

NET Nuclear  
Education Trust

Independent Survey & Inquiry  
The UK's Defence Needs and International  
Nuclear Disarmament Responsibilities



**The UK's National Defence Needs and  
International Nuclear  
Disarmament Responsibilities**

Volume II • Volume of evidence

## INTRODUCTION

The Nuclear Education Trust (NET) is an independent charity<sup>1</sup> whose remit is to further education amongst the public regarding nuclear weapons related issues through making grant awards and commissioning its own research. It is non-party political and does not advocate any one specific approach on nuclear disarmament issues.

This latest survey and inquiry grew out of the consensus that emerged at the launch in late 2012 of the Barrow report where it was pointed out by Lord Browne amongst others that the world in general is on a “disarmament curve” since the end of the Cold War - see table 1 for current nuclear stockpiles and ‘retired warheads’ - and that further specific information and consideration is therefore required on two key issues:

- What are the real future defence/security needs of the UK?
- What are the UK's international nuclear disarmament responsibilities?

NET believes that the answers to these two questions must be the starting points of any public debate on nuclear weapons generally and the successor to Trident in particular. Form must follow function – in other words military procurement decisions should follow from a rigorous analysis of security needs and disarmament responsibilities and there should be no assumption that any one particular weapons system is an absolute given.

NET therefore canvassed opinion on the current National Security Strategy and is publicising its findings in line with the recent statement by the Chair of the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy, which called *"for a public debate and cross-party discussion on the UK's place in the world and our national [security] priorities before we get embroiled in the next General Election campaign."*<sup>2</sup>

In total twenty interviews and submissions were made by current and past Defence Secretaries and Ministers, academics, think tanks, campaign groups and other stakeholders. Interviews took place - and written submissions were received - over the period September to December 2013. NET is extremely grateful for the input of all contributors and it has sought to reflect the range of views expressed in this report.

These have been made available as Volume 2 on the same day (11<sup>th</sup> February 2014) that a final report on the survey's findings was launched in the House of Commons.

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<sup>1</sup>Please see [www.nucleareducationtrust.org](http://www.nucleareducationtrust.org)

<sup>2</sup> See [JCNSS@parliament.uk](mailto:JCNSS@parliament.uk) announcement on 31/10/13

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- Jeremy Corbyn MP, Chair Parliamentary Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
- *Rear Admiral John Gower on behalf of Defence Secretary, the Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP*
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- Dr Kate Hudson, General Secretary Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
- Paul Ingram, Executive Director of BASIC, and Secretariat to the BASIC Trident Commission
- General Sir Mike Jackson, former Chief of General Staff (Defence)
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- Paul Nowak, Assistant General Secretary, Trade Union Congress
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- Rt Hon Sir Malcolm Rifkind MP, former Defence and Foreign Secretary
- Alison Seabeck MP, Shadow Defence Minister
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*Italics indicate evidence given by way of written submission rather than by an oral interview.*

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**Anonymous, broadsheet foreign correspondent**

Agreed summary of interview held 23 November 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

**1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

- *Can be helpful although reality is classification turned out to be wrong.*
- *In no way was Arab Spring predicted and moreover I think some threats eg. energy security too low*
- *Therefore worth has to prove itself. It would be interesting to see the rankings if the rankings disaggregated into impact and likelihood.*

**2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and Nato?**

- *Although we are slightly less dependent now than we were the reality is it is impossible to imagine the UK getting into any military conflict or making an intervention without the support of the USA*
- *There have been only two occasions in last thirty years when we have acted independently: in the Falklands in 1982 and Sierra Leone in 2001 (which actually started as a peacekeeping role but ended up as a very limited military intervention.)*
- *We are now tied militarily and diplomatically to USA*

**3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

- *My view is that they have an extremely limited military application. In the current way that warfare is conducted no use at all except that they create an aura of military prowess*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

- *Yes. However in its final stages it may be almost impossible to achieve. In other words once get down to threshold levels - the US and Russia having similar low numbers as the Chinese and ourselves - the next stage may be impossible.*

**5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**

- *Yes although I am sceptical about whether any measures undertaken by the UK would impact on global negotiations (see 7 later)*

**6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

- *The persuasive arguments for not going ahead with replacement for the Vanguards or indeed the removal of our deterrent are twofold.*

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- *First they actually offer no value added above and beyond the protection afforded to us by the USA's nuclear weapons.*
- *Second, when there are only finite resources we should be considering spending the considerable sums involved elsewhere eg on covert capability including special Rapid Reaction forces, on drones and on combatting cyber warfare.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

**7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

- *The US and Russia need to agree new warhead cuts and until they do nothing will happen multilaterally.*
- *A number of obstacles are blocking another deep cut as Obama would have liked to achieve in his second term. These include some basic disagreements regards the US missile defence shield which Russia fears is aimed at them and not at Iran as is claimed. There are a number of - too many - disagreements on a range of issues including Syria*
- *Russia also has weaker conventional forces and therefore tends to overcompensate by possession of nuclear weapons*

**8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

- *See 5 and 6 above but as far as the logjam between US and Russia there is very little UK can do.*

**9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

- *We are in a phase when there has been a lot of progress on WMD proliferation: in Syria with chemical weapons; and in Iran where hopeful will be interim deal struck.*
- *Not sure however these will lead to nuclear disarmament. At the end of the day it is about strategic approach of both USA and Russia and I see no immediate prospects of change*

**10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

- *Insufficient time to ask*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

**11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

- *Insufficient time to ask*

**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *Insufficient time to ask*

**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *To some extent this is an elite debate and an extremely complicated issue*

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- *My instinct is that the public are moving more and more towards getting rid of nuclear weapons but that may be in line with generally being averse to war/conflicts and not sure that is a good guide for policy makers.*

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**Rt Hon James Arbuthnot MP**  
**Chair, Defence Select Committee**

Agreed summary of interview held 21 October 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

- 1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**
  - *Helpful to classify the threats although whether it is absolutely correct is a matter of opinion*
  - *In my opinion a nuclear explosion in the above atmosphere should be a tier one threat as this would create the most unimaginable damage – a magnetic pulse which would destroy electronic infrastructure. Iran – who definitely want the bomb - and North Korea – which has it – might choose this method. (Please see the Defence Select Committee report from 2012 on emerging threats.)*
- 2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**
  - *We should do our utmost to work together. NATO is the cornerstone of our defence*
  - *Of course we should have the freedom to protect our own national interests but NATO strengthens that but we are not wholly dependent upon it which is right.*
- 3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**
  - *Our nuclear weapons perform various roles. Main one is to send a message that we are determined to retaliate if someone attacks us - although not sure how effective that message is.*
  - *Second chief role is to send message that we are a strong power and therefore to be taken seriously in all types of international negotiations.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**
  - *I do agree with it but as a wish rather than a realistic hope. You won't get a nuclear world until India and Pakistan issue is resolved and also the Middle East and Israel conflict and probably not until resolved North and South Korea issue. It's hard to see the technology being 'disinvented'.*
  - *However 70 years ago all those issues did not exist so it would be pessimistic to think could never happen.*
- 5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**
  - *Yes – I am a supporter of multilateralism but do not think we can take any further reductions alone*
  - *Our role as a world power is to talk to and persuade others eg Russia - which sees its nuclear arsenal as a weapon of intimidation of those within its sphere of influence (near its borders ie*

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*former southern states in Soviet Union) - to work towards a reduction in their stockpile of nuclear weapons and hence reduce tension.*

**6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

- *The UK should keep its weapons for its own security but at the same time I do believe that nuclear weapons are inherently unstable. Risks of mistakes are huge. In a recent India and Pakistan war-game exercise very rapidly they got to using nuclear weapons.*
- *This paradox – better for us to keep but also better if none existed - cannot be squared. However whilst true risks are high in fact our possession of nuclear weapons means we keep our powerful voice which can be a force for good. Note that when South Africa unilaterally disarmed its influence reduced.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

**7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

- *I want to see USA and Russia to reduce substantially its nuclear weapons. Not particularly Russia – both.*
- *The focus by US on ballistic missile defence systems is unhelpful – short range nuclear weapons should be the first to go*

**8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

- See 5 above

**9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

- *I am afraid I am rather gloomy and think these terms are fairly meaningless although the Arab Spring has made clear that in the Middle east the only issue is not Israel*
- *What is ultimately required is for confidence measures and a different approach from USA and Russia but in fact I am more pessimistic than in the years immediately following the end of the cold war. Now I carry an emergency space blanket and water filter with me wherever I go.*
- *Nuclear weapons are inherently unstable and so the risks are very high. Any accident/mistake would be horrendous and would require a new response. To reduce the risks one needs to have a powerful voice in the world.*

**10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

- See above

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

**11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

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**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *Not asked due to lack of time*

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Name Rt Hon Nick Brown MP  
former Chief Whip

Written evidence submitted on 19 December 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

- 1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

*Up to a point. I would add in the risk of a serious crisis in the financial service sector, with Governments unable or unwilling to coordinate their responses effectively.*

- 2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**

*I support Britain's enthusiastic engagement with NATO. Our policies of defence and intervention should be carefully coordinated with our allies.*

- 3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

*None of the threats identified in the Tier 1, Tier 2 or Tier 3 classifications, or my addition of a major financial services crisis, invites the use, independently and unilaterally, of United Kingdom nuclear weapons. I cannot envisage any situation where the United Kingdom would be left without allies and reliant on independently using a strategic nuclear weapon. There are arguments about 'international standing' and 'Britain's ticket to the top table', but I don't think they are strong enough on their own to justify the present policy.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

*Yes I agree with the policy. We should try harder to emphasise the desirability of achieving the original Non-Proliferation Treaty goals.*

- 5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**

Yes

- 6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

*The UK could meet its strategic security needs and international responsibilities through enthusiastic engagement with our military allies, principally through NATO and through emphasising the foreign relations, trade, overseas development and humanitarian aid and cultural parts of this agenda.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

- 7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

*I favour a single step approach, but would not oppose interim steps in a journey towards the same outcome.*

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- 8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

*The conditions pertain now. An independent strategic nuclear deterrent is a weapon system that we can't use and can't pay for without foregoing other items of public expenditure.*

- 9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are 'humanitarian disarmament', 'unacceptable harm' and Nuclear Free Zones useful notions/initiatives?)**

*I am neutral on this.*

- 10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

*The question is international in character. The United Kingdom does not exist in a vacuum. Support for International Agencies is in the United Kingdom's best interests.*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

- 11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

*This is an important consideration. Any weapon system has to be weighed against the likelihood of its helping to defend our national interests and the cost of procuring it. The present independent British nuclear deterrent fails on both tests.*

- 12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*There should be interventionist, alternative economic strategies for those parts of the UK that rely on aspects of the programme for their employment base.*

- 13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*It is important to explain and justify the nation's defence policies to its citizens. Whatever is decided should carry a reasonable measure of public support.*

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**Lord Des Browne of Ladyton  
former Defence Secretary**

Agreed summary of interview held 4 November 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

**1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

- *Broadly most people agree this is helpful but unless you have the detailed thinking that has informed the classification, it is difficult to comment in detail.*
- *That said it does seem right that a risk of a nuclear attack is pretty far down the list. That is consistent with my experience as I meet people around the world who when asked about the hierarchy of threats mention climate change, cyber-attack, organised crime, terrorism and trafficking. In fact often they do not discuss nuclear threats unless I raise the issue.*
- *I am as concerned as all others about an accident with nuclear weapons and of course about non-state actors – terrorists – getting hold of nuclear weapons or nuclear material, and using nuclear devices in populated areas. But of course owning nuclear weapons does not deter this.*
- *There is clearly no Russian threat now – that is not just my view but that of our Government. Is Russia a future threat? I am unimpressed by the argument that you can only make a decision if you can predict the future. No one ever can predict it with certainty. So saying “ah but we don't know Russia's future intent” is a true-ism but doesn't get us very far when facing real risks and finite resources today.*

*Of course Russia has the capability to threaten the UK and I understand that some people are worried about Russia's regression - that Putin is becoming more authoritarian, less support for human rights and more for investing in military.*

- *But some of these same things could be said about other countries around the world. And the USA has increased its military spending more.*
- *If the future threat is metric, who should be more threatened, Russia or the West? If I was a Russian and saw the rhetoric of the Tea Party which celebrates as an icon of freedom arms and even proposes to arm schoolteachers what should I think? Sometimes we need to see ourselves as others see us.*
- *The world is also now so different from when nuclear weapons were invented – hundreds of thousands of Russians live around the globe. They have enormous reach – not just owning football teams and newspapers here in London but also there are joint business ventures. There is also a dress and culture in Moscow which shows that country's people are on a journey which will not be stopped.*
- *Of course one cannot allay all fears but it is incomprehensible to me that this social change will regress. And if we are really concerned about a future threat from Russia then the answer is to make us and them more interdependent like we did to Germany after WW2.*
- *In our lives we face hazards all the time. One hazard that is increasingly discussed is that of biological attack. But do we therefore build hospitals to stand empty just in case?*

**2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**

- *Of course we live in an uncertain world and we do not start from a position where we don't have these weapons and have to choose whether to have them or not. On the contrary we are a nuclear state and that places on us obligations – to our allies - which are important.*

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- *We are all incrementalists and multilateralists now and its right that we have to have aspiration but also to act responsibly and find ways of disarming. I therefore am an uncomfortable and reluctant believer in the UK remaining a nuclear state. But at the same time we do need to go beyond a binary narrative for example where you are either for or against renewal.*
- 3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**
- *I was extremely disappointed that the Trident Alternatives Review has been seen as reinforcing that there is only one choice; for or against, yes or no.*
  - *If we replace Trident, like for like, on basis that we may need it in 50 years' time then the next generation will be faced with the same challenging decisions we face. We are the cold war generation and nuclear weapons are a cold war problem: we should take responsibility for resolving it not put that responsibility on our children or children's children.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**
- *The NPT is an extremely valuable, near universal treaty that has prevented proliferation but it remains a priority that signatories live up to its obligations.*
  - *In the 1960s it was predicted that there would be up to 40 nuclear armed states. Now nine. Some states had a programme or weapons themselves and gave up including all the countries that disaggregated from the Soviet Union, and South Africa and Brazil.*
  - *But future success of the NPT cannot rely on the non-nuclear states. Hence why I was instrumental in starting the P5 process*
  - *Setting a deadline for a nuclear free zone is unwise but there is an obligation on those in the political class to accept leadership responsibility. That is why in Government Margaret Beckett, Foreign Secretary, and I published steps to disarmament document before the 2010 NPT conference. I know many people are cynical but we did believe it and we did move us down the path.*
  - *This Government to their credit have further reduced our nuclear weapons and Cameron supports Global Zero although not going to the Oslo Conference was a mistake so there is some ground for optimism. The agenda now needs to be re-energised.*
  - *I don't accept the argument that because we cannot disinvent the knowledge then disarmament is not possible. Asbestos is no longer used although we still know how to make it, anti-personnel mines have been banned and so have other weapons of mass destruction e.g. chemical weapons. Of course strategic defence armaments are distinct from other munitions but the whole disinvention argument is a non-sequitor.*
- 5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**
- *In the UK debate is extremely polarised, this is neither necessary nor helpful*
  - *My position is that as a nuclear weapon power we will join multilateral negotiations and that when we do our stance cannot be we keep them or we disarm wholly. There must be – will be – negotiating positions.*

