

26 September 2021

CNDP Statement on AUKUS and Quad

1. The Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace (CNDP), India expresses its deep concern at the U.S. agreement to sell nuclear submarines and Tomahawk missiles to Australia and also at the ongoing quadrilateral security dialogue of which India is a part.
2. We call attention to the absurdity of U.S. involvement in a security dialogue in the Asia- Pacific region. The United States has no legitimate security interests in this part of the globe and is simply looking to confront and thereby contain China, which it perceives as a threat to U.S. hegemony.
3. The United States finds itself unable to maintain its economic hegemony, which has been in steady decline. But U.S. military hegemony remains unchallenged and, for decades, the United States has accounted for 40% of world military expenditure. As a declining empire, the United States seeks confrontation where it is strongest: by fostering a new arms race in the Asia-Pacific region.

In the wake of what has happened in Afghanistan these US machinations will, as a reaction, promote a counter-alliance between China, Russia, Iran and Pakistan that worsens the prospects of peace and stability in South Asia as well as furthering a nuclear and conventional arms race in this region.

4. The U.S.-Australia agreement involves the sale of nuclear submarines that function using highly enriched uranium (HEU). HEU can also be used to manufacture nuclear weapons. This agreement sets a precedent for trade in HEU and therefore undermines arms-control efforts. We call attention to the hypocrisy of the United States and Australia who have previously been vocal on questions of non-proliferation when it suits their interests. It is possible that this precedent will encourage governments in India, China, Pakistan, Indonesia, South Korea, Japan and others to seek trade in HEU.
5. The sale of U.S. Tomahawk missiles to Australia undermines the Missile Technology Control Regime.
6. France's dismay at the U.S.-Australia deal is not simply because it has lost a lucrative defence contract. France lays claim to the world's largest exclusive economic zone (EEZ) involving large areas around

islands in the South Pacific region that it thereby patrols. The EEZs of the US and Australia are the second and third largest respectively.

It is notable that all three countries involved here are either colonial states or settler-colonial states and these large EEZ's are reminders of how they continue to exploit this legacy. This deal is an indication that 'protection' of their respective EEZs will be further militarised thus reinforcing the privatisation of the resources of the seas and oceans when this should be a part of humanity's common heritage.

7. We find it deplorable that the Indian government seeks to play the role of a junior partner of the United States in these geopolitical machinations.
8. We urge the Indian government to challenge these attempts to militarize and colonize the seas. We also urge the Indian government to stay clear of the emerging conflict between the U.S. and China and adopt an independent foreign policy.
9. As the COVID-19 pandemic reminds us, nuclear weapons and military expenditure have very little to do with the true challenges that face humanity in the 21st century. Peace, international cooperation and investment in peoples' welfare instead of weapons serve as far better guarantors of a country's security.

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