

Western States Legal Foundation Statement on Complex 2030

The only *good* thing about “Complex 2030,” the publicly announced United States plan to modernize its nuclear weapons complex and replace its entire nuclear arsenal with new “Reliable Replacement Warheads” by the year 2030, is that it’s *visible*. Other than that, the proposed project, which could cost more than \$150 *billion* over 25 years, is tantamount to a U.S. declaration of “nukes forever,” and a repudiation of its obligation under Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to end the arms race “at an early date” and to negotiate “in good faith,” the *elimination* of its nuclear arsenal.

It is too easy to fall into the trap of thinking that Complex 2030 is merely a “make work” program for scientists and engineers. Or, to think that the nuclear weapons we already have are not “useable.” Consider the following passage from an August 2006 Pentagon planning document:

“Within Global Strike, US nuclear forces contribute uniquely and fundamentally to deterrence—through their ability to threaten to impose costs and deny benefits to an adversary in an exceedingly rapid and devastating manner. *Nuclear weapons provide the President with the ultimate means to terminate conflict promptly on terms favorable to the US....* Nuclear weapons threaten destruction of an adversary’s most highly valued assets, including adversary WMD capabilities, critical industries, key resources, and means of political organization and control (including the adversary leadership itself). This includes destruction of targets otherwise invulnerable to conventional attack, e.g., hard and deeply buried facilities, “location uncertainty” targets, etc. Nuclear weapons reduce adversary decision-makers’ confidence in their ability to control wartime escalation.”*

Western States Legal Foundation believes that maintenance of a nuclear arsenal for another hundred years, whether in the form of existing or “new” weapons, by the only country that has so far used nuclear weapons, is an “unreasonable,” unacceptable, and unlawful alternative. It is long past time for us to break out of the confines of technical arguments about the “need” for replacement warheads, and instead to demand the *only* reasonable alternative, nuclear abolition. The United States, in compliance with its obligation under the NPT, should commit to the elimination of nuclear weapons *no later than 2030*, by initiating negotiations leading to conclusion of a verifiable treaty, under strict and effective international control.

Today we’re calling for a national referendum on the future of nuclear weapons. We urge all Americans to take this opportunity to “vote” for the elimination of nuclear weapons, in conformity with international law. *See attached “ballot.”*

* Final Draft, *Deterrent Operations Joint Operating Concept*, Department of Defense, United States of America, Version 2.0, August 2006, pp. 39-40, available at: http://www.dtic.mil/futurejointwarfare/concepts/do_joc_v20.doc