

Topic A:

Rearming: The Future of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)

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[Committee introduction](#)

The Security Council is the most powerful organ of the United Nations. It is tasked under Chapter V of the UN Charter of maintaining international



peace and security, which gives it far reaching powers to debate numerous issues, ranging from state conflicts to nuclear waste disposal mechanisms.

The Security Council is composed of 5 permanent members: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and ten non-permanent members elected on a regional basis every two years. The five permanent members reserve the right to veto any resolution that is presented to the Security Council. A veto automatically prevents a resolution from passing. This often causes the work of the Council to be slow and ineffective, especially when clear differences exist among the interests of the permanent members. To ensure a resolution is passed, Security Council members often try to seek compromises from other members.

According to many historians, the failure of the League of Nations, which was established following the First World War, was in part attributed to its failure to enforce decisions it took with regards to maintaining international peace and resolving global disputes. Following the Second World War, participating states creating what would become the UN were keen on making sure that the Security Council had all necessary means of enforcement to fulfil its mandate. They therefore decided that all the Council's resolutions would be binding, and that the Council reserved the right to impose sanctions, take military action and serve as a diplomatic mediator to maintain global security.

Introduction

2017 marks the 25th anniversary of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT). A first step towards dealing with the complex matter of nuclear weapons. International actions have come a long way and numerous measures have been undertaken by the international community to limit the nuclear activity worldwide. But recent statements and actions by the Trump administration and the Russian president jeopardizes this development.

But before discussing today's developments, this study guide will give an overview of how the topic was developed. Afterwards we will turn towards the current developments of different nuclear powers. With the background information, we will then focus on a small excerpt of critical issues to be considered when dealing with nuclear weapons and questions that a comprehensive resolution should answer.

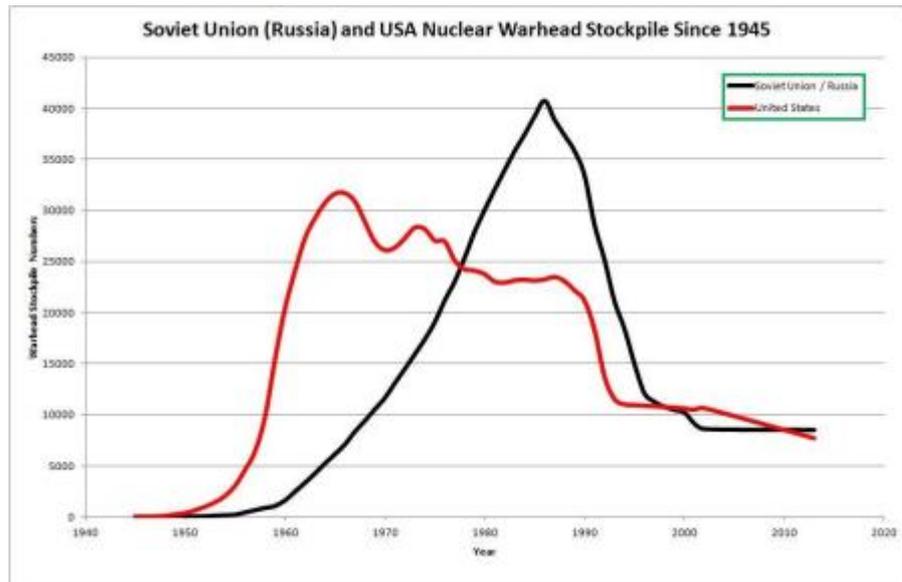


History of the topic

“I am become death, the destroyer of worlds.” - These are the words uttered by J. Robert Oppenheimer after the first detonation of a nuclear weapon in 1945. The sheer might of the explosion and destructive potential even overwhelmed its creator. His words however are true, now more than ever. Today's nuclear arsenals bear the potential of destroying the whole planet multiple times. A single nuclear bomb today has more explosive power than all

weapons used in World War II combined and would easily wipe out an entire city like London or New York.

After the second World War, which till today marks the only ever hostile use of nuclear weapons and with the cold war, the “nuclear arms race” broke out. The competition for military supremacy also extended to the field of nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union first successfully tested a nuclear bomb in 1949 and shortly after in the 1950s both nuclear powers at that time reached the point of ‘mutual assured destruction.’ The US and the Soviet Union both had enough nuclear weapons to obliterate the other side and both sides had the capability to launch a devastating attack even after sustaining a full assault from the other side (aka second strike). The development of the nuclear warhead stockpile since 1945 can be seen in graph 1. In the following years the UK, France and China all succeeded in producing their own nuclear weapons and the tensions and weapon arsenals continued growing. In 1962, the world was on the brink of a nuclear war with the Cuban crisis. After this, peak tensions between the two superpowers started to relax.



SALT I

Both sides understood the inherited dangers of continuing to stand on the brink of nuclear holocaust. By 1969, the superpowers were spending more than \$50 million a day between them on nuclear weapons. It was a burden both sides were finding intolerable. One of the first steps back was the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT), which began in November 1969. These talks were slow and cautious in their development. An era of relaxation of strained relations or tensions, or *détente*, had begun.

Finally, in May 1972, President Nixon and Soviet Premier Brezhnev signed the SALT I treaty in Moscow. The most important parts of the agreement were the Treaty on Anti-Ballistic



Missile (ABM) Systems and the Interim Agreement and Protocol on Limitation of Strategic Offensive Weapons. The Interim Agreement froze each side's number of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) at current levels for five years, pending negotiation of a more detailed SALT II. After years of hostility, the Soviet Union and the United States had agreed to curb spiralling arms-race costs and reduce the risk of nuclear war.

However, this treaty did not address the recent technological advances of placing more than one warhead on a single missile. This technology, known as multiple independently

targetable re-entry vehicle, or MIRV, allowed for military planners to produce greater damage for the same total yield and reduce the effectiveness of an anti-ballistic missile system. So, a loophole was left for the arms race to continue. Over the next decade, Russia and America would add 12,000 nuclear warheads to their arsenals.

To resolve the issue of MIRVed weapons, talks continued for a while and, President Ford and Premier Brezhnev signed the Vladivostok Accord in November 1974 that limited each side to 2,400 delivery vehicles, of which 1,320 could be MIRVed.

