

BIDEN MUST ACT IMMEDIATELY TO ROLL BACK HANDS OF THE DOOMSDAY CLOCK

Written by John Hallam

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HUMAN SURVIVAL PROJECT

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NUCLEAR WAR CANNOT BE WON AND MUST NEVER BE FOUGHT

President-Elect Joe Biden must act immediately on taking office in January to roll back the hands of the Doomsday Clock, now at an unprecedented 100 seconds to midnight, or risk an exchange of nuclear weapons that would likely destroy civilization and that could put human survival itself into question.

This would involve measures ranging from commonsense steps to minimize the risk of an accidental nuclear war, to more far-reaching measures to decrease US dependence on nuclear weapons in its security policies and ultimately to eliminate its nuclear arsenal completely and sign and ratify the nuclear ban treaty.

At a minimum a Biden administration should:

--Reaffirm, preferably with Russia, but if need be, alone, the Reagan-Gorbachev Joint declaration of 1986, that 'A Nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought'.

--Extend the New START treaty for at least a full five years with no ifs or buts.

--Improve or restore military to military communications and hotlines.

More far-reaching but still immediate measures could include:

--Lowering the operational status of quick-launch nuclear weapon systems such as land-based ICBMs.

--Increased presidential decision-making time beyond the six minutes the US (and Russian) presidents have to decide whether or not to launch thousands of warheads, a step that would likely end civilization.

Biden should take steps to ensure the US does not contribute to an ongoing nuclear arms race between the US and Russia, including a review of the proposed replacement to the existing Minuteman ICBM force.

The US must recommit to its article VI NPT obligation to eliminate its nuclear forces completely and unequivocally.

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Biden should, far from being 'tough' on Russia and China, immediately seek to repair relationships with those two nations. Russia still has the capacity to destroy the United States as a functioning society (the US can do the same to Russia) and make the rubble bounce. If relations are sufficiently bad, that outcome could be result of pure accident.

Avoiding nuclear war is of existential priority both for the US, Russia and China, and for the entire planet. No more urgent or important task awaits the Biden administration.

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