NUCLEAR WEAPONS

More than 25 years after the Cold War and the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the world’s nuclear stockpiles remain at dangerously high levels. Of the 14,575 estimated nuclear weapons in the world, the United States and Russia have 92% of the world's nuclear arsenal. As the United States continues to increase military spending, fails to meet obligations set out in the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and refuses to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, it is more important than ever to hold the government accountable.

1. “The Real Nuclear Threat to America is an Accident”

The chance of any nation intentionally launching its nuclear arsenal is low, so “the real nuclear threat to America is an accident,” says the deputy commander of U.S. nuclear forces. The U.S. has experienced dozens of nuclear near-misses, including dropping two live bombs on North Carolina when a plane malfunctioned. In 1995, Russia almost launched its nuclear missiles at the U.S. when it thought it was under attack. To date, the U.S. has lost 11 nuclear weapons (whereabouts still unknown).

2. Nuclear Weapons Programs are Really Expensive (And Could Get More Expensive Soon)

The United States will spend at least $179 billion over the fiscal years of 2010-2018 on its nuclear arsenal, averaging $20B per year. The U.S. plans to spend an additional $1T over the next 30 years modernizing its nuclear arsenal. The 2019 military budget is $886 billion. That’s enough money to end world hunger...more than 29 times over.

3. Nuclear Weapons Do Not Address Today’s Most Critical Security Concerns

The costs of the nuclear weapons program and modernization are particularly jarring because nuclear weapons cannot be used to address terrorism, climate change, or any of the critical security concerns we face. The U.S. nuclear stockpile has dropped by 80 percent since its peak in 1967, but is still a formidable and expensive force of about 6,550 warheads.

4. We Cannot Use These Weapons

Why should the U.S. spend $20 billion per year on a weapons system we can never again use, when domestic programs are underfunded? Between 120,000 to 200,000 people - mostly civilians - died instantly from the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Hundreds of thousands more died in the following years from radiation related sicknesses. Nuclear testing conducted in the United States and its territories did not end until 1992 and continues to affect the health of people and the environment. The U.S. needs to invest in programs that help the American people, not in programs that cause unparalleled destruction.

PEACE DEMANDS ACTION