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**"The world, Europe and France  
will become nuclear-free, or  
else will self-destruct. Think  
urgently about this, Monsieur  
le ministre!"**

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Saintes, 25 March 2010

M. Hervé Morin, Minister of Defense, temporarily in Saintes

**Subject:** Your defense policies

**Attached:** Letter to President Sarkozy dated 11 March 2010

Monsieur le ministre,

The newspaper *Sud-Ouest* tells us that today in Saintes you are holding a meeting of your political party, the New Centre.

I am unable to attend or speak at the meeting, on account of a sudden death in my family. I am therefore writing you a letter, which a civil servant has agreed to pass on to you.

As your ministerial advisors may have already informed you, Monsieur le ministre - and I am chiefly addressing your status as minister - your choice to hold your meeting in Saintes, indeed in the Auditorium Saintonge, is provocative for a number of Saintais.

In fact, this city's municipal council decided unanimously, without voting on party lines, to join the "Abolition 2000" network June 2000, and to join "Mayors for Peace" in March 2008. These two international networks together work for the abolition of nuclear weapons. More than 3600 cities around the world are part of Mayors for Peace. Saintes received in July 2004 the [Hiroshima World Peace Mission](#).

The Auditorium Saintonge is itself a major point of resistance to the policies that you represent. It was the venue in May 2001 for the first Nuclear Disarmament Days, in 2003 for the first [National Colloquium on phasing-out civilian and nuclear technology](#), and in 2004, 2006 and 2008 for the 1st, [2nd](#) and [3rd](#) Rallies for International Disarmament, nuclear, biological and chemical.

Also in Saintes, on the Prairie de la Pallu, stand the Hiroshima tree and the Nagasaki tree, planted on the occasion of those rallies in 2006 and 2008.

In May 2001 Saintes lit the Nuclear Disarmament Flame, right in the Saintonge courtyard alongside the Auditorium. It is [periodically re-lit there](#) or, for example, beside the Monument to the Fallen and the Palais de Justice, notably in November 2009 when the [Hiroshima Flame](#) was brought here by the [World March for Peace and Non-Violence](#). Beside this Flame and in front of the Monument to the Fallen, the war veterans then lowered their flags for a minute of silence in memory of the dead of all wars.

I regret I cannot take the opportunity of your visit to Saintes to speak to you publicly about the policies that you are following in the name of France, and perhaps to obtain from you at last the semblance of a response to the questions for which ACDN wants answers - questions which this national NGO which I chair has never stopped asking since its establishment in 1996.

## **Europe and France will become nuclear-free, or else will self-destruct. Think urgently about this, Monsieur**

I regret that many letters sent to you are left unanswered, be they letters from military and civilian victims of French nuclear tests or letters from us, including one which did reach President Sarkozy and was transferred to you by his Director of Cabinet, as he affirmed to me at the start of March.

Above all I regret that, although you claim to follow a centrist « humanism », you are carrying out as part of the French government directly inspired by President Sarkozy certain policies which are unworthy of France. These policies make France guilty of perjury with respect to Article VI of the NPT, they make France a driving force in nuclear proliferation, both military and civilian, and a source of planetary irradiation. They make France an arms merchant on the first rank, and a major obstacle to the movement which President Obama initiated in Prague for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Last and most important, they make France a state whose so-called « defense » relies on the preparation and threat of committing crimes against humanity.

And those policies continue with the most exquisite hypocrisy, since France at the same time poses as a champion of both nuclear and conventional disarmament.

I lack the time or inclination, in my situation today, to demonstrate point by point the accuracy of each of my accusation. For more information I invite you, and all the readers of this open letter, to visit ACDN's website [www.acdn.net](http://www.acdn.net).

Finally, Monsieur le ministre, I draw your attention to the attached letter for President Sarkozy, sent to him on 11 March by the spokesman of Monde Sans Guerres et Sans Violence (MSGSV - World without war or violence) and by me for ACDN.

Mme Catherine Quéré, MP for Saintes and Saint Jean d'Angély took it to him on 16 March.

We call on all French citizens, and particularly the MPs, senators and other elected representatives, to adopt it and to send it to the President.

Why not you, Monsieur le ministre ?

You are the head of a party, and as such you hinted to *Le Monde* in an interview yesterday, that you might stand for the presidency in 2012. Be aware, Monsieur Morin, that you will have no chance if you persist in your current policies.

Up till now, the "presidential hopefuls" deemed it imperative to support France's nuclear "strike force". In 2012, the opposite will be true. In any case, such is our gut feeling, and you can count on my friends and myself to work to make it true.

The world, Europe, and France will become nuclear-free - or else they will self-destruct.

Think urgently about this, Monsieur le ministre.

Jean-Marie Matagne, president of ACDN