

MYTHBUSTERS !!!

The point of mythbusters is not just to read them, but to practice saying them aloud in your own words. Once you are clear about them, you can change the details of how you say them. Work with two or three other people. Add your own! Is there something that you hear people say, to you or on the radio, that is just not true? Write it down. Research if you need to, then find simple sentences to show it's a myth. Start by practicing these.



Myth #1 Nuclear weapons are essential for security Nuclear weapons pose a direct and constant threat to people everywhere. Far from keeping the peace, they breed fear and mistrust among nations. They have no legitimate military or strategic utility, and are useless in addressing any of today's real security threats, including climate change, terrorism, resource depletion, extreme poverty and disease, interstate conflict and fragile governments.

So-called Nuclear 'deterrence theory' relies on a range of assumptions about an adversary that are unstable, unprovable and unreliable. And if things go wrong, the consequences will be catastrophic. The vast majority of states reject the idea that nuclear weapons make them, or anyone else safer.

Myth #2 Nuclear weapons have kept the peace for 70 years There have been hundreds of conflicts across the world: there hasn't been peace. Saying that nuclear weapons stopped conflicts from developing into nuclear war makes no sense. If there were no nuclear weapons there could be no nuclear war.

Nuclear proliferation by states that felt threatened by the nuclear powers along with huge political shifts mean that the world no longer consists of two ideological blocks but is much more unpredictable. Nuclear deterrence entails preparing for nuclear war. Nuclear deterrence is not a sustainable strategy.

Myth #2 a) Nuclear weapons have kept us safe for 70 years Evidence of a shocking number of close shaves show that it was only by luck that the Cold War didn't go 'hot' i.e. nuclear on numerous occasions. Example: In 1983, a Soviet satellite nuclear early-warning system malfunctioned, Petrov was the Russian duty officer there when the system reported that a missile had been launched from the US followed by up to five more. Only Petrov's decision to disobey orders prevented retaliatory attacks on the United States and all its NATO allies and a global holocaust.

Expert Risk Assessment evidence from Chatham House and other scientists tell us that the UK modernisation programme means that the likelihood of accident is increased (numbers of error possibilities and possibility of remote cyberattack, reduction in human failsafe) as is the impact (new evidence on climate impact, medical and first responder dependence on internet).

Myth #3 It's okay for some countries to have nuclear weapons The argument that the UK must retain its nuclear weapons to protect against future threats or blackmail could be made by any country, and is the main cause of nuclear proliferation. The UK's nuclear weapons were designed to kill tens of millions of people – in order for the UK to have enough firepower to **disable the Russian state from functioning**. Use would trigger catastrophic climate chaos and food shortages affecting the whole planet. Their possession and the risk of use or accident —goes against every principle of international humanitarian law. Calling for an end to what they termed 'nuclear apartheid', South Africa's delegate at NPT 2015 argued that it privileges a few states "at the expense of the rest of humanity".

"There are no right hands for wrong weapons" - UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

Myth #4 The ban treaty undermines the NPT There are still more than 16,000 nuclear warheads still active. All nuclear armed states are investing in nuclear modernization, with the apparent intention of retaining nuclear weapons indefinitely. The TPNW is not only compatible with the NPT and the CTBT, it is the legal instrument to complete the requirement of Article VI in the NPT. Obligations on safeguards will ensure that they comply with NPT CTBT requirements. The TPNW encourages all unilateral or multilateral efforts towards nuclear elimination. It allows nuclear armed states to join once they have destroyed their weapons, but also to join first so long as they agree to eliminate the weapons within a specified time frame. States that do this will then be able to negotiate together with all treaty signatories to ensure that destruction of stockpiles is verifiable and irreversible.

Myth #5 A ban is useless unless all countries sign at once Even before the TPNW enters into force it is already affecting how nuclear weapons are perceived even in countries that have declared themselves against signing it at this time. Over thirty international financial institutions have already withdrawn from nuclear weapons investment. The US no longer sells or uses landmines – despite never signing the landmine treaty

Myth #6 Banning nuclear weapons won't eliminate them Banning nuclear weapons is not the same as eliminating them but prohibition is needed to initiate the process leading to elimination. The TPNW will make maintenance and development of nuclear weapons difficult, and this will make possession more questionable as a legitimate activity. Prohibition provides a strong framework for detailed elimination measures to be negotiated. All nuclear weapons are unacceptable, even if never used.

Myth #7 Joining the TPNW means leaving NATO or UN Security Council Joining the TPNW means renouncing nuclear weapons but it does not prohibit military alliances or co-operation – provided the TPNW party does not engage in prohibited (nuclear weapon) activities. (Even before EIF there is a new discourse around whether NATO must remain a nuclear armed alliance) There is no requirement for UNSC membership to be nuclear armed and it would require a significant and lengthy process to change the membership process