SALT II

In the mid-1970s, the Soviet Union achieved rough strategic parity with the United States. Shortly thereafter, the Soviet Union began replacing older intermediate-range missiles with a new intermedia, making a limited nuclear war in Europe was now a possibility. In response, the United States pressured various members of NATO to allow the installation of the Pershing II ballistic missile and ground launched cruise missiles in their countries.

Relations between the United States and the Soviet Union continued to worsen. To try to repair relations, both sides began to press for the signing of the SALT II treaty. This treaty set upper limits on their nuclear arsenals, and new weapons technology, such as MIRV warheads and cruise missiles, were counted in the number of weapons each side was allowed.

The SALT II treaty was signed by President Carter and Premier Brezhnev in Vienna on June 18, 1979, and was submitted to the U.S. Senate for ratification shortly thereafter. But renewed tensions between the superpowers prompted Carter to remove the treaty from consideration in January 1980, after the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. The era of détente was over.

End of the cold war

With the election of President Reagan in 1981, the United States began a period of increased military spending. Reagan sought to outspend the Soviets and win the Cold War. Although America's military build-up concerned them, the Soviets were not in a strong enough position to respond. Therefore, they continued the course of pursuing détente.

With the passing of several Soviet leaders, Mikhail Gorbachev assumed control of the Soviet Union. His rise to power ushered in an era of perestroika (restructuring) and of glasnost (openness). U.S.-Soviet relations improved considerably during the middle 1980s. At a dramatic summit meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, in October 1986, Gorbachev proposed a 50-percent reduction in the nuclear arsenals of each side, and for a time it appears a historic agreement would have been reached. The summit ended in failure, owing to differences over SDI. However, on December 8, 1987, the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty was signed in Washington, eliminating an entire class of nuclear weapons. The INF Treaty was the first arms-control pact to require an actual reduction in nuclear arsenals rather than merely restricting their proliferation.

This treaty was followed by the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which was signed on July 31, 1991, after almost ten years of difficult negotiations. However, with the breakup of the Soviet Union five months later, four independent states with strategic nuclear weapons came into existence--Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine. Through the Lisbon Protocol, signed in 1992, all four states became parties to the START I treaty. The treaty did not enter into force until these new states ratified the treaty and signed the NPT as non-nuclear states. Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Ukraine have removed all their nuclear warheads.

Modern Era

The START I treaty was followed by START II. After much delay, the treaty was finally ratified by the Russians in April 2000. By the end of the treaty's reduction timetable, the total number of strategic warheads could not exceed 3,500. By the end of 2002, no MIRVed ICBMs could be deployed. The treaty also limited the number of warheads on SLBMs, which can remain MIRVed.

A contrary action happened in May 2001, when President George W. Bush announced that the U.S. was going to move forward in the development of the National Missile Defence (NMD). It is a program designed to defeat a limited ballistic missile strike against the United States. However, any further development of an anti-ballistic missile defence system would have violated the 1972 ABM Treaty.

On December 13, 2001, President Bush formally notified Russia and three former Soviet republics that it had invoked Article 15 of the ABM Treaty to withdraw from the pact in six months. It marked the first time in the nuclear era that the United States has renounced a major arms control treaty. Russian President Vladimir Putin responded by saying, "This step was not a surprise for us. However, we consider it a mistake." This led to Start II not going into effect.

In 2010 the New START Treaty, which called for a fifty percent reduction of strategic nuclear missile launchers and a curtailment of deployed nuclear warheads was signed by U.S. President Obama and Russian President Medvedev. However, the development and implementation of missile defence systems continued; on the American side.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty

Another key issue when dealing with nuclear weapons is the prevention of spreading. This issue was first tackled in 1968 with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The NPT is one of the most significant international agreements. Under the terms of the NPT, the nations with nuclear weapons are committed not to sell them or aid in their development. Similarly, the non-nuclear states pledge not to acquire nuclear weapons or the technology to manufacture them. To date 185 nations have signed the NPT. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) governs the inspection of their facilities.

In 1996, the world renewed the treaty indefinitely. Major non-signers of the NPT include India, Pakistan, Cuba, and Israel.

In addition to the NPT, another major treaty towards arms control is the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which was first introduced by the General assembly in 1996 and has been signed by 150 countries. It completely bans all testing of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, underwater or below ground. Efforts toward this treaty have been underway since the 1960s. However, like the NPT, it has several major non-signers.

Although the NPT limits the possession of nuclear weapons, none of these treaties limit the number of weapons nor have they led to disarmament.

The New Nuclear Nations

India and Pakistan

On May 11, 1998, the world was reminded that nuclear proliferation was still an issue, as India shocked the world by conducting three underground nuclear tests in the Rajasthan Desert in western India. Indian officials claimed that they were a fission device, a low-yield device and a thermonuclear device. Although, India had conducted a "peaceful nuclear explosion" in 1974, it was generally assumed that the country was not overly active in developing more nuclear devices. Two days later, India conducted two more sub-kiloton nuclear tests.

Pakistan further increased global tensions when it conducted five nuclear tests on May 28, 1998. Officials did not release any information about the types or yields of the tests. Two days later, Pakistan conducted one more nuclear test. Pakistan had pursued the development of nuclear weapons since 1972. Their bomb development has been rumoured to be greatly assisted by the Chinese.

The United States placed economic sanctions on both countries as required by the 1994 Nuclear Proliferation Act. Both countries have announced a moratorium on further nuclear testing.

A reason for concern is that India and Pakistan is the fact that since 1947 they had gone to war three times and had several skirmishes over the control of Kashmir. Each side has continued development of more advanced weapons systems, including ballistic missile systems. Both states are not signatories to the NPT and therefore aren't really forced to go by its provisions. However, steps are being taken to reduce the risks of a nuclear confrontation by both sides, such as establishing a "hot line" between the two governments.

