



MINISTÈRE DE LA DÉFENSE  
MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES ET EUROPÉENNES

## NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT : FRANCE'S COMMITMENT

The activities carried out by France in the context of the fight against proliferation, of arms control and disarmament are guided by a set of unchanging principles: working for a fairer international order founded on the rule of law and collective security, prevention of threats to peace, respect for the right to self-defence, refusal of engagement in any arms race, and progress towards general and complete disarmament. In accordance with the goals of the NPT in terms of nuclear disarmament and of general and complete disarmament, goals which it has adopted as its own, France has taken significant unilateral measures. As the French President recalled in his Cherbourg speech on 21 March 2008, the French doctrine of deterrence is based on the principle of strict sufficiency. France has consistently sought to maintain its nuclear arsenal at the lowest possible level compatible with the strategic context.

### WHAT FRANCE DID

France has an exemplary record with respect to nuclear disarmament which is unique in the world: it was the first nuclear-weapon State with the United Kingdom to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); it was the first State to decide to shut down and dismantle its facilities for production of fissile materials for explosive purposes; it is the only State to have transparently dismantled its nuclear testing site, located in the Pacific; the only State to have dismantled its ground-to-ground nuclear missiles; the only State to have voluntarily reduced by a third the number of its nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines.

### WHAT FRANCE HAS DECIDED

- 1- The President of the Republic has announced a further disarmament measure, with the reduction by one-third of the number of nuclear weapons, missiles and aircraft of the airborne component. Following this reduction, the French arsenal will include fewer than 300 nuclear warheads, which is half of the maximum number of warheads France had during the Cold War. In giving this information, France is completely transparent, because it has no other weapons beside those in its operational stockpile.
- 2- As a further gesture of his will to promote transparency, the French President has decided to invite international experts to come and acknowledge the dismantling of our fissile military materials production facilities at Pierrelatte and Marcoule.

### WHAT FRANCE PROPOSES

The President of the Republic has proposed to the international community an action plan he calls on the nuclear powers to firmly commit to by the next NPT Review Conference in 2010:

- universal ratification of the CTBT
- dismantling of all nuclear testing sites, in a manner that is transparent and open to the international community
- opening without delay of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT)
- establishment of an immediate moratorium on the production of such materials
- agreement among the five nuclear-weapon States recognized by the NPT on transparency measures
- opening of negotiations on a treaty banning short and intermediate range ground-to-ground missiles
- calling on all States to adhere to and implement the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOG)
- in parallel, mobilization in all other fields of disarmament.

TYPES OF MEASURE	MEASURES DECIDED AND IMPLEMENTED	COMMENTS
<p><b>Reduction of France's nuclear arsenal since the end of the Cold War</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete dismantling of the ground-to-ground component.</li> <li>• <b>Reduction of the sea-based component:</b> Reduction of the number of ballistic missile nuclear submarines (SSBNs) from six to four.</li> <li>• <b>Reduction of the airborne component:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Early withdrawal from service and dismantling of the AN 52 nuclear bombs carried by Jaguar and Mirage III aircraft</li> <li>- Withdrawal of Mirage IV strategic aircraft from nuclear missions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Reduction by one-third of the airborne component, announced in 2008;</b> following this, the French arsenal will include <b>fewer than 300 nuclear warheads.</b></li> </ul>	<p>France is the only nuclear-weapon State that has totally eliminated its formerly deployed ground-to-ground nuclear weapon systems.</p> <p><b>France is proposing the opening of negotiations on a treaty banning short and intermediate range ground-to-ground missiles.</b></p> <p>Following the measures announced by the French President on 21 March 2008, the total number of delivery vehicles has been reduced by more than half since 1985.</p> <p>"France applies a principle of strict sufficiency: It maintains its arsenal at the lowest possible level compatible with the strategic context." (<i>Cherbourg speech</i>).</p>
<p><b>Adjustment of the operational aspects of nuclear forces</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>De-targeting</b>, announced in 1997, <b>confirmed in 2008.</b></li> <li>• <b>Reduction of the alert status of the two components</b> in 1992 and 1996. Those reductions of the alert status applied to both the response times of forces and the number of weapon systems on alert.</li> </ul>	<p>"When international security improves, France draws the consequences [...] I can confirm that <b>none of our weapons are targeted against anyone.</b>" (<i>Cherbourg speech</i>).</p>
<p><b>Cessation of production of fissile material for nuclear weapons</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cessation of production of plutonium as early as 1992 and of highly enriched uranium (HEU) in 1996.</b></li> <li>• <b>Shutdown and dismantling (decided and being implemented) of the Pierrelatte and Marcoule fissile military materials production facilities.</b></li> </ul>	<p>First State to take and implement a decision to dismantle its facilities for the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.</p> <p>France favours the <b>immediate launching of negotiations, in the Conference on Disarmament, on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons purposes.</b></p> <p>France proposes to the nuclear powers the establishment of an immediate moratorium on the production of such materials.</p>
<p><b>Cessation of nuclear testing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cessation of all nuclear testing</b> announced on 20 January 1996.</li> <li>• <b>Dismantling of testing facilities in the Pacific</b>, announced on 22 February 1996 and completed end of July 1998.</li> <li>• <b>Support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)</b> signed by France on 24 September 1996 and ratified on 6 April 1998. Active support for the CTBTO Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS).</li> </ul>	<p>France is the only nuclear-weapon State to have closed down and dismantled its nuclear testing facilities. Today, France no longer has any testing facility enabling it to conduct nuclear tests.</p> <p><b>France is calling for the dismantling of all nuclear testing sites in a manner that is transparent and open to the international community.</b></p> <p><b>France is calling for universal ratification of the CTBT.</b></p>
<p><b>Transparency</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Doctrine:</b> speech by the President of the Republic on 21 March 2008 clarifying the French deterrence doctrine.</li> <li>• <b>Capabilities:</b> after the further reduction by one-third of the airborne component announced in 2008, our arsenal will include <b>fewer than 300 nuclear warheads.</b> Announcement that France has <b>no other weapons beside those in its operational stockpile.</b></li> <li>• <b>International experts invited</b> to come and acknowledge the dismantling of the Pierrelatte and Marcoule fissile military materials production facilities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>France invites the five nuclear-weapon States recognized by the NPT to agree on transparency measures.</b></p> <p>"I have also decided that France could and should be more transparent with respect to its nuclear arsenal than anyone ever has been. After this reduction, our arsenal will include fewer than 300 nuclear warheads. That is half of the maximum number of warheads we had during the Cold War. In giving this information, France is completely transparent because it has no other weapons beside those in its operational stockpile." (<i>Cherbourg speech</i>).</p>