



TGT MUN

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Introduction

The issue at hand revolves around the need for a new global treaty or framework on Nuclear weapons to replace the NPT which many consider as a relic of a bygone area. The main problems around the NPT arise from the inability of the United Nations and UN members to enforce the treaty and the reluctance of major global and regional powers to abide by the NPT and other affiliated frameworks. Currently 7 nations, Russia, USA, China, UK, France, Pakistan, India admit to possessing nuclear capabilities. 2 other nations Israel and DPRK are believed to possess nuclear weapons, but the Israeli government has never officially admitted to the possession of said weapons and critics have serious doubts about DPRK's ability to possess nuclear weapons.^[1] Furthermore, Iran is known to possess the capability to develop nuclear weapons but has always insisted that it aims to use its nuclear program for peaceful purposes.

Another important point which will be explored further in the upcoming parts of this guide is the concept of nuclear deterrence. Most nations who possess nuclear weapons at the moment have defended their refusal to a complete removal or blanket ban of nuclear weapons by citing the idea of nuclear deterrence and nuclear parity. In simple terms these nations claim that the only reason a major violent global conflict has not broken out since the development and acquisition of nuclear weapons is because the threat of a country possessing nuclear weapons is enough to deter any country from engaging in direct violence.

Treaties on nuclear weapons usually revolve around the destruction of nuclear weapons, banning the production/distribution/sale of nuclear weapons, or both. Sadly, recent attempts to establish a new treaty on nuclear weapons, the TPNW failed to produce results, even after being passed by the general assembly. This failure was directly caused by the decision of NWS's to reject the treaty and their refusal to participate in its drafting.

Currently, a large part of the discussion on a nuclear treaty is focused on the situation in the Middle East with reference to the JCPOA signed by Iran and the P5+1 countries.^[2] and the situation in the Korean Peninsula with reference to North Korean missile tests.

The main reason behind the discussion of this topic is to evaluate the efficiency of the NPT and related frameworks, the effect of recent tensions in between nuclear powers and to discuss the feasibility and possibility of a new international framework on nuclear weapons.

Key Terms

Nuclear Deterrence

Nuclear Deterrence or the Deterrence Theory refers to the idea that an enemy will not use nuclear weapons as long as they are threatened by the consequences of their action.

Mutually Assured Destruction

Mutually Assured Destruction or the MAD theory, refers to the idea that the usage of nuclear weapons by one side would definitely lead to an equal response from the other side leading to the prospect of annihilation for both sides which leads to the idea of nuclear deterrence and prevents either side from conducting the first strike

Non-Proliferation Treaty

Non-Proliferation Treaty also known as the NPT is the treaty that prevents NNWS from acquiring or developing nuclear weapons and makes NWS commit to complete disarmament of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear Weapon Free Zones

Nuclear Weapon Free Zones refer to Specific regions around the globe where countries commit themselves not to manufacture, test, acquire or possess nuclear weapons.

CTBTO

Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization

ICSANT

International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism

ANWFZ

African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone

CANWFZ

Central Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone

Antarctic Treaty

Treaty which establishes that countries party to said treaty can only use Antarctica for peaceful purposes.

SEANWFZ

Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone

SPNFZ

South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone

LANWFZ

Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean

Problems Raised

Reluctance of NWS's to completely denuclearize

One of the most significant issues that prevents developments in the field of denuclearization is the overall reluctance of Nuclear Weapon States to denuclearize.

Currently there are nine states which possess or are rumored to possess nuclear weapons, the total size of this arsenal is 15,000 nuclear weapons, which is a significant reduction from the 60 - 70,000 nuclear weapons which were active during the cold war. ^[3]

Although this can be seen as a positive trend, this is overshadowed by two major negative trends.

Firstly, 4 out of the 9 countries having a nuclear arsenal are not party to the NPT, Israel, India and Pakistan have never signed or ratified the NPT and DPRK withdrew from the convention. This shows the lack of enforceability that has plagued the NPT and similar frameworks. Furthermore, this displays the ability of rising regional powers to bypass the current framework on nuclear weapons by simply refusing to acknowledge it.

The next negative trend is the overall rise in the number of NWS's attempting to expand, modernize or strengthen their nuclear weapons programmes. First off the United States is attempting to restart its nuclear weapons program through the proposed 30 year plan to rebuild its nuclear weapons program. ^[4] Next, the Russian Federation has unveiled various nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons delivery

Denuclearization of Iran and the Middle East

One of the most significant problems faced by the attempts towards denuclearization is the denuclearization of Iran and the Middle East. One of the most significant developments in this field was the United States pulling out of the JCPOA. Most other members of the JCPOA criticized this move but President Donald Trump justified the move by saying "We cannot prevent an Iranian bomb under the decaying and rotten structure of the current agreement,"^[5]. The United States further moved to violate the JCPOA by placing sanctions on the Iranian Oil Sector.

Critics and Experts hold a different opinion on the effectiveness of the JCPOA as they believe that the JCPOA was in fact an effective framework, they back this up by presenting evidence which suggests that Iran was complying with the deal and that it is significantly further from developing a nuclear weapon than it was before the deal. ^[6]

In 2020 after rising tensions with the United States and an airstrike that killed one of the country's lead generals, Iran announced that it was abandoning the limitations on Uranium enriching that were specified by the JCPOA, but would continue working with the UN watchdog. Furthermore the Iranian government has rejected the idea of a different deal to succeed the JCPOA and has also said that it would reverse its breaches of the JCPOA if international sