put it.

There are three major issues to which the peace movements should be alert. First, the further instability that

these weapons create. Second, the risk of further escalation in terms of rhetoric and arms development. Third, the acceleration of the rate at which new technologies are being harnessed in weapons systems and the consequent costs.

At a time when the global system of arms control has been significantly undermined and the rate of development of new weapons systems is increasing, there appears to be no restraint in the new arms race.

New START must be extended!

New Start, the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, came into force 5 February 2011. If not renewed, it will expire at the start of 2021. New START functions by agreement of the United States and Russian and is the only remaining such Treaty after President Trump took the step of withdrawing from the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

In essence, New START: caps each country at 1,550 deployed long-range nuclear warheads; restricts each side to 700 deployed long-range nuclear delivery vehicles and limits each country to 800 deployed and non-deployed launchers and delivery systems.

The Treaty does not limit non-deployed warheads, of which there are many on each side, and neither does it limit research and development, missiles development or conventional weapons development.

Under the Treaty the United States and Russia can each carry out up to eighteen short-notice, on-site inspections of each other’s nuclear bases and support facilities annually.

Inspectors check the location of nuclear weapons, their deployment status, and the production of new ballistic missiles. This includes inspecting ballistic missiles and bombers to ensure the number of warheads they were declared to be carrying is accurate.

As with the US withdrawal from the INF Treaty and JCPOA, a concerted campaign is now underway to undermine New START with a view to adding it to the already burning ‘bonfire of treaties’.

‘Objections’ include: Russia is developing new nuclear weapons that will not be limited by New START; China is not included in the treaty, so the United States is handcuffing itself; the treaty does not limit Russia’s shorter-range nuclear systems and Russia has ‘cheated’ arms control rules.

The reality is that: some of these new weapons would fall under New START’s restrictions. Others would likely not be deployed until after the treaty expires, even if extended; Beijing has five times fewer nuclear

weapons than Washington and Moscow each do. Adding China to the treaty would not meaningfully limit its arsenal and would even leave room for it to grow; New START was intended to limit Russia’s most threatening nuclear weapons, the long-range ones that could strike the US homeland and the Trump administration has repeatedly assessed that Russia is complying with New START.

Whilst arms control is not the ultimate aim of nuclear abolitionists, it is a fact that treaties such as New START make the world a safer place. Further, the motive forces driving the US towards sabotaging yet another international treaty should not be ignored.

The aim is for the US to assert itself on the world stage as we shift to a multipolar order. The US is no longer the sole ‘global power’ and it is willing to take reckless measures in an effort to maintain its position. As the reckless measures stack up, the world becomes a more and more dangerous place. Scrapping New START will accelerate this process.

Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor

The 2019 report of the Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor was launched at a side event during the UN General Assembly in New York on 16 October. This watchdog measures progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons, by using the 2017 UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) as a yardstick. The report also evaluates the extent to which the policies and practices of all states comply with the prohibitions in the TPNW, regardless of whether they have joined the Treaty yet.

The 2019 report of the Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor, researched and published by the organization Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), identifies 31 mostly European states as "nuclear-weapon-implicating states". These are states that do not themselves possess nuclear weapons but have outsourced their nuclear postures to one or more nuclear-armed allies through arrangements of extended nuclear deterrence, or so-called "nuclear umbrellas". They have endorsed or acquiesced in the continued possession and potential use

of nuclear weapons on their behalf.

It is not only the nine nuclear-armed states that stand between the international community and its long-standing goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. So do the 31 nuclear-weapon-implicating states. Their role in assisting, encouraging, and inducing continued retention of nuclear weapons had not been given much attention prior to the adoption of the TPNW in the UN in 2017. The nine nuclear-armed states and the 31 nuclear-weapon-implicating states do not support the TPNW, and some of them actively oppose it. The majority of the world's states, however, stand behind the Treaty. The Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor categorizes a total of 135 countries as TPNW supporters.

As of October 2019, 32 states are full states parties to the TPNW, while another 48 states have signed it, but not yet ratified it. In addition, 55 countries have voted in favour of the Treaty in the UN.

Support for the TPNW is high in all regions apart from Europe, where 34 states (or 69%) today are opposed to

signing it. Only 17 countries in the world are undecided on the TPNW.

The TPNW will be binding, international law when 50 states have ratified it. The Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor shows that the Treaty is moving steadily towards early entry into force, despite obstructionism from nuclear-armed states. At the time of writing, the TPNW had, by a close margin, the second fastest speed of adherence of the treaties on weapons of mass destruction, though significantly slower than the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Even though the nuclear-armed states are resisting the TPNW, it is important that countries without nuclear weapons now are taking the lead and becoming the first states parties to the Treaty. In doing so they are creating a long-overdue norm that nuclear weapons are unacceptable, and an international framework for their elimination.

