

Finland amends laws to allow deployment of nuclear weapons

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Finland's parliament voted 17 June to repeal the country's ban on nuclear weapons to remove any obstacles to the deployment of NATO bombs and missiles to the country, which has a 1,300-kilometre border with Russia. Overturning decades of official support for non-proliferation and disarmament, Finland is now helping to promote the deployment of nuclear weapons throughout Europe under conditions in which the major imperialist powers are recklessly escalating the war in Ukraine against Russia.

The right-wing government led by the National Coalition Party (NCP) and including the far-right Finns Party was joined by the opposition Center party to carry the vote with a majority of 125 for, to 61 against. On social media, Defense Minister Antti Häkkinen remarked ahead of the parliamentary vote, "By dismantling the Cold War-era total ban on nuclear explosives, we are aligning our legislation with that of our closest NATO allies." He proceeded to denounce the opposition Social Democratic Party (SDP), ex-Stalinist Left Alliance (LA), and Greens for voting against the change.

The parties that voted against the measure are not opponents of nuclear weapons, as shown by their argument that NATO's nuclear strategy does not require deploying weapons to Finland to be effective. These "left" parties led the charge for Finland's NATO membership, portraying it as a "defensive" move in the face of "Russian aggression" in Ukraine. They all ignored the three decades of US-led aggression and NATO expansion that preceded the nationalist and capitalist-restorationist Putin regime's 2022 invasion of Ukraine. All of the parliamentary parties voted for joining NATO under the previous prime minister Sanna Marin (SDP).

Since joining NATO in 2023, Finland and its Nordic neighbour Sweden have been among the most vocal European agitators for war preparations against Russia. Russia's 2022 reactionary invasion of Ukraine was seized upon by Helsinki and Stockholm to drop their longstanding cloak of neutrality and stampede the public into accepting membership in the US imperialist-led aggressive military alliance.

The Finnish government has already gone far beyond merely voting to repeal the country's ban on nuclear weapons. One day after the vote, Häkkinen attended a meeting of NATO's Nuclear Planning Group, after which the body issued a statement that it would "continue enhancing NATO's nuclear deterrence mission."

The infrastructure is already in place and agreements reached to facilitate the deployment of nuclear weapons on Finnish territory,

notwithstanding repeated claims by leading politicians that this would not take place during "peacetime." Earlier this month, NATO launched the new Forward Land Forces (FLF) Finland, centred in Rovaniemi, as a new permanent deployment of NATO troops on Russia's border. Häkkinen emphasized that establishing this foreign garrison was a key policy of the government. "At the start of the government term, we announced as our goal to establish NATO's Forward Land Forces in Finland," he wrote in a press release, "and our Allies endorsed our proposal."

A major factor accelerating Finland's abandonment of restrictions on nuclear weapons was French President Emmanuel Macron's announcement in March that Paris would consider deploying its arsenal more widely across Europe and launch joint exercises with allied countries. Prime Minister Petteri Orpo discussed the proposal in a one-on-one meeting with Macron in Paris earlier this month, following which the French government promised to send more information to Helsinki before it takes a decision on participating.

Speaking following a separate meeting in Paris with the commander in chief of the French armed forces, Häkkinen told Finnish television, "The nuclear deterrent is a key part of Europe's defence capability and also constitutes a major pre-emptive deterrent to possible Russian aggressive actions. Currently, it is based on the nuclear deterrent produced by NATO and the US, but the French now want to launch a French nuclear deterrent initiative that offers added value."

The US has a bilateral defence cooperation agreement in place with Finland that gives American military personnel unimpeded access to several air bases and other military sites in the country. US nuclear weapons could therefore also be deployed to the country.

Finland is joined in its nuclear ambitions by the other Nordic countries, which have responded favourably to Macron's call for support and coordination in expanding its nuclear arsenal. So far the governments of Norway, Denmark and Sweden have signed up to the plan. Discussions have even begun in academic and policymaking circles on the viability of an independent Nordic nuclear weapons program, marking a complete break with these countries' post-World War II image as advocates of disarmament.

Last year, Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen answered a reporter's question if Denmark would host nuclear weapons with the statement, "Everything has to be on the table now." So far, Denmark has maintained its ban on the stationing of nuclear

weapons, but Finland's repeal is likely to embolden other governments to make similarly drastic changes.

