
V. NUCLEAR WEAPONS TODAY

NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN EUROPE – NUCLEAR SHARING

Although there are only two official Nuclear Weapon States, namely Great Britain and France, there are more deployment sites for nuclear weapons from the US in other European countries. This initiative by NATO during the cold war is supposed to guarantee „protection in Europe“. Whereas the decision of an use of those weapons is up to the US president the operation itself would be carried out by national troops. The planning for military strategy is done by the “Nuclear Planning group” of NATO.

	Nuclear warheads	
Official Nuclear Weapon States		
Great Britain		160
France		300
Nuclear Sharing, „Umbrella States“		
Germany	Büchel	10 - 20
Italy	Aviano	50
	Ghedi Torre	20 - 40
Belgium	Klein Brogel	10 - 20
The Netherlands	Volkel	10 - 20
Turkey	Incirlik	50 - 90

Nuclear weapons in Europe (www.fas.org, 12.03.2010)

This nuclear politic of NATO is often criticized because the Nuclear Sharing is a violation of the nuclear Non-Proliferation-Treaty (NPT) under international law. According to article I and II of the NPT only the five official Nuclear Weapon States are allowed to develop and possess nuclear weapons. A transfer of the nuclear weapons to Non Nuclear Weapon States is therefore a breach of international law. Nuclear Sharing is a transfer of technology and Know-How, and even the training with foreign nuclear weapons like the German military is practicing in Büchel, Germany, is a transfer of knowledge and is prohibited under the NPT. Especially the fact that the „Umbrella States“ of the Nuclear Sharing have the possibility to use their nuclear arsenals, is contrasted strongly with the spirit of the NPT: the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

METHOD: LETTER TO DECISION-MAKER

MATERIALS: envelope, paper – or email

TIME AND LOCATION: approx. 30 minutes

The policy of a country bases on the opinion and attitudes of the population. Therefore it is important to tell your own government in which state you want to live and what has to be changed to do so.

STEP 1 – Whom do I write to?

You could write to your head of state, your mayor or a local member of parliament. It might also be worthwhile contacting non-elected officials, such as church leaders or academics.

It is important to get information about the person you want to write to. Have there been any comments on nuclear weapons in the press? What do you know about his or her activities in the disarmament issue?

STEP 2 – What is my aim?

You should have a particular request. Make sure that this can be realistically fulfilled by the leader you are writing to: e.g. don't ask a local mayor to sign an international treaty. Also don't ask for example South Africa to dismantle its nuclear weapons – it has already done this.

STEP 3 – How do I draft my letter?

Your points should be clear, logical and well expressed. Don't make the letter long if it doesn't need to be, and be polite even you strongly disagree with your leader's views and actions. On the preview page you can find a sample letter you can use for your writing.

STEP 4 – How do I send my letter?

You could send the letter in hard form or by email. Make sure it's correctly addressed and, if it's hard form, be sure to sign it. Then await a reply. Leaders receive a large volume of correspondence, so you should be prepared to wait several months for a reply!

Sample letter to decision-makers:

[Your address]

[Address of decision-maker]

[Date]

Dear [title and name]

I write to you because I am deeply concerned about the threat that nuclear weapons pose to our health, global security and human survival. I fear that, unless we muster the political will to abolish these weapons of terror, they will be used again – intentionally or by accident – and the effect will be catastrophic.

I am a supporter of the new global grassroots movement called the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, which is calling on all governments to agree to a Nuclear Weapons Convention – a treaty that would ban nuclear weapons.

The overwhelming majority of countries want such a ban. We have already outlawed anti-personnel landmines, chemical weapons and biological weapons. It is now time to ban the worst weapons of all.

I urge you to do everything in your power to support the campaign.

Yours sincerely,

[Your signature]

[Your name]