

Green Party Celebrates new UN Nuclear Weapons Treaty



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- **UK government should establish Global Britain as country committed to real security and peace**

As the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons has now been ratified by 50 UN Member States, it will come into full legal effect under International Law on 22 January 2021.

The Treaty requires signatories to 'never under any circumstances ... develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices'. It provides two legal pathways by which nations holding nuclear weapons, like the UK, can eliminate their arsenals, and sets out the principles for establishing sustainable legal, institutional and verification systems for treaty compliance and implementation.

Caroline Lucas, Green Party MP and longstanding supporter of nuclear disarmament said:

"This Treaty represents a new hope for the world in an era of increasing instability. The stigmatisation of certain categories of weapons has been a crucial outcome of previous international treaties prohibiting chemical weapons, biological weapons, antipersonnel landmines and cluster munitions under international law. Weapons that are outlawed are increasingly seen as illegitimate, so this international prohibition of nuclear weapons is an essential step towards their global elimination. There can be no justification for holding these weapons that threaten mass destruction and appalling suffering were they ever to be used. At this time when we are having to find a new place in the world, the UK should establish our role as a country committed to peace and global disarmament."

Green Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley said:

"I have written to Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab to request that he signs the Treaty in the name of the United Kingdom. As one of the three original signers of the 1970 Non-Proliferation Treaty, we have a particular responsibility to lead in fulfilling its binding legal requirements, including nuclear disarmament.

"Conservative politicians are fond of saying that they support multilateral disarmament, and yet the government has failed to participate so far. Now that this UN Treaty is about to become International Law, the government has an opportunity to show that their commitments are more than empty words."

Rebecca Johnson, Green Party Security, Peace and Defence Speaker and first

president of the International Campaign to Ban Nuclear Weapons (2017 Nobel Peace Laureate), said:

“The Treaty was taken forward by UN Members because they recognised the high risks and catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences of nuclear weapons. They looked at the facts and evidence and recognised that nuclear weapons do not deter and might be detonated by accident, intent or insanity. Far from being a security asset, nuclear weapons are an obstacle to peace and progress, and get in the way of collective security actions to tackle the real security threats we have on the ground from Covid to climate and the ecological emergencies facing us all.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

The UK is one of three depositary states for the 1970 Non-Proliferation [Treaty](#) (along with the United States and USSR, now Russia). In accordance with their NPT obligations, the UK and all signatories are required to ‘pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.’ It was on this basis that a large number of NPT states parties initiated the multilateral negotiating process (under UN General Assembly auspices) that led to the adoption on 7 July 2017 of the [UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#), which has so far been signed by 84 states and ratified by 50, and will enter into force on 22 January 2021.

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