



Rt Hon David Miliband MP  
Foreign Secretary  
The Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
King Charles Street  
London  
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May 1, 2009

Dear Mr Miliband

We wish to express our hope that substantial progress might be made on a clear agenda for disarmament and non-proliferation at the 2009 United Nations Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Preparatory Committee meeting in New York.

The Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church are among the largest of the free churches in the UK. We believe that the sacredness of life is among the deepest of values shared by religions and cultures and that nuclear arsenals pose one of the gravest threats to humanity.

As you are aware, after careful consideration and debate in 2006, our Churches opposed the replacement of the Trident nuclear weapons system and have urged UK leadership in disarmament negotiations to bring about the intention of the Non-Proliferation Treaty for the elimination of all nuclear weapons. Many in our churches are convinced that the current era offers an unprecedented opportunity to progress towards this goal.

We welcome the UK Government's intention, announced by Gordon Brown on 17 March, to host a conference of recognized nuclear weapons states on disarmament. We note too President Obama's pledge made in Prague on 5 April "to seek the safety and security of a world without nuclear weapons". We add our support to the many and increasing demands for a return to the long-delayed undertaking of nuclear disarmament.

We are aware that major change is likely to arise from increasing consensus on overall direction and consequent commitment to a series of measured steps. We therefore ask that the UK NPT delegation joins with other delegations to make a concerted effort to achieve concrete results at the 2009 NPT Preparatory Committee.

We suggest that with the 2010 NPT conference in view, key areas for progress in 2009 include:

**Agree an agenda for the 2010 Review Conference.** A constructive agenda, agreed in good time, will signal a welcome change from recent NPT meetings and enhance prospects for substantive achievements next year.

**Re-set the '13 Steps' of NPT 2000 within a new plan of action** that will be ready for 2010.

**Set a deadline for achieving one of the 13 Steps – ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.**

**Affirm and support Nuclear Weapons Free Zones (NWFZs) as concrete steps taken by a majority of states parties toward a world without nuclear weapons.** 110 states are now part of such zones. The new zone in Central Asia is complete. Ratification of the African NWFZ treaty is almost complete. However, all Nuclear Weapon States must sign protocols that provide Negative Security Assurances to the states protected by NWFZs.

**Join other delegations in consolidating support for the 1995 NPT resolution on the Middle East.**

**Agree a timetable for starting and completing negotiations on a Fissile Materials Cut-off Treaty (FMCT).** This is a key area for substantive progress in 2010.

We and other members of the World Council of Churches are advocating these steps in the conviction that each is achievable if governments with similar views co-operate and work to build consensus.

The UN Secretary General has rightly called a world free of nuclear weapons “a global public good of the highest order”. We hope that you find yourselves able to join with other governments to make progress toward that goal at the 2009 NPT Preparatory Committee.

We will follow closely the outcome of the Preparatory Committee meeting and the on-going progress towards the 2010 NPT Review Conference and look forward to continuing in dialogue with you over the coming year.

Yours sincerely,



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General Secretary  
The Baptist Union of Great  
Britain



Revd Dr Martyn Atkins  
General Secretary  
The Methodist Church



Revd Roberta Rominger  
General Secretary  
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cc: Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia, General Secretary, World Council of Churches