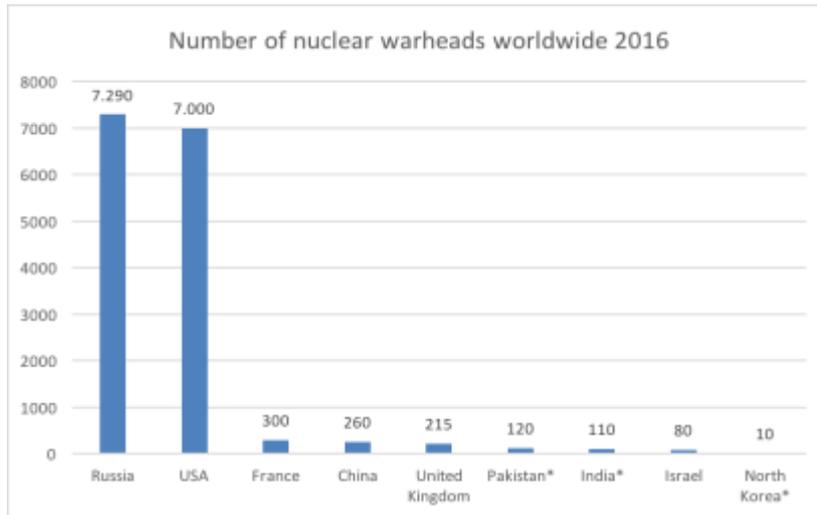
Israel

Israel is not a party to the NPT and has not acknowledged if it has nuclear weapons, but generally is regarded as a de facto nuclear-weapon state. Based on the real or perceived threat from its Arab and Persian neighbours, Israel continues to maintain a highly-advanced military, a nuclear-weapons program and offensive and defensive missiles.

Israel's nuclear program, the most advanced in the Middle East, began in the late 1950s to meet the perceived threat to the state. Its missile program began in the 1960s with French assistance. Its nuclear arsenal is estimated at between 20 and 100 Nagasaki-sized bombs. The country has formally stated that it would not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East. Israel has not signed the NPT, but has signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

North Korea

Although North Korea signed the NPT in 1985, it is believed to have pursued an active



nuclear-weapons program, in violation of the Treaty. The country did not permit the IAEA to conduct required inspections, until May 1992. It is assumed that North Korea has made enough plutonium for one to two nuclear weapons. In a tentative agreement with the U.S. in 1994, North Korea agreed to suspend further development of nuclear weapons in exchange for increased aid and heating oil.

In February 2005, a spokesman for the North Korean Foreign Ministry announced that North Korea had manufactured nuclear weapons. This announcement followed Pyongyang's January 2003 declaration that the country was withdrawing from the NPT. In early April 2005, North Korea shut down its reactor in Yongbuon-kun and declared that the spent fuel would be extracted to "increase North Korea's nuclear deterrent." Since North Korea had been operating the reactor since late February 2003, its technicians should be able to extract enough plutonium from the spent fuel for 1-3 nuclear bombs.

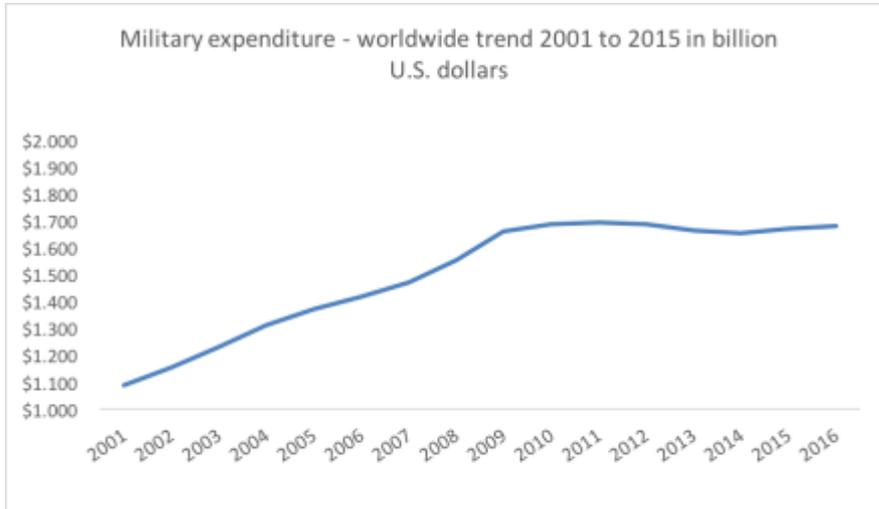
In September 2005, the North Korean delegation to the Six-Party Talks in Beijing signed a "Statement of Principles" whereby Pyongyang agreed to abandon all nuclear programs and return to the NPT and IAEA safeguards. However, on the following day a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry declared that the U.S. would have to provide a light-water reactor to North Korea to resolve the lack of trust between the two countries. The Six-Parties agreed to meet again.

Additionally, in mid-2002, U.S. intelligence discovered that North Korea had been receiving materials from Pakistan for a highly-enriched uranium-production facility. In October 2002, the U.S. State Department informed North Korea that the U.S. was aware of this program, which is a violation of Pyongyang's non-proliferation commitments. North Korean officials initially denied the existence of such a program, but then acknowledged it. The IAEA has not been able to verify the completeness nor correctness of North Korea's initial declaration submitted in 1992, and the agency cannot verify whether fissile material has been diverted to military use.

Current Developments

Rearmament

Fuelled by Russia's annexation of Crimea, tensions in the South China Sea, wars in the Middle East: these situations are feeding the fear that armed conflicts will continue to spread. At the same time, some experts see a lack of confidence in the work being done by



international organizations and institutions. This has led countries to fend for themselves. The importance of national armies has grown, and thus, so has defence spending.

