

Scottish CND AGM: Chair's Framing Statement 2024

This document reminds us of our aims, the campaigns that have occupied us in the year past and that we remain committed to, in order to help us think about priorities in the year ahead. It should be read alongside the year in review.

Scottish CND oppose all weapons of mass destruction, biological and chemical and nuclear but our name reflects our central aim - the removal of the UK nuclear weapons that are based in Scotland, from Scotland and the world. Scottish CND's campaign seeks paths for the removal of the UK nuclear weapon system and the end of UK complicity in the use of nuclear threats while opposing nuclear weapons everywhere. Scottish CND has long opposed membership of NATO because of its nuclear posture. As stated on our website, Scottish CND has a longstanding opposition to nuclear power because of the strong links between the nuclear power and nuclear weapon industries.

The Faslane Peace Camp is entirely independent of Scottish CND but has our admiration and support for its 40+ years of bearing witness against the UK's nuclear weapon system.ⁱ We have a formal relationship and friendly collaboration with CND UK, whose campaigning may become increasingly focused on US nuclear weapons when they are again based in England at the US airbase described as RAF Lakenheath with Scottish CND playing a minor but supportive role.

Our campaigning includes building pressure for the removal of nuclear weapons from Scotland, the UK and the world by raising public awareness of and encouraging actions that point to their harms including - the catastrophic consequences of their use, the everyday risks, the history of near accidents, victims of tests and uranium mining, the financial costs, the myths and lies encapsulated in the phrase 'an independent nuclear deterrent', the escalating risks caused by a nuclear arms race and the idea of a 'nuclear umbrella.' Our annual routines of commemoration of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, British nuclear tests, and Marshall Islands Remembrance Day point to the roots of nuclear weapons in an extractive, exploitative colonial history and the harms already caused to indigenous peoples and the planet's fragile eco systems. Remembrance of accidents at Chernobyl and Fukushima are also occasions for remembering the links between nuclear weapons and nuclear power and their associated harms. Members views of anniversaries that we should mark are always welcome.

As well as raising public awareness of and actions pointing to harm, we also campaign around the positive possibilities of nuclear disarmament, - particularly those developing because of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Scottish CND is an ICAN partners organisations in Scotland (ICAN - the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapon - the coalition of organizations that successfully campaigned for the TPNW which entered into force in 2021) along with Trident Ploughshares, Peace & Justice, UN House Scotland, MEDACT Scotland, Northern Friends Peace Board, Pax Christi Scotland, Secure Scotland and Don't Bank on the Bomb Scotland. Scottish CND supports the website www.nuclearban.scot.ⁱⁱ We seek to highlight steps taken by treaty signatories to further its aims and to showcase examples from these non-nuclear states, like that of our near neighbor Ireland, who achieve security, an internationally respected diplomatic service and foreign policy without nuclear weapons.

Although our priority is necessarily the nuclear weapons in our backyard, we campaign for the abolition of all nuclear weapons and the end of their threat of use. This involves acknowledging the way in which nuclear threats play out in Putin's unjust and illegal war against Ukraine and explaining why we argue that resort to more nuclear weapons is not an answer. It also involves highlighting the fact that Israel is a nuclear armed state and the relevance of this to their colonial-like sense of entitlement to use genocidal, ecocidal indiscriminate force in Gaza and the relative silence of other nuclear states about their war crimes.

Scottish CND are not party political and have members across parties. Since an AGM resolution in 2013, we have had a position in support of Scottish Independence as the shortest route to nuclear disarmament in the UK. Various campaign materials hosted on our website explain that parties in Scot-

land campaigning for independence are committed to the disarmament and removal of the UK's nuclear-weapon system from Scotland. The nuclear-weapon system would be unable to operate without a Scottish base because there is no alternative site to the combination of the port at Faslane and sea-accessible armament depot at Coulport. (John Ainslie *Trident: Nowhere to Go* first written 2012, updates 2013&2014.)

In an election year, a campaign priority was to encourage our members and supporters to vote for candidates who oppose nuclear weapons. Anticipating a November election, we commissioned new art work which highlights the cost of nuclear weapons to the natural world of our planet and our own society. We also conducted a crowd funding campaign to support this work. When a UK election was called in July 2024, we knew that some of the majority of supportive Scottish MPs would lose their seats. Overnight the number of Scottish MPs who had signed or candidates pledged to sign the ICAN parliamentary pledge expressing support for the TPNW went from over 40 to ten. (The list of Scottish MSPs who have signed the ICAN pledge is maintained on nuclearban.scot). Scottish CND holds a significant position in the Scottish Parliament Nuclear Disarmament Cross-Party Groupⁱⁱⁱ. This will continue to be an important forum in which supporters can meet and find ways of working with our MSPs.

