November/December 2025

### KINGSTON PEACE NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF KINGSTON PEACE COUNCIL / CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

http://kpc.gn.apc.org www.facebook.com/kingstonpeace



## CND Embassy Walks were organised by London Region CND this year.

Their office worker, Daniel, reported:-

This year, we've chosen to focus on states that have either signed but not yet ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), or those that have ratified it but recently experienced a change in leadership.

With this in mind, we arranged meetings with three embassies and hand-delivered letters to three others:

- Holy See We met with the Holy See Ambassador to the UK. The Vatican has ratified the TPNW but recently underwent a change in leadership. This is significant because Pope Francis was a strong opponent of nuclear weapons, whereas the new Pope recently met with the President of nuclear-armed Israel, showing a potential departure from his predecessor's likely stance.
- Letter deliveries We delivered letters to the embassies of Tanzania, Mozambique, and Barbados, all signatories that have yet to ratify the TPNW.
- Algeria We also met with the Algerian Ambassador. Algeria is an especially important voice given its history as a site of French nuclear testing and its current seat on the UN Security Council.
- Brunei We visited an official in the Brunei embassy and stressed to him how important it is to complete their support by ratifying the TPNW.
   (In 2018, Brunei said that the TPNW "represents a strong recognition of the dangers of nuclear weapons and reflects the will of the majority" and is "a timely response to the lack of progress that we have been witnessing on the disarmament agenda over the years".) It welcomed the TPNW's entry into force in 2021 as "a vital step towards global nuclear disarmament". But apparently it has yet to formally ratify the Treaty.

I attended the visits to the embassies of the Holy See and Brunei. Ed.

# President Trump has announced new nuclear testing, 30/10/25

If this proceeds the testing of nuclear weapons will end a 33 year-long U.S. moratorium on nuclear **testing.** This would most likely prompt Russia and perhaps China to also resume nuclear testing and escalate a nuclear arms race that is consuming over \$100 billion per year and increasing the risks of nuclear war. Asked on CBS News whether he planned to start detonating nuclear weapons, Mr. Trump replied that "we're going to test nuclear weapons like other countries do, yes." Senator Ed Markey, Co-President of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament, has responded by announcing the introduction of a No Nuclear Testing Act, which would use Congress's power of the purse to prohibit the Trump administration from restarting nuclear testing. Senator Markey said "The United States has not conducted a nuclear test since 1992, and there is absolutely no need to resume. This is a reckless directive from Trump that will only make the country and the world less safe and lead to a terrible new nuclear arms race."

In This Issue:- Pages 2 and 3 Palestine - News from the West Bank; Demonstrations in London Pages 3 to 5 From London Region CND *Peaceline*; International Day for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons Pages 6 to 7 Book talk at Wimbledon Book Fest.; CND's recent Policy Conference. Page 8 Diary/Forthcoming Events... For any December events see our group emails and Facebook

#### **Palestine**

#### News from the West Bank. Erella from the Villages Group has

just sent this message.

Warning – this is a tough read! Also I have left the American spelling as used by her.

Wed, 22 Oct at 16:22 To our friends all,

On the evening of Monday Sep. 15 I returned home from another day in Masafer Yatta that ended with a visit to Umm al-Khair. When I opened my door into the roars of bombing and shelling inflicted upon Gaza, only 20 kilometers from my home as the crow flies, I felt that I had already heard the shelling roars of hatred and evil today. Hatred and evil have various weapons.

Yinon Levi, notoriously criminal southern West Bank outpost settler, murdered Awdah Hathaleen in July. Now, the settlers of "Carmel" are forcibly taking over land near Umm al-Khair to build a new "neighborhood" in ways that would put even the Wild West to shame. [Note: in the West Bank, new settlement "neighborhoods" are a cover for huge land grabs. They are often located 2-3km away from the "parent" settlement, and the entire area in between eventually becomes off-limits for Palestinians, even if they own the land which is often the case.]

The "Carmel" settlers lie and humiliate; they are full of hubris and arrogance as they see themselves to be "divine messengers". And they dare to bring the murderer himself into Umm al-Khair. After all, he is the owner of the bulldozer company that prepares the stolen ground for "kosher" Jewish settlement.

At night, on the main road to the village, like thieves that they are, they transfer more houses to the new site on giant trucks, and tighten the chokehold on Umm al-Khair's neck a bit further. Protected by the Israeli army and police (whom the local residents themselves had called up, in the vain hope for some true law and order), the "Carmel" settlers then cut Umm al-Khair's main water pipe. The water spills on the ground and the villagers and their sheep have no water. Then the settlers disconnect the electric power and darkness descends on the village. The children scream with fear, and the water main (that had been mended temporarily with intervention of

the military's fraudulently-named "Civil Administration") gets cut off once more, this time by Shimon Atiya of nearby "Shorashim" settlement. He is banned by the court to go near the village, but who cares? [Certainly not the police who were present.]

Everything is perpetrated by the settlers with blatant indifference, wearing their blank faces lacking any emotion, save that of those who enjoy humiliating, torturing, trampling upon, subduing, "winning". The "Absolute Victory" [Bibi's and the far-right's favorite slogan as they continue inflicting this endless, hideous war upon the rest of the region], not only in Gaza, but here as well, in Masafer Yatta, across the West Bank, under cover of the "Law".

The international activists, the young Israelis and us — we stand there by the villagers, helpless. Even the lawyers helping Umm al-Khair's inhabitants are helpless right now.

Then I look at my friends from the village: only they are not helpless. Through the deep sadness of their faces, I see that great power of honesty, integrity, the simple dignity of people wishing to tend their land, graze their sheep, eat their daily bread and grow their children with love and respect to all humans.

My dear friends, perhaps you don't even know what great teachers you are. But this is what you are. Thank you for this difficult lesson. The lesson about the power of internal human dignity, to maintain humanity even when you are murdered, when your murderer comes back to verify his murder and tries to humiliate you into the ground. Even when your offender condescends and dismisses and lies to you and repeatedly does this daily, by the hour. Even when there is no horizon beyond this moment that I had described.

Erella
On behalf of the Villages Group

P.S. from Erella - The following night, Sep. 16, electricity was not yet restored to Umm al-Khair. For two entire days this arm of the regime (i.e. The Civil Administration) blocked locals from repairing the line because – wait for it! – Umm al-Khair's power line is "illegal". It WAS finally reconnected by local Palestinian residents on Sept. 17th.

#### **Demonstrations for Palestine**



October 11<sup>th</sup> saw another massive demonstration in central London when over 600,000 took to the streets in solidarity with Palestine. The mood was both celebratory and determined. As Jeremy Corbyn said at the rally, "We are a global movement for Palestine, and we are never never going away."

For the last two years the *Palestine Coalition* has been protesting against Israeli genocide. Although the peace deal brings welcome relief, we know it does not bring justice for the Palestinians and is unlikely to bring long-term peace to the Middle East.

So we keep going.

## The next demonstration is to be on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November.

Note - The *Palestine Coalition* is made up of the following organisations:

Palestine Solidarity Campaign Palestinian Forum in Britain Friends of Al-Aqsa Stop the War Coalition Muslim Association of Britain Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

These actions cost money. All of these organisations would appreciate donations if you are able to help them.

### Thanks to London Region Peaceline for the next two items:

#### 1.TUC Votes to Reject Defence Spending Increases, Calls for Investment in Public Services.

In a significant shift, the Trades Union Congress (TUC) has voted to oppose Labour's planned increases in defence spending. The motion, proposed by UCU General Secretary Jo Grady and supported by nine other unions representing over a million workers, passed at the TUC's annual Congress in Brighton. Delegates called for the billions earmarked for arms and military

projects to instead be redirected toward Britain's crumbling public services and key industries. Jo Grady said: "Labour tells workers there is no money left for us - for our wages, our services, our industries - yet somehow finds billions to spend on weapons and war. Trade unions aren't going to accept that any more. We are coming together to demand investment in our members and their communities. Buying more American weapons won't make Britain any safer or more

/continued on page 4

continued from page 3

secure. For that, we need serious public investment to rebuild the fabric of our country. Labour must start transferring wealth and power to working people."