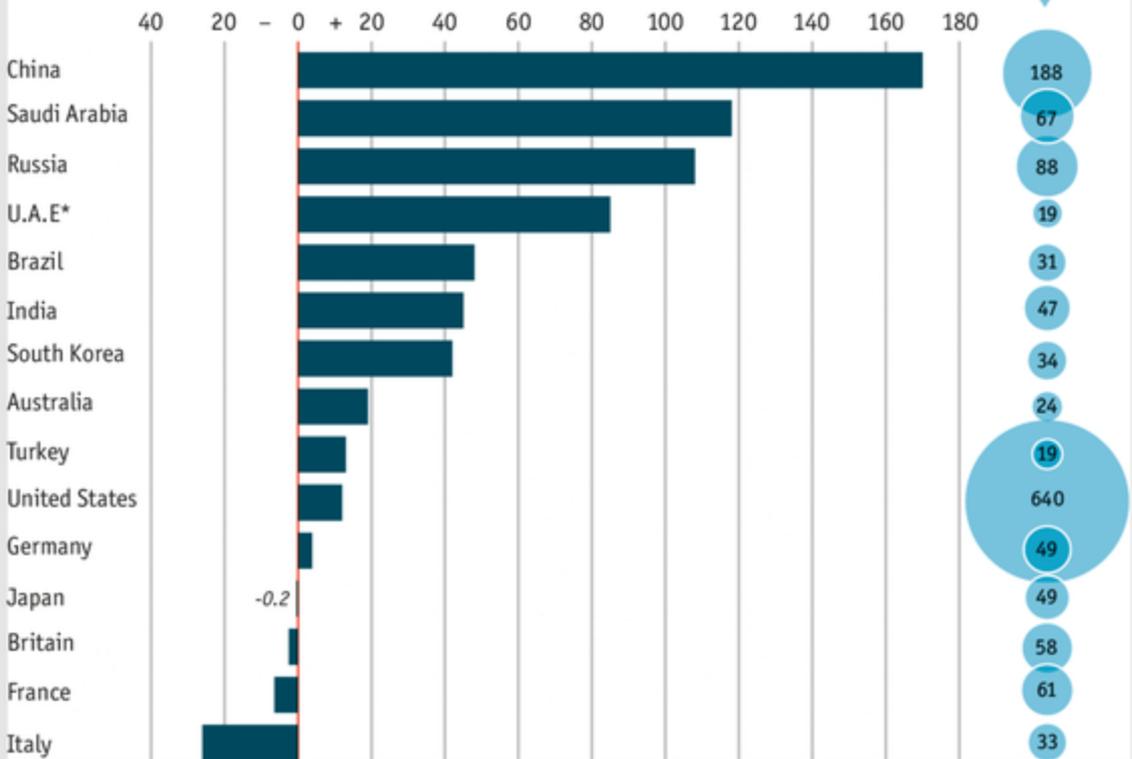
So, in 2016, the global defence spending went up for the first time since 2011. According to the World Military Expenditure Report

published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), countries around the world spent a total of \$1.68 trillion on arms in 2016 - an increase by 0.4 percent to 2015. Leading military powers – USA, China and Russia – increased spending more than any other countries. That rule also applied to countries that already have a huge military budget. The USA, for instance, increased spending by 1.7 percent in 2016, bringing its total annual expenditures up to \$611 billion; Russia increased spending by 5.9 percent (\$69.2 billion); and China by 5.4 percent (\$215 billion). Some countries with traditionally large military budgets, such as Saudi Arabia, decreased spending, though they did so not out of political conviction, but rather due to economic problems stemming from the falling price of oil.

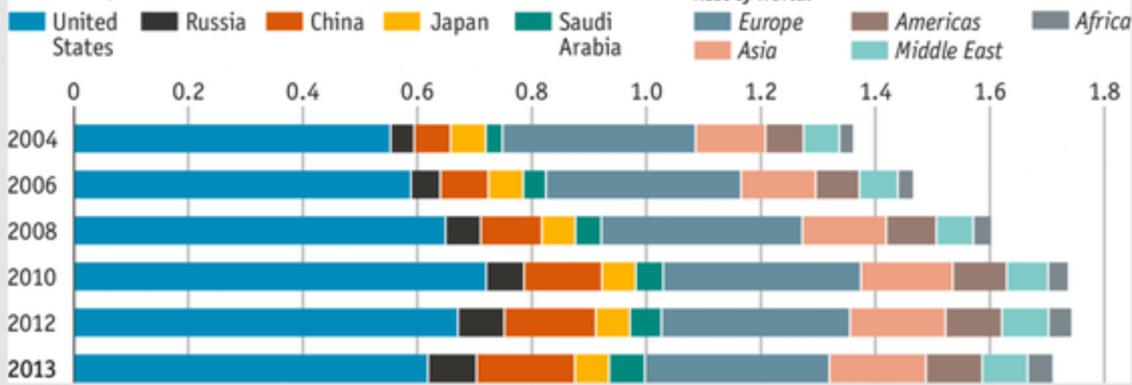
Global military spending

Biggest spenders, % change 2004-13

2013 spending, \$bn



\$trn, 2011 prices



Source: SIPRI

*To 2012

Economist.com/graphicdetail

USA

"The United States of America (USA) must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capability until the world comes to its senses regarding nukes" On December 22, 2016, U.S. President Donald Trump proclaimed this a tweet that effectively challenging the world to re-engage in a race for nuclear dominance. The next day, Trump allegedly reiterated his position stating to Mika Brzezinski, co-host of MSNBC's Morning Joe programme, in an early phone call: "Let it be an arms race. We will outmatch them at every pass and outlast them

all." In January 2017 Trump also dismissed the New START agreement, a key US-Russia nuclear disarmament treaty, as "a one-sided deal."

The rhetoric alone raised awareness throughout the world, but some actions to undermine the new president's' announcement followed. On March 16, the Trump administration proposed a new budget: "America First: A Budget Blueprint to Make America Great Again" which said the new spending on nuclear weapons would support "the goals of moving towards a responsive nuclear infrastructure and advancing the existing program of record for warhead life extension programs." That language refers to an existing effort to modernize three types of warheads, so they can be deployed with bombers, submarine-launched missiles, and land-based missiles, some of which will themselves be modernized in years to come. That warhead work is well under way, although the budget document suggested it had been slowed by Obama-era defence spending caps.

Russia

The ABM treaty provided a foundation of strategic stability, built on the precepts of "mutually assured destruction," that enabled both the United States of America and the Soviet Union/Russia to enter meaningful arms reduction agreements. In 2002, George W. Bush's administration withdrew from the ABM Treaty, citing the need to develop defences against missile launches from so-called "rogue states," like Iraq, Iran and North Korea. In doing so Bush unhinged the foundation upon which U.S.-Russian strategic arms control was built. The Obama administration continued to develop and deploy anti-missile defences, both in the United States of America and in Europe, resurrecting in Russia Cold War-era concerns that the Americans would leverage this new ABM capability to subject Russia to nuclear blackmail, threatening a nuclear strike for which Russia would have no response. These concerns were on display on December 22, 2016, when President Vladimir Putin delivered a speech that made the recent Russian developments public. "We need to strengthen the military potential of [Russia's] strategic nuclear forces," Putin said, "especially with missile complexes that can reliably penetrate any existing and prospective missile defence systems."

