Chris Heaton-Harris
Member of Parliament for Daventry
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
Tel: 020 7219 7048

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Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the UK's nuclear stockpile.

The fundamental purpose of our nuclear weapons is to preserve peace, prevent coercion and deter aggression. A minimum, credible, independent nuclear deterrent assigned to the defence of NATO, remains essential to guarantee our security and that of our Allies.

Regarding your concerns about the UK's nuclear stockpile, I would like to reassure you that the UK remains deeply committed to our collective long-term goal of a world without nuclear weapons, under the framework of the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty. Until then, we must hold the minimum number of nuclear warheads necessary to maintain a credible nuclear deterrent. In 2010, the Government stated an intent to reduce our overall nuclear warhead stockpile ceiling from not more than 225 to not more than 180 by the mid-2020s. However, in recognition of the evolving security environment, including the developing range of technological and doctrinal threats, this is no longer possible, and the UK will move to an overall nuclear weapon stockpile of no more than 260 warheads.

I would also like to reiterate that the Government's position on Trident as the UK's continuous at sea nuclear deterrent was overwhelming supported by Parliament in 2016. This vote was part of a wider programme to maintain the UK's nuclear deterrent beyond the early 2030s, which will see the introduction of four Dreadnought Class ballistic missile submarines to replace the current four Vanguard submarines - securing thousands of highly skilled engineering jobs in the UK.

I welcome that the Government will continue to keep the UK's nuclear posture under constant review in light of the international security environment and the actions of potential adversaries.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY