#1 Nukes are the only Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) not yet banned

In 1996 International Court of Justice said that Nuclear Weapons should be regarded as illegal. However they remain the only WMD not yet prohibited despite the well documented catastrophic impact. Other banned WMD are: cluster munitions, land mines, biological and chemical weapons.

Previous experiences show that a ban provides a solid foundation for advancing elimination. While this will not immediately achieve global nuclear disarmament it will help by stigmatising the possession of nuclear weapons. Possessing countries and arms companies will find it harder and harder to acquire resources for work on illegal weapons, transport the weapons and the materials, modernise their programmes and their reputation and status would be at risk. It would challenge allies of nuclear - armed nations to end their support for the indefinite retention of nuclear forces. And it would provide a strong basis for arguing that financial institutions everywhere should redirect their investments. In other words a ban would challenge all those who help sustain our nuclear-armed world.

#2 Nukes cause great environmental damage

Even if nuclear weapons were never again be exploded over a city, the mining, transport, processing and testing of nuclear materials and nuclear weapons result in the contamination of our environment. Uranium elements escape when mining and processing and results in contamination of air, land and sea and the disposal of waste is extremely controversial because radioactivity persist for thousands of years.

The radioactivity affects the living and the unborn. Radiation is also carried away by wind: eg Radiation fallout from the Chernobyl disaster affected Scotland and sheep had to be tested for 24 years. Use of nuclear weapons would destroy society with fire and radiation leaving those who survived without food, shelter or medical help. Future generations would be genetically damaged and the land would be contaminated so as to make it uninhabitable. A small scale nuclear war would mean a catastrophic global climate change. The explosions would send massive clouds of dust high in the stratosphere blocking so much sunlight that a nuclear winter would result. People and animals will die of starvation and radiation will penetrate the food chain. Famine on this scale would also lead to major epidemics of infectious diseases, and would create immense potential for mass population movement, civil conflict, and war.

#3 Nukes are inhumane and indiscriminate weapons

Nuclear weapons have been used in warfare twice on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (1945). More than 210,000 of innocent civilians died while many more suffered. Nuclear weapons are the most destructive and inhumane weapons and today's nukes are thousands of times more powerful than the ones detonated in World War 2. Almost everything close to ground zero is vaporised. A single nuclear weapons detonation could kill millions of people (including children, elderly and vulnerable).

They would be incinerated in an instant or they would suffer agonizing deaths in the weeks and months after the attack. Many others will die after from radiation-related illnesses and the effects will affect generations by genetic mutations. Buildings, hospitals, roads, power supplies and infrastructure will be destroyed. The UN and Red Cross declared that no adequate humanitarian response would be possible to provide following a single nuclear detonation.

#4 Nukes are very risky

Te manufacture and transportation of nuclear weapons involve risks which would not be permitted in non - military activity.

Accidents with nuclear weapons almost turned the Cold War „hot" on dozens of occasions.

However, due to the great secrecy surrounding nuclear weapons we often don't hear of accidents and mistakes until much later. Some examples have come to light.

- In 1983 a Soviet early-warning satellite indicated five US nuclear missiles had been launched and Lieutenant Colonel Stanislav Petrov had a matter of minutes to respond to the supposed attack. Petrov deemed the readings a false alarm therefore averting a nuclear war.
- In 1995, Russian President Boris Yeltsin was advised to retaliate immediately against an incoming NATO missile, which proved to be a Norwegian scientific rocket.

We have examples of explosions, fires, leaks, false alarms, malfunctions, sunk submarines or submarine coalitions and safeguarding issues. Nuclear weapons are transported around the globe and put people at risk. In the 60s a bomber jet accidentally dropped two nuclear bombs during a flight and miraculously neither of them exploded. In 2007 six nuclear missiles were loaded to a bomber jet by mistake flown across USA and were left unguarded for 36 hours until somebody noticed.

In UK, nuclear missiles are transported with convoys up to 6 time a year. They travel day and night, even in severe weather conditions. The fallout from a radiation leak through a road accident or terrorist attack would be catastrophic. Only between 2000 - 2016 there were 180 incidents involving these nuclear convoys. Coalitions, breakdowns, crashes and failures have happened and Ministry of Defence admitted in a technical report declassified in 2005 that bombs damaged in a vehicle pile-up or air crash could partially detonate and deliver lethal radiation doses.

#5 Nukes undermine our security

Nuclear weapons pose a direct and constant threat to people everywhere. Far from keeping peace they have no utility and are useless in addressing any of today's real security threats such as terrorism, cyber war and climate change. There have been dozen of documented instances of the near-use of nuclear weapons. The UK"s nuclear weapons didn't prevent the Falklands War in 1982, the Gulf War in 1991, or

the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. A commonly held myth is that nuclear-armed states don't get attacked. In 1973, after troop losses, Israel considered using nuclear weapons against Syria in the Yom Kippur war. In 1999, India and Pakistan - two nuclear armed states - went to war.

Nuclear weapons makes us a target. Other's countries nuclear missiles are targeting us or we could become victims of cyber war or theorists attacks. Nuclear armed nations are more vulnerable to strikes and terrorist targeting than non-nuclear nations. The existence of nuclear weapons in unstable regions of the world also leads to the risk that a group of terrorists ("non-state actors") might acquire nuclear weapons. Even if they lacked the technical capabilities to detonate a large device, nuclear materials could still be used in a „dirty bomb" that would spread contamination and panic.

In June last year, the Royal Navy test-fired an unarmed Trident missile. The navy claims that the accuracy of the missile can be within a few meters. However, the tested missile was not only out by a few meters but several thousand miles. The missile was targeted at the southern Atlantic off the coast of Africa and instead, it was heading in the opposite direction, over the US.

The failure of nuclear weapons countries to disarm will likely result in the proliferation of nuclear weapons to other nations. It is only reasonable to assume that other countries will decide to add nuclear weapons to their military forces.

#6 Nukes cost a fortune

Countries spend large sums of money on nuclear weapons programmes which could be used for health care, education, disaster relief and other vital services. The nine nuclear-armed nations spend in excess of $105 billion each year maintaining and modernizing their nuclear arsenals. The British government's plans to replace Trident submarines will taxpayers over £207 billion.

Despite renewed commitments by nations to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world, all of the nuclear powers continue to invest exorbitant sums of money in their nuclear forces. Funding allocated to national disarmament efforts is minuscule by comparison. Money should be redirected towards meeting human needs.