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Nuclear Weapons at the Paris Correctional Court

- Homepage - News - Communiqués -

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ACDN Press Release

On Monday 7 November at 9am, Sophie and Rémi, two anti-nuclear activists promoting the abolition of these weapons, are to appear before the 29th Chamber of the Tribunal Correctionnel de Paris.

Their « crime » is that on August 6 2016 they took part in a « Die-In » in front of the Paris offices of the « Républicains » Party, a party which approves the financing and modernising of France's nuclear arsenal. The date was the 71st anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The event was a collective fast expressing their rejection of nuclear arms. This nonviolent action led to rapid intervention by the police.

Two grounds were given for detaining the activists : Sophie because she had written in chalk the slogan « No to financing nukes : 4 billion euros to save per year ! » and Rémi because he had stuck « Abolish Nuclear Arms» stickers on the windows of the Party's offices.

For this crime, they were detained for 28 hours and 30 minutes : held under observation for 24 and then presented to the Procurator of the Republic and charged with « grave damage ». The damage was so extremely grave that the chalk slogan had already disappeared and stickers had come unstuck.

This ridiculous trial is in fact a political one. It criminalises the activist deeds of people who champion a world without nuclear weapons, people who make the mistake of taking seriously President Obama's call for one (in his Prague speech on 5 April 2009).

But who is criminal here ? In the view of the UN, which is preparing to convene in 2017 a conference tasked with establishing a treaty to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons, the criminals are the nations like France that possess these weapons and want to keep them at all costs, despite their hypocritical and mendacious undertakings to eliminate them.

It is paradoxical that a party calling itself « republican » to the point of grabbing and claiming this label, a party that should deserve to be sued by the Republic for usurping and stealing its identity, should dare to sue two young citizens whose concern is to uphold international law. It should have had the good sense to withdraw its complaint. Let us hope that French Justice has the good sense to discharge them.

We call on all lovers of freedom to support the two defendants during their trial, which opens in Paris, at 4 Bd du Palais, on Monday 7 November from 9am.

In addition, we invite sincere and genuine republicans, whether or not belonging to the « Républicains », to take part in the national campaign for a « shared-initiative referendum » (pariament and citizens) on the question :
"Do you want France to negotiate and ratify with all the other states concerned a treaty to ban and completely eliminate nuclear weapons, under mutual and international control that is strict and effective?"

This initiative is the subject of a referendum bill that has already been signed by over 100 MPs and senators. It needs 185. So please, Mesdames & Messieurs les parlementaires, make another effort and then, thanks to you, irrespective of your political labels, the French people will perhaps at last open the way to the abolition of nuclear weapons.

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