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Open Letter to President Janus [Macron], Elysée Palace, Paris

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Monsieur le Président de la République

Subject : Terrorism and State Terror

Last evening, like millions of French people, I was watching my TV and was deeply moved by the national homage paid to Samuel Paty. At the Sorbonne, the very place where I did my philosophy studies, in the courtyard that I knew so well. Samuel Paty, my colleague in "freedom of thought", in "quest for truth" and in "open expression", my previously unknown brother - tragically promoted to the fate of hero. So does one have to be murdered to be heard, recognised, heeded?

Like millions of French people, I felt with horror the crime committed by an Islamist maniac. And I find that your posthumous portrait of Samuel Paty was very good, very worthy, very convincing - a vibrant homage - along with the hymn to the Republic's values that accompanied it.

The trouble was that gradually I perceived a huge gap between your words and your acts. A gulf, an abyss. And I had the sad sensation that all those generous words served only to mask the horror of the nuclear policy that you conduct, silently, in the name of France and with our taxes.

It's a policy that causes you to maintain and to increase by over 50 % the budget devoted merely to modernising our nuclear weapons - going from nearly 4 billion to over 6 billion per year by 2025 - not to mention hidden bits of budget for maintaining and testing them.

It's a policy that makes you assert that France holds to "strict sufficiency" - her capacity to cause a billion deaths being seen as indispensable to our security. And not just any deaths. Horrible deaths, unspeakable sufferings, survivors branded for life. Can you not know the testimonies of the hibakusha, the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Have you not read the testimony of Setsuko Thurlow, one of the Nobel Peace Prize recipients, which she

sent you last February?

How can you persist in such a criminal policy and yet proclaim that France will keep faith with her fundamental values: Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité? She will obviously not keep faith, since for at least 70 years she has not done so: since her first atomic bomb test in Algeria on 13 February 1960, even since the De Gaulle's creation of the Commissariat for Atomic Energy in on October 18, 1945 - for its research had no other goal but to get the bomb. That goal was not stated at the time, already we were advancing under a mask. And what can you say of France's "fraternity" when it consists of promising and preparing for massacres of whole populations?

The hypocrisy of this policy, which I have been denouncing for decades, is truly insupportable. I have written to you several times about this, including before you became president. You have still never replied - no more than your predecessor did. But now, a few weeks ago, you thanked me for the letter I had sent in June 2020 to your Minister of Defense Madame Parly, and re-sent it to her for her to answer me.

You did this despite the fact that I had said to her:

"You are, Madame la ministre, a fine example of French double language, duplicity, hypocrisy and cynicism concerning respect for international humanitarian law, as also in disarmament matters, conventional or nuclear. There is nothing there to be proud of. As citizens we are ashamed of that France.

"In the "after-world" we are entering, Madame, the government you belong to needs to urgently change its discourse and its posture, put France's defense in line with her commitments, her Constitution, her republican values, and simply in line with reason."

It is precisely because I have confidence in the reason of most human beings - at least when not obsessed with power or money - and even in the potential good sense of some heads of state - "good sense is the thing in the world that is shared the best" said Descartes - I wondered whether perhaps, at last, you had become sensitive to our arguments and did not totally exclude a change in your policy and a reconversion of our arms industries.

Alas, the reply that came from Madame Parly through her chief administrator merely proved that nothing had changed in that Ministry. I will naturally be sending her my own reply, not without a copy to you.

But to return to yesterday's ceremony. Just after it finished, I saw an article published in Ouest-France a few hours earlier: « *Successful test of cruise missile from the Suffren, the new nuclear attack submarine* ».

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Its content was frightening: « *On Tuesday 20 October, France has carried out for the first time a cruise missile test from a submarine, said the Minister of Defense. The Suffren, a new nuclear attack submarine in the Barracuda class 'successfully launched' this Naval Cruise Missile off the coast of Biscarosse.* »

What exactly is this missile? *A priori*, one would say conventional. The nuclear attack subs (SNA) are called nuclear because of their propulsion, not their weapons. They are built only for tracking enemy subs, gaining information, and protecting our one aircraft-carrier and our four ballistic missile submarines (SSBN), which do have nuclear missiles: 6 warheads per missile, 16 missiles and thus 96 warheads per sub, the equivalent of 9.6 megatonnes of TNT or 640

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Hiroshima bombs. (I don't mention this for you - you know it by hear and I wish it prevented you from sleeping - but for my compatriots who don't already know.) "Strict sufficiency", obviously...