The TUC's reversal adds pressure on the government ahead of the Budget, which plans to increase defence spending by over £10 billion annually, eventually reaching 5% of GDP, while essential sectors face continued cuts.

## 2.UK-US Nuclear Deal: A "Golden Age" or a Costly Gamble?

Earlier this month, PM Keir Starmer and President Donald Trump announced a multibillion-pound partnership to expand nuclear power in the UK. Dubbed the Atlantic Partnership for Advanced Nuclear Energy, the deal promises to speed up construction of new reactors and provide low-carbon energy to power everything from homes to data centres.

#### What's being planned?

- Up to 12 advanced modular reactors (AMRs) in Hartlepool, northeast England, in collaboration with US firm X-Energy and UK energy giant Centrica. Officials claim these could power 1.5 million homes and create 2,500 jobs.
- Small modular reactors (SMRs) in Nottinghamshire, built by a US-French-UK consortium, intended to power high-demand data centres
- Additional projects include micro-reactors for ports and advanced reactors from US companies

TerraPower and KBR, potentially creating thousands of temporary and permanent jobs.

• The UK-US agreement also aims to fast-track safety approvals, potentially cutting design and licensing time in half.

#### Why it's being pushed now:-

The official line is that the UK's nuclear capacity is ageing. Most of the country's eight reactors were built between the 1960s and 1990s, and several are already decommissioned or nearing the end of their operational lives.

#### The challenges and concerns:-

- Cost and delays: Past UK nuclear projects, like Hinkley Point C, have faced years of delays and ballooning budgets. Even if SMRs are smaller, these risks remain.
- Skills shortage: Building a new fleet of reactors requires highly specialised workers. Where will these engineers and construction teams come from?
- Nuclear waste: The UK's nuclear waste problem is already severe, with the Sellafield clean-up exceeding £136bn. Adding new reactors will only compound this challenge.
- Safety and location: Some SMRs are planned inland, near data-centres. Public opposition could be strong, given the potential safety risks.

The bigger picture While the deal promises economic growth and low-carbon energy, it also locks the UK into decades of nuclear developments and high-stakes financial commitments. The so-called "golden age" of nuclear may bring jobs and power, but it also raises urgent questions about the long-term direction of the UK's energy policy.

### Joint Appeal for Nuclear Abolition Day

Discussions on this began on this year's International Day for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September, and continued into November.

#### Nuclear weapons pose an existential threat to humanity and the planet. UN Secretary-General António Guterres warns that

"Growing geopolitical divisions and mistrust are driving tensions to new heights. Instead of dialogue and diplomacy being deployed to end the nuclear threat, another nuclear arms race is taking shape, and sabre-rattling is re-emerging as a tactic of coercion. We need to stop the madness before it's too late."

The 2025 Joint Appeal for Nuclear Abolition Day calls on governments to:

- Reduce nuclear risks and prevent nuclear war;
- Shift nuclear weapons budgets and investments (more than \$100 billion per year) to instead protect the environment and meet human and economic needs;
- Commit to achieving the global elimination of nuclear weapons within a strict timeframe (no later than the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations).

The Appeal has already been endorsed by more than 550 organizations and over 1,100 /contd.

individuals from 98 countries, including Nobel Laureates, former foreign ministers, parliamentarians, local body representatives, other political leaders, academics/scientists, religious leaders, medical professionals, youth leaders, educators and other members of civil society.

It was presented to the UN High Level Plenary Meeting on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September. and then presented to the UN First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) on 17 October.

The First Committee, meeting from 8 October until 7 November 2025, chaired by Ambassador Maurizio Massari of Italy, was when UN member states would discuss disarmament resolutions for adoption by the UN General Assembly.

#### More about this day and why it was chosen:-

The United Nations, which was established 80 years ago, affirmed nuclear disarmament as a top priority in its very first resolution, A/Res/1(1). In 2013, frustrated at the lack of progress, the UNGA declared 26 September as the *International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons* (A/Res/68/32). This international day serves to enhance public awareness and education about the threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the necessity for their total elimination. Annually on 26 September, the UN also holds a high-level meeting of world leaders to discuss "urgent and effective measures" to achieve global nuclear disarmament.

