

U.S.-UK Nuclear Pact Revised

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[Jefferson Morley](#)

The United States and the United Kingdom revised and extended their long-standing nuclear forces cooperation agreement in July, with President Barack Obama declaring that “continu[ing] to assist the United Kingdom in maintaining a credible nuclear deterrent” is in the U.S. national interest.

A July 24 White House statement said the changes would “ensure consistency with current United States and United Kingdom policies and practice regarding nuclear threat reduction, naval nuclear propulsion, and personnel security.” Because portions of the new agreement are secret, Obama sent classified and unclassified versions of the agreement to Congress, according to the statement.

As the UK debates the long-range future of its submarine-based Trident nuclear forces, the renewed agreement authorizes U.S. support through 2024. A 1958 mutual defense pact between the two countries allows transfer of “classified information concerning atomic weapons; nuclear technology and controlled nuclear information; material and equipment for the development of defense plans; training of personnel; evaluation of potential enemy capability; development of delivery systems; and the research, development, and design of military reactors,” according to the White House.

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