Yes, but the euphoria found in a tweet by the defense minister suggests that there will be more in future: *"This success gives our navy a new strategic capacity and places it among the best in the world,"* she says, clapping her hands. *"France's undersea forces could strike subs and surface ships. They can now destroy heavy infrastructure on land, from a long distance."*

Briefed by the military officials, the newspaper continued: *"Thus France joins the closed circle of states possessing naval cruise missiles, like the Tomahawks of the USA, 'popularised' in the Gulf War of 1991. With a range of 1000 kilometres, the naval cruise missile is designed to attack targets located 'at depth' in enemy territory, such as political centres, anti-aircraft command posts or radars. It is complementary to the airborne cruise missile."*

The reference to the *Tomahawk* is highly suggestive. It is a dual-purpose missile. It can carry a conventional explosive charge. But it can also carry a nuclear warhead: an A80 warhead with a power between 5 and 150 kilotonnes (equivalent to 150 000 tonnes of TNT, which is ten times the power of the Hiroshima bomb which on 6 August 1945 reduced to ashes a city of 350 000 people). As for the « airborne cruise missile » which our French one will "complete", it is apparently the Improved Medium-Range Air-to-Ground Missile (ASMP-A in French) which equips our Rafales and which certainly carries a nuclear charge of 300 kilotonnes.

We must therefore suppose that this naval missile too (the MdCN) can if required carry an atomic weapon, in which case the "N" would mean not Naval but Nuclear, and the 6 submarines of the Barracuda class in service in a few years will be added to our 4 nuclear SSBN as 6 bi-valent subs, capable of nuclear strikes, at shorter range, because the "strategic context" could get worse in the meantime and because that's what strategists do, they are visionaries and they foresee the worst.

So that is probably the "true strategic rupture" whose prospect enthuses your minister, Monsieur le Président. And likely you too. But I confidently expect soon a formal denial.



For your policy is not free from duplicity. As when you sell arms to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, knowing all that they will be used against the Yemeni population. Or when you invite those warring Emirates to your "Paris Peace Forum" to sponsor « Peace Games »! Or when the very warplane that transported Covid patients from Mulhouse to Brest - the armed forces are so charitable - took part a week later in a simulated nuclear strike.

To conclude, Monsieur le Président, please tell us how our threat to cause horrible deaths to millions of people - in Russia, Chechnia, Pakistan or elsewhere - succeeded in deterring the Samuel Paty's murderer, and will succeed in deterring others.

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In truth, your policy is not only costly and criminal, it is ineffective and mad.

The only way to neutralize the terrorist threat is to stop brandishing State Terror, to respect our republican values by starting to respect ourselves. France has only one kind of head she needs beheading: her nuclear warheads. And not just hers, but those of all 9 rogue states, which include the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, who have taken humanity hostage and threaten to annihilate us at any moment. How can one not grasp that the violence that ravages our world is merely following the example set by states?

That's why we call on France's people to require a radical policy change, that you should simply honour France's commitment to negotiate the elimination of nuclear-armed along with the other nuclear states, in conformity with Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

And since you will probably not do so, we call on them to require, yes require of their elected representatives in Parliament (MPs and Senators) that they sign the Bill aimed at organizing a referendum on France's participation in the abolition of nuclear and radioactive weapons. We know, and you know too, that French voters are 85% in favour of this. The time has come for the world's people to seize their destinies - and for France's people to open the path for all.

As Albert Camus wrote in *Combat* two days after the massacre of Hiroshima :

"This is not a prayer, it is an order that must rise from the peoples to the governments, the order to choose between hell and reason" (Albert Camus, *Combat*, 8 August 1945)

Yours respectfully..

Jean-Marie Matagne, President of ACDN (Action des Citoyens pour le Désarmement Nucléaire)

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Proposition de Loi (Bill)

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Formulaire de signature (Signature Form to Send to French MPs and Senators)

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Liste des signataires au 20 octobre 2020 (List of Signatories on 20 October 2020)

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[How to find and contact French MPs](#)

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Please inform us if you write to French MPs or Senators. Thanks!
