

UK Nuclear Warhead Stockpile Increase – Christian CND briefing

On Tuesday 16 March 2021 Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced that the UK's nuclear warhead stockpile is set to increase by more than 40% and by the middle of the decade the cap on warheads would be 260.

This is a significant change to a policy of gradual reduction in the nuclear warhead stockpile which has been supported by successive governments for more than 30 years. Previous reviews of defence policy had set a cap of 180 warheads by the middle of the 2020s.

The UK is a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Article 6 of which sets out that states must negotiate the reduction of their nuclear arsenals towards their eventual abolition. The decision to expand the warhead stockpile represents a clear breach of the NPT. In addition there is a risk that it could ignite an arms-race between states with similar sized nuclear arsenals.

There was swift condemnation of the announcement from Christian leaders in the UK. Senior representatives from seven denominations issued a statement calling the move a “retrograde step that will not make any of us safer” and added “it is immoral that the UK government is committing resources, which could be spent on the common good of our society, to stockpiling even more.”

There has also been international diplomatic response to the decision. Germany's Foreign Minister, Heiko Maas said "We don't want nuclear weapons arsenals to grow. If you don't want that to happen, you can't expand them," and a spokesperson for the Secretary General of the United Nations adding that the UN would “express our concern at the UK's decision to increase its nuclear weapons arsenal, which is contrary to its obligations under Article VI of the NPT”

Christian CND will be working with CND and others to oppose this decision and continue to call for the elimination of nuclear weapons in the UK and around the world.

You can get involved in the campaign:

- [Pray with us as we oppose this move](#)
- [Contact your MP and ask them to oppose the plans](#)
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