Behind this statement stands a new kind of weapon the RS-28, a hypersonic warhead capable of speeds 15 times the speed of sound and evading any anti-missile system the United States has today, or may develop and deploy for decades to come.

A nuclear warhead-armed RS-28 would take about 30 minutes to reach the United States from a silo in central Russia; its warheads would can destroy an area about the size of Texas.

The RS-28 ICBM, scheduled to become operational in 2018, assures Russia the ability to annihilate the United States in retaliation for any American first strike, while providing Russia a silo-killing first-strike capability of its own.

North Korea

Pyongyang's latest nuclear test was in September 2016, and since then it has ground-tested a new rocket engine and test-launched ballistic missiles by firing over the sea. Those activities were followed by new UN sanctions on North Korea in November 2016, while the UN Security Council in February pressed to "redouble efforts" on enforcing the sanctions. US President Donald Trump also said: "Obviously North Korea is a big, big problem and we

will deal with that very strongly." Shows of force and provocative threats have been exchanged by the United States and North Korea since the US began joint military drills with South Korea on March 1. What year?

Overview over international actions

Year	Treaty/Action	Parties involved
1946	Creation of the UN atomic energy commission	UN Member States
1963	Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT) to limit testing of nuclear weapons	Till today 131 states
1968	Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to limit the spread of nuclear weapons	Till today 191 states joined but India, Israel, Pakistan and North Korea are not members
1972	SALT I include the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and the Interim Agreement on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms	USA, Russia
1974	Vladivostok Accord to limit delivery vehicles of nuclear warheads	USA, Russia
1979	SALT II treaty to set upper limits on their nuclear arsenals	USA, Russia
1987	Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty to eliminate an entire class of nuclear weapons	USA, Russia
1991	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) to limit the number of carriers and warheads	USA, Russia
1996	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) banning all nuclear explosions, for both civilian and military purposes, in all environments	Adopted by the UN GA, signed but not ratified by: China, Egypt, Iran, Israel and the United States; not signed by India, North Korea and Pakistan
1998	START II limiting strategic warheads to 3,500	USA, Russia
2010	New START treaty calling for a fifty percent reduction of strategic nuclear missile launchers and a curtailment of deployed nuclear warheads	USA, Russia

Immediate Challenges

Nuclear deterrence

A major argument for all supporters of nuclear weapons is their use for deterrence. Deterrence was especially popular as a military strategy during the Cold War. It is a strategy intended to dissuade an adversary from taking an action not yet started, or to prevent them from doing something that another state desires. A credible nuclear deterrent, must be always at the ready, yet never used.

However, the proliferation of nuclear weapons, recent shifts of power resulted in a far more complex world and the question remains if deterrence remains to be a valid military strategy. So, the Economist noted in June 2011: “The risk of accidents, misjudgements or unauthorised launches, they argued, was growing more acute in a world of rivalries between relatively new nuclear states that lacked the security safeguards developed over many years by America and the Soviet Union. The emergence of pariah states, such as North Korea [...], armed with nuclear weapons was adding to the fear as was the declared ambition of terrorists to steal, buy or build a nuclear device.”

Replacing nuclear deterrence

The overwhelming US conventional military machine, combined with NATO expansion and interventions in Afghanistan and Libya, has revived Russia's deep historical anxieties. Current US deployments of armed drones and ballistic missile defence systems inhibit nuclear disarmament, and have provoked another conventional arms race, initially with Russia, and now with China. Replacing nuclear deterrence by deterrence with conventional military force is no solution. What is needed is reassurance through confidence-building measures. Because of Russia's huge nuclear arsenal, there is a priority to provide Moscow with incentives to discard its perceived dependence on its nuclear arsenal for security. Options include immediately standing down US strategic nuclear forces from high alert, repatriating US tactical nuclear weapons from Europe and dismantling them, and encouraging Russia to reciprocate.

Nuclear weapons and power

Going hand in hand with deterrence is the issue of nuclear weapons being a symbol of power. Currently, the political leadership of the five-recognized nuclear-weapons states, and permanent members of the UNSC (known as the P-5) requires nuclear weapons to be perceived as the pre-eminent currency of power. Underpinning this is a largely unquestioned consensus that nuclear deterrence has prevented major war among members of the P-5 and their allies and provides an indispensable “insurance policy” as the ultimate guarantor of national security in an unpredictable world.

Questions a Resolution should answer

Since the topic of limiting nuclear weapons offers countless opportunities for the international community to act. The debate should be focused on the presented issues and questions.

The debate should mainly circle around the two issues of new tendencies to increase military spending and the issue of deterrence. These topics offer the following questions:

- What is necessary to further reduce the global nuclear arsenal?
- How can a new arms race with conventional and/or nuclear weapon systems be prevented?
- What is today's perception of the military strategy: nuclear deterrence?
- What does the changing role of deterrence mean in terms of numbers and types of weapons?
- What measures can be taken to create an environment of mutual trust taking into consideration the current developments?
- What is the link between lack of trust in international institutions to resolve international conflicts and military spending?
- How can countries be motivated to limit their military spending?
- Is there a way of using modern Internet Communication Technology (ICT) to assist the solution process?

Further Reading

<https://www.sipri.org/>

<https://www.icrc.org/en/war-and-law/weapons>

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<http://www.newsweek.com/us-russia-nuclear-arms-race-over-and-russia-has-won-581704>

<http://www.nuclear-knowledge.com>

<https://www.sipri.org/>

Topic B: Establishment of Nuclear Free Zone in the Middle East

Committee introduction

The Security Council is the most powerful organ of the United Nations. It is tasked under Chapter V of the UN Charter of maintaining international peace and security, which gives it far reaching powers to debate numerous issues, ranging from state conflicts to nuclear waste disposal mechanisms.