The designation of this date is not arbitrary: one of the many times humanity has come perilously close to nuclear war was 26 September 1983, at the height of the Cold War. A nuclear war was narrowly averted when Colonel Stanislav Petrov, Duty Officer at a Russian nuclear early warning facility, broke protocol by not affirming to senior command an apparent incoming ballistic missile attack from the United States (later confirmed as a false alarm). Two years later, the countries at the brink jointly declared that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought."

This commitment has been reaffirmed in intervening years, including in a statement by

the P-5 states in 2022 and in the **Pact for the Future** adopted by consensus at the UN Summit of the Future in September 2024 (see below).

However, today the risk of nuclear war by accident, miscalculation, crisis escalation, or malicious intent, is higher than ever with the Doomsday Clock ticking closer to midnight than in 1983. The use of nuclear weapons by any of the nine nuclear-armed States or their nuclear allies would have catastrophic human, economic, and environmental consequences. The use of just a small fraction of the 12,500 nuclear weapons in the world's stockpiles could end life as we know it. In addition, the \$100 billion USD spent annually on nuclear weapons is sorely needed to support peacemaking, environmental protection, and other urgent needs of humanity and the planet, as expressed through the Sustainable Development Goals.

The world's highest court, the International Court of Justice, affirmed that the threat and use of nuclear weapons is generally illegal and that there is a universal obligation for states to negotiate in good faith to achieve comprehensive nuclear disarmament. States currently relying on nuclear weapons for their security have an obligation to replace these policies with approaches based on international law and common security, as outlined in the UN Charter.

The Pact for the Future includes commitments to prevent nuclear war and achieve the global elimination of nuclear weapons. UN Member States should use the opportunity of the *International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons* and UN High Level Plenary Meeting on 26 September to announce concrete plans to achieve these goals.

No time is better than 2025 - the 80th anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the establishment of the United Nations – to undertake these actions to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world to protect current and future generations.

These aims are also embodied in the Treaty for the Prevention of Nuclear War, which many non-nuclear armed States have now signed up to and ratified. Ed

#### The Power of Nuclear

Recently I was lucky to be offered a ticket by Conor Bollins of CND to this event at the Wimbledon Book Fest, as he was unable to go.

Frank Close & Tim Gregory spoke about their recent books. 80 years on from the atomic bombings, this event explored both the historical context and future prospects of nuclear power.

**Frank Close** is an award-winning science writer, University of Oxford physicist, and former CERN staff member. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society and winner of their Michael Faraday Prize for excellence in science communication.

His book "The Destroyer of Worlds" is a new history of the development of nuclear power and the extraordinary minds behind it. Henry Becquerel's accidental discovery, in Paris in 1896, of a faint smudge on a photographic plate sparked a chain of discoveries which would unleash the atomic age. This is the story of how pursuit of this hidden source of nuclear power, which began innocently and collaboratively, was overwhelmed by the politics of the 1930s, and following the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki opened the way to a still more terrible possibility: a thermonuclear bomb, that could destroy all life on earth – from anywhere. The story spans decades and continents, moving from Becquerel to Ernest Rutherford, includes Enrico Fermi in Rome, Otto Hahn and Lise Meitner in Berlin and the Joliot-Curies in Paris, leading to the appearance of Robert Oppenheimer before climaxing with increasingly horrifying developments in the USA and USSR.

**Tim Gregory** is a nuclear scientist working in a laboratory at Sellafield, as well as a speaker, popular science author, regular on radio, and occasional television presenter.

His book "Going Nuclear - How the Atom will Save the World" puts forward the possibility that instead of destroying it, the atom could save the world – and is the only way to solve climate change. From advanced medicine and forensics to space exploration and even atomic gardening, Gregory reveals the boundless potential of atomic energy. He urges us to rethink the path to net zero. He argues that the solution to climate change lies not simply in replacing fossil fuels with renewables, but in fully embracing another energy source that emits zero carbon dioxide: nuclear power. Gregory dismantles the 'conventional wisdom' that renewables such as wind and solar are completely 'green', and debunks 'myths' surrounding nuclear waste and radiation, demonstrating that nuclear power is 'not only reliable, safe and potent, but the most environmentally responsible way to harvest energy'. The authors were interviewed by journalist Jeevan Vasagar, who writes on climate, the environment and global affairs at the Observer. Most of the questions asked were to Tim Gregory, unsurprisingly as his ideas were, to my mind, very controversial. The talk was interesting but to me the opinions of Tim Gregory were extraordinary – nuclear waste is not really dangerous, very few people died of radiation sickness after either Chernobyl or Fukushima – and it is the **only** safe/possible way to combat climate change, which is really likely to make our world largely unliveable in, probably in this century.

