

Roland Nivet, French Peace Movement

The peoples have the power to win the total elimination of nuclear weapons despite the obstacles of the politico-military industrial lobbies.

I speak on behalf of the French Peace Movement.

Before addressing the issues of action, I will briefly speak about the global context in which we operate.

We all know that neo-liberal globalization maintains the militarization of international relations and conflicts to establish economic and political domination.

For my part, I am totally convinced by the work of Naomi Klein, the Canadian sociologist, who demonstrates that in times of crisis the globalized capitalist system, instead of providing the human solutions that people demand, takes advantage of it to push through antisocial reforms.

The current health crisis does not escape this analysis .

So i think the hardest part of the economic, social and geopolitical crisis is surely still to come.

Now a few words to characterize the situation in France.

In France, President Macron and his government follow neo-liberal logic. They are conducting regressive reforms in all areas of French economic, social and political life and a policy of militarization.

The most revolting example is the testing of new nuclear missiles during the health crisis. At a time when covid was causing thousands of deaths in France, the government found the means to launch a campaign to test a new nuclear missile while hospitals were crumbling under the lack of means to save lives.

These launches of new nuclear missiles are part of a multi-year programme to modernize France's nuclear weapons. This programme is a violation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Its cost is estimated at approximately one hundred billion euros over every fifteen year period..

We oppose it with all our might.

The Peace Movement has denounced these tests as a real provocation.

The government's objective was to show that the priority of France's nuclear modernization programs could not be challenged even in front of a health emergency such as the covid pandemic.

The Peace Movement organized protest rallies, which generated media attention through some twenty press articles and a television news interview.

In addition, the Macron government is trying to get French nuclear weapons and deterrence accepted as an umbrella for the European Union, while the Peace Movement is calling for the withdrawal of American nuclear weapons from European soil and the constitution of the European Union territory as a nuclear-weapon-free zone (NWFZ).

Finally, it is important to note that France is strengthening its partnership within NATO, as shown by the latest NATO military operation which took place in July partly on French territory.

As part of the peace wave we sent a special newsletter "seventy five years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki" to forty thousand people (40 000) asking them to raise awareness about the danger of atomic weapons and to sign the Hibakushas' petition.

This newsletter was also sent to the nine hundred and twenty five (925) members of our national parliament, to four hundred journalists and four hundred and fifty social organisations.

The newsletter included information about atomic bombings provided by Gensuiko exhibition which was integrated into an exhibition on our website.

This newsletter was relayed on our social networks and **a teaser film of a few minutes will be launched on this occasion.**

Beyond the peace Wave are some of our upcoming initiatives:

- **On Saturday September, nineteen** we call for the organisation of marches throughout France "for peace, social justice, human rights, ecological and health security and for **nuclear disarmament**";
- **on September twenty one 21**, as part of the International Day of Peace, popular education initiatives will be carried out in more than a hundred cities.
- **on September twenty six 26**, mobilization against nuclear weapons on the occasion of the United Nations International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons with the organization of an international video conference
- because of the cancellation of the NPT Review Conference, the delegation of one hundred and twenty 120 French activists who were due to participate in that conference has been cancelled. However, we wrote to seventy ambassadors in France by personal letter.

In the coming weeks and months we will be stepping up pressure and requests for hearings with embassies to demand that all these countries ratify the treaty for elimination.

- **on december ten 10** on the international day of human rights actions, we organise actions and debates to reaffirm everywhere the human right to peace.

- **In December or January**, in the framework of our relations with the trade union organisations, in particular with CGT, we have scheduled the organisation of a national seminar about the subject "which economy for peace? ».

One of the objectives will be to define actions, with workers and trade unionists, working in all sectors of the nuclear weapons manufacturing chain to build solidarity in order to take better actions for their elimination.

The difficulties, the hopes and the next challenges

The health crisis increases all the problems and makes public action difficult. A significant number of organizations that are in favour of nuclear disarmament do not consider as a sufficiently high priority the urgent need to mobilize our society for the elimination of nuclear weapons and for asking France to respect its commitments under the NPT, and in particular Article 6. Organizations, including environmental organizations, underestimate the impact of militarization on the future of the world and ignore the risk of a nuclear winter. For this reason we have published a book entitled "Peace and Climate".

Finally, the economic crisis with nine million unemployed does not facilitate the commitment of many people in the action for peace and nuclear disarmament.

However, we are optimistic because we believe that through our common struggles at the global level we have the capacity to win the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Indeed, the number of States (40) that have so far ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons shows that we will obtain the entry into force of this treaty (from 50 ratifications).

To do this we must also improve synergy at the global level between individuals and organizations, but also with States and international institutions.

In France seventy-eight percent (78%) of French people are in favour of nuclear disarmament and sixty-eight percent (68%) are in favour of the ratification of the treaty about the elimination of nuclear weapons by France. according to a poll conducted between the newspaper La Croix and the Peace Movement. It's a great force that we can count on...

I think that the international conference against A and H bombs would have to launch an new international appeal to unify all the dynamics to win the total elimination of nuclear weapons

Roland NIVET co national spokesman of the French Peace Movement. Le Mouvement de la Paix