See <https://banmonitor.org/> for more information.

UK Elections: the view from Scotland

Statement from Scottish CND

We are pleased that Scotland's view on nuclear weapons is reflected in the election results with an overwhelming majority of our winning MPs having a clear anti-Trident stance. It is also encouraging that the issue of nuclear weapons came up so regularly during the campaign on doorsteps and at hustings. It is more of an issue for people than many of the politicians think.

Today is the beginning of new chapter in SCND's campaign for a nuclear-free Scotland working for a nuclear-free, anti-racist world, and responding appropriately to the climate emergency. An anti-nuclear anti-racist stance was explicit and high profile in the SNP campaign and the one remaining Labour MP in Scotland is known for his steadfast opposition to Trident.

The election results outwith Scotland are a sober reminder that

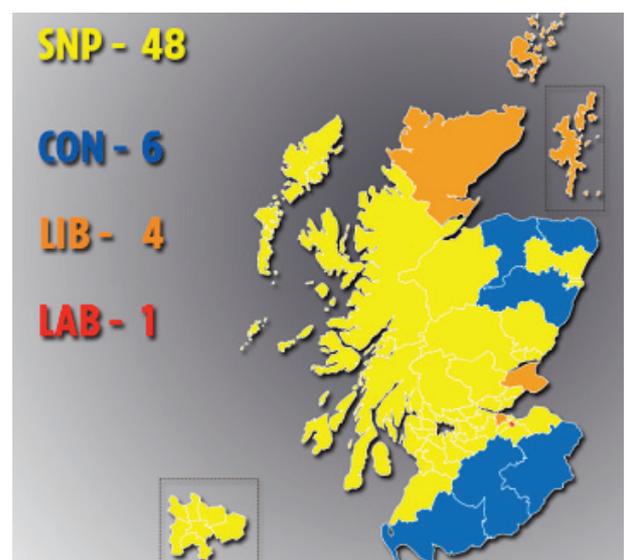
Scotland is currently part of a United Kingdom which is dead set on continuing to prioritise nuclear weapons at the expense of genuine social and economic security, and to wilfully ignore the planetary crisis. An independent Scotland will follow a better path than the road the UK is being led down.

The power is in our hands to rid the whole of the UK from the scourge of nuclear weapons and we should now be planning the vital and sequential steps towards that end. Meanwhile, we must live and act as part of that global groundswell for peace and human security that is behind the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. It's a sleeves up moment.

At the same time we share the feelings of distress, dismay and actual grief that so many are experiencing today and

we wish to express real and heartfelt solidarity with those who are even now picking themselves up to continue the struggle for equality, truth and justice. In particular we salute the courage and the persistence of those in the rest of the UK who work their socks off in the cause of nuclear disarmament in such a hostile climate. We are in this together.

www.banthebomb.org



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confront us. Trump's actions in Iraq could very easily have spiralled out of control, developing into an intense regional conflagration.

We have characterised the situation that developed over the course of 2018 and 2019 as amounting to a 'global tinderbox', where one small spark could set the world on fire. The US attack on Iran's second most powerful figure is an example of the kind of reckless and dangerous actions that could spark horrifying outcomes.

The deployment of new tactical war heads on US submarines (see page 4), ongoing development of hypersonic weapons (see page 6), the threat of 'useable' nuclear weapons, the trashing of the INF Treaty and the risk

that intermediate-range, nuclear capable missiles might be deployed in Europe once more clearly demonstrate that the global dangers we have analysed are being compounded by a new arms race.

This race is itself driven by the changing global political landscape but has been supercharged by technological and scientific developments. The nuclear weapon states are racing to exploit these technologies.

It is essential that our 'thinking and doing' extends to alternative proposals. For example, against Trump's demand that the European states withdraw from the Iran Deal, we should demand and work to ensure that this does not happen.

Against the development of a EU military formation and the extraordinary sums of money that will be spent on it, we should demand policies of common security and moves towards a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone with the money spent on peaceful development, tackling unemployment and social provision.

Against the arms race, in which European states will play a part, we should demand and develop policy on socially useful production and arms conversion. Where European governments have recognised the realities of the climate emergency, we should demand a 'climate audit' of all military operations.

European Nuclear Disarmament has much work to do! TU

The Spokesman

Journal of the *Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation*



Keep the Peace

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The next issue of *END Info* will be published in mid-February, 2020. Please send information, articles, pictures, news items and reports to tomunterrainer@russfound.org.

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