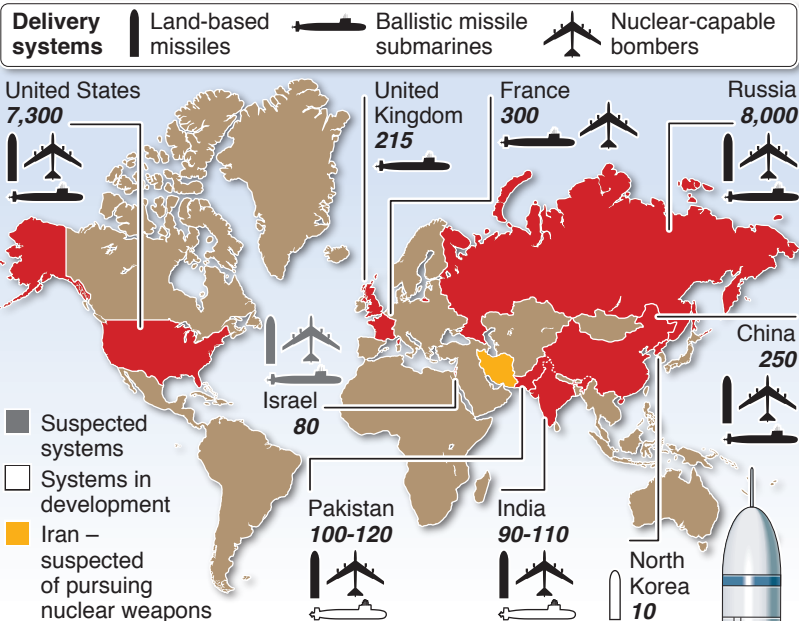


Debate over Britain's nuclear deterrent

The Conservative Party is committed to building four new missile-armed submarines to maintain Britain's nuclear deterrent, but opponents claim the end of the Cold War makes the weapons unnecessary

NUCLEAR WEAPONS: WHO HAS WHAT?

Nine countries together possess more than **16,000 warheads**



VANGUARD-CLASS SUBMARINE

Four operational vessels give UK continuous at-sea deterrent and “second-strike” retaliatory capability

Trident II D5

Three-stage, solid-fuelled submarine-launched missile. Range: 12,500km

Length: 150 metres

Missile compartment

Submerged speed:
25 knots (46km/h)

Successor programme: Decision over renewal delayed until 2016. New submarines expected to cost £25 billion and enter service from 2028