A MAJOR STEP BACK FROM NUCLEAR WAR

by New Worker correspondent

THE P5 five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council have come together to state that war must be avoided between nuclear states. The five veto-powers on the UN Security Council – People’s China, Russia, France, Britain and the USA – have signed a joint statement pledging never to use nuclear weapons against each other and to work towards nuclear disarmament in the future.

Whilst the statement doesn’t rule out nuclear attacks on smaller countries, the ‘Big Five’ affirmed that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought”.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the initiative that reflects the diplomatic efforts of China, Russia and to a lesser degree France in getting Anglo-American imperialism to take this first step towards preventing a new nuclear arms race that could easily trigger a third world war. But Guterres said that the only way to eliminate all nuclear risks is to eliminate all nuclear weapons, and he called on the nuclear powers and all the other member states of the UN to work to achieve this goal as soon as possible. Although falling short of a complete no-first-strike pledge that only People’s China and Democratic Korea have made, the joint declaration – the first of its kind – is a major step forward.

increase trust

The Chinese say the declaration will “increase mutual trust” and reduce the risk of nuclear conflict, and the Russians are now calling for a Big Five summit to further reduce international tensions.

China’s Vice Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu told the media on Monday that this was the first time the leaders of the five countries have issued a statement over the nuclear weapons issue. This, he said, reflects the five countries’ political will to prevent nuclear war and their common voice on safeguarding global strategic stability and reducing risks of a nuclear conflict, at a time when international strategic security is facing many major challenges amidst profound changes not seen in a century as well as the pandemic.

During the preliminary talks, British and French diplomats declined to commit themselves to a “no first strike” pledge claiming that this would undermine their so-called “nuclear deterrents”. But the focus remains on the White House.

In Washington, US Department of State spokesperson Ned Price told reporters that his government was “gratified to be able to reach this joint statement together with other members of the P5.”

“I called it an extraordinary statement because it really is. It’s the first time that all five nuclear weapon states, parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, have affirmed together that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. And they did so at the highest levels,” he said.

Although the Biden team has signed up to a declaration which would halt the American arms build-up that accelerated under Trump and has continued unabated by the Biden administration, everyone knows that the Americans are good at saying one thing and doing another.

Last year Biden told the UN General Assembly that the USA is “not seeking a new cold war or a world divided into rigid blocs” whilst secretly setting up a new AUKUS military pact with Australia and Britain to provide Australia with nuclear-powered, yet conventionally armed, submarines.

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FUND

The December fund closed with £1,100 in the bag giving us a grand total of £3,235. We didn’t hit our target but we hope anything still floating around at the depot – and it sometimes takes two weeks or more for some of our post to arrive – will bump up the January appeal.

With Covid not many workers make New Year resolutions these days but let’s make one for the New Worker and the class to hit our £3,500 target every month and ensure the survival of the only communist weekly in Britain.

Now, more than ever, we need to get our message out on the street. With Johnson in Downing Street and Starmer at the top of the greasy pole in the Labour Party we need to make the case for communism up and down the country. There is a way out of the crisis but this government is not it.

We rely entirely on the support of friends and comrades to keep us going.

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