

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0008/07

pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure

by Caroline Lucas, Jill Evans, Jean Lambert, Ian Hudghton and Alyn Smith, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group
to the Council

Subject: Nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament - modernisation of UK Trident incompatible with NPT

In March 2007 the UK Parliament will vote on a controversial plan to extend and modernise the country's possession of its nuclear weapon arsenal, Trident. In December 2006 the Government detailed its case for extending the UK's nuclear posture in a 40-page white paper, 'the Future of the United Kingdom's Nuclear Deterrent', in which it is argued that the UK can only deter nuclear weapon threats in the future through the continued possession of nuclear weapons.

1. In the run-up to the NPT Prepcom in Vienna in March/April 2007, will the Council establish a dialogue with the UK Government regarding the fact that these British plans are alleged to be a violation of Article VI of the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty, which obliges the UK and the other nuclear weapon states to work towards nuclear disarmament, as well as a breach of the pledge made in 2000 at the NPT Review Conference by these nuclear weapon states to 'an unequivocal undertaking ... to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals'?
2. Does the Council endorse the statement, made by the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on 28 November 2006 that the retention of nuclear weapons by some might motivate others to acquire such arms: 'by clinging to and modernising their own arsenals ... nuclear-weapon states encourage others ... to regard nuclear weapons as essential, both to their security and to their status'?
3. Does the Council share the conviction that the modernisation of British and French nuclear arsenals, as well as the non-withdrawal of US nuclear weapons from European territories, hinders the evolution, application and efficiency of the European Strategy against Weapons of Mass Destruction?

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Forwarded: 07.02.2007

Deadline for reply: 28.02.2007