

Salisbury CND Position Paper Ukraine Crisis

Salisbury Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament wishes to bring this important information to the attention of the public

We write this piece following the meeting on 26th November of the Ukraine-NATO council in Brussels to discuss its response to the worsening escalation between Russia and Ukraine.

Every day brings the risk of nuclear war closer. Britain's reckless decision to allow Ukraine to fire its long-range Storm Shadow missiles inside Russia has reportedly caused hundreds of fatalities. In retaliation, Russia has launched a hypersonic ballistic missile, capable of carrying nuclear warheads, which has caused major damage to a heavily defended missile manufacturing facility within Ukraine. These missiles are capable of reaching the UK. Russia has also now lowered its threshold for nuclear use, precisely to respond to recent attacks in Russian territory by both the US-made Army Tactical Missile Systems (ATACMS) and Britain's Storm Shadows.

We condemn the UK's role in precipitating this crisis and call on the government to acknowledge the dangers it is unleashing.

Britain's actions are increasing the risk of this conflict lurching into an all-out war between nuclear-armed NATO and Russia. The consequences of such a war are too terrible to contemplate.

We are also deeply shocked by statements from Lieutenant General Magowan, Britain's Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, at the Defence Select Committee, saying that 'If the British Army was asked to fight tonight, it would fight tonight.' The open threat of UK troops being put on the ground in Ukraine only serves to further increase tensions with Russia.

These actions are deeply reckless, putting at greater risk the lives of the Ukrainian and Russian people, as well as endangering populations across Europe and here in Britain.

Opinion polls show that the Ukrainian people want an urgent end to this war through peace talks. Across Western Europe very large majorities also want an end to the suffering through a negotiated settlement.

A global majority is dedicated to the avoidance of nuclear war. The warmongering attitude of the government has to stop. The only path to true security lies through universal security, based on negotiations, arms reduction treaties and mutual respect. Security based on military dominance of one country or grouping of countries is a total, and very expensive, illusion.

We therefore urge the British government to end this reckless and dangerous escalation, withdraw the use of its Storm Shadow missiles, and call for a ceasefire and peace negotiations as a matter of urgency.

It is vital that the concept of peace underlies future discussions, rather than a default position based on war.