The Security Council is composed of 5 permanent members: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and ten non-permanent members elected on a regional basis every two years. The five permanent members reserve the right to veto any resolution that is presented to the Security Council. A veto automatically prevents a resolution from passing. This often causes the work of the Council to be slow and ineffective, especially when clear differences exist among the interests of the permanent members. To ensure a resolution is passed, Security Council members often try to seek compromises from other members.

According to many historians, the failure of the League of Nations, which was established following the First World War, was in part attributed to its failure to enforce decisions it took with regards to maintaining international peace and resolving global disputes. Following the Second World War, participating states creating what would become the UN were keen on making sure that the Security Council had all necessary means of enforcement to fulfil its mandate. They therefore decided that all the Council's resolutions would be binding, and that the Council reserved the right to impose sanctions, take military action and serve as a diplomatic mediator to maintain global security.

History of the Establishment of Nuclear Free Zone in the Middle East

How can the Middle East start or mainly make political conditions through which they can reach serious and sustained progress in limiting and stopping the nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons? The focus here though is the nuclear weapons. There are some

challenges which include the widespread perception that Weapons of Mass Destruction [WMD] are useful tools of statecraft, the slight absence of trust between states of the region, as well as the uncertainty concerning the internal transitions in the Middle East and the absence of regional institutions.

In the Middle East, it is seen that the demand for Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NWFZ) has increased through time, yet it is barely acknowledged. It is safe to say that what happens at the end of the Iranian stalemate, Israel's strategic choices, as well as the civil war in Syria, will identify the fate of the nuclear free zone in the Middle East.

History

In 1963, a group of Israeli intellectuals and scientists, referred to themselves as the committee for Denuclearization of the Middle East. The committee's aim was an effort from the concerned citizens to have the attention of the public to Israel's clandestine program of having weapons. Then in 1974, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) approved a resolution endorsing the goal of establishing a NWFZ in the Middle East following a proposal by Iran. Furthermore in 1980, Israel joined international consensus allowing the General Assembly to pass a resolution supporting the goal of NWFZ without a vote. Afterwards in 1991, after the backing of the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, the Security Council Resolution 687 was adopted. This resolution supports the establishment of a Middle East Weapon of Mass Destruction Free Zone (WMDFZ).

Four years later, in 1995, the NPT Review Conference releases a Resolution on the Middle East urging for practical steps to make a Middle East WMDFZ. In 2000, the NPT review conference did not achieve its goal thus it keeps the resolution as is and states: "the resolution remains valid until its goals and objectives are achieved". And in 2010, the NPT Review Conference endorses 5 practical steps to progress towards a WMDFZ.

In 2011, the regional conference on the action of the establishment of a WMDFZ in the Middle East was accepted to take place in Helsinki in December 2012, with sponsors (US, UK, Russia). But in November of 2012, the meeting postponed for an unspecified period, due to "present conditions in the Middle East" and the lack of agreement of the states which are participating on "acceptable conditions". From October 2013 till June 2014, five consultations were held for the states in the region to discuss moving forward on establishing an agenda for the conference after its previous failure. On May 2015, the draft final document of the 2015 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference presented a new plan for moving forward on a conference to establish the zone. The United States, the United Kingdom and Canada objected to the document, thus preventing consensus and the adoption of the final document.

Highlights of Previous Treaties

In parallel to all the above-mentioned events, Israel remains the country which is least disposed to agree on treaties, since it has not signed and ratified a single treaty that circles around WMD. These treaties include Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (which was signed by all countries located in the Middle East except for Israel), Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, Chemical Weapons Convention, Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, and additional Protocol to the IAEA's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement.

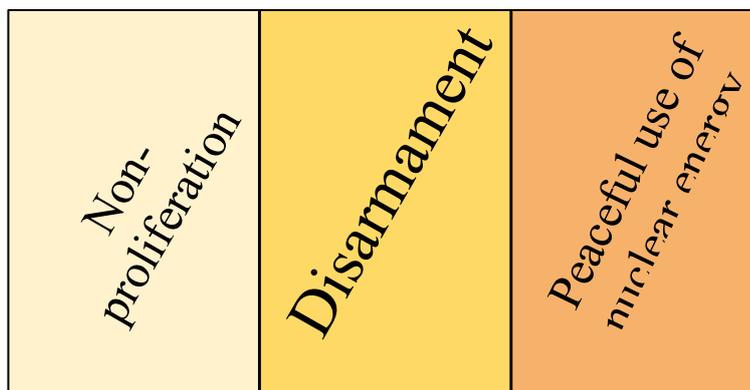
Even though the path to the nuclear free zone in the Middle East is problematic, there has been some progress in the region such as the signing of a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt in 1979 and between Israel and Jordan in 1994. Plus, the Iraq- Iran conflict was fading away gradually due to the ascendance of a pro-Shiite government in Baghdad.

Year	Description:
1963	Group of Israeli intellectuals and scientists claiming themselves as committee of Denuclearization of the Middle East.
1974	Proposal made by Iran and the United Nations General Assembly to accept the establishment of a Middle East NFWZ.
1979	Peace treaty signing between Israel and Egypt
1991	Hosni Mubarak backing security council Resolution 687
1993	Common recognition between Israel and PLO, Iran-Iraq conflict was fading away
1994	Peace treaty signing Israel and Jordan
1995	NPT Review Conference chooses to take up a resolution urging to make a Middle East WMD FZ
2005	NPT Review Conference breaks down to reach any final agreement
2010	NPT Review Conference accepts transfer of regional conference on a WMD free zone to assign an official facilitator.

