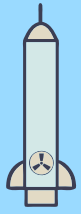


Nuclear Weapons

A very brief history of nuclear weapons



Nuclear bombs are weapons that use the energy from atoms (either by splitting them or joining the particles within them) to cause an explosion. They are seen as weapons of mass destruction because just one bomb is enough to destroy a large area.

They were first created in the USA during the second world war. The only nuclear weapons used in war were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan on 6th and 9th August 1945 respectively. The bombs had killed 140,000 people in Hiroshima and 74,000 in Nagasaki by the end of 1945, due to the impact and effects of the bombs. However, weapons have been tested in other places around the world, such as in the USA, Algeria, Australia, the Marshall Islands and more. These tests have caused environmental damage and health problems in local communities.

Throughout the years different countries have had access to nuclear weapons, but today nine countries are recognised as having them- the USA, the UK, France, Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea. Nuclear weapons today are much more powerful than those used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. There are approximately 13,865 nuclear weapons in the world. The UK has 215, and each one is eight times more powerful than the one dropped on Hiroshima.

The catastrophic impacts of even one bomb being used is recognised across the world, and one argument in favour of nuclear weapons is that no country with a nuclear weapon will use it against another country, as that risks a counterattack. This is known as Mutually Assured Destruction- the country that used a nuclear weapon, will also face a nuclear weapon itself. This was a particular fear during the Cold War in second half of the 20th century, where there was a lot of tension and fear that a nuclear war could start.

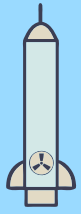
There have been many attempts to limit the effects of nuclear weapons and campaigns to have them banned. In 1968 a treaty could be signed at the UN called the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty, where countries without nuclear

For more information on nuclear weapons please visit:

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weapons agreed not to get any and those countries with nuclear weapons would agree to get rid of their weapons.

There has also been many protests and protest movements against nuclear weapons calling for disarmament, or for countries to get rid of their weapons. One of the most well known in the UK is the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), which still exists today.

In 2007 a campaign was announced in Austria that had begun in Australia. ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) is now a global coalition of organisations calling for nuclear weapons to be banned. A Treaty was introduced at the UN in 2017 to ban nuclear weapons. Enough countries have now signed and ratified it, and it came into effect in January 2021, which means that under international law, nuclear weapons are illegal.

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