



International Physicians
for the Prevention of Nuclear War



New Anglo-French Nuclear Deal Undermines Security and Health Conclude British and French Affiliates of IPPNW

On 2nd November 2010, France and Britain signed a Treaty that will see the two countries test the safety of their nuclear arsenals in a joint facility in France.

A nuclear simulation centre will be built at Valduc in eastern France, about 45 kilometres northwest of the city of Dijon, and start operating from 2014. The Valduc laboratory will work with a French-British research centre based in Aldermaston in southern England, and will enable French and British scientists to model the performances of nuclear materials to ensure the "viability, safety and security in the long term of our nuclear arsenals." The data so obtained could be used to design new warhead types.

Article I of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) forbids the transfer of nuclear explosive devices to any recipient. The new Anglo-French Treaty is largely driven by the current economic downturn and adds to similar agreements already negotiated between the USA and France and the USA and the UK. It allows an indirect transfer of nuclear weapon knowledge between France and the UK and indicates very clearly that neither Government recognises the legitimate objections of the Non-Nuclear Weapons States which have signed the NPT to the maintenance by the British and the French of weapons which can be deployed without notice; and also why the Non-Nuclear Weapons States view with great scepticism the "good faith" of the Western Nuclear Powers to reduce substantially their nuclear arsenals and their readiness to use them, to which they are committed by the NPT. Furthermore, as the new Anglo-French facilities allow research into the development of nuclear weapons – even though not needing an actual nuclear explosion – they also breach the principles behind the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

The global dangers to the health, welfare and very survival of societies and peoples otherwise not involved which are posed by nuclear arsenals deployed intentionally or by accident or false alarms, continue to be ignored by the Powers in possession of these arsenals. Not only do the chances of a nuclear exchange remain unacceptably high, the NPT itself is undermined and made increasingly vulnerable to the withdrawal from it of Non-Nuclear Weapons States who feel the need to develop and possess nuclear weapons for their own security, thus encouraging nuclear weapons proliferation.

Medact and AMFPGN, the British and the French affiliates of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), therefore oppose this new Anglo-French contribution to nuclear proliferation and urge that all Powers work for the rapid implementation of a Nuclear Weapons Convention to abolish all nuclear weapons throughout the World.

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