2011	Regional conference on the action of establishment of a WMDFZ in the Middle East was accepted for the Helsinki conference to take place in December 2012.
November 2012	Meeting which was supposed to take place was postponed for an unspecified period
April 2013	Egypt's decision to leave NPT preparatory committee meeting which was taking place in Geneva
November 2013	Arab League accepts to support parts of Egypt initiative made in speech by foreign minister Nabil Fahmy
November 2013	5 nuclear weapons states plus Germany agreed with Iran to prevent its nuclear enrichment which was programmed for six months.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty

The previously mentioned landmark treaty created by the United Nations to promote nuclear non-proliferation was the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The NPT was put in place to attempt to limit the expansion of nuclear weapons. It was first opened for signing in 1968 and was meant to promote international cooperation in the use of nuclear technology restricted to peaceful purposes. Today, it is regarded as a long-term treaty used to further the goal of eventual total nuclear disarmament. The treaty is based on three pillars:



This treaty is, to date, the only legally binding commitment to non-proliferation, having been ratified by all five nuclear weapon states. Currently, 190 states have ratified the NPT, making it the most successful international non-proliferation treaty to this day. India, Pakistan, and

Israel are the only states that are yet to sign the NPT. Given that all states in the Middle East region (besides Israel) have signed the treaty, it can be assumed that there is regional support for the establishment of NFWZ. Despite their apparent lack of nuclear development since 1998, India and Pakistan's hostility towards non-proliferation poses a threat to international security because they are not legally bound in any way to limit expansion in nuclear technology. It should also be mentioned that the treaty is reviewed every five years to make sure that it is in coordination with the current global environment and to make sure to adapt it to the growing needs of the international community.

To the Middle East region and international community, Israel's indirectness when it comes to the adherence to any treaty tackling this matter is certainly a concern.

Israel

Israel has been greatly involved in international conflict since its establishment in 1948. Territorial disputes between native Palestinians and Israelis have led to decades of instability and violence in the area, most recently in August 2014. After 2,100 Palestinian casualties and nearly 70 Israeli deaths, negotiations finally ended the weeks of fighting. The collapse of all kinds of progress toward an Israeli-Palestinian peace overshadows all efforts to create WMD-free zones. Israel maintains that disarmament must follow regional peace and normalization. But Israel's neighbours point to the disintegration of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and Israel's earlier rejection of the Arab peace initiative as evidence that Israel is unwilling to ameliorate the current situations.



If Israel were to take tangible steps to restart discussions with the Palestinians, the atmosphere surrounding future WMD-free zone process would improve significantly (just as Israeli-Palestinian negotiations contributed to the conducive atmosphere surrounding the ACRS talks). If stagnation persists in Israeli-Palestinian relations, or worse, if violence escalates, then these tensions will undermine and could foreclose opportunities for progress on WMD issues (as the recent Gaza conflict demonstrated). Additional conflict between Syria and Israel over the past decade has contributed to tension in the area as well. While Israel has been hesitant to enter another war with Syria, violence and hostility between the two countries continues.

This continued Arab-Israeli conflict has instilled insecurities in the Israeli political and social life. Israel having a highly innovative and capable military, it remains a leader in the world's military exports, and is widely known to have extensive WMD capabilities. As a leading military power in the world, it is fully capable of developing nuclear weaponry and of maintaining policies that would support the idea that nuclear weapons could positively contribute to their national safety, hence explaining its refusal to sign the NPT. It is important



to understand that the continuing Arab-Israeli conflict is a major factor halting the establishment of a NWFZ.

Moreover, Israel's nuclear monopoly is under threat due to Iran's advancing nuclear capability, and over the longer term, due, potentially, to the growth and spread of nuclear energy in the Middle East and the new political forces shaping the region, which justifies its refusal to go into any of the nuclear negotiations.

Considering its multitude of choices on how to proceed to maintain its nuclear monopoly, the option of entering into negotiations on a WMD-free zone may come to be seen in Israel as the least favourable of all.

Iran

One of the many ironies of history is that non-nuclear-weapon states, like Iran, have done far more for the cause of non-proliferation in practice than nuclear-weapon states have done on paper. Iran and other nuclear have-nots have genuinely "walked the walk" in seeking to consolidate the non-proliferation regime. Meanwhile, states possessing these destructive weapons have been completely brushing off their disarmament obligations under the non-proliferation treaty (NPT) and customary international law. Iran has consistently supported the creation of a nuclear-weapons free zone in the Middle East.

In 1974, as concerns in the region grew over Israel's nuclear weapon program, Iran formally proposed the concept



of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East in a joint resolution in the UN General Assembly. The Shah of Iran had made a similar appeal five years earlier but had failed to attract any support. The call for the creation of NWFZ in the Middle East was repeated by Iran's President Ahmadinejad in 2006, by Foreign Minister Mottaki in 2008, and by Foreign Minister Zarif in 2015.

The outcome of the standoff over Iran's nuclear program has had a decisive effect on the prospects for progress toward a WMD-free zone in the Middle East. A peaceful resolution of the stalemate would contribute to the effort to establish a zone. It is believed the prospects for progress on regional WMD issues would brighten if Iran is able to strike a deal with the P5+1, restore confidence that it is adhering to its international obligations, and take other steps to assure its neighbours of its peaceful intentions. Under such circumstances, Iranian-Israeli tensions would likely ease, as would Iranian tensions with Saudi Arabia.

If, however, continuing doubts about Iran's intentions result in a U.S. or Israeli attack, the prospects for improving regional security in general and for the establishment of a zone will further recede. It is generally agreed upon that action against Iran would lead to increased regional tension. If its nuclear ambitions were made stronger by an attack, then confidence in the value of WMD discussions would be further diminished. The security deficit that confidence building measures would need to fill would be far larger than it is under current circumstances. Iran itself may come to see the WMD-free zone discussion as an opportunity to advance its interests. Iran supported the establishment of an NWFZ in the past, and in early November 2012, Iran announced its intention to attend the proposed WMD-free zone conference. However, its position since the 2010 NPT review conference toward the 2012 proposal has been less than constructive.

Nevertheless, Iran has important security interests in pursuing a WMD-free zone. Iran has a strategic interest in denuclearizing Israel, and negotiations on a zone are essentially the only way to accomplish that objective: regional security discussions can help Iran break out of isolation; in WMD-free zone discussions, Iran can also work to split the U.S.-Arab coalition against Iranian nuclear development and focus attention on Israel's nuclear weapons; and finally, the creation of a zone, if it were to occur in the next several years, would leave Iran far ahead of its Arab neighbours in fuel cycle and latent nuclear weapons capability, while reducing the incentives for its neighbours to attempt to match its investment.

Egypt

During what is currently known as the Arab Spring, Egypt experienced a political and cultural revolution in early 2011, ending in late 2013. Despite the political turbulence within its

territory, Egypt remains to be a leader in the movement for the establishment of a NWFZ. An original supporter of the 1974 UN resolution, Egypt is also the largest sponsor of a NWFZ in the Middle East. Egypt recently participated in the 2013 Geneva Convention in hopes of nuclear talks with other member states. The Geneva Convention was held to prepare for the 2015 NPT review and the convention yielded some success, such as the Geneva Agreement with Iran.

