



FranceTNP2010  
Turning commitments into actions  
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## NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT: FRANCE'S CONCRETE COMMITMENT

Working paper submitted by France

*” Resolving to seek a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the goals of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all.”*

**UNSC Resolution 1887 (2009)**

In accordance with the NPT goals in terms of nuclear disarmament and of general and complete disarmament – goals which it has adopted – **France is actively committed to disarmament.**

In order to progress towards a safer world, France has adopted an **approach of disarmament both concrete and global:**

- **Concrete, for acts matter more than words.** France leads the way: it has taken unprecedented unilateral measures and formulated ambitious and concrete initiatives in the pursuit of disarmament, including nuclear, at the international level.
- **Global,** for not only does international security improvement require progress regarding **nuclear disarmament**, but it also requires progress regarding **conventional disarmament**, universalization of **chemical and biological weapons prohibition**, as well as **consideration for ballistic proliferation**, for **space security**.

## 1. WHAT FRANCE HAS DONE

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### ➤ CESSATION OF THE PRODUCTION OF FISSILE MATERIAL FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Cessation of plutonium production as early as 1992 and of highly enriched uranium (HEU) production intended for nuclear weapons in 1996.

France is upholding since then a **moratorium** on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

*The only State* that decided to shut down and **dismantle** its facilities for production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

### ➤ INCREASING STRATEGIC STABILITY AND CONFIDENCE

None of our weapons are targeted against anyone. This “**detargeting**” measure has been announced in 1997 and constantly reaffirmed since then.

Lessening of the **alert status** of the two components announced in 1992 and 1996.

*First State, and the only State to date,* that has announced the **total number of its nuclear warheads: less than 300**. France has no other weapons beside those in its operational stockpile.

*The only nuclear-weapon State,* with the United Kingdom, to provide its partners with **prior notification of all its ballistic and space launches** in accordance with the HCOG.

*The only State* that **opened** to international experts **the doors** of its facilities formerly dedicated to the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons (visits in 2008 and 2009).

### ➤ DEFINITIVE BAN ON NUCLEAR TESTS

**Definitive cessation of nuclear testing** announced in 1996.

*The first nuclear-weapon State,* with the United Kingdom, to sign in 1996 and ratify **as early as 1998** the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

*The only nuclear-weapon State* that **dismantled** its nuclear testing site, located in the Pacific, in a manner that was transparent and open to the international community. In 1996-1998, a mission of international experts was tasked with assessing the environmental impact of the nuclear tests.

Support for the Treaty's **verification system**: France is responsible for **24 monitoring stations**.

➤ **REDUCTION OF THE ARSENALS TO STRICT SUFFICIENCY LEVEL**

As the French President recalled in his Cherbourg speech on 21 March 2008, France has always sought to maintain its nuclear arsenal at the **lowest possible level** compatible with the strategic context, according to the **principle of strict sufficiency**.

The evolution of the strategic context, in particular since the end of the Cold War, allowed to reduce the size of the three components of the French nuclear deterrence force: **the French nuclear arsenal thus halved in nearly ten years**.

- **Ground-to-ground component:** *The only State* that fully dismantled its ground-to-ground nuclear missiles.
- **Sea-based component:** *The only State* that voluntarily reduced by **one third** the number of its nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarines (SSBNs).
- **Airborne component:** In 2008, the French President announced a reduction by **one third** in the number of nuclear weapons, missiles and aircraft of the French airborne component.

## **2. FRANCE'S ACTION IN NUMBERS**

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- **300 nuclear warheads** : is the total cap of nuclear weapons announced by President Sarkozy on 21 March 2008. France is the *only* nuclear-weapon State to have made public the amount of its entire nuclear arsenal.
- **50%** : **France has halved its nuclear arsenal in nearly ten years**.
- **0** : France no longer has **nuclear testing facilities nor facilities producing fissile material for nuclear weapons**.

## **3. WHAT FRANCE PROPOSES, WITH ITS EUROPEAN PARTNERS**

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France carries on at the international level with its national determined efforts for disarmament. It would like all other nuclear powers to concretely take the path that it has forged, based on a posture of strict sufficiency of nuclear arsenals.

Drawing on the proposals presented by the French President in Cherbourg (21 March 2008), France and its European partners jointly presented an **Action Plan on**

**disarmament**, which was endorsed by the 27 EU Heads of State and Government in December 2008, which includes:

- the **universal ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)** and the completion of its **verification** regime, and the **dismantling**, as soon as possible, of all nuclear testing facilities, in a manner that is transparent and open to the international community;
- the opening without delay and without precondition of negotiation for a treaty **banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons**, the introduction of an **immediate moratorium** on the production of such material; and the **dismantling** of the dedicated production facilities;
- the establishment of **confidence-building and transparency measures** by the nuclear powers;
- the conclusion by the United States and Russia of a **legally binding post-START arrangement**, and an overall reduction in the global stockpile of nuclear weapons in accordance with article VI of the NPT, in particular by the States which possess the largest arsenals;
- the inclusion of **tactical nuclear weapons**, by those States which have them, in their general arms control and disarmament processes, with a view to their reduction and elimination;
- the start of consultations on a treaty banning **short- and intermediate-range ground-to-ground missiles**;
- the accession to and implementation by all of **The Hague Code of Conduct**;
- mobilisation **in all other areas** of disarmament.