As part of war preparations against Russia and China, NATO has emphasized the importance of militarizing the Arctic region. "The Arctic and the High North are of growing strategic importance to our security," NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte declared at the NATO meeting of defense ministers in Brussels earlier this month. As the Arctic Ocean becomes increasingly ice free due to climate change, the imperialist powers see the opportunity to control emerging shipping routes and critical resources.

The militarization of the region is assuming even more explosive dimensions due to the breakdown in Transatlantic relations. As a recent analysis by the US Center for Strategic and International Studies put it, "This internal realignment [on nuclear weapons in the Nordic region] is colliding with a fundamental shift in Washington. Following the June 2025 NATO Summit in The Hague—where President Trump demanded allies reach a 5 percent GDP defense spending target by 2035—the subsequent 2026 Greenland crisis acted as a strategic shock to the Nordic region. By threatening military force to annex Danish territory, the United States transformed from an unconditional protector into an unpredictable strategic risk. For the Nordics, the US nuclear umbrella, while still present, is no longer perceived as an absolute or unconditional guarantee."

To establish itself as a key outpost for the imperialist powers, whether the US or European imperialism, Finland withdrew from the Ottawa Treaty banning the use of land mines at the beginning of this year. Orpo's right-wing government is pouring an additional €1 billion into military spending in pursuit of NATO's commitment that 5 percent of GDP should be spent on the military and war-related infrastructure. To fund this, the government is cutting social services as unemployment continues to rise. In May, unemployment reached its highest levels since 1998, with a 20 percent year-on-year rise. Finland currently has the highest unemployment in the European Union at 12.7 percent.

Finland's President Alexander Stubb (NCP) has attempted to manage the deepening Transatlantic rift, emerging as a liaison between US President Donald Trump and the European Union. His central focus has been on pushing for more weapons to Ukraine while bemoaning the collapse of "multilateralism." In a recent discussion in Lithuania with the Geopolitics and Security Studies Centre, Stubb acknowledged with reference to relations between the major powers, "Now we're moving towards disorder."

Stubb rattled off several of the United States' recent criminal undertakings but limited his criticism to a lack of consultation with Washington's European allies. "You [the US] go into Venezuela, you don't ask. You make claims on Greenland, you don't ask. You go into Iran, you don't ask," he said. He followed this with full-throated support for the US-Israeli war of aggression against Iran that began with assassinating the head of state and the terror bombing of an Iranian elementary school: "But it is, of course, in our interest that America succeeds in Iran. It's without question, and it's also in the interest of the region."

Stubb dismissed the possibility of the US withdrawing from NATO, insisting that "If the United States wants to project power, military or otherwise in the Middle East, say in Iran right now, it

has absolutely no chance to operate without European bases". He emphasized his loyal support for US wars of aggression, adding, "Of course we support the United States in its endeavours, and you know of course we will support the United States when it comes to the Strait of Hormuz."

Last week, the new Social Democrat-led government in Denmark, which includes the ex-Stalinist Socialist People's Party and relies on the pseudo-left Red-Green Alliance for a parliamentary majority, announced that it would hold a vote in parliament on sending Danish personnel and equipment to secure the Strait of Hormuz. The provocative nature of such a move, which from the European side is being led by German Chancellor Merz, Macron, and the British government, is underscored by the US and Iran continuing to exchange missile strikes, notwithstanding the ongoing 60-day ceasefire agreement.

The "multilateral" world Stubb advocates for is one where Finland is a loyal hound of war for the US. The wars of aggression, assassinations, bombings and the drive to dictatorship would continue unabated, but the European powers would be "asked" to participate as partners and not vassals for each new crime against humanity.

Eighty-five years ago, the Finnish government invited Nazi Germany to occupy the country. They sold this to the public as necessary to protect against the Soviet Union, while secretly collaborating with Hitler's preparations for a war of annihilation against the USSR. Far from protecting Finland, this threw the country into the maelstrom of the Nazi war of extermination and the Holocaust. After helping the Nazi war machine slaughter millions of innocent people, Finland suffered renewed military defeat as the Red Army rolled back the fascist forces.

The Finnish ruling class is once more transforming the country into a frontline state against Russia, increasing the risk of a catastrophic war fought with nuclear weapons. Russia's second largest city, St. Petersburg, lies just 150km from the Finnish border, minutes away for missiles stationed in Finland. Whether these missiles are deployed by the US or European imperialists, the Putin regime could not but interpret such a move as making Finland a legitimate target in a future war that European imperialism is preparing at breakneck speed.



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