However, the delegation of Egypt was hoping to further negotiations over the implementation of a NWFZ in the region. The lack of serious discussion on this matter led Egypt to withdraw from the global nuclear talks, as it felt that some member states were “obstructing” the goal; however, Egypt remains to be a signatory and ‘ratifier’ of the NPT.

All the countries mentioned, namely Israel, Iran, and Egypt, are some of the most important countries in the region concerning the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East. The recent actions taken by these countries is important to consider as the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East will have to be a regional decision.

[Nuclear Weapon Free Zones](#)

At present, there are five NWFZs, which cluster in clearly identifiable regions. The legal authority to establish nuclear weapon-free zones derives from Article 53 of the UN Charter, which recognizes the role of regional arrangements and agencies in the maintenance of international peace and security. The NPT also foresees the creation of NWFZs. Its article VII states, “Nothing in this Treaty affects the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties to assure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories.” With a total of 112 member countries, the five zones virtually cover the entire Southern Hemisphere. Known also according to the names of their establishing treaties, the zones are as follows.

The Latin America and Caribbean NWFZ (The Treaty of Tlatelolco) was signed and ratified by all 33 countries of the region. This treaty was the first NWFZ to cover a densely-populated area. It opened for signatures in 1967 and became law, in 1969. It originated in response to the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 and the consequent desire of the states in the

region to promote complete denuclearization. The zone includes two long-time rivals, Argentina and Brazil, both of which were, at the time of the treaty, ruled by military governments that sought to acquire nuclear weapons capabilities.

The South Pacific NWFZ (The Treaty of Rarotonga) includes 13 members of the Pacific Islands Forum. Its zone of application extends horizontally from the west coast of Australia to the boundary of the Latin American NWFZ, and it includes an extensive part of the South Pacific from the equator southward to the Antarctic demilitarized zone. Opened for signature in 1985, it became law, in 1986. This free zone originated from the concern of its member states over the many nuclear tests conducted in the South Pacific from the late 1940s to the 1960s, first by the United States (106 tests) and the United Kingdom (21 tests) and later by France (193 tests from 1966 until 1996).

The Southeast Asia NWFZ (The Treaty of Bangkok) includes all ten ASEAN countries. Open for signature in 1995, it became law, in 1997. Although this zone was conceptualized in the early 1970s, its implementation was hampered by the unstable geopolitical situation in the region and made progress only when the United States withdrew its military forces (including nuclear weapons) from the Philippines in 1992.

The African NWFZ (The Treaty of Pelindaba) covers all 53 countries of the African continent. Opened for signature in 1996, it only became law, in 2009. Like the South Pacific NWFZ, the initial drive for denuclearization originated with protests over nuclear testing in the region. However, the realization of this treaty proved unfeasible in the context of the Cold War. The end of the bipolar confrontation and of the apartheid regime in South Africa led to a breakthrough that resulted in the dismantling of the South African nuclear program in 1991 and its accession to the NPT.

The Central Asia NWFZ Treaty (CANWFZ) comprises five Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) in an area of great strategic relevance in which thousands of Soviet nuclear weapons were deployed during the Cold War. It is the first zone located entirely in the Northern Hemisphere. Opened for signature in 2006, it became law, in 2009.

[Current Developments](#)

In May 2010, the prospects of a nuclear free Middle East seemed quite positive. Following an annual meeting, members of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) decided to hold a conference in 2012 between Middle Eastern states, with the aim of abolishing all ideas of a region armed with nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. These efforts

were led by the UN's Secretary General, as well as NPT depositary states: The United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Russia, and selected Finland to host the meeting. By late 2012, however, these efforts stalled and the meeting was called off. This example clearly demonstrates the difficulties facing efforts to create a nuclear free ME region.

Numerous reasons have been attributed to these failures. Chief amongst them the refusal of Israel to participate in any talks, since it considers it would be the primary target of diplomatic harassment over its nuclear weapons. Moreover, Arab states, have in general refused to accommodate Israel's wishes that the process be convened under a regional umbrella, independent of the NPT, and cover a broad agenda of regional security issues. More recently, the issue of Iran's nuclear development, and the extent to which it should be allowed to pursue its nuclear agenda has proven to be a divisive point amongst regional and international players.

As such, recent efforts to promote a nuclear-free region in the Middle East have been centered on the principle of promoting growth, stability and security in the region, improving the mechanisms of national institutions and fostering better relationships amongst Middle Eastern states. However, the election of US President Donald Trump has cast doubts over the prospects of achieving such an outcome, given the repeated claims made by the President during his campaign in which he stated, when asked about his thoughts on nuclear armed Arab states: "It's going to happen eventually".



Moreover, there was a rapid progress in 2017 with North Korea's missile program. As of February, it has fired 17 missiles during 11 tests, further improving its technology with every launch. On July 4th, North Korea conducted its first-ever test of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), which it claims could reach "anywhere in the world." Many perceive North Korea's current decision-making to be caused by South Korea's political turmoil.

The tests were also perceived to be timed to maximize political impact: The May launch happened in parallel to the One Belt One Road summit in Beijing, an important project for the Chinese president, Xi Jinping; as for the 4th of July tests, they occurred the same day as the US Independence Day. It is speculated that North Korea's missile tests were aimed at improving their nuclear power to try and avoid having US intervention in North Korea, aimed at removing Kim Jong Un from power (the possibility of a nuclear attack from North Korea would cause a threat to Washington). So far, however, North Korea experts have stated that the regime has not developed the capability to send missiles further than Asia.

Recommendations

- Develop effective legal measures to reach a world without nuclear weapons
- Negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination
- Encourage states to show transparency measures related to: the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons
- Raise awareness to encourage the civil society to demand their respective governments to support a Middle East nuclear free zone
- Identify the primary obstacles impeding the creation of a NWFZ
- Pre-existing standards or methods that the committee should utilize to ensure the successful establishment of this NWFZ
- Encourage Israel to pursue discussions with the Palestinians to alleviate the tensions in the Middle East

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