Sadly, the UK Labour government continues on the same path of the Conservatives with respect to nuclear weapons, belittling the TPNW and proceeding with the replacement of the current nuclear weapon system continuing arrangements under the dubious legality of US-UK Mutual Defence Agreement enabling the UK's dependence on US nuclear systems. This is despite the shambles of accidents and incidents associated with the current nuclear weapon system and the constantly extending timescales and out-of-control cost overruns that are already hallmarks of its replacement at a time of cuts for almost everything else. New submarines continue to be built at Barrow In Furnace, to be powered by a new generation of nuclear reactors based on the US design, a new generation of Trident missiles is to be leased from the United States and fitted with UK-assembled nuclear bombs dependent on US parts and design. Sadly also, the UK Labour government's energy strategy gives continued support to nuclear power as well as hydrogen and carbon capture projects that our friends in the environmental movement see as 'greenwash'. We know that government recognizes that the nuclear weapons' industry needs a nuclear power industry to share the infrastructures of training, research and expertise needed to sustain it. Following the election our messaging sought to highlight the gap between a Scottish civil society most of whom oppose nuclear weapons and the political position of the UK government. In the coming year we wish to further develop materials and workshops that will give our supporters confidence to call-out deluded talk of a nuclear 'defence', 'security' and the magical thinking of 'deterrence' and to support local groups in lobbying local authorities to sign the ICAN pledge. In our small group discussions at conference members may want to discuss how we inspire activism through these routes. Details of how we move our work with political parties and politician forward may always be a matter conference wishes discussion.

We remain committed to the direction of travel set in November 2023 when we held a 'Festival for Survival' which explicitly acknowledged links between nuclear weapons, the environmental tragedies of fossil fuel consumption leading to climate change and other forms of environmental destruction leading to loss of biodiversity and accelerating rate of species' extinction. We continue to seek ways of getting environmental activists and Peace Movement activists together in ways that strengthen each. The Reclaim Our Clyde Campaign is one channel for continuing this work. Highlighting the links between climate and nuclear catastrophes is also a strand of education work carried on by Peace Education Scotland, the independent charity that prepares educational materials for schools.

In September 2024 we collaborated in a month for peace with many other organisations. These included the Nuclear Information Service which digitized John Ainslie's archive, the National Library of Scotland that now hosts the archive and the parliamentary Nuclear Disarmament Cross-Party Group who hosted an event around the archive in the Scottish parliament. Scottish CND were also pleased to

support a separate event hosted by the Cross-Party Group in September highlighting the detrimental impact of nuclear weapons on democracy, and the horrific humanitarian consequences of their use and testing, remembering the hibakusha and highlighting the plight of test victims in Kazakhstan. We also gave support to events organized by Peace and Justice including their annual peace lecture and worked with Don't Bank on the Bomb in response to an ICAN call for to collaborate in a specific week of advertising the costs of nuclear weapons. In October we responded to the call of Space4Peace to highlight the threat of further militarization of space.

Scottish CND is keen to collaborate with other organisations that seek a just transition to more socially worthwhile employment than nuclear or fossil fuel industries. We are grateful for work by Friends of the Earth, the STUC and others on just transitions, the research of Don't Bank on the Bomb exposing investment in nuclear weapons and the Campaign Against the Arms Trade for its exposé of nuclear arms related work. We walk alongside other organisations that campaign against weapons and war fighting such as the Campaign Against the Arms Trade, Drone Wars, The Campaign for the Abolition of War, Secure Scotland, Stop the War, Space4Peace and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, WILPF.

The AGM is a time to hear the views of members. Experience suggests this is best done in smaller groups. To get started we suggest selecting some of the following topics

1. Encouraging new grass roots activism around the harms of nuclear weapons and positive possibilities of nuclear disarmament
2. Finding appropriate ways of members and supporters regularly taking action and engaging with nuclear issues.
3. Raising more awareness of the positive steps taken by other nations using the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear weapons
4. Raising more awareness of the work of the scientific advisory group and the group working on remediation and reparation as required by the TPNW treaty obligations.
5. Working to get more local authorities signing the ICAN 'cities appeal' in support of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons
6. Working with within political parties
7. Lobbying sympathetic politicians to take action
8. Collaborating with the environmental movement
9. Working on just transition from nuclear weapons related employment
10. Review of potential anniversaries to mark and how to mark them in ways that raise public awareness of our arguments.

Are there other topics you would wish to discuss?

If we are dividing into groups to discuss specific topics, it is helpful if, in each case if we address the same questions. These are preliminary suggestions

- Can we devise more specific aims and achievable targets for a campaign
- Can we do this in a way that will help to bring in new people, new energy, and/or financial support?
- What are the first steps?

We invite members to reflect on these questions, or others raised by our framing statement, ahead of the AGM, and to participate in an inclusive and thoughtful conversation about how our movement can most effectively meet the challenges and opportunities ahead of us in 2024/5.

Lynn Jamieson, Chair, Scottish CND

ⁱ Nuclear bombs designed and built in England at Aldermaston and Burghfield and transported back and forward in nuclear convoys to the Royal Navy Armament Depot Coulport. We are grateful to Nukewatch the organization that tracks these convoys.

ⁱⁱ Janet Fenton is a member of the International Steering group of ICAN and has a special responsibility for liaison with ICAN partners in Scotland.

ⁱⁱⁱ Janet Fenton is the elected secretary to the cross-party group.