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- *The UK for example could break the red line of CASD. At the moment there is no threat yet we are on continuous patrol. Not convinced by argument that if stop cannot start again, or that they are needed to maintain morale of submariners (otherwise we would have 24/7 army manoeuvres). Nor does the argument that this wouldn't save money wash – as this isn't about saving money. We should do what's right.*
  - *I therefore no longer accept the arguments that justify CASD. To take that step would send an enormous signal and also make sense: we would no longer be protecting ourself from something that does not exist!*
- 6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**
- *See above*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

- 7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**
- *See above*
- 8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**
- *The positive conditions for moving towards nuclear disarmament now include*
    - *No threat*
    - *Political leadership that aspires to it including in USA and UK*
    - *We now have greater understanding of limits of military force*
    - *We face a huge challenge in public spending*
    - *We have a decision to make – in 2016*
  - *That decision must be based on the real risks and hazards we are trying to mitigate and an appraisal of whether what are phenomenally expensive (both in terms of time and resources) and 20<sup>th</sup> century weapons systems are appropriate.*
  - *If the same time was allocated for example to the real threat of cyber-attack then we would be more confident to deal with them*
  - *The terms of the debate must change. It must no longer be the case that if you hold this view then you are unfit to govern. The issues are very complicated and by simplifying issue to one choice only we are decreasing our capacity to deal with them.*
  - *For example I do not think that our credibility as a nuclear weapon state depends on CASD. If that were the case then Putin does not have a credible nuclear weapon, nor China, nor Pakistan.*
  - *I am willing to engage in a debate – and it was important to open up the debate - but I think the arguments of the others are not sustainable. Many of those are actually arguing from their conclusion not on the evidence.*
  - *It would send an enormous signal to the rest of the world if we were to give up CASD*

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**9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

- *The P5 process aims to find common ground to deliver on NPT responsibilities and the non-nuclear weapons states are lining up to say that they are not doing so.*
- *The 2010 NPT Action Plan agreed on steps towards a Middle East WMDNFZ. The UK, Russia and the US are thereby co-sponsoring states of the Conference, which was envisioned for 2012, which hopes to bring together all regional stakeholders to discuss a WMDNFZ in the Middle East. Non delivery of the Conference causes a problem now and a serious one in 2015*
- *After Obama speech in Prague it was envisaged that bilateral negotiations and that multilateral discussions would follow on. But Obama lost Congress and pushed Obamacare and he had to expend huge political capital to get the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty ratified, including a commitment to invest more in new nuclear weapons.*
- *Meanwhile no-one else really stepped up to help. Europeans – mostly eastern Europeans – stopped the withdrawal of short range nuclear weapons from all of Europe.*
- *Looking forward it is obviously impossible to predict the future but if Russia and US remove chemical weapons from Syria (despite being told how impossible it would be) and if the Iranian talks move forward under Rouhani then we will be in a different environment. One in which we must live up to our rhetoric and risk doing things differently.*
- *The UK has made progress in the past - reduced its launch “platforms” from three to one and its stockpile of weapons by 75% since the 1990s. To those who say made no difference, I would say that we don't know that. Other countries have taken disarmament actions.*
- *To those who say we got no thanks, I say we did them for strategic selfish reasons. Many weapons that we decommissioned were useless and had no strategic purpose or were actually unsafe.*
- *But the big question is, how was any of this multilateralist? None – entirely unilateralist. So why is unilateral such a pejorative word?*

**10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

- *Not asked due to lack of time*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

**11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

- *Not asked due to lack of time*

**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *Not asked due to lack of time*

**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *Not asked due to lack of time*

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**Peter Burt**  
Nuclear Information Service

Agreed summary of interview held 23 October 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

**1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

- *Putting risks into tiers is an oversimplification. Risks change at different times and affect different stakeholders in different ways. A continuous spectrum might be a better way of presenting the risks analysed in the National Security Strategy, and to aid understanding of the different factors influencing each risk they could be charted to show their likelihood and their consequence.*
- *The approach taken in preparing the National Security Strategy was largely to identify risks facing the British state, and not necessarily those which pose the greatest threats to its citizens. If threats to the British public had been given a greater weighting the Strategy would probably have placed more emphasis on risks posed by threats such as climate change, economic shocks, and pandemic disease, which are dangerous and tangible threats with significant potential impacts, rather than traditional military threats which are less diffuse and more easily defined, and have a higher profile in the National Security Strategy.*

**2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**

- *The reasons for UK's military dependency on the USA are historical and were heavily influenced by World War 2. During World War 2 and its aftermath the British state was militarily very dependent on the USA, with NATO subsequently emerging and continuing to bind the two nations together. NATO was very much a Cold War, post World War 2 construct but it is increasingly less relevant now, more than 20 years after the Cold War has ended and at a time when security threats are far more complex than they were then.*
- *The UK's model of international security is also largely based on the colonial notion that some countries have the authority to direct others how to conduct their affairs. This is the principle on which the UK operates in its role as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. This approach is often described by the government as 'meeting our international responsibilities' but in large part these 'responsibilities' are in reality interventions which are to the advantage of the United Kingdom, aimed at maintaining the international status quo, rather than aimed at peacebuilding or establishing fair and equal relations between states.*
- *There is growing resistance to this approach internationally and pressure for a reformed UN Security Council which is more representative of global interests. A model of Security Council reform which is commonly cited would give permanent representation to Brazil, Germany, India, Japan and an African state. This position is supported by the current Coalition government<sup>3</sup>. It will also be important to reform veto arrangements for permanent members, which have been widely abused.*
- *Almost all the military interventions which the UK government has been involved in over recent years are not defensive, but are overseas offensive operations. They are not directed at addressing threats to the UK or its citizens, but aim to impose order on states which are considered to be defying the 'international regime'. In some cases these interventions increase the risks to the British public rather than decrease them, for example through terrorism. British involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan are, of course, prime examples of this, driven in part by our commitments to the USA and NATO.*

3 See 'The Coalition: our programme for government' (2010) section 15, which states: "We support reform of the UN Security Council, including permanent seats for Japan, India, Germany, Brazil, and African representation". See also 'Outdated United Nations 'must reform'', warns Clegg: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-24304685>

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**3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

- *UK nuclear weapons have no meaningful role in any realistic security policy – nor have they ever done. Eric Schlosser's recent book 'Command and Control' makes it clear that there are significant risks from an accident involving nuclear weapons, and during the Cold War we came close to nuclear war more than once. Nuclear weapons also act as a driver for proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The risks of the UK possessing nuclear weapons far outweigh any benefits there might be. The sooner the UK renounces its nuclear weapons the better it will be for everyone, including the UK itself.*
- *We do not live in a world where there are unlimited resources so we must focus resources which have been allocated to security and prioritise addressing the threats most likely to happen. It is difficult to see what role UK nuclear weapons would have in any conflict between states – and their use would certainly be an appalling war crime. Some say that we need them to defend against a 'resurgent Russia', but Russia has acted in the main as a responsible member of the international community and has close trading links with Europe which are important for its economy. However imperfect Russia's democracy and governance is, it is not the Soviet Union and has no aggressive intentions towards Europe. The best approach for the UK to take to Russia is to increase trading links and secure strong economic relationships with Russia.*
- *China has similarly demonstrated that it wants to be a responsible world player and is not interested in military adventurism. China's ambitions for the next few decades will focus on internal development and maintaining its 'core interests' in the Asian region.*
- *Those who are worried about future threats from authoritarian overseas states must also accept that there is also a risk that politics in the UK over the fifty year life of Trident's replacement may also become authoritarian. There has been a steady drift to the political right in the UK for several decades with the BNP and UKIP getting stronger over the past few years. How safe would Britain and the world be in twenty year's time if Nigel Farage or Nick Griffin was in control of its nuclear weapons? It is selective thinking to construct one future threat overseas but ignore a similar risk at home.*
- *It is missing the point to say that we need nuclear weapons in case states that are painted as our enemies, such as Iran, also develop nuclear weapons. If we allow any other state to develop nuclear weapons we will have failed miserably in our aims of controlling the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the world will be a more dangerous place for everyone – even for states which have nuclear weapons. Paradoxically our own nuclear weapons programme will be one of the reasons for this failure. If we are worried about Iran, the solution is to make every effort to encourage Iran to moderate its fuel enrichment programme and to understand that by no conceivable measures is it in Iran's interest to develop nuclear weapons. This will mean taking a more constructive diplomatic approach to Iran and providing it with security guarantees.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

- *Yes this is a very important global vision which, in theory, everyone has signed up to, including President Obama, the UK government, and other NPT recognised nuclear armed states through their commitment to NPT conference declarations. But more than 40 years after the NPT came into force we are not even close to this goal and the number of nuclear armed states in the world has increased, not decreased. Foot-dragging by the nuclear armed states in meeting their nuclear disarmament commitments has been a major reason for this.*

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- *There is no reason at all why the world should not be free of nuclear weapons by 2050 but this will depend on political will and nations working together in an adult way to overcome many obstacles. So far this has been lacking.*
- *There are a number of road maps which set out viable strategies and plans which will lead us to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, most notably the report prepared in 2009 by the International Commission for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament<sup>4</sup>.*
- *The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has worked well for many years in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, but there are limits to what it will be able to achieve in future<sup>5</sup> and we need a new treaty – a Nuclear Weapons Convention – that will ban the use and eventually possession of nuclear weapons.*

### 5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?

- *Yes I do. Britain is actively pursuing this route and the government deserves credit for this. The UK government sees itself as the most 'forward leaning' nation on disarmament within the NPT signatories that have nuclear weapons. But Britain could do a lot more and its support for disarmament initiatives is fatally compromised by the Trident replacement programme. Since 2010 the UK has become involved with the other NPT recognised nuclear weapon states in the 'P5 process'<sup>6</sup> and this seems to have resulted in a loss of momentum and support for steps which would contribute to multilateral disarmament. For example, to show 'P5 solidarity', the UK did not participate in the 2013 Oslo conference on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons – which badly damaged the credibility of its claims to be a leader within the P5 on nuclear disarmament issues.*
- *Britain should give unqualified support for negotiation and early entry into force of a Nuclear Weapons Convention which would include a legally binding agreement outlawing the use and eventually the possession of nuclear weapons. The government's reasons for not doing this are weak and unconvincing and are seen by many as further evidence of foot-dragging and a lack of real commitment to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons.*

### 6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?

- *The UK should move away from its current approach of trying to maintain the status quo and keep the lid on problems by the use of force and instead address the root cause of security problems. A developing security model, which has been proposed by, for example, the Oxford Research group, proposes a 'Sustainable Security'<sup>7</sup> approach. This approach aims to address the causes of conflicts rather than just keep them under control. So, for example, the way to address energy security concerns is to act to increase energy efficiency and move to self-sufficient renewable sources of energy rather than intervene in Middle Eastern politics to secure oil supplies. The UK should gradually move over time towards this approach as a security strategy.*

## NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT

### 7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?

- *Practically there would have to be a series of small steps to get to a nuclear weapon free world, to ensure that relationships remain stable and that confidence builds up as the world moves towards zero. The UK has taken some such steps towards reducing the importance of nuclear weapons in its military posture, eg. abolishing its tactical nuclear weapons in the 1990s, and deserves credit for this.*

4 See [www.icnnd.org](http://www.icnnd.org)

5 See 'Deterrence, Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and UK Trident', John Simpson, 2013. <http://www.basicint.org/publications/john-simpson/2013/uk-trident>

6 See 'Great Expectations': The P5 Process and the Non-Proliferation Treaty'. Andrea Berger and Malcolm Chalmers. <http://www.rusi.org/publications/whitehallreports/ref:O5220A834AB3A4/>

7 See <http://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/ssp>

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- *There is no real reason why the UK could not abandon its nuclear weapons programme tomorrow, and we would be a lot safer and save a lot of money if we did so. We would also give a massive kick-start to international disarmament initiatives. However, British politicians are too timid and conservative to take this approach, so an alternative strategy which is in favour with some non-government organisations at the moment is to advocate a 'step by step' approach to disarmament by the UK in the hope that this will be more palatable to the Establishment.*
  - *Britain has a 'first use' policy so any initiative to move away from this could be positive, although on its own it would probably not have a major impact. China currently has a policy not to be the first nation to use nuclear weapons in a conflict, and this has in no way diminished its security.*
- 8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**
- *An obvious first step would be to take Trident submarines off a regime of constant nuclear patrols. There is no threat facing the UK which requires a round-the-clock ability to respond and halting constant patrols would not only reduce risks and build confidence by reducing the readiness at which nuclear weapons are held, but could also be used to gain disarmament concessions from other nations, if supported by a suitably strong political and diplomatic offensive.*
  - *We could take such steps tomorrow with no impact at all on the UK's security, but again, lack of political will is the problem. What is necessary to create that political will is an increasing groundswell of public opinion to show that nuclear disarmament would be a popular move which will win votes for parties which supported it.*
- 9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**
- *These concepts are helpful in taking the incrementalist approach forward – but after many years of trying they have not got us to where we want or need to be. There needs to be more – a global commitment that the use of nuclear weapons would be treated as a crime against humanity of the worst kind. There are signs that this is beginning to develop and, importantly, advocates for such a commitment are not letting the nuclear-armed states block or delay their plans, which is what has happened in the past. The nuclear-armed states are looking increasingly exposed and isolated over this issue, especially in the light of their ill-judged and ineffective boycott of the 2013 Oslo conference.*
  - *The Nuclear Free Zone movement has been helpful in the past but has probably secured all the easy wins. Current efforts to begin negotiations on a WMD free zone in the Middle East are probably too late and should have been taken forward when there were opportunities at the 2000 and 2005 NPT Review Conferences, but again, were blocked by the nuclear-armed states. We are now seeing the consequences of this in Syria. Despite my pessimistic view here, steps to stabilise relationships in the Middle East will have to be an important stage in creating the stability needed for the nuclear armed states to have the confidence to abandon their nuclear weapons.*
  - *Russia and USA could both get rid of their tactical nuclear weapons – either unilaterally or multilaterally. But the USA is paralysed by its political system and is unlikely to be able to take any meaningful steps to lead disarmament initiatives in the foreseeable future. Russia could do so and would get a lot of credit for doing so, but it perceives this would put it at a military disadvantage compared to NATO. Another option is for the USA and Russia to take further steps to reduce the numbers of strategic nuclear weapons they have deployed, although Russia has said it wishes other nuclear armed states to be involved in this process. China could show a welcome lead by ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in the face of inaction by the USA.*

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**10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

- *These international agencies have no genuine authority themselves and are governed by and accountable to the nations of the world who set their direction and policies. In the main, the Permanent Five members of the UN Security Council (who are all nuclear-armed) have disproportionate influence in their management, so such institutions are unlikely to be effective leaders towards disarmament. They can provide frameworks for discussion and monitoring but not launch initiatives of their own accord.*
- *Developments in the Syrian civil war have had some positive outcomes in that the UK and the USA were not able to intervene in the conflict; that Russia has shown a leadership role in finding a way forward to tackle the crisis, and that Syria has signed the Chemical Weapons Convention and agreed to destroy its chemical weapons with verification by chemical weapons inspectors. On the other hand, a war crime was committed when chemical weapons were used and it is still not clear who was responsible for this, let alone there being any prospect of bringing them to justice. The civil war is still raging on and short-term prospects of a cease-fire do not look encouraging.*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

**11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

- *This should be a factor - resources are scarce in the current economic climate and should be prioritised on the most important needs, not white elephant vanity projects like Trident replacement. There is little appetite among the public for spending money on new nuclear weapons at a time when public services are closing and facing cuts, and there's quite a bit of polling evidence to show that when the public are given the facts about the costs of nuclear weapons, support for replacing them drops considerably.*

**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *Jobs and employment should not be a factor in such decisions. Decisions should be taken on foreign policy and security grounds and not because of the employment implications. If the government wishes to use public money to create jobs, then pound for pound, spending on nuclear weapons and military projects is one of the least effective ways to create jobs, ranking far behind investment in health, education, or home energy improvement schemes.*
- *This is not to say that no regard should be had for those currently employed in the nuclear weapons sector. If we start planning now for a transition away from nuclear weapons work at places like Barrow and Aldermaston a shift to other employment options would be possible and the economic impacts of abandoning nuclear weapons would be far less painful.*

**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *It should be a factor. But let's not forget that nuclear weapons are the most dreadful of weapons of mass destruction - the most appalling weapons ever invented with the most destructive and cruellest impacts. There is, quite rightly, a norm among humans and governments that such weapons must never be used, and if the British people consider ourselves to be civilised, we should accept this and get rid of the nuclear weapons we hold.*
- *Public opinion is easily manipulated, especially in the UK where the media is powerful and conservative, and where the similarities between the main political parties are greater than the differences. So far we have not had an honest rational debate in this country on whether the UK needs nuclear weapons or not, and there are powerful players who intend to keep it that way.*

**Declaration of interest:**

Peter Burt is a trustee of the Nuclear Education Trust, which provided funding for this project.

