

Greens criticise Labour for putting party interest above global disarmament



26 February 2021

The Green Party has criticised Labour's policy of "non-negotiable" support for nuclear weapons, which comes soon after a new global disarmament process.

Green Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley said:

"We deeply regret Labour's change of stance over nuclear weapons that do nothing to enhance our security and which no defence minister would ever be able to use.

"The language of making this policy 'non-negotiable' is highly provocative, coming shortly after a global process for multilateral, negotiated disarmament was agreed at the United Nations. It is precisely through negotiation that reductions in global nuclear weapons stockpiles have been achieved.

"Labour's decision to wrap itself in the flag and act tough on nuclear weapons is cynically designed to win back voters who deserted the party in 2019. It does nothing to address the UK's strategic security needs or to advance global disarmament."

Bartley wrote to Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab in October 2020, asking that he sign the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that came into effect on 22 January.

He continued:

"The Green Party is fully committed to the ICAN process and would welcome a public debate on this process of multilateral disarmament in the UK, as one of the few nuclear-armed states that could really advance the process of removing these immoral and dangerous weapons from our world.

“We would also support an engaged public debate on the future of NATO, which is a strategic alliance forged during the Cold War that is outdated in a world where threats to our safety are multi-polar. Both these issues should be debated by the public as part of the so-called integrated defence review that the government is undertaking.”

ENDS

Notes

1

Labour’s Shadow Defence Minister is expected to signal a change of policy on Trident and NATO during a speech later today:

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/feb/25/labour-to-state-non-negotiable-support-for-uks-nuclear-weapons>

2

The UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons came into force on 22nd January.

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