



# Disarmament and Non-proliferation

The UK is committed to working towards a safer world in which there is no need for nuclear weapons. This requires progress in the fields of both non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

## UK Nuclear Disarmament

- We continue to support the disarmament obligations set out in Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which says:

*"Each of the parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control."*

- We also remain fully committed to the obligations contained in the Decisions and Final Document at the NPT Review Conferences in 1995 and 2000, including the "13 Practical Steps" towards the implementation of Article VI agreed in 2000. These are available at: <http://disarmament.un.org/wmd/npt/2000FD.pdf>.
- We have an excellent record in meeting these obligations. Over the past decade we have:
  - withdrawn and dismantled our maritime tactical nuclear capability and the RAF's WE177 freefall bomb;

- significantly reduced the operational status of our nuclear weapons system. Normally, only one Trident submarine is on deterrent patrol at any one time. It has a maximum of 48 warheads on board, and is normally on several days 'notice to fire'. Its missiles are not targeted at any country;
- reduced our maximum number of operationally available warheads to fewer than 160. Since coming to power in 1997, we have reduced the maximum number of operationally available warheads by nearly half;
- not conducted a nuclear test explosion since 1991. We ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1998;
- ceased production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. We support the proposal for a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty and call for the immediate start of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva;
- increased our transparency with regard to our fissile material holdings. We have produced historical records of our defence holdings of both plutonium and highly enriched uranium;
- pursued a programme to develop UK expertise in verifying the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons internationally. The aim of the study has been to examine and trial potential methodologies which could be used in a future nuclear disarmament regime.

# Non-proliferation

- The UK has pursued a comprehensive multilateral strategy to strengthen legally binding obligations on states to tighten export controls, combat supply chains and prevent old or unused materials from falling into the wrong hands. These efforts include:
  - **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA):** The UK is working closely with the IAEA to develop assurances of supply for nuclear fuel, which provide energy security without the need for proliferation of sensitive enrichment technology.
  - **Iran/IAEA:** Since 2003, the UK, France and Germany have been leading international diplomatic efforts to convince Iran fully to co-operate with the IAEA over international concerns about its nuclear programme.
  - **Middle East WMD Free Zone:** The UK continues to support the creation of an effective and verifiable chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear free zone in the Middle East.
  - **UNSCR 1540:** The UK was one of the leading proponents of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 which established legally-binding obligations on all UN Member States to take steps to combat proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
  - **Libya/AQ Khan:** The UK played a key role in the process that led to Libya's announcement, in December 2003, that it would eliminate its chemical, biological and nuclear programmes and limit its missile projects. This process contributed to the discovery and dismantling of the proliferation activities being pursued by the AQ Khan network.
  - **Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI):** The UK has been involved actively in driving forward the PSI, which aims to prevent the acquisition and development of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapons by states of concern and non-state actors.
- **Export Control Regimes:** The UK is a leading and active member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Zangger Committee - arrangements which aim to minimise the risk of assisting CBRN and ballistic missile proliferation through more effective national level export licensing measures.
- **G8 Global Partnership Co-operative Threat Reduction:** The UK has committed up to \$750 million over ten years to this work and currently supports projects to help dismantle old Russian nuclear submarines, dispose of 34 tonnes of plutonium in Russia, destroy Russia's stocks of chemical weapons (a total of 40,000 tonnes) and create new employment for former Soviet weapons scientists.
- **Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT):** The UK is an Initial Partner Nation of the GICNT, unveiled by the US and Russian Presidents in July this year. The initiative calls for co-operation in efforts directed at, among other things, improving control of nuclear materials, and detecting and suppressing illicit trafficking of such materials.
- **Norwegian 7 Country Initiative:** The UK is an active member of the 7 Country Initiative, which aims to foster fresh thinking on how we can take forward the three pillars of the NPT – access to nuclear technology for exclusively peaceful purposes, non-proliferation and disarmament.
- **Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)/Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention:** We are working with the EU to encourage and help all countries accede to both treaties and fully to implement their obligations. In the last 5 years, over 20 additional countries have joined the CWC.