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**Rt Hon Sir Menzies Campbell MP**  
Former Liberal Democrat foreign affairs spokesperson

Agreed summary of interview held 6 November 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

**1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

- *Helpful to have a ranking of this kind because it helps to set priorities.*
- *Has to be kept under review – too easy to assume priorities are unchangeable.*
- *Broadly speaking I agree with ranking of threats*

**2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**

- *As a sovereign country it is necessary for us to determine our own priorities and our own objectives*
- *Our relationship with the US is the strongest of all our allies and it is therefore necessary, and sensible, to co-ordinate our approach with them. However there may be some circumstances when our interests and theirs do not coincide.*
- *Our relationship should be as a "candid friend"*
- *NATO has consistently signed up to a strategic concept which represents universal values but as a sovereign country ultimately we must secure our interests in the best way possible*
- *The question of independence is rather semantic. The truth is we rely on the US for missiles, but the warheads are our own creation and the instructions to submarine commanders are the instructions of the British PM.*
- *Yes we have assigned nuclear capabilities to NATO but that can be recalled at any time.*

**3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

- *I don't subscribe to the view that retention of nuclear deterrent is essential to remain a permanent member of UN Security Council.*
- *However, like my party in present circumstances, I support a continued nuclear deterrent but I am enthusiastic about taking any opportunity that would allow us to take a step down the nuclear ladder without prejudice to our security.*
- *My attitude has always been one of utility. I understand but am not convinced by the moral arguments against a nuclear capability.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

- *Anyone with any understanding of the consequences of a nuclear exchange must be in favour of the NPT and its objective of a nuclear free world.*

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- *Whether will be achieved and when is a matter of debate but it is essential we maintain our efforts and fulfil our obligation under the NPT.*
  - *The Treaty review conferences have been very difficult but the Treaty sets a benchmark to judge country's actions*
- 5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**
- *US President Obama in his speech in Prague outlined a firm commitment to multilateralism and this is supported in the UK by the present government, the three main political parties and by individuals.*
- 6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**
- *Establish foreign policy objectives and responsibilities and cooperate with our allies.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

- 7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**
- *It is inevitable in my view that there would require interim steps. Any such steps taken require to be accompanied by confidence and security measures.*
- 8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**
- *See 3 and 6 above*
- 9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**
- *I am not in favour of adopting No First Use because it is a policy that can be switched back in 30 seconds*
  - *The kinds of things that should be explored and to which I am sympathetic are the arrangements which separate political decisions and military execution ie preclude early use of nuclear weapons.*
  - *However difficult to achieve a NFZ in Middle East, it would be an extremely positive development*
  - *As we have proved, a convention involving a WMD can be an effective tool. It may be difficult to achieve but a similar Convention on nuclear weapons could make a significant contribution to disarmament and stability.*
- 10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**
- *Both the UN and IAEA should necessarily be involved to provide a framework and monitoring*

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**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

**11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

- *The deployment of any defence system must always take account of the balance between costs, necessity and effectiveness. Nuclear weapons are no different.*

**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *If the opportunity were to present itself for genuine multilateral nuclear disarmament then to refuse to take forward on ground of jobs would be a mistake.*

**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *Democracies like the UK are governed by public opinion. It is hard to see how any government could maintain a military nuclear capability if public opinion was systematically and unconditionally opposed.*

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**Prof Michael Clarke**  
**RUSI**

Agreed summary of interview held 8 November 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

**1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

- *Yes, it is sensible that the risk register tries to be systematic but we (RUSI) told the MoD when they were consulting about it that people would not understand the differentiation they were trying to make between high impact and low likelihood.*
- *However, the three tier system is better than what was there previously in terms of prioritisation.*

**2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**

- *We are coming up to a strategic parting of the ways and towards a relationship which will be more transactional.*
- *America now thinks of Nato as not being their alliance and so to stay close to the USA means fewer European partnerships because their focus is now on Asia.*
- *Nato is an alliance of 28 countries, not an agile one but it gives a golf bag of capabilities. By default it is more powerful than the EU because it is a more coherent and structured entity.*
- *Nato is only a nuclear alliance because they feel it too hard an issue to broach. They may possible revisit it when the tactical systems go out of date, that is the aircraft not the ballistics.*

**3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

- *For current threats there is no relevance. But for future threats? Well it is the 'mere uncertainty' argument. It's utterly fallacious – if you told the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Treasury should fund 20 hospitals just in case there was a pandemic, he would laugh at you.*
- *Why should this argument be any more creditable when it comes to nuclear weapons?*
- *Britain and France are the worst proliferators and they provide the worst example to the world. We are physically more safe than at any other time in our history before.*
- *Referring to keeping a nuclear deterrent as an 'insurance policy' assumes that it is risk free.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

- *Yes I do. It's the base camp argument – we may not be able to see what the summit looks like but any progress is an improvement.*

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- *We could of course still have a world in which Russia, the USA AND China were allowed to have a highly regulated control of nuclear weapons. That would still be a real improvement.*
  - *Ironically, it will most probably be a nuclear exchange which increases the clamour for unilateral and multilateral disarmament.*
  - *It is not impossible to conceive of complete disarmament – 7 countries have disarmed: Kazakhstan, Belarus and Ukraine all had some form of nuclear weaponry which they gave up. Argentina and Brazil gave up their nuclear weapons programmes as did South Africa. They may have done so for cynical reasons but they showed that complete disarmament could happen.*
- 5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**
- *Yes absolutely. You know when the decision was taken to renew Trident in 2006, I was told by the former Chief of Staff, Lord Richard Dannatt that they only spent 10 minutes discussing the issue. That is shocking.*
  - *Britain has some advantages too – our diplomacy is generally well thought of and I have heard from trusted sources that we are well-respected in the UN too.*
  - *NATO has ducked the nuclear issue at least 3 times.*
- 6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**
- *We need to be more engaged in regional issues, in the Gulf States and in the Middle East. This engagement should also be on a humanitarian level.*
  - *We need to use our influence on Iran – there is evidence the sanctions have been effective and that the leadership has been frightened by the uprising in Syria and the subsequent crisis.*
  - *We also have to indicate a willingness to put our own nuclear weapons into the scope of any discussion, there has been a general inclination to exclude them by arguing that they are not part of a strategic consideration.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

- 7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**
- *It has to be staged, nobody is prepared to make a sudden big leap.*
  - *There needs to be an agreement between Russia and America, then this needs to extend to the P5, those on the Security Council, Britain, France and China and then this needs to extend to the other non-nuclear powers.*
  - *Britain and France are bad role models for other countries: they have nuclear weapons and so are safe but they don't allow others to have them.*
- 8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**
- *The conditions already prevail. Now is the best moment for disarmament. Future generations will not thank us for not dealing with the issue now.*

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- *Britain should use its Security Council role to push more. As I said before, we have never been safer than in this present era, where all threats that challenge are intangible ones like globalisation and cyber-terrorism.*
- 9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**
- *Nuclear is at the tip of the apex of arms weapons. One finds that if there is movement on nuclear disarmament, chemical and biological disarmament is on the table. It is worth hammering in on the nuclear issue.*
- 10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**
- *Well they are vital. However the IAEA should be given more power – if you traded in a squadron of fighter jets and gave those resources to the IAEA, they could increase their power tenfold. They have a very necessary role in enforcing authority and they should be given more power to do this.*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

- 11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**
- *Over the lifetime of the system, the budget can afford it.*
  - *However, Trident replacement will soak up around 30% of the equipment budget and in 2020-2024 when spending on Trident will be at its highest comparatively, there will be arguments over shortfall for other defence equipment.*
- 12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**
- *Well they always are but they shouldn't be.*
  - *For the sake of 3,000 jobs, are we going to tell our children that we didn't stop the annihilation of another country?*
- 13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**
- *Always, but then there has been a fairly consistent debate since 1950s. What is striking however is that at key moments, 1945 when we attained nuclear capabilities, 1961 when we got Polaris and in 2006 when the decision to upgrade Trident was taken, there was comparatively little debate about what were momentous issues.*

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**Jeremy Corbyn MP, Chair of Parliamentary CND**

Agreed summary of interview held 4 November 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

**1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

- *No I don't because think the nuclear threat is very low and we should align ourselves with the majority of the countries in the world who don't rely on, want or need nuclear weapons*
- *China is a very powerful economic power – and it has insecurity as do Russia and USA but interestingly it has not deployed any bases outside its borders.*
- *Russia is an interesting combination of loss of empire and feeling of deep nationalism – Putin plays into that. Syrian conflict does involve super powers by proxy in that Assad armed by Russian weapons but Russia has been guarantor of chemical weapons inspection and helped avert wider military intervention. [DOES THIS NEED REWRITING?]*
- *However threats of conflicts around the world are quite high. Nearly all are a result of minerals, nationalism and/or inequality. Congo is the best example where there is a nexus of all three: greater loss of life there than any other conflict in world currently.*
- *Our idea of threats are driven by the western media – hence no attention to the Congo but much on Syria and although of course that is extremely serious should remember that other major conflicts are ongoing eg. in Columbia, Sri Lanka, China and India.*
- *There are also threats of terrorism and although I do not condone terrorism people do need to try and understand why it occurs, for instance terrorism in UK may be driven by UK foreign policy.*

**2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**

- *The UK is completely dependent on NATO – it completely dictates our needs.*
- *How far it should is a different question. NATO has become a cipher for intervention by western states which is a changed role from what it was set up for. The Lisbon Treaty of late 2000s gave NATO a global role which one needs to question.*
- *Reform of NATO is very difficult – it determines that all members spend a certain high % of GDP on defence – more than 4% I think - and there is no accountability.*
- *The peace movement established the non-aligned movement in 1987 which was ahead of its time but much needed now.*

**3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

- *UK nuclear weapons are not in any way independent. Our ability to use them by ourselves is absolutely zero.*
- *They have no military role at all*

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**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**
- *This is the only way forward. There must be a sense of urgency again. The 5 nuclear states need to take steps to implement the NPT*
  - *Looking back getting a Test Ban Treaty and then the Non Proliferation Treaty and then an Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty was historically an incredible achievement*
  - *Failure to make progress regards Middle East NFZ means Egypt has withdrawn from NPT. Real concerns that a future Egypt might therefore develop its own weapon*
  - *Given Saudi Arabia's heavy involvement in Syria we need to be more urgent about a Middle East NFZ – serious steps need to be taken on NPT otherwise Brazil could decide to leave.*
  - *A Nuclear Free world could happen by 2050 – because of the economic trajectory of the US which cannot fund all its commitments. With a 17 trillion debt ceiling there will be a need to ask questions*
  - *After success with achievements in Africa, Central America and the Arctic the Middle East is potentially harder to achieve.*
- 5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**
- *Yes – interesting thing is that language of nuclear weapons has changed. In the past always emphasised multilateral but now leaders are under pressure to disarm.*
- 6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**
- *Our international responsibilities are to reduce weapons and global inequality – and of course also to protect ourselves by stopping bombs going off.*
  - *I may be suspicious of my new neighbours but the answer is not to build a fence but to meet and have dialogue. Similarly in International Relations the majorities – even of Israel and Iran – do not want to bomb each other. Diplomatic not military solutions are the way forward.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

- 7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**
- *Yes. No first use would be a good first step – puts everything on the back foot. No more renewal of existing systems is another essential first step.*
  - *There then needs to be an agreed process of decommissioning with year on year reductions across all nuclear states.*
  - *But also need to deal with proliferation: India and Pakistan relations have got better; N Korea now back in six party negotiations. Israel however now has 200 warheads which for a country with a population of 5million is disproportionate to say the least. Iran clearly has a number of people who seriously want to get a bomb – but also serious number who want to be part of western world. Hence why new President is engaging.*

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**8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

- *Removing the paranoia from all three political parties that cannot step outside of pro-nuclear "consensus". In Labour are very paranoid about what happened in the 1980s but not actually a nuclear election if you look at history. And the world is very different now.*
- *Pointing out the real costs of nuclear weapons – Trident renewal = HS2 x 2! And they have already spent £3billion despite no final decision being taken to go ahead.*
- *Mobilising people with the moral case. What are insecurities in the world – instability that can be dealt with but not by nuclear arms. It is poverty for example that is leading to migration.*
- *I also think that young people are not aware of what nuclear weapons are. Conscious of stop the war campaigns but CND membership tends to be older.*
- *Finally we do need to think about our defence needs more. We are an island of 65million – 1% of the world's population. Do we really need a military that has global reach? There is another way of going forward.*

**9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

- *Yes - See 7 above. I also think the fact that the Liberal Democrats have broken the cross party consensus and opted for a policy of Non Continuous at Sea Deterrence is very useful. It helps open up the debate domestically. However it is important to include foreign policy in any discussions of national strategic defence.*

**10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

- *The charter of the United Nations preamble is to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and it is obviously essential that the UN has an enormous role in steps towards nuclear disarmament. It already hosts the nuclear nonproliferation treaty and the International Atomic Energy Authority and has a crucial role of inspection in existing nuclear facilities, whether for nuclear power or weapons.*
- *I see the UN role as essential in this but there may be a need to rethink some aspects of the Nuclear Non Proliferation treaty to ensure that the non-declared nuclear weapon states (Israel, India Pakistan North Korea) have some positive role to play, rather than the current one of exclusion from the system because they were not nuclear weapons states at the foundation of the treaty system.*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

**11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

- *Significantly - see above*

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**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *I very much welcomed NET's previous report on the future of Barrow which made clear that for a fraction of the expenditure on renewing Trident other work could be generated where their brilliant skills could be deployed.*
- *Also need to be aware of how war affects the mental health of the armed forces. A disproportionate number are in prison or homes after being in the services. And in the USA more service personnel were killed by suicide than actually in the Vietnam conflict.*

**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *Public opinion must be a factor. Assumption often made that a majority pro nuclear. Although my constituency is not representative I have been elected 7 times. If people presented with the facts and the arguments entirely possible that they will agree different positions.*

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**Rear Admiral John Gower  
on behalf of Defence Secretary, the Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP**

**Written evidence submitted on 25 October 2013**



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Ms. Madeline Held  
Chair  
The Nuclear Education Trust  
162 Holloway Road  
London  
N7 8DQ

ACDS Nuc CB/(039/13)

25 October 2013

***Dear Ms. Held,***

Thank you for your letter of 17 September sent to the Secretary of State for Defence regarding the Nuclear Education Trust's project on the UK's national defence needs and its international nuclear disarmament responsibilities, and for your request for an interview with the Secretary of State for Defence. As these issues have been widely discussed in the Government's National Security Strategy (NSS), Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR), both published in 2010, and the White Paper on the Future of the United Kingdom's Nuclear Deterrent, published in 2006, an interview with the Secretary of State would not add much more to the information in these documents, the web links to which are at the end of this letter<sup>8</sup>. As the policy lead at my level for the nuclear issues covered in your letter the Secretary of State has asked me to respond in detail on his behalf.