## Making Britain Safer?

Thanks to Campaign Against Arms Trade for this article from their latest Newsletter.

In June the UK government published its
Strategic Defence Review, the first to be
published under Keir Starmer's Labour
government, and it will have had arms dealers

submarines. With calls for an in military personnel, it recommends structures such as a "gap year" or hope will encourage more people.

Proclaiming that the UK must be ready to "fight and win" a full-scale war, the review calls for the UK to boost its nuclear programme with an extra £15 billion for warheads and more F-35 aircraft to carry them, and up to 12 new conventionally armed, nuclear powered

rubbing their hands together.

submarines. With calls for an increase in military personnel, it recommended new structures such as a "gap year" option that they hope will encourage more people, including women and young people, to consider joining. Ominously it calls for cadet forces in schools and communities across the UK to be expanded by 30%, which will be supported by work with the Department for Education "to develop understanding of the armed forces among young people." The UK is one of few countries that

allows 16 year olds to join the army and such an approach is likely to see those numbers increasing. This splurge in military spending is likely to be paid for by the people with the least. Despite challenges from within his own party,

Keir Starmer and his Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, have made clear that funding will come from cutting social security for disabled people as well as cuts to

international aid. There is also the promise of a greater focus on international arms sales, with the creation of a new Defence Exports Office in the Ministry of Defence to drive exports and an explicit commitment to sell even more arms.

With UK arms having been used in human rights abuses around the world, such as the Saudi-led bombardment of Yemen and the Israeli genocide against Gaza, this can only mean even more complicity in war crimes and atrocities. One of the most telling things about the review is what is missing. There is almost nothing in it about the climate crisis, and nothing about the threats that people are facing

from underfunded public services, which will only get worse as the arms industry continues to suck up resources. Experts agree that military procurement is one of the most wasteful expenses in government, with vast sums involved, yet Labour is proposing to hugely expand this bloated and destructive sector. It doesn't have to be this way. The arms industry employs some of the best and most skilled engineers in the world. We want to see those workers and their skills being put to the best possible use by boosting support for green and renewable industries that can help us to build a cleaner, greener and safer world. The UK already has one of the biggest military

The UK already has one of the biggest military budgets in the world, the idea that we should be inflating it further while services we all rely on go without is one that CAAT will always oppose.

The Campaign against the Arms Trade Newsletter has very many other interesting articles - see their website www.caat.org.uk

#### CND AGM and Conference 2025

This was held in October. Chairperson Sophie Bolt was warmly thanked for her work, in what has been a very busy time not least because CND has quite rightly been heavily involved in the very many demonstrations against the genocide taking place in Gaza.

There were many resolutions passed, of which I found the following very interesting, you can read about them all at www.cnduk.org

## **1.Halting Britain's nuclear expansionism** CND notes:

The British government's announcement, the purchase of 12 US F35A nuclear-capable fighter jets, to be stationed at RAF Marham with a likely delivery timeframe of 2029.

The purchases and ongoing costs, not yet published by the government, could be in the region of £1.5 billion. There are likely further costs.

CND further notes: Evidence of two deliveries in July of the US B61-12 nuclear bombs to RAF Lakenheath, the first time US nuclear weapons have been stationed in Britain since 2008.

**CND resolved to:**- Continue and strengthen our campaigning work in Lakenheath Alliance for Peace and build on the successful protests at RAF Lakenheath.

To build successful actions at and activism

around opposing the F35A deployments and the expansion and upgrade of RAF Marham.

