

WE HAVE PEACE IN MIND

- a response to the UK Integrated Review

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The UK government published a 111 page Integrated Review CP 403 on Tuesday, and point 3.1 confirms that the UK is abandoning the previous efforts to cap 225 warheads. We have once aspired to reduce warheads to a target of 180 by the mid-2020s, but contrary to those efforts, our country is now allowing an increase of nuclear weapon stockpile to rise to 260, and that the UK “reserves the right” to use nuclear weapons if other countries use “weapons of mass destruction” against us.

When challenged, those who support nuclear stockpile have always waved the “deterrent” flag and said that all those weapons are for self-defence, yet UK has not signed up to the “No First Use” agreement, which means that we as a people are willing to push the button when we are threatened.

The UK’s Trident nuclear programme now costs the UK around £2 billion a year to operate. Our Trident submarines already carry warheads that are equivalent to hundreds of the bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima. We do not, and according to the new Review, we will not know how much of an increase of these weapons will be deployed on our vessels.

The UN Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has taken decades to bring the world to restrict the increase in the number of nuclear weapons worldwide as well as the number of new nuclear-armed countries. We should be working to cool the situation instead of provoking a weapons race. UK’s new direction of increasing our stockpiling will NOT make us any safer. The world can only achieve shared security through dialogue, diplomacy and action with common interest in mind. As advocates for peace, we feel that the resource of this country should be assigned to peaceful and cooperative international relationships, To this end, we wish to rally our faith communities to insist for peaceful and cooperative relationships, and work together with other countries to address climate change, poverty, refugee relief, violence against women and other challenges which will make the world a better place for us and for our future generations.