With regard to your point about national defence needs, the 2010 NSS assessed that no state has currently the combination of capability and intent necessary to pose a conventional military threat to the territorial integrity of the UK. Both capability and intent can change, however, sometimes in a matter of only a few years. We have recognised this in our force development and strategic planning processes across the Government and particularly in Defence. These processes use illustrative future scenarios to identify potential risks and capability gaps across all environments and to consider how they might be mitigated. Among the risks listed in the NSS, for example, four have been identified as a high priority: international terrorism affecting the UK or its interests; hostile cyber-attacks against the UK; a significant natural hazard event; and an international military crisis.

In order to position the defence response to these risks, the 2010 SDSR set out a flexible, adaptable and affordable force structure that gives the UK the ability to deploy highly capable assets rapidly across a range of operating environments, whether on non-enduring interventions or on enduring stabilisation missions. The UK remains one of the very few countries able to deploy and sustain a credible sized force, together with its air and maritime enablers, almost anywhere in the world. The

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-national-security-strategy-a-strong-britain-in-an-age-of-uncertainty>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-strategic-defence-and-security-review-securing-britain-in-an-age-of-uncertainty>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-future-of-the-united-kingdoms-nuclear-deterrent-defence-white-paper-2006-cm-6994>

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2010 SDSR also underlined our commitment to maintaining and enhancing our counter-terrorism capabilities; developing a cyber-defence programme to protect against a range of threats; working with our partners across government on homeland resilience issues; and integrating diplomatic, intelligence and military capabilities to prevent and if necessary respond to military crises abroad. The 2010 SDSR also set out the need for a minimum effective nuclear deterrent as the ultimate means to deter the most extreme threats.

The next SDSR, expected in 2015, will provide an opportunity to take stock of progress since 2010 and to make any adjustments to reflect the fast-changing strategic context. Early preparations for this review are already well underway within MOD, with a wide-ranging programme of research and activity to define the future strategic context, consider the policy options in response and to build an evidence base that will support decision making during the next Review.

The UK's nuclear deterrent remains in place to serve as the ultimate means to deter the most extreme threats. The possession of a minimum effective nuclear deterrent provides an assurance that neither we nor our allies can be subjected in future to nuclear blackmail or a level of threat which would put at risk our vital interests or fundamentally constrain our foreign and security policy objectives for an increasingly stable and prosperous world. Successive British governments have judged it is in our national interests to retain the ultimate guarantee of national security provided by a minimum, independent, credible deterrent. They have also judged it would be rash to assume that the world we see today will be so much more secure in twenty or fifty years' time that we could reverse this judgement.

In making clear to potential adversaries that they cannot infringe our vital interests through extreme threat without compelling risk and in providing reassurance to our allies, our deterrent helps (has helped) prevent major war and contributes to the security backdrop that enables us to pursue a foreign policy that seeks to enhance international trust and security and to promote conflict resolution. Nuclear deterrent decisions have to be taken with decades in mind. The current decision horizon is to 2060. In that time we simply cannot rule out the risk either that a major direct nuclear threat to the UK's vital interests will re-emerge or that new states will emerge that possess a more limited nuclear capability, but one could pose a grave threat to our vital interests.

There is clearly now a reduced salience for nuclear weapons in UK strategy and the concept of them serving as war fighting weapons disappeared well before the end of the Cold War. But in a nuclear world, which has become more complicated due to the disappearance of the bipolar international system and the emergence of several nuclear powers in wake of the end of the Cold War, the need for the deterrent as a strategic tool of war-prevention clearly remains. Thus, nuclear disarmament should only take place if it promotes international stability and does not diminish any nation's security. To turn to the UK's international nuclear disarmament responsibilities, we recognise fully, that along with the other nuclear weapons states, we have particular responsibilities to fulfil. And we have a strong record on continual progress in nuclear disarmament.

The UK took advantage of the end of the Cold War to commence the steady reduction of its nuclear forces. This is a process that has been taking place for over 20 years. Our nuclear arsenal peaked in the late 1970s, standing at a total of around 450 warheads of varying types and delivery systems. The 1995 Statement of Defence Estimates stated that the UK would have fewer than 300 operationally available warheads as the UK reduced to just one nuclear delivery system (Ballistic Missile submarines or SSBNs). These further reduced in stages and in May 2010 the Government announced that that figure would reduce to no more than 120 operationally available warheads by the mid-2020; it also announced that in parallel the total stockpile of warheads (i.e. not just operationally available warheads) would reduce to no more than 180. Our nuclear arsenal is almost certainly the smallest of the five states recognised as nuclear weapons powers under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Moreover, British nuclear weapons have, for now almost twenty years, been de-targeted and placed on several days notice to fire.

In addition to having reduced our stockpile furthest, we have declared that we will not use, or threaten to use, nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states party to, and in compliance with their obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. We have also been clear that we would only consider using nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances of self-defence, including the defence of our NATO allies.

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The UK signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty on the day it opened for signature, was among the first to ratify, and has had a voluntary moratorium on testing since 1991, pending entry-into-force of the Treaty. And, unlike some other states that possess or are seeking to possess nuclear weapons, we have had a voluntary moratorium on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other explosive nuclear devices since 1995, pending the early negotiation of a workable Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty in the Conference on Disarmament. We have demonstrated a high level of transparency in making these announcements which clearly contribute toward creating the future conditions for a world without nuclear weapons.

It must be recognised, however, that unilateral action alone will only get us so far towards our goal of a world without nuclear weapons. It is only through moving forward together, through balanced and reciprocal disarmament, that we will achieve that goal. Having led by example through our own actions, we are working to help build the trust and mutual confidence between states needed to achieve multilateral nuclear disarmament. That is why the UK instigated a dialogue among the P5 states in London in 2009, where we reaffirmed our unconditional support for the Non-Proliferation Treaty and engaged in meaningful dialogue, aimed at building the mutual understanding needed to help us take forward our shared disarmament commitments. Since 2009, we have held further conferences – in Paris, Washington and Geneva. Each conference has built on the last and has fostered an environment where the P5 are increasingly building trust by discussing sensitive issues affecting national security on a confidential basis. The P5 will hold its fifth conference, hosted by China in Beijing, in 2014. We hope that the result will be greater transparency for all nations.

We also recognise the need to build trust between nuclear weapons states and non-nuclear weapons states – not just between nuclear weapons states themselves. Our work with Norway on the verification of warhead dismantlement exemplifies the UK approach. The UK is unique amongst the P5 in launching such initiatives with non-nuclear weapon states, and this plays a crucial part of our contribution towards building the right environment for multilateral disarmament.

Yours sincerely,

***John Gower***

J H J GOWER OBE  
Rear Admiral

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**Sir Nick Harvey MP**  
**Former Defence Minister**

Agreed summary of interview held 16 October 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

**1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

- *Yes, broadly speaking. I agree that nuclear is at most a Tier Two threat and that cyber-attack, for example, is a much more likely scenario.*

**2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and Nato?**

- *They must be dependent. I hope we will build up the European end of Nato but we are in no position to do anything about the scale of our own contribution in any way I can see for the foreseeable future. The US is rightly critical of the contribution some European countries make, that it is too low. However, the EU can do soft-power things.*
- *Our position as a Permanent Member does not allow us to be a bystander. We are part of an international coalition of the willing and we must be ready to take the burden with other members.*
- *In terms of our membership however, our national defence spend is due to go down below 2% by 2020, this is club-level membership and it will be hard to see how we can remain a member if we go below this figure.*

**3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

- *NATO is a nuclear alliance comprising the nuclear assets of the US, France and the UK and the few remaining Nato assets in Central Europe. Britain is committed to this.*
- *I am unsurprisingly an enthusiastic supporter of our policy regarding Trident which was passed at the Liberal Democrat party conference in September, for a reduced nuclear deterrent. This is a settled policy that will be in the 2015 manifesto.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

- *I certainly do, it is depressing how little progress has been made since 1968. However, we must remain objective and should not disparage the efforts of countries like the US and Russia who have gone through several rounds of removing stockpiles.*
- *It is true that five countries have developed nuclear capabilities: India, Pakistan, Israel, North Korea and possibly Iran, but in terms of proliferation, it could have been far worse. There has not been proliferation on a regional scale at least.*
- *Other nuclear powers are at a crossroads like Britain. If the Iranians were to weaponise, this could of course pull up the threshold status for others.*

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**5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**

- *Yes absolutely. We should continue to work with Norway on verification of decommissioning and continue selling this agenda at NPT conferences.*
- *If the UK as one of the original five nuclear powers were to, for example, adopt non CASD, put their weapons away or reduce them in some number, this would send a powerful message to others.*

**6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

- *We should focus our resources on Tier One threats. We would be better equipped if we were not investing so much on nuclear weapons.*
- *For example, we are vulnerable in terms of the cyber sphere, we do not have everything we need in terms of marine and spyware equipment to mitigate Tier One threats.*
- *We are also underprovided in our helicopter capabilities – a decent helicopter fleet is far more important for Britain than nuclear weapons and it could be used for real humanitarian good in disaster zones.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

**7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

- *I do not think you will convince the security establishment, the media and Parliament to transition in one step to a completely non-nuclear policy. However, I do think we could get there in steps.*
- *The Liberal Democrat proposal is that we should come off nuclear patrol but retain the capability and make sure future submarines are multi-purpose. This is a substantial first step, we would retain the capability but reduce the nuclear deterrent considerably.*

**8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

- *To “get out of the business altogether” you would have to see that the Russians and the Chinese and other nuclear states like North Korea were getting rid of their weapons or showing serious intent to do so. We would have to be in a position where we could mitigate our risk and be confident in the knowledge that those other nuclear powers were disarming.*
- *At the moment there is no power which has both the capacity and the intent to use nuclear weapons but this could of course change in the future.*

**9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

- *I would go back to what I said previously about Liberal Democrat policy to reduce our nuclear deterrent, our policy constitutes a significant step.*
- *On a party level, Jim Murphy (former Shadow Defence Secretary until the October reshuffle) is a dinosaur on these issues. I do not know what the new Shadow Defence Secretary will be like on Trident but it is fair to say that the Labour position may now soften and they may budge a little in the direction of our policy. In the event of a Lib-Lab coalition in 2015, it might then be easier to agree a government policy.*

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**10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

- *Absolutely, they have a role to play but disarmament will only happen on a bilateral basis, between America and Russia and China and other nuclear powers.*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

**11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

- *Cost should be a factor in a decision to replace Trident as shown by the Liberal Democrat policy on this.*

**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *I'm afraid they just should not be. I got in trouble in Barrow for my "Bahamas" comment, that one could give each worker £2m and send them on a long holiday to the Bahamas but I stand by the point I was making. This would not be unwelcome to employees as well as being affordable to the Government, given the scale of the potential savings.*

**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *There must be a public debate and the time for it is now. This is a golden opportunity for politicians to inform the public about nuclear weapons, in the two years before a general election.*
- *People have to be aware that the impact of nuclear weapons would be global. I do not think that the humanitarian impact is understood properly by the public.*

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**Dr Kate Hudson**  
**CND**

Agreed summary of interview held 29 October 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

**1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

- *This was a positive development from the Government. It appropriately recognised new threats – pandemics, terrorism and climate change and quite rightly downgraded state on state nuclear threat (although whether even merits tier two is a question.)*
- *What wasn't right was that this analysis did not then inform and link to a strategic assessment of Britain's nuclear weapons – one which would have matched the low level of threat to the spending on Trident, its opportunity cost and real strategic defence priorities. Instead it remains at a cold war level of spending and posture.*

**2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**

- *Across the range of Tier 1 threats quite clear that appropriate to work across the EU and share knowledge and resources. Co-operation across the globe is the way to meet global threats – not through military solutions.*
- *CND is not in favour of NATO to which Trident is assigned. It is a nuclear-armed US-dominated, increasingly interventionist alliance. The truth is that since Suez the special relationship with the USA is such that we have been a second lieutenant, drawn into wars, hoping to maintain a status we can no longer achieve independently. We have had to pay what Tony Blair called 'the blood price' for the special relationship with the US.*
- *It is time for that special relationship to end. And the Syria vote shows the relationship can change – our different stance has had global consequences with a diplomatic process now in place and progress being made.*

**3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

- *None. Our nuclear weapons are militarily useless and dangerous. They make us a target (non-nuclear states are not targeted). And they contribute to proliferation. Replacing Trident for example is an escalation.*
- *It is true we don't know what the world will be like in fifty years but we have to take steps now to shape the world we want to have. Escalation cannot help. If we proliferate we will lead others to do the same and we will certainly face the kind of world we least want to see in decades to come. And there is always the additional risk that nuclear weapons will be used by accident.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

- *Yes. NPT is an excellent aspiration – the only problem is there is no method. Hence the need for a nuclear weapons convention or global ban treaty. The NPT conference in 2000 did*

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*agree 13 practical steps but there was no way of enforcing them or a policing mechanism (unlike Chemical Weapons Convention which has more status and legal force).*

- *NPT has three key pillars. First those with nuclear weapons should disarm. Second those without will not try to get them. And third civilian nuclear power use is available to all signatories for civil energy purposes. Unfortunately and quite wrongly in 2005 Blair tried to amend the NPT by dropping the 13 practical steps and implying that the nuclear weapons states had the right to keep their nukes. This was an obstacle for a period but fortunately the 2012 Review Conference was able to take a more constructive approach.*
- *There could easily be a nuclear weapons convention or global ban treaty by 2050. The question is political will. That will is increasing from non-nuclear states to take steps towards a global ban, tiring of waiting for the nuclear weapons states to take any initiative. They have initiated a discussion around the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons use, notably from a conference in Oslo hosted by the Norwegian government. 120 states recently attended the Oslo summit which the UK boycotted. They should attend the next one – in Mexico in 2014. They claim to be multilateralists and should go in a spirit of good intent and not be negative and hostile to the process.*

**5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**

- *As above - the UK claims to be in favour of multilateral disarmament but when practical steps are proposed they avoid them.*

**6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

- *The UK should reassess its global role – stop thinking of itself as a global police person or lieutenant to US interests. Instead it needs to build on its cultural and development links which we do well and not see military intervention as key way of contributing to the world.*
- *Britain has got rid of some obsolete weapons but it has kept the gold standard version, which is what Trident is.*
- *Yes we have reduced the number of warheads but still 160 too many. It used to be that 225 used to be absolute minimum – now 160. A step in the right direction but the safest and best approach is to have none.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

**7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

- *It could be done in a number of ways, but one logical option would be for the USA and Russia to further simultaneously reduce their stockpiles then the other nuclear weapons states could put their arsenals into the reduction and then elimination process at the appropriate reduction level. Some progress has been made with this approach but it is currently derailed by the US's determination to advance its missile defence system - which of course were illegal during the cold war. Missile Defence gives the US the ability to gain nuclear supremacy – by having the capacity to launch a first strike against another nuclear state and knock out its retaliation with the missile defence system. In effect it removes 'mutually assured destruction' and ends the validity of 'deterrence'. Understandably Russia feels threatened by these developments.*

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- 8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**
- *See above – it should take action now eg. by cancelling Trident replacement.*
- 9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**
- *Ultimately there must be a nuclear weapons convention or treaty that bans nuclear weapons for ever. An agreement on No First Use would be a nice gesture and helpful. NCASD would also be a good if small step, potentially delaying a replacement decision.*
  - *A majority of the world is covered by binding state level nuclear weapons-free zones. This is a massively important initiative with global strategic significance. However unfortunately it has been denigrated, marginalised and ignored by the main 5 nuclear weapons states who also ignore the illegality of nuclear weapons and the wishes of the majority of the world.*
  - *At least NCASD is a better policy than Labour's and hopefully could be one Labour would adopt, especially if went into coalition with Liberal Democrats after next election, but CND want more.*
- 10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**
- *The UN is the body that has the legal right to oversee world security. Any ban must be drawn up within the UN framework, with the IAEA providing expertise regarding inspection and monitoring.*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

- 11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**
- *We shouldn't have nuclear weapons even if free. But the absolutely huge costs should give pause for thought and make sure question is asked: could that money be better spent, on meeting social needs or on genuinely useful and necessary defence spending.*
- 12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**
- *None, not least because as report after report has shown jobs in other sectors could be created for any workers displaced from the nuclear weapons industry – as NET showed at a fraction of the cost ie. £100 million could generate 1,000 jobs. Trident replacement is costing £100 billion in total.*
- 13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**
- *It must be a factor although humanitarian and legal considerations should also apply. Nuclear weapons are indiscriminate in nature and massive in their impact – their use which would cause millions of deaths almost all civilians is not only abhorrent but illegal, and immoral. They must be banned.*

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**Paul Ingram**  
**BASIC**

Agreed summary of interview held 21 October 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

**1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

- *There is a problem comparing apples and oranges ie. some are more everyday threats – such as cyber- but much lower impact. Others have very high impact but very low probability*
- *Have to say there is no current nuclear threat – also that threats are not dissociated from reality of, and consequences of, our own decisions ie. if we keep nuclear weapons then threat of use of nuclear weapons against us is higher*

**2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**

- *I don't think we should be obsessive about independence not least when you look at the threats that we face – almost all of which require an interdependent approach which means we need to team up for collective security*
- *NATO has proved incapable of evolving to meet today's threats – not surprising as formed during cold war for different realities. Best way for it to evolve would be for Russia to be invited to join but it a very Conservative institution*
- *It might be better to be honest about our relationship with America. In a sense we have become the 51<sup>st</sup> state and it might be better to be honest about that and in fact the Americans may prefer us to concentrate on what we are good at militarily and get out of nuclear weapons. There is a seminar on this very subject next month in Washington.*
- *From a US perspective a very close ally that has an independent nuclear deterrent on the basis it can't trust the Americans sends the wrong signal to other allies that extended deterrence is not reliable, and to states outside NATO that nuclear weapons have an ultimate insurance value that even a safe, close ally like Britain cannot survive without. This signalling undermines US and UK diplomacy, big time.*

**3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

- *I do not subscribe to idea that they provide the ultimate insurance – that requires us to believe that nuclear deterrence works in an age when nuclear weapons have not been used for 70 years. . Also remember we are only a target because we have them in the first place.*
- *Must also remember Britain only acquired nuclear weapons because the Labour Foreign Secretary felt humiliated by the Americans and wanted to be able to hold head high especially with USA. Later as has been evidenced by Oxford Research Group the principal reason for maintaining nuclear weapons was to have parity with France. In other words they are a political instrument not a military one.*

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**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

- *Yes – by 2050 not impossible for three reasons*
  - (i) *People are realising that nuclear weapons are too dangerous; and that military requirements are moving in the opposite direction – smart, stealthy weapons with more precise effects.*
  - (ii) *They are likely to be replaced by new technologies*
  - (iii) *In an increasingly globalised world wherein Russians live in London, China invests in UK again state on state weapons look increasingly obsolete*
- *Actually already people believe that nuclear weapons should not and could not be ever used. Modern warfare has developed – it is all smart weapons more focussed and with less collateral. Nuclear weapons are so twentieth century! For a world wherein one state seeks to take over another ie. WW2 but world not like that now.*
- *I am aware of the argument that nuclear weapons could become obsolete if all countries develop anti-ballistic missile systems but this also inherently destabilising – unless technology fully shared – and excessively expensive and unproven. And the issue of short range missiles still remains.*

**5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**

- *Yes – key question is how to do this. It's important to consider how we, and every other state, not just Russia and US, are going to create the conditions for multilateral disarmament. As a close ally of the US we have influence.*
- *Britain could delink status from nuclear weapons possession by renouncing their weapons. It would not make itself irrelevant if it did this in a self-conscious way. In fact India and Pakistan's possession of nuclear weapons has not enhanced their status so not true to say nuclear weapons give status nor that cannot be a security council if don't have them (indeed when set up the only one with nuclear weapons was USA)*
- *Britain could be a world leader – at NPT, at UN. Worried that potential positive impact of actions taken during 90s and 00s have been dissipated but then that's because taken for financial reasons and certainly not for declared disarmament reasons*

**6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

- *Not renewing Trident would be a good first step. See above and below too.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

**7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

- *A first step would be to stop CASD – there is no 24/7 threat so why have 24/7 patrols? In fact only NATO has CASD with five submarines (including 1 from UK) – certainly this number could be reduced. Russia does not have CASD and China maintains its far smaller nuclear arsenal with weapons separate from delivery systems*
- *I think there is a question regards whether in fact we have a minimum deterrent which I note is what is now claimed by the Government. Even if you only count the active warheads –*

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*those ready to be fired which is approximately 40 – this is still more than could be ever required even given Moscow's anti-ballistic missile system*

- *Steps could include not renewing Trident; a statement by the five nuclear states indicating how they plan to move towards a nuclear free world e.g. no first use which would be strong insurance for both nuclear weapon holding and non-nuclear weapon states. Currently first use is not only declared posture (by NATO and Russia) but implicitly threatened which is very dangerous ie. in first Iraq War suggested that if Saddam went over a line then might be used. But he did and never used anyway. But a "red lines with threats" approach is inherently risky as end up in situation that USA was vis a vis Syria – actually saved from having to take military action by UK which somewhat accidentally took a lead, and Russia.*

**8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

- *Greater awareness of the safety risks that nuclear weapons pose – as highlighted in Eric Schlosser's Command and Control book would also help*
- *An understanding that NCASD was sensible and could save huge sums of money. The argument that cannot adopt as going back to CASD at a time of tension would be escalating ignores the fact that at a time of increasing tension probably want to give a signal that we are to be taken seriously.*

**9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

- *All of these are helpful initiatives and there should be greater pressure on Israel to take part in middle east NFZ*
- *There should also be far more awareness of humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons*

**10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

- *Yes these have a key role to play. UN will in the end be the body which will create the security system that gives comfort/context for security.*
- *IAEA also has a key role and Syria shows the power of protocols and conventions*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

**11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

- *It is a factor in two ways. First politically as £100 billion is £100 billion and in a time of austerity the nuclear budget must be under far greater security – at least as much as a hospital budget. That is only sensible, proper and to be expected.*
- *Second, militarily as there is an opportunity cost for the MOD if it chooses – or not – to spend money on nuclear weapons then there is less – or more – for other services.*

**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *Jobs are a legitimate security concern for those employed in the industry and those communities dependent upon it.*
- *Needs to be made clear that if we turn towards disarmament then the employment opportunities would be greater*

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**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

- *We live in a democracy. If not willing to listen to public opinion then what are we defending?*
- *Unfortunately however the public are somewhat apathetic on this issue*

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**General Sir Mike Jackson  
Former Chief of General Staff (Defence)**

Agreed summary of interview held 22 October 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

**1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

*I am not sure what the priority is for ordering these threats. Are they ranked dependent on spending, effort, immediacy? The gravest threat is undoubtedly state-to-state hostility.*

*There is a balance to strike between present threats, immediate ones and threats which are not of themselves existential.*

*We need to distinguish between the likelihood of a threat on the one hand and the potential gravity of a threat on the other – a nuclear threat does not seem likely right now but if there were to be such a threat, this could threaten our existence.*

**2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and Nato?**

*There is an assumption hidden in that question that UK policies are dependent upon the USA or Nato.*

*I have a different understanding of the 'Special Relationship'. We may be the junior partner in this relationship but it is often to our political advantage to align our policy.*

*Strategically, our interests overlap or coincide more often than not. Our view of the world overlaps to a very considerable extent with the USA.*

**3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

*It is important to emphasise, as I have done many times, that nuclear weapons are not military in themselves. They are political. The function of a nuclear deterrent is to provide comprehensive insurance against a whole gamut of possible future threats.*

*There are no existential threats at the moment but that is not to say there will not be any in the future. Trident takes us to the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century but then who knows?*

*The nuclear genie is out of the bottle.*

*When I give talks, I often use the analogy of owning a car. If you like your car, why would you only insure the car third party?*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

*We are living in a world of nuclear proliferation. Britain cannot go much lower and maintain an effective deterrent. However, it is impossible for me to judge what will happen in the future.*

*I'm a supporter of the non-proliferation objective and a nuclear free world is a laudable ambition but is it achievable?*

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- 5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**

*Yes, Britain must play a role but this must always be done against a backdrop of caution regarding the possible future actions of other nuclear states.*

- 6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

*There needs to be a grand strategy. The last Defence Review was done in rather a hurry and there needs to be rigorous strategic planning, something Britain has traditionally not been very good at.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

- 7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

*If we get anywhere, it would have to be over the long-term and it would be incremental at best.*

- 8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

*Well there has to be an abolition of the human tendency to resort to violence. We have to pursue the use of peaceful means for the settlement of differences.*

*As I said before, there must be thorough, strategic planning and we must keep a broad capability, including nuclear, while we do this.*

- 9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

*I cannot say although we must always bear in mind that rogue states will not comply with international protocols.*

- 10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

*The UN are sadly not a very effective body but of course they must do what they can. The IAEA is doing a very good job and has proved the worth of its role but as I said before, the difficulty is rogue states who would not allow themselves to be constrained by such bodies.*

*Such agencies are not a panacea and they must work in conjunction with cooperative states. A homogenous approach is a shibboleth.*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

- 11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

*Cost is a complete red herring, it is a tiny fraction as a percentage of total governmental spending. Moreover, Liberal Democrat proposals to reduce costs through a smaller number of submarines and non CASD just won't work – this plan will increase the risk for Britain.*

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*However, through advances in technology in the future, a 3 boat solution might be acceptable. The same technologies might be achieved as a result of improved technologies.*

*There is also an argument to be made that Trident should be taken out of the Defence budget and safeguarded.*

**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*It is not a factor.*

**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*I am all for a well-informed public, we need to debate our need for Trident in the future. However, what we are desperately in need of is a strategic plan.*

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**Dr Rebecca Johnson  
Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy**

Written evidence submitted on 15 November 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

**1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

*My main critique is that the NSS treats some threats as if they are one-off events that might occur, rather than ongoing dangers that create threat-laden conditions, which may escalate into catastrophic disasters. Terrorism and transnational organised crime, including trafficking in weapons, people and drugs, feed each other and should be recognised as 'tier one' because they are ongoing and have cross-cutting impact that can drive or amplify other kinds of threats, including domestic and regional instability and attacks on civilian populations and our commercial life, transport, communications etc. Nuclear or other high risk military-industrial facilities are also highly vulnerable targets for state or non-state terrorism. Conventional attacks on these are more probable than attacks that actually use CBRN. These linked threats would have potentially high humanitarian impacts. For policy purposes these interlinked tier one threats require rather different approaches than the knee-jerk beefing up of terrorism laws and military capabilities that are the default reaction to threats perceived as one-off risks or events. Instead, increased and ongoing commitment of resources are needed for community and transnational policing – development of 'peace service' approaches rather than traditional armed forces.*

*The NSS was right to put "cyber-attacks" into tier one which should have included 'severe disruption to information', as these are related and could be used to create massive communications and even nuclear, transport and industrial accident scenarios. Electronic/cyber-attacks disrupting satellite information are more likely than direct physical attacks on satellites, which adversaries would likely eschew to avoid causing debris problems for all space users, including themselves. Attacks or accidents involving nuclear materials or facilities, whether 'civilian' or 'military', should be treated as tier one – the likelihood is significant and, as we've seen from Chernobyl and Fukushima, the impact on human security is very high.*

**2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**

*In terms of our real security, UK policies should not be dependent on the US and NATO. But current dependencies will not change unless NATO is either disbanded or fundamentally transformed from a nuclear-dependent military alliance into some kind of networked peace and emergency response service. As it stands, vested military and defence interests in the US, UK and other NATO countries ensure that UK and NATO policies remain heavily influenced by US perspectives.*

*Underlying this question is a core concern about the role and decision-making of NATO, which should have been disbanded as was the Warsaw Pact after the Cold War ended. NATO's expansion, search for military interoperability (meaning modernisation of force capabilities according to US-led criteria) and political dominance by its three nuclear-armed and heavily militarised governments (the US, UK and France) have been counterproductive to British and European security. NATO's structural weaknesses and consensus requirements mean that 'no change' inertia dominates over strategic assessments and decision-making, making it impossible even to jettison the out-dated nuclear weapons policies.*

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**3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

*Nuclear weapons have no credible place in national, regional and international security policies or responsibilities. None of the 2010 NSS likely threat scenarios would be averted by the UK having nuclear weapons, and some could be exacerbated. It is clear from strategic assessments undertaken by Britain, the US and other NATO countries that nuclear weapons are a security liability and not an asset. The UK's long term responsibilities would be best served by joining multilateral negotiations to prohibit nuclear weapons globally and embarking on genuine steps – with or without other nuclear-armed states – to eliminate (not just reduce while modernising) existing arsenals. This would entail announcing Britain's resolve to cease deploying Trident at sea, returning the missiles to the US and putting the warheads into secure storage pending their elimination. Scotland would undoubtedly allow Coulport's facilities to be used for this purpose, with the clear understanding that once the warheads were dismantled, the bases at Coulport and Faslane would be cleaned up and transferred to Scottish management. Trident would not be replaced, and AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield would focus resources on developing safe, secure methods to dismantle existing nuclear weapons as quickly and verifiably as practicable. Nuclear warhead transports should be minimised, taking place under the highest conditions of security for the sole purpose of warhead dismantlement and disposal.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

*Odd assumptions in this question, as UK governments seeking to replace Trident do not have defence policies consistent with the NPT. No-one should support defence policies that undermine UK obligations on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Trident replacement violates the clear commitment in the 2010 NPT Review Conference for "all States... to make special efforts to establish the necessary framework to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons".*

*Regrettably, the status accorded to 'nuclear weapon states' (NWS) under the NPT has undermined international efforts to achieve a credible disarmament programme to comply with the NPT's Article VI obligations. UK nuclear policies contribute to the problems that continue to erode the NPT.*

*Nearly 45 years after the NPT entered into force, Britain has joined the five NWS and four states outside the NPT in ignoring disarmament steps adopted through the NPT. In 2010, NPT Parties adopted a final document that addressed nuclear weapons use for the first time, and referenced the UN Secretary-General's proposals for nuclear disarmament, which recognised the need for additional treaties to embed and implement the NPT's disarmament obligations.*

*Frustrated with lack of progress, over 120 governments now support negotiations to get a treaty that will prohibit the use, deployment, production, transporting and stockpile of nuclear weapons (activities not addressed in the NPT), as well as requiring their total elimination. This multilateral initiative, which is gathering momentum through the United Nations (thereby including non-NPT states), builds on the NPT cornerstone, while transforming the legal and political context within which nuclear policy decisions are taken. The envisaged nuclear ban treaty would be multilaterally negotiated and create legal prohibitions and responsibilities that are equally applicable to all, regardless of their status under the NPT.*

*If the NWS boycott multilateral talks, as they boycotted the UN open-ended working group on nuclear disarmament (OEWG), a growing number of nuclear free governments are likely to move forward to establish the conditions and negotiate and conclude a nuclear ban treaty under international humanitarian law. This could be achieved by 2016, though it may take longer. Having learned lessons from the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), it is not now*

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*envisaged that this would be a detailed 'nuclear weapons convention' with a schedule for eliminating arsenals. By universalising prohibitions that were established only for non-nuclear states under the NPT, the envisaged nuclear ban treaty would establish much clearer legal requirements, conditions and pressure for the nuclear-armed states to undertake disarmament, which could be managed individually or jointly with other nuclear-armed states (unilaterally, bilaterally or plurilaterally, depending on the circumstances), with assistance from the IAEA and other appropriate inspection regimes.*

*The UK arsenal and others of similar size could probably be eliminated within five years of deciding to do so. The larger US and Russian arsenals might require 20 years or more before they are totally eliminated, during which time warheads would need to be held in safe and secure storage. For those who fear a nuclear free world, the physical possession of NW by certain countries – albeit un-deployed, pending dismantlement – could perhaps give existential reassurance for a significant period following adoption of a nuclear prohibition treaty, as the world moves on with deterring emerging threats and addressing the security challenges for the future.*

**5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**

*With the Conference on Disarmament (CD) paralysed, the UK joined with other NWS to undermine the disarmament step by step process agreed by NPT states in 2000. In this context the new humanitarian approach is the most promising multilateral approach in the pipeline. Britain and the other NWS need to stop undermining disarmament efforts and bring security, defence, foreign and domestic policies into line with non-proliferation and disarmament obligations.*

**6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

*Britain needs to overcome delusions of past military grandeur and adapt to being a medium power, with shared responsibilities. Our strategic interests require cooperative security, threat reduction, and defence arrangements, attuned more to EU policies for European cooperation and security with other nations than to NATO's military policies.*

*The US-UK 'special relationship' has been evoked to justify military interventions and wars, often in the name of 'international responsibilities' to 'protect'. These projections of military force for mistaken foreign and defence objectives have resulted in the deaths of many innocent people, damaged our security and standing in the world, and exacerbated terrorist threats at home and abroad. The strategic priority is to stop being so stupid and arrogant in our international relations. Britain needs to become more independent of the US and NATO, and recognise our interdependent connections with other nations, including potential adversaries. Healthier human and international relationships will lead to better security.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

**7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

*This is not a binary choice. Distinctions have to be made between achieving a legally binding nuclear prohibition treaty through a process of multilateral negotiations, and the various stages necessary to accomplish physical disarmament, including dealing with large stockpiles of nuclear materials and weapons. Nuclear disarmament was mandated by the NPT in 1968, but with no indication of how it should be achieved. Traditional arms control approaches identified "interim steps", which did not get far, and left nuclear proliferation and modernisation incentives unchanged. While the processes of eliminating all nuclear weapons will require various steps, a national decision by the UK to scrap and not replace Trident could shift the debate and kick start a more wide ranging disarmament process. Similarly, a concerted decision by a group of states to initiate treaty negotiations to prohibit NW would likely kick*

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*start genuine disarmament by removing the legal protections and incentives that nuclear-armed states hide behind.*

**8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

*The first condition is for one or more major political parties to move beyond the ideologies and rationalisations that perpetuate NW. There needs to be a public debate, involving public, professional, military and political analysts that are not burdened by vested interests, to examine the cases and implications for and against retaining nuclear weapons and replacing Trident. Reducing the role of political vanity and vested interests, and changing the discourse around NW, will give Britain more confidence for pursuing nuclear disarmament and more sustainable security. Effective disarmament steps will become obvious as soon as UK policy-makers acknowledge that NW are not necessary for deterrence or defence, that their very existence perpetually risks causing humanitarian catastrophe through accident or war, and that continuing to be politically dependent on them undermines our ability to meet UK security needs and work effectively with others to prevent nuclear proliferation, terrorism and nuclear accidents.*

**9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

*See the NPT's thirteen paragraph disarmament plan of action adopted in 2000 for the traditional agenda of long-standing interim steps. Had they been implemented in good faith, they would have gone a long way towards disarmament. But such 'step-by-step' plans were exposed as unrealistic in the absence of clear, binding legal and political obligations. Negotiating a multilateral NW prohibition treaty is increasingly viewed as the next achievable interim step, intended to: a) to create clearer legal obligations on nuclear weapons than provided by the NPT, including prohibitions that provide more effective barriers to further acquisition, modernisation and proliferation; and b) to remove the value, status and incentives attached to NW, making it illegal to use or deploy as well as to produce and proliferate them; and c) to create a regime that has much stronger tools, obligations and incentives to irreversibly disarm existing arsenals.*

*Arms control has largely served NWS interests, perpetuating a role for NW and retaining the high value, deterrence doctrines and strategic advantages they attached to them. By contrast, the "humanitarian disarmament approach" utilises recent developments in international law to stigmatise these WMD and ban them on grounds that they cause "unacceptable harm" and create "catastrophic humanitarian consequences". These terms are useful because they are recognised in international law and treaties that have succeeded in banning and substantially eliminating other weapons systems. Applying them to nuclear weapons reframes the disarmament context and provides an active leadership role for nuclear free governments and civil society, diminishing the prestige of nuclear-armed governments and their power to control and impede.*

**10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

*The UN continues to play an important role – most recently in the OEWG, which was convened in 2013 to discuss comprehensive and incremental nuclear disarmament approaches. Under the current NPT regime, the IAEA safeguards nuclear materials but lacks the legal powers and authority to verify weapon programmes. The CTBTO's international monitoring system to detect and deter nuclear explosions and the IAEA's nuclear inspections capabilities will undoubtedly contribute to overseeing and verifying the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear free world, but there will probably be a need to incorporate them into a legally constituted disarmament and verification institution – some kind of 'organisation for the prohibition of nuclear weapons' along the lines of the OPCW established by the CWC.*

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**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

**11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

*If nuclear weapons were capable of delivering the security benefits claimed by their supporters – i.e. deterring nuclear attacks, wars, providing insurance against unknown future threats etc - costs would not be in question. Cost is an issue because nuclear weapons are a huge investment with no real usefulness in strategic, military or security terms. Cost is a relevant issue because the government's "austerity" programme is taking from the NHS, education, social, environmental, transport and energy investment, and also the armed forces. While juxtaposing the cost of Trident replacement with education and NHS needs is useful for raising awareness of what is at stake, there may also be drawbacks.*

*The notion that continued nuclear dependence could be procured more cheaply with Trident light (2 or 3 subs) or another smaller nuclear option must be challenged. Since there is no compelling case for replacing Trident, the only sensible option is disarmament, not Trident light or sea-launched cruise. Any replacement NW version will still cost billions and produce no security benefits. Dismantling the current Trident system will not be cheap either, and the MoD needs to factor that in.*

**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*As we've seen with other MoD decisions that have cut regiments and ship-building, jobs are not significant factors in defence decisions, whether on NW or anything else. Defence jobs are treated as political footballs - sacrificed when expedient and sanctimoniously evoked to silence opposition to new military projects. Britain needs a real debate about alternatives to nuclear and defence jobs and how to regenerate maritime and port-based employment, such as reinvigorating manufacturing in commercial ship-building, renewable energy and engineering etc.*

**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*Nuclear decisions should be determined by a rational assessment of Britain's defence and security needs. Public opinion can be an important gauge of changing attitudes, but can also be manipulated (poll answers often depend on the questions). Civil society has already played an important role in raising awareness of nuclear dangers and developing national and international arguments and initiatives for creating a more secure future without nuclear weapons. British and international civil society has been ahead of most politicians in recognising that scrapping Trident would enhance and not undermine British, European or international security. Arguments and evidence from civil society and relevant interest groups such the armed forces, manufacturers, contractors and allies should all be factored into policy making, tested and intelligently evaluated. The most compelling case is now being made for Britain to end nuclear reliance and join multilateral efforts to stigmatise, ban and eliminate nuclear weapons.*

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**Sean Morris  
NFLA**

Written evidence submitted on 19 November 2013

**Nuclear Free Local Authorities Secretariat**

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19<sup>th</sup> November 2013

**NUCLEAR EDUCATION TRUST (NET) INQUIRY INTO THE UK'S NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS & INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Emailed: to [k.nagendran@connectpa.co.uk](mailto:k.nagendran@connectpa.co.uk)

I attach the response of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) to the NET inquiry into the UK's national defence needs and international nuclear disarmament responsibilities. As requested, I have kept the responses brief in reference to the 2,500 word limit.

The NFLA is a local government organisation made up of Councils from England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland which raises legitimate concerns and local issues of its members across all aspects of national and international nuclear policy. For further details on the remit of its work, please consult the NFLA website <http://www.nuclearpolicy.info>.

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

**1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

*The NFLA generally agrees with the Tier One and Tier Two assessment of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy. It has some concerns though that a (Tier Two) direct nuclear attack by a foreign state or proxy on the UK would have a much greater impact than a (Tier One) terrorist attack using a crude device ("a dirty bomb"), even though the likelihood of such an attack would be much lower.*

*In reference to the amount of public funds spent on the UK's nuclear weapons programme, in comparison to its work on combating terrorism, it would be interesting to compare these figures to see how the Government calculates the risk of either occurring.*

**2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**

*At present, the UK policies of defence or intervention are closely allied with those of the USA and NATO, and the UK has usually gone into a conflict situation when requested to do so by either parties. However, the recent decision by Parliament not to seek military intervention in Syria until the international support of a second United Nations resolution, despite significant military and American pressure to do so, sets an encouraging precedent for the future. The NFLA would argue that the UK policies should first and foremost be determined by public and Parliamentary consent, particularly in relation to a conflict that could ultimately use nuclear weapons.*

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**3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

*The NFLA was established in 1980 to call for a nuclear weapons free world. In its close association with the international Mayors for Peace organisation, led by Hiroshima and Nagasaki, that still remains its ultimate policy. The UK should seek to be pro-active to reduce its nuclear weapons stockpile and work in a much more determined fashion with other states for multilateral nuclear disarmament.*

*This should include cancelling the Trident replacement programme. The most effective way to deal with current and future threats is to improve the structure and effectiveness of the United Nations to seek more peaceful ways to deal with national and international conflicts.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

*The NFLA works in conjunction with the Mayors for Peace to seek a nuclear weapons free world and believes UK defence policy should have this as its clear and complete aim – as it is enshrined under the commitments of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Though the NPT is a far from perfect tool for multilateral nuclear disarmament, it has largely prevented a major escalation of states developing nuclear weapons programmes (India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea being the only states to transgress) and has helped with a number of states to disarm their nuclear programmes (e.g. South Africa, Libya, Brazil, former states of the Soviet Union outside Russia, such as Ukraine and Belarus).*

*The NFLA has consistently worked with Mayors for Peace to seek to develop concrete international moves to nuclear weapons disarmament by 2020 – the Mayors for Peace's '2020 Vision'. The imperative has to be to reduce and eventually abolish nuclear weapons as quickly as is possible and practical. It is the will of the vast majority of states in the world to see the Treaty fulfilled in its totality. It is always difficult to put a final date on a nuclear weapons free world, but the intransigence of the 'P5' states (the permanent members of the UN Security Council) and continuing concerns over instability in the Middle East give added impetus to speeding up this process. Reform of the United Nations structures could also assist making the NPT regime more effective.*

*In this area, the NFLA fully supports the Mayors for Peace's 'Good Faith Challenge' relating to Article 6 of the NPT. The UK Government are presently showing a lack of 'good faith' in its lack of co-operation with the NPT regime, in the same manner as the other 'P5' states. The UK Government refused to attend the 2013 UN Oslo Conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. It is also not actively participating in the meetings of the Open Ended Working Group on Nuclear Weapons Disarmament in the United Nations offices in Geneva. This raises questions about UK Government claims that it is being a leader within the 'P5' on disarmament initiatives.*

*Furthermore, in the recent historic United Nations General Assembly meeting on Nuclear Disarmament neither Prime Minister David Cameron nor the Foreign Minister William Hague were in attendance. The majority of other UN members had a President or Prime Minister in attendance at the meeting, such as the Irish Government, where Tánaiste and Foreign Minister Eamon Gilmore was present and took a very active role in the meeting, calling for more ambitious steps for a nuclear weapons free world.*

*Such behaviour emphasises that the UK government is not showing sufficient 'good faith' in its nuclear disarmament responsibilities. It should rather be seeking to encourage all the 'P5' states to engage in these worthwhile and important discussions which are attempting to lift the logjam within the NPT arrangements – this would comply with the Mayors for Peace 'Good Faith Challenge' and radically alter the sense of stalemate at the NPT.*

*NFLA certainly does not want to wait till 2030 or 2050 (or beyond) for full nuclear disarmament and continually calls for a swifter timetable through the NPT regime.*

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**5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**

*The NFLA believes this is an absolute imperative of UK Government foreign policy. The current Coalition Government's record on promoting multilateral nuclear disarmament in the past 3 years has been reasonable but not eye-catching. The 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review did include some significant "unilateral" measures on disarmament matters. However, there is an appearance that the UK seems to be working closely within the 'P5' to frustrate the wishes of non-nuclear weapon states to move the disarmament agenda at a much quicker pace. It is also disappointing that it has not taken an active part in the initiatives considering the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear weapon attack.*

**6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

*It should refocus its national security needs to deal with the much more complicated matters of dealing with non-state terrorism, cyber-attacks, natural disasters and the ongoing problems likely to be created by long-term climate change.*

*By taking a more prominent role in nuclear disarmament discussions it could refocus its military to deal with conventional defence matters, the protection of the civilian population and international peacekeeping operations. It should also take a leading role in the reform of the United Nations to bring greater equity in international relations.*

*The likely future threats to national security could well come from environmental degradation, technological complexities and health pandemics if medical science cannot keep up with germ mutations. This requires a wholesale review of defence policy and a more flexible national security policy. However, as long as nuclear weapons are retained and the causes of terrorism and the deep divisions remain in the world, the capacity of the military will also have to maintain a critical mass able to deal with lower level conflict. A nuclear weapons free world will significantly take the pressure off the military to deal with the other great complexities affecting our world.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

**7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

*The NFLA and the Mayors for Peace are clear that multilateral nuclear disarmament is not a straightforward matter, relying on a level of verification and complete trust on all sides. The NPT regime outlines a sensible process for disarmament. The NFLA endorse the Mayors for Peace's 'Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol' (see Appendix 1) as an excellent example of a staged process for meeting disarmament responsibilities.*

