



Don't Bank on the Bomb Scotland briefing sheet: RBS Group

If you bank with one of RBS Group's subsidiaries, such as Royal Bank of Scotland, NatWest or Ulster Bank, there is a good chance that your money is going towards nuclear weapon producers. The latest figures show that the group provided **£1.4 billion** to 11 of the world's top 18 nuclear weapons producers between January 2017 and January 2019:

Company	Involved in Britain's nuclear weapons programme?	Involved in developing new nuclear weapons?	Amount (£ million)
Airbus		✓	259.4
BAE Systems	✓	✓	71.3
Bechtel		✓	178.7
Boeing	✓	✓	98.0
General Dynamics	✓		17.2
Honeywell International	✓		232.8
Jacobs Engineering	✓		218.6
Lockheed Martin	✓	✓	66.6
Safran			107.4
Serco	✓		57.2
Thales			120.0
Total			£1,427.2

Sources: Susi Snyder, "Shorting our security - Financing the companies that make nuclear weapons", PAX-ICAN (June 2019); https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/2019_HOS_web.pdf;
Susi Snyder, "Producing mass destruction: private companies and the nuclear weapons industry", PAX-ICAN (May 2019): https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/2019_producers-report-final/

RBS Group's policy on nuclear weapons

RBS Group's defence sector Environmental, Social and Ethical Risk (ESE) Policy states that the Group will only finance nuclear weapons companies that are based in NATO countries and involved in the nuclear weapons programmes of the UK, US or France. Investment in these companies is *restricted* and they are subject to "enhanced due diligence". Investment in companies that undertake work related to the nuclear weapons programmes of other countries is *prohibited*.

This means that major nuclear weapons producers, like BAE Systems and Lockheed Martin are not excluded from RBS Group investment. Moreover, the policy only covers RBS Group's lending and investment banking operations, not its asset management activities, meaning that the bank can invest in companies involved in "prohibited" activities on behalf of third parties.

Why should RBS Group strengthen its policy?

By providing financing to companies that are involved in the production of nuclear arsenals for the UK, the US and France, RBS Group is helping to fuel a new nuclear arms race. The nuclear weapons owned by these three countries are no less indiscriminate and no less dangerous than the nuclear weapons owned by other countries.

The UK, US and France together possess approximately 7,000 nuclear warheads; enough to destroy the world several times over. Most of these warheads are several times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, in 1945 and studies show that even a "limited" nuclear war, fought with 100 Hiroshima-sized nuclear weapons, would affect the global climate and put two billion people at risk of starvation.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons prohibits the development, production, testing, possession and use of nuclear weapons and prohibits assistance with these activities. Financing is a recognised form of assistance and banks that continue to finance nuclear weapons producers when the treaty enters into force, most likely in 2019, will risk damage to their reputation.

How should RBS Group's policy be strengthened?

- The policy could be strengthened by expanding the bank's definition of "prohibited activities" to all nuclear weapons producers. There should be no exception for companies that are based in NATO countries and involved in the nuclear weapons programmes of the US, UK and France.
- The policy should apply to *all* the bank's activities, not just lending and investment banking.

What can you do?

Write to RBS Group's Chief Executive to request that the bank introduces a comprehensive policing that prohibits financial involvement with nuclear weapons producers. You can compose your own letter or use one that we have prepared: <https://nukedivestmentscotland.org/template-letters-2/>

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