#### 2. Missile Defence

- 1. Satellites have become a vital component for the US and UK military and play a key role in missile defence programmes.
- 2. The recent document 'Space Warfighting: A Framework for Planners' describes how the US will gain and maintain space superiority. It demonstrates how space is seen as another battleground and shows how the US seeks to control the various orbital regions and deny their use to others.
- 3.The UK already hosts US Space Force systems at Fylingdales, Menwith Hill and Croughton and has joined the US in several military space projects (e.g. the DARC radars proposed for Pembrokeshire) and agreements (e.g. 'Operation Olympic Defender').

#### CND resolved to:-

- 1. Reaffirm opposition to missile defence.
- 2. Press the UK government to strengthen and expand the Outer Space Treaty to prevent an arms race in outer space.
- 3. Support opposition to military bases and arms companies associated with the militarisation of space and missile defence.
- 4. Continue to support the Global Network's "Keep Space for Peace" week in October.

## KINGSTON PEACE COUNCIL/CND

Subscription rates £8 annually, £10 family membership, £3 unwaged

## CHAIRPERSON and SECRETARY

Positions vacant.

Please offer if you could help as secretary. At present several people are sharing these jobs.

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Next Issue (January/February 2026)
Phillip Cooper

**Disclaimer:** The views expressed in this edition are not necessarily those of Kingston Peace Council/CND

Our Regular Stalls in Kingston Market Place take place on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of the month, outside the gates of All Saints Church, Kingston, in the market place.

Dates for November will be Saturdays 1st and 15th and for December Saturdays 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. We start at 11am and have 2 or 3 one hour shifts. Please contact Angie Cooper 020 8399 5537, angecooper47@hotmail.com. (If you are new to this, you will always be with an experienced member.)

#### Forthcoming Events (Some Online)

Sun, 09/11/25 12noon – 1pm Peace Pledge Union:National Alternative Remembrance Ceremony in Tavistock Square
WC1H 9EU. This annual event happens in front of the memorial stone
for conscientious objectors. They will observe two minutes' silence and
white poppy wreaths will be laid on the memorial in memory of all
victims of war, both civilian and military, of all nationalities. Speakers
will include Sir Mark Rylance, Oscar-winning actor, director,
playwright, peace campaigner and PPU member, and Rachel Taylor
from Every Casualty Counts, an international charity dedicated to
ensuring every life lost in armed conflict is recognised.

Sun, 09/11/25 3pm 'Ending Wars', Movement for the Abolition of War's Remembrance Lecture 2025. At Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9BD (between St Pancras Station & Tavistock Square). Is it possible that out of the immediate worldwide crises of war and climate catastrophe a new approach can be fashioned to deal with our deepest differences? Speaker: Lord John Alderdice, Founding Director of the Oxford Centre for the Resolution of Intractable Conflict and co-editor of 'Ending Wars', published August 2025. The lecture will be preceded by MAW's Annual General Meeting at 1.30pm. Organised by: Movement for the Abolition of War For free tickets and more information visit www.abolishwar.net or email info@abolishwar.org.uk

Sun, 09/11/25 5 - 6pm Launch of 'Memorial 2025', Friends House, 173-177 Euston Road NW1 2BJ. Live Projection by Every Casualty Counts, which will document the lives of civilians killed in war over the past year. A 'virtual cenotaph' will be projected onto the Friends House building.

**Sat, 22/11/25 10.30am CND conference** 'Stop British nuclear expansion: how to reverse the government's disastrous war drive', at The Green House, Ethical Property, 244 – 254 Cambridge Heath Road London E2 9DA.

Join CND for this national conference to discuss why we must campaign against the purchase of these fighter jets and urge the government to reverse its disastrous war drive, and instead focus on providing real, human security – funding health, education, and climate action.

More information on speakers and panels to be announced. Organised by: CND Please contact <a href="mailto:information@cnduk.org">information@cnduk.org</a> or 'phone the CND office on 020 7700 2393 with any queries.

#### Tue, 2/12/25 7.30pm online Christian CND Webinar.

In the year marking the 80th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, CCND is offering a series of monthly short webinars (First Tuesdays of the month). Members of the Executive and invited guest speakers will present a topic related to nuclear disarmament from a Christian perspective. Register at:

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/4EKignTfSbe1Bhl1LkY Fg