**8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

*The further development of nuclear weapon free zones is a useful starting point for multilateral disarmament. The promotion of a Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) free zone in the Middle East would be immensely useful for reducing tensions in this extremely troubled part of the world. An East Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone, bringing North Korea fully into a state of nuclear disarmament, would also create a greater sense of confidence.*

*The moves for effective verification of nuclear weapon disarmament, that the UK has been working with the Norwegian Government on, is one of the most positive areas of UK Government policy in this area. Such an initiative is useful in creating an important level of confidence and trust for all states will need to have in reducing nuclear weapons stockpiles.*

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*The UK has a relatively small amount of nuclear weapons in comparison with the United States and Russia. It should continue to encourage these two states to take the greatest steps to reduce their large stockpiles, and reduce its own stockpiles commensurately.*

*There also needs to be a more robust regime at the international level to ensure all levels of weapons grade plutonium is recorded and verified. The continuing number of incidents of illegal sales by groups of such materials is evidence that the international authorities do not have a complete handle on this issue, and it has to remain a major concern that a terrorist group could get control of such material. More concerted efforts to understand and deal with the causes of terrorism are also vital in developing the conditions that assist with nuclear weapons disarmament.*

### **9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

*Some interim steps that the UK could take include the following:*

- a. Encourage the 'P5' to engage in the international discussions over the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons in order to make all states aware of the urgent need for disarmament.*
- b. As noted above, seek to encourage the creation of a Middle East WMD Free Zone and an East Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone. This would be followed by diplomatic moves to de-escalate tensions in Kashmir to allow for concrete discussions on disarming nuclear weapons in the Indian sub-continent. The NFLA sees no negatives in the development of such a policy, as long as they are verifiable.*
- c. Reform the United Nations to make it more democratic in nature and responsive to its state members. This will not be an easy task after decades of power politics and improving trust within international diplomacy but the medium to long term benefits would be hugely positive. Like with the NPT regime, it requires a measure of constructive bargaining to create a greater sense of fairness.*
- d. 'Humanitarian disarmament' and 'unacceptable harm' are concepts which need greater definition but could be useful in improving trust and a more ethical foreign and defence policy. However, in the short term they will be difficult to define within the current defence paradigm.*

### **10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

*With sensible and practical reform, the UN could play the lead role in effective steps towards disarmament. The current illogical and unfair structure of the UN makes it extremely difficult to move disarmament policies beyond the interminably slow pace that they are currently at.*

*In the NFLA's view, the IAEA also needs to be reformed due to its role, within the NPT, to promote the peaceful use of nuclear power. The NFLA wants to see the medium term phasing out of nuclear power to ensure a safer, risk free and sustainable energy policy dominated by a wide renewable energy mix. The close partnership of the defence and civil nuclear industry has been pernicious in the ongoing weakness of the NPT regime.*

## **WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

### **11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

*In a time of huge financial austerity across much of the world, the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons is inevitably going to be a factor in decisions to disarm. The huge benefits that would be attained by diverting resources from nuclear weapons to conventional defence and other social and economic parts of the national budget goes without saying. The NFLA would always argue that there is a strong ethical and moral imperative in nuclear weapons disarmament and the extreme effects of these weapons should always necessitate against their use. This is why they remain ridiculous and irrational parts of UK defence policy. However, with the size of the UK's overall debt burden the cancelling of Trident replacement is not just a political, ethical and moral imperative, it is also economic good sense.*

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**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*The NFLA believe clearly and unequivocally that decisions on nuclear weapons should be based on foreign policy and security needs, not employment policies. It should be noted that, pound for pound, spending on nuclear weapons is one of the least cost effective ways of generating jobs.*

*The jobs and employment that maintain the UK's nuclear weapons programme are made up of highly skilled scientific and technical staff, which remains an asset to the UK economy. Significant employment opportunities will remain in any moves for nuclear weapons disarmament for many years to come and a core staff monitoring this process will need to be retained. For many years, the NFLA has also advocated sensible defence diversification to encourage such scientific and technical expertise to be harnessed for other useful parts of the economy. The NFLA outlined some examples of this in its previous submission to the NET on Trident replacement and the Barrow dockyard.*

*In the area of nuclear power for example, the NFLA believes there are many sustainable jobs in dealing with decommissioning and ongoing safe management of radioactive waste for decades and more to come. This includes the safe management of the UK's weapons usable plutonium stock. There are further opportunities with transferring such staff into the development of innovative and technical renewable alternatives to nuclear power which can be achieved with an innovative and imaginative industrial policy. The same can be said with jobs in the nuclear weapons programme, which has a similar jobs structure.*

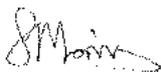
**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*NFLA notes that public information and full debate on the UK nuclear weapons programme has been limited, and often coloured by government views and the views of political parties rather than of an informed and objective discussion.*

*All fundamental political decisions should have a strong element of public consent. For many years the majority of the public has called for nuclear weapons disarmament and a conventional defence policy. It is surely time in this area for the UK Government to comply with the wishes of the public.*

*If you have any queries with this response please do not hesitate to get in touch with me using the details at the top of this letter.*

Yours sincerely,



Sean Morris  
NFLA Secretary

On behalf of the NFLA Steering Committee and with the full approval of the NFLA Chair and Vice Chairs

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**Appendix 1  
Mayors for Peace Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol**

**THE HIROSHIMA-NAGASAKI PROTOCOL  
A protocol complementary to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons for  
achieving a nuclear weapon-free world by the year 2020**

Desiring to establish an over-arching means of addressing nuclear disarmament in all its aspects so as to facilitate the fulfillment by States Parties of their obligations under Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and with a view to all states fulfilling the nuclear disarmament obligation found by the International Court of Justice in their 1996 advisory opinion on the legality of the use or threat of nuclear weapons.

Considering that continued exploitation of the discriminatory nature of the Treaty, wherein nuclear weapon States Parties are exempted from the prohibition on the acquisition of nuclear weapons, is incompatible with the pursuit in good faith of nuclear disarmament in all its aspects.

Considering further that full equality under international law must be re-established by the elimination of all nuclear arsenals as agreed in the 1995 Extension Conference decision on "Principles and Objectives".

**Article I**

1. The nuclear-weapon States Parties to this Protocol shall cease forthwith:
  - (a) all activities related to the acquisition of nuclear weapons which non-nuclear weapon States Parties are prohibited from pursuing under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;
  - (b) all activities which incorporate nuclear weapons into their military doctrines and practices; and shall place all nuclear weapons and weapon-usable fissile materials in safe and secure storage at the earliest possible date.
2. All other States Parties to this Protocol possessing weapons-usable fissile material shall take those steps required of the nuclear-weapon States in paragraph 1 which apply to their circumstances.

**Article II**

1. The States Parties to this Protocol shall pursue in good faith negotiations on achieving nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under the following two main sections: Section One negotiations will standardise and legally codify the measures taken under Article I, paragraph 1, (a) and (b). Section Two negotiations will address:
  - (c) the elimination of all nuclear weapons and related deployment systems, including delivery vehicles, launch platforms, and command and control systems.
  - (d) the elimination of all infrastructure associated with the acquisition of nuclear-weapon systems, including production and testing facilities, and of all weapon-usable fissile material stocks.
1. The negotiations called for in paragraph 1 shall have as their objective a Nuclear Weapons Convention or a comparable Framework Agreement. Negotiations shall begin forthwith and be pursued without interruption by all States Parties until this objective is achieved. A Secretariat for the negotiations shall be established that remains in operation until negotiations are concluded.
2. Every good faith effort shall be made to ensure that all measures related to Section One are agreed and implemented before or by 2015 and that all measures related to Section Two are agreed and implemented before or by 2020.
3. All measures contained or foreseen in the Nuclear Weapons Convention or Framework Agreement shall be subject to strict and effective international control and shall provide for international institutions capable of ensuring that the nuclear-weapon free world which is achieved can be maintained indefinitely.

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**Article III**

Nothing in this Protocol shall be interpreted as diminishing in anyway the nonproliferation obligations of any State Party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; including each State's obligation to cooperate in the establishment and operation of the international institutions of Article II, paragraph 4.

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**Paul Nowak  
TUC**

Agreed summary of interview held 2 October 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

- 1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

*As an organisation, we are committed to peace and the prevention of war.*

*The TUC has no formal policy on the National Security Strategy. On many of these issues unions will not have formal policy positions, and our members views will reflect those of the public more broadly.*

*However, I think the main thrust of the risk assessment in the Strategy is correct. The likelihood of Britain being invaded by a foreign power is remote; threats such as cybercrime and terrorism are much more real.*

- 2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**

*We think it important that the UK retains real independence over defence policy.*

*However, we would distinguish between policy and our obligations under international treaties – for example, we understand the UK's position as a NATO member, its responsibilities and obligations as a member of NATO, but we would not wish to see UK defence policy subsumed by NATO.*

- 3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

*In the TUC's Constitution, there is a general obligation to render assistance to workers throughout the world who are under threat. Working people suffer most in war and this would apply with particular force in nuclear war. The TUC is not a pacifistic organisation – unions played a crucial part in Britain's mobilisation in the Second World War for example, but we believe in the value of non-military interventions - diplomacy, economic sanctions and humanitarian assistance. War should never be the first resort.*

*Unions would support international efforts to secure managed non-proliferation and the reduction of nuclear weapons stocks.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

*This is not an issue the TUC and its unions would have considered in any detail or have formal policy on.*

- 5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**

*Yes, I am in favour of multilateral disarmament and Britain should play an active part in this process, and not be a passive recipient. It should make the case and advocate for disarmament.*

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During the recent TUC Congress, the CWU proposed the following motion regarding Trident which was adopted:

*“Public finances can also be improved by addressing tax avoidance and scrapping the replacement of Trident. Money saved by ending our nuclear weapons system could be used to sustain the process of defence diversification, vital to our manufacturing future. Such a policy would need to ensure that the jobs and skills of tens of thousands of workers in the sector were preserved”*

### **6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

*There are countries that are major economic powers without being nuclear powers.*

*There is a much wider question to be considered about Britain's role in the world, how should we and other countries use our economic strength?*

*Britain is the fourth biggest spender on defence but this is only a part of our security needs. There is a national security value in building long term strategic relationships with countries, particularly those in the developing world, for example by offering financial and humanitarian assistance.*

*Wherever possible, we should work through humanitarian solutions that do not require military input. This will help to bring stability in those countries and may remove the need for military intervention. This approach informed our recent General Council statement on Syria.*

## **NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

### **7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

*From our point of view, there needs to be interim steps. Long-term planning and investment is required and a broader industrial strategy needs to be factored in. For example, large defence contractors cannot switch from defence to civilian needs overnight but if they do, there is the potential for green energy and the potential to build and expand in different sectors.*

*The Government should have a proper industrial strategy, and defence diversification would have a role to play in this.*

*However, there are no simple gains, nor is conversion easy or quick. It would be key to engage the unions representing workers in the sector.*

### **8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

*Politicians have to plan ahead. For decades there was no industrial policy other than to support the City of London. The key thing the Government have to think about is this broader industrial strategy because a lack of an industrial and manufacturing strategy is holding Britain back.*

### **9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

*The Barrow report showed the value of thinking in longer timescales. Time must be allowed for industrial adjustment.*

*There needs to be active industrial policy steps so that it is clear what the future will look like for Barrow and anywhere else involved with the industry.*

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*Is there anything to stop Britain being an active proponent of nuclear disarmament? In a changed economic world, it is hard to justify having so much money tied up in weaponry we may never use.*

**10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

*Britain has invested a lot in the UN, in its value as an organisation, and the UN should take an active role in its efforts to reduce the levels of nuclear weapons. The TUC believes that the UN has an important and valuable role to play in securing and maintaining world peace.*

*The argument that Britain will lose its seat on the UN Security Council if it disarms is flawed. If having nuclear weapons is your sole reason for having a seat, what sort of message is that sending out? Does this encourage proliferation elsewhere? Nuclear weapons should not be a reason or justification for having a seat on the Security Council.*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

**11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

*In a changed world, where Britain is no longer an empire, it's hard to justify the expense of maintaining a deterrent we hopefully will never use. But, we have to consider carefully the impact on employment in the UK, and would need to mitigate any negative effects. This goes back to the need for a clear industrial strategy with defence diversification as an element of this.*

**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*A long-term industrial strategy is key.*

**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*We live in an imperfect democracy, the public need to be educated about nuclear weapons and we need an open public debate. Informed public debate must be a consideration in any decision.*

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**Dr Dan Plesch**  
Director of Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy, SOAS

Agreed summary of interview held 1 October 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

- 1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

*No. While nuclear weapons exist they remain a primary threat to our security – either by way of global war or by accident. Other self-destructive features of an industrial society including climate change are also Tier One threats.*

- 2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and Nato?**

*They should only be dependent insofar as it suits the UK's national interests. However it is clear that there is a realistic necessity for global cooperation against adversaries, especially through the UN.*

*Einstein, Mountbatten, Butler and more recent military theorists all share an understanding that it is a mistake to fit nuclear weapons into traditional alliances. History suggests that deterrence is an illusion can only be short term fix not a long term, sustainable state of affairs*

- 3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

*It is a foolish and short-sighted idea to think that any long period without nuclear weapons without a war is possible. The period 1815 to 1914 was the first century without a general European War since the time of Charlemagne and this was achieved without nuclear weapons and we know what happened at the end. There is a psychotic disconnect between politics and policy that allows this idea that nuclear weapons can be held indefinitely without war.*

*The problem of deterrence is that it always fails. Nuclear Deterrence is a concept born out of denial of the existential reality of nuclear weapons. .*

*After years of extremely disastrously managed international wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, we are asked to believe that conflicts involving nuclear weapons will be handled in different ways despite the nature of society and the same military culture of aggression and mistakes.*

*Moreover, there is no such thing as an independent British nuclear weapon, a fact which the former Defence Secretary Michael Portillo has admitted.. See my evidence to the Defence Select Committee in 2006.*

*There hasn't been a British nuclear weapon for over half a century. CND should stop talking about a British Nuclear Weapon. We have "rent-a-rockets" as Denis Healey once said.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

*Yes. Nuclear weapons constitute a threat to a great many countries by virtue of their capabilities. But also be aware that NPT commits to general disarmament too.*

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*The SCRAP (The **Strategic Concept for the Removal of Arms and Proliferation**) agenda advocates disarmament over a 10 year time frame.*

**5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**

*First, Britain needs to say that they don't have any independent nuclear weapons.*

*Second, they should face up to the fact that sharing weapons with America is a violation of Article 1 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.*

*Third, the UK should adopt the SCRAP weapons agenda*

**6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

*The UK should advocate international disarmament. It should also condemn deterrence (which incidentally CND does not do absolutely).*

*We should apply the proven set of mechanisms and principles that brought about the end of the cold war including mobilising public opinion and disarmament.*

*Syria is a good example, where a hitherto apparently obsolete Chemical Weapons Convention is being used to solve a seemingly intractable problem. We must make more of proposals such as the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and conventions which are currently being proposed by the Philippines in the UN Assembly regards SCRAP.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

**7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

*The Government need to acknowledge there is no British bomb, move away from the delusions of power which Britain still holds and accept that they may be strategically isolated from the US.*

*I gave evidence to the Defence Select Committee in 2006 and the Conservative MP Julian Lewis agreed by the end that Britain did not possess an independent nuclear weapon.*

*There then needs to be a draft negotiating text as set down in the SCRAP weapons agenda.*

**8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

*British people need to see that the focus on Trident is erroneous. Trident is not a British nuclear weapon even if the peace movement have made it a central part of their campaign.*

**9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

*It is a mistake to draw a distinction between a "chess" and a "go" approach, you need to do both. You need to have a mutually complementary strategy for example you need to change policy but a humanitarian approach is also necessary: to surround the enemy, isolate them and create a norm for disarmament in this way.*

*There are also people within elite organisations who don't support the traditional mainstream need to be nuclear, who are opposed to nuclear weapons. They include Nato Generals and US Generals. Their arguments are potentially particularly persuasive.*

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**10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

*They should help with reductions. It was reductions that played a critical role in ending the Cold War.*

*Scrapweapons organised an event at the UN in Geneva to introduce the SCRAP proposal to the diplomatic community. This was introduced by Director General Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Personal Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General to the Conference on Disarmament. Tokayev urged support for the proposal and said such initiatives helped to keep the issue of disarmament alive.*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

**11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

*This is irrelevant – cost makes no impact on those who do not agree with Trident and it is no consideration for those who do.*

*There are no grounds for complacency however. Look at Fukushima where there were warnings.*

**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*I am not inclined to be sympathetic to those making weapons of mass destruction. Alternatives can be found.*

**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*This is extremely important but the Government must be honest with the public.*

*It is nonsense to say that Britain has its place on the UN Security Council because of its supposed nuclear weapons: there is no legal or political basis for this, it is a fantasy as proven by the fact that when established only one country had nuclear weapons.*

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**Rt Hon Sir Malcolm Rifkind MP**  
former Defence and Foreign Secretary

Agreed summary of interview held 17 September 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

- 1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

*Yes – this reflects the changed international reality since the end of the cold war.*

*For now and foreseeable future no nuclear threat to UK.*

*The question is: is there a future threat?*

- 2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**

*Europe should be a contributor to the NATO nuclear shield and as one of the only two European countries with nuclear weapons we have to maintain our contribution*

*In this respect we are in a different position to a country say like Denmark who has never had nuclear weapons. If we stop contributing what would US decision makers and public make of that? Why would US maintain its contributions to European defence?*

*Is it legitimate to say we want NATO shield but not contribute? SNP facing that difficulty – finding not sustainable politically to want to have it both ways!*

- 3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

*Our nuclear weapons do contribute to the NATO umbrella which is required as long as Russia remains an authoritarian – not totalitarian but not fully democratic – country.*

*Also there are concerns about Iran and North Korea.*

*Also there can be no guarantee that USA will continue to support NATO. Already grumbings from Congress about lack of European contribution*

*Also there is no guarantee that NATO will be there in 30 to 40 years. If is not, this will have an inevitable impact on disarmament.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

*As a senior member of the Global Zero campaign yes – as long as we are talking about multilateral disarmament.*

*The only unilateral measures we should consider are those that pose no additional risk to ourselves*

*As to whether will ever happen – I don't know*

*It would be possible to significantly reduce the number of warheads from circa 23,000 now (95% owned by Russia and USA and still far more than could ever be required).*

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*If there was trust and co-operation as well as massive political will (for which there is some evidence from Obama) between USA and Russia feasible we could get to 500-1,000 on each side. Still enough for deterrence.*

*In fact moving to total abolition would be the more difficult stage as at that point – when each country only has a few – then cheating is a major problem (as if one country hid some whilst the other disarmed wholly they would then be at a disadvantage). Verification and trust are absolute key factors to get to zero nuclear weapons.*

**5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**

*The UK took a very active part in the 90s when we got rid of nuclear artillery and ensured the removal of US tactical weapons from bases. We also detargetted our submarines.*

*There was little recognition for these unilateral actions either domestically or internationally. France has actually expanded its arsenal and so too has China*

**6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

*As above: maintain a contribution to NATO*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

**7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

*Britain has moved to a position of minimum deterrence – minimum ownership of nuclear weapons. It is unique in only having submarine based weapons.*

*On CASD I had an open mind. I certainly accept that at present there is no need for it however I am told it is hugely convenient to the Navy, moving to NCASD would not save any significant sums and the question is would we lose something?*

*As our only nuclear weapons are submarine based they must be invulnerable to first strike or being holed up in Faslane. Some of these objections could be overcome under NCASD but not convinced any actual benefit. Those CASD are not loaded/ready anyway don't forget.*

**8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

*See above and below*

*It is not a convincing argument to talk about the loss of jobs at Barrow or that the United Kingdom would lose its place on the Security Council, given their veto on such a removal, as a reason not to disarm.*

**9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

*These are helpful – Nuclear Free Zones also minimise accidental discharge and the threat of theft of fissile material.*

*There is a case for removal of remaining tactical nuclear weapons – still based near Polish border.*

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**10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

*[Not asked/answered]*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

**11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*These are all factors but cannot be the only one.*

*Of course money is a factor – no one spends more than they have to*

*But if you are saying should we have nuclear weapons to keep jobs in Barrow, or not have them to save money then I disagree.*

*The real question is, do nuclear weapons contribute to our security or not. If you believe they do then this has to take precedence.*

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**Alison Seabeck MP  
Shadow Defence Minister**

Agreed summary of interview held 30 November 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

- 1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

*Ballpark, I do yes. There should probably be some discussion about moving some categories of threat around – for example, there is an increased level of a terrorist threat now, though it is classed in Tier 3.*

- 2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and Nato?**

*We are part of a partnership, we have to look at broader bilateral relations as well. However, we are not wholly dependent on Nato or the USA but it is becoming increasingly difficult to act alone.*

- 3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

*The USA are actually starting to shift their sphere of influence away from the Atlantic particularly – there will be a defence gap as a result which does give cause for concern.*

*It is difficult unilaterally for us to say we wouldn't continue to maintain our nuclear capability.*

*It is not a good argument to say that because Nato has continued to maintain CASD, we are in a position to disarm.*

**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

*We signed up so the answer is yes. We have a long way to go but if the UK Foreign Office and Defence departments and the UK Government continue to work together with others to encourage non-proliferation, it is entirely possible that at some point, nuclear weapons will become obsolete.*

- 5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**

*Yes as I said before, by working with other alliances.*

- 6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

*It is important to have a fully thought-through SDSR in 2015. The last one was beset by a number of issues and was too hastily thought-through.*

*Defence, International Development and Foreign Office departments need to be working to the same ends. This SDSR needs to take account of both necessary financial constraints and the range of our international responsibilities including the fact that we are pulling out of our combat role in Afghanistan next year.*

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*We need to have a thorough discussion about our defence equipment needs.*

*This needs to be a plan of what the country should do/might have to do in future.*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

- 7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

*Realistically, a negotiation with so many different players needs to have interim steps. There needs to be constant communication, encouraging openness and transparency.*

- 8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

*It has to be something as momentous as powers saying there is no longer a need for nuclear weapons. It often needs a catalyst for that change or prolonged negotiation.*

*In the event of a Labour-Liberal Democrat coalition in 2015, keeping Trident would be a redline for the Labour party just as it is in this coalition for the Conservative party.*

*The Main Gate decision will take place in 2016 but most of the preparatory work for renewal would have been done by then.*

- 9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

*There needs to be constant communication, encouraging openness and transparency between states.*

*There has to be a public debate because the debate has become polarised in recent years.*

*If there are significant steps, I would be very surprised if the public are not consulted.*

*Regarding whether 'Nuclear Free Zone' is a useful term, well, Greenwich used to be Nuclear Free Zone. It has to be meaningful to have impact.*

- 10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

*They are key, they have to be the honest brokers in the process. There is a discussion to be had about the shape of the UN going forward though. Possible changes in the system could lead to a wider debate.*

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

- 11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

*For strategic and capability reasons you want CASD and the price tag has to come with it.*

*Anyway, the cost over a 30 year period works out cheaper than Crossrail or HS2.*

- 12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

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*Any decision on nuclear weapons should be based on strategic defence need, after then we can consider other issues such as jobs*

*However if the UK were not to continue with a like-for-like replacement.it would be devastating to those communities, a government of any description would have to look at what they could do to support them*

*It is a big issue for Barrow and supply chain.*

**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*Public opinion is important and governments have opened up the debate on nuclear weapons.*

*Trident is an insurance package but without it, we are likely to spend more on other Defence capabilities.*

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**Admiral Lord West  
former Defence Minister**

Agreed summary of interview held on 15 October 2013

**NATIONAL DEFENCE NEEDS**

**1. Do you agree with the Tier One and Tier Two classification of threats in the Coalition's National Security Strategy?**

*I drafted the first national security strategy and began the process of identifying risk. This takes it further by looking at both impact and risk. However I do not believe it is a proper strategy – not certain it has identified our key national interests and the resultant issues that are essential to protect our nation and which are crucially important to the British people.*

*A national strategy should set out how the whole of Government – not just MOD but also Treasury, FCO, even DfE – should be involved in agreeing our key national interests and in how to work towards securing them.*

*The issue of migration is an example of one practical threat that with the numbers dying off Lampedusa needs to be considered from a security perspective. But also need to focus on what it is we are defending – freedom, the right to trade. The document is therefore incomplete.*

**2. How far should UK policies of defence or intervention be dependent on those of the USA and NATO?**

*Britain does have an independent deterrent of that I am certain (given my experience in the Navy) and whilst I believe this is useful – as it gives us the ultimate security of being immune from nuclear blackmail by another country – we will work within NATO, with other allies particularly the USA most of the time.*

*Alliances can have unpredictable consequences and conflicts have a habit of leading from one thing to another – as Syria might have done. I do accept that one of the dangers of existing nuclear weapons are that they may – in the heat and hate of war - be considered usable (by certain nations) in a tactical or battlefield way when nothing should be further from reality. Nuclear weapons were not designed as war-fighting weapons.*

**3. What role, if any, would UK nuclear weapons have with regards to current and future threats as well as long term responsibilities?**

*Our deterrent is a minimum one and acts as ultimate security against nuclear blackmail. They are clearly not usable against many of the current threats to our security – terrorism and cyber-attack – but they do provide that ultimate insurance at actually a very small cost: in general just 3% of the MOD budget.*

*It is true that all conflicts since WW2 have been “wars of choice” – Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Iraq – and we have not faced a threat to our sovereignty (with exception of Falklands) but we could. Hence retain nuclear weapons.*

*We could adopt “a ten year rule policy” – wherein it is envisaged that there is no threat of state on state attack in the next ten years which is probably true - and say therefore disarm. But events change – look what happened to that policy in the 1930s - and moreover what about after ten years. Nuclear weapons are a long term insurance policy and current Trident nuclear weapons system will continue to at least 2042 so need to plan to replace the submarines.*

*Despite their inherent risks it is safer for UK to keep them for now. Should also be remembered that nuclear weapons helped stop a real world war and thereby enabled us to win the cold war.*

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**INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 4. Do you agree with overall defence policy which moves towards a nuclear free world as envisaged in the Non-Proliferation Treaty? (Do you think this will happen by 2050, 3000, ever?)**

*Yes. Nuclear weapons do present an existential threat to humanity. They have the ability to wipe out whole countries so the world would therefore be safer if they did not exist.*

*Safety issues such as those highlighted recently by Eric Schlosser do also worry me. I also think there is a risk that they are considered usable in way that in 1939 the British would not have thought firebombing German cities was acceptable but ultimately did.*

*Is a nuclear free world possible? – probably not by 2030 but possibly by 2050. I can envisage a situation where the capacity to rebuild a nuclear weapon remains but the situation of not doing so is monitored to ensure compliance.*

*Britain already has a minimum deterrent – about which I am glad: the W177 free fall bombs were getting unsafe – but Russia and America both still have massive stockpiles including of tactical weapons which should be got rid of first. These tactical short-range weapons serve no real purpose and are dangerous as they could be considered usable in an escalating conflict. They are also more likely to be vulnerable to theft and conversion by terrorists into an improvised nuclear device. We are the only nuclear state with just one nuclear system.*

*I also have to say that I am getting increasingly worried about bacteriological warfare and possible weaponisation. There is action to curtail chemical weapons but advances in bacteriological warfare are taking place and these have the potential ability to be as devastating as nuclear weapons e.g. pandemics which kill 50% of the population.*

- 5. Do you agree that Britain needs to take an active part in the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament?**

*Yes I believe in multilateralism. Having nuclear weapons means we have the opportunity to join in – and encourage – wider negotiations.*

*The UK has been amazingly good but I don't think all the reductions that the UK made in the 90s and 00s encouraged others to disarm. In fact France does not have a minimum nuclear capacity as it retains more than one platform for delivery.*

*Unilateralism enhances risk and does not reduce it.*

- 6. How should the UK plan to meet its strategic security needs and its international responsibilities?**

*See above*

**NEXT STEPS TOWARDS DISARMAMENT**

- 7. In meeting disarmament responsibilities would this be a single step from the current system to non-nuclear status or would there be interim steps?**

*There would need to be very considerable confidence building measures, greater transparency and discussions about ballistic missile defence systems.*

*That said there is no reason why both the US and Russia could not reduce their arsenals to 1,000 weapons each and in particular get rid of short range weapons – both battlefield and tactical.*

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*They don't do that because Russia remains very concerned about the Middle East and China; USA remains concerned about Russia.*

**8. What conditions could need to pertain for Britain to have the confidence to take any of these steps and how could HMG operate to help bring about these conditions?**

*Could Britain reduce anyway its current stockpile further and maintain a minimum deterrent? Possibly. Britain has already taken more steps than most other countries and certainly of any of the permanent members of the Security Council; our holdings are minimal compared to those of USA, Russia, China and France. In my opinion unilateral reduction does not lead to multi-lateral disarmament*

**9. What might interim steps look like? Specify the positives and negatives of different steps? (Are humanitarian disarmament, unacceptable harm and Nuclear Free Zones useful terms)**

*A NFZ in the middle east would be helpful but of course that would involve Israel disarming their nuclear weapons and they clearly feel that they provide that ultimate guarantee of survival.*

*However without one Iran will continue to work towards having a nuclear weapon and if they succeed either Israel will attack or Saudi Arabia, Turkey and possibly other regional states will acquire weapons (from Pakistan) or both.*

**10. What role would you envisage the UN or other international agencies such as IAEA having in steps towards disarmament?**

Not specifically asked

**WIDER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS**

**11. How far should the cost of replacement and maintenance of nuclear weapons be factors in any decision?**

*As discussed costs are low except for during the period of construction of the replacement submarines – so for a period after 2016 it will take more, up to 6%, of MOD budget. Although only a small part of the total defence budget it would be a huge chunk of the procurement budget for some 6 years and would have a big impact on other defence requirements.*

*But for those, e.g. in Army, who think those funds would help other parts of defence it should be noted that any savings on non-replacement of the deterrent would almost certainly not go to the defence budget. There would also be considerable decommissioning costs.*

**12. How far should jobs and employment be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*Decision is ultimately a security one so whilst costs are a factor they should not be an overriding one.*

**13. How far should public opinion be a factor in any decision on nuclear weapons?**

*Public opinion is always important but it is important to realise that it all depends on the question asked e.g. if frame it as 'do you want to spend all this money on a replacement' then will get a different reply than if you ask 'should we give up ours while others retain theirs'.*

*Certainly agree there should be more public debate but problem is that media always simplify to black and white and issues are very complex*

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**Photos on front page – from top**

- Conference on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Opens in New York. UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe ; <http://www.ips.org/TV/wsf/npt-meet-draws-thousands-of-anti-nukes-activists/>
- First artist's impression of the submarines due to replace the Vanguard-class boats which carry Trident missiles