



## A message to Iran

from Lord Robertson,  
former UK defence minister  
& Secretary-General of  
NATO

The carnage we see on our TVs every night is what Ukraine got in return for unilaterally disarming. Some bargain. Would Crimea have been grabbed and Eastern Ukraine occupied if the Ukrainians had kept some of their nukes?

In the face of all the manifest threats we face today and the unknown, unknowable ones we may face in the next 50 years what sort of folly would it be not to acquire a nuclear deterrent? Do you want to leave yourselves - and future generations - completely exposed in a dangerous and unpredictable world?

Nuclear deterrence is to stop any potential aggressor from thinking he or she can win a conventional war or launch a nuclear attack or even blackmail you. It has done that successfully for the UK for the last sixty years. And the cost? The costs are pretty small for the security nuclear weapons provide.

Nobody can predict what challenges and threats we will face in the next five, never mind 50, years. Given what we see today it would be an impossibly knowledgeable or a profoundly reckless person who would dare say that you will never be threatened as a country over these generations. Those who advocate the abandonment of your nuclear weapons program ask others yet unborn to face terrible risks.

The real world out there is a dangerous place, as the people of Ukraine are sadly finding out. It is no place for those who would bargain away your long-term security and safety.

(adapted from an opinion piece published in Herald Scotland on 19 February 2015:  
<http://www.heraldsotland.com/comment/columnists/agenda.118839437>)