



*Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee*

# information

**NFLA English Forum media release - for immediate release, 25<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

## **NFLA English Forum welcomes Parliamentary CND Chair Caroline Lucas MP giving the 2016 Leeds International Peace Lecture**

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) English Forum welcomes the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Leeds International Olof Palme Memorial Peace Lecture being given by the Chair of Parliamentary CND, Caroline Lucas this Thursday in Leeds Civic Hall. (1)

The lecture has been organised jointly by Leeds City Council's Peacelink Group and the School of Politics and Applied Global Ethics in Leeds Beckett University, with support from the NFLA Secretariat and Mayors for Peace. This year will be the final year in its guise remembering the legacy of the former Swedish Prime Minister, Olof Palme, who was tragically assassinated in 1986. Amongst many other issues, Palme was instrumental in the 'Non Aligned Movement' of states seeking nuclear disarmament at the height of the Cold War.

Previous lectures have been given by the likes of Nobel Peace Laureate John Hume, former Leader of the US Senate George Mitchell, former International Development Minister Clare Short, CND Vice President Bruce Kent and international stage and screen actor Sir Patrick Stewart. (2)

This year's lecture is being given by the Co-Leader of the Green Party, Caroline Lucas MP on the subject of 'War and Peace in the Modern World'. The world today faces two huge problems that humanity has created that threaten our very existence on Earth – climate change and nuclear war. Governments and wider society now have the power to destroy so much but the lecture asks if we have the intelligence and the initiative to save ourselves and the planet?

Caroline Lucas will focus her lecture on current and future global threats, alongside solutions that will help build a more secure stable world for all. She will talk about the threat posed by the ecological crisis in particular and set out what she thinks Britain's foreign policy ought to look like, including, of course, the issue of 'Brexit'.

NFLA very much welcomes this lecture and the ongoing support being given by one of its member authorities to support the cause of peace and disarmament. It is planned in the future to look at doing similar lectures in cooperation with Mayors for Peace members in other UK and Irish towns and cities.

As Chair of Parliamentary CND, Caroline Lucas has been instrumental in developing a cross-party movement of MPs opposing Trident replacement and calling for the UK Government to live up to its multilateral nuclear disarmament credentials. NFLA is disappointed at the recent public statements being made at the United Nations by the UK Ambassador opposing an Austrian led resolution (co-supported by the Republic of Ireland Government) which calls for negotiations to begin in 2017 for a nuclear weapons ban treaty. For NFLA, the UK Government should be living up to its formal policy of multilateral nuclear disarmament and actively cooperating with these discussions, rather than trying to curtail them. (3)

NFLA English Forum Chair and Leeds City Council's NFLA member Councillor David Blackburn said: "I am delighted to be part of the welcome to Caroline Lucas to give the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary lecture of the Leeds International Olof Palme Memorial Peace Lecture. Such cross-party initiatives are essential to support national and international moves for peace and disarmament encouraged by local government

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**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT VOICE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES**



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groups like Mayors for Peace and the NFLA. I am looking forward to hearing from Caroline as solutions to the many problems in our world where violence, climate change and nuclear proliferation, which are putting us all so much at risk and danger, are urgently needed. This lecture is just one example of how cities committed to peace like Leeds can promote the values of social justice, tolerance and nuclear disarmament."

Ends

For more information please contact Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary, on either 0161 234 3244 or 07771 930196.

Notes for editors:

- (1) Leeds Beckett University <http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/events/faculty-events/war-and-peace-in-the-modern-world>
- (2) History of the Olof Palme Peace Lecture [http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Leeds\\_Olof\\_Palme\\_Peace\\_Lecture\\_2016.pdf](http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Leeds_Olof_Palme_Peace_Lecture_2016.pdf)
- (3) ICAN media release, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017 <http://uk.icanw.org/action/uk-and-us-ambassadors-fist-bump-after-speech-against-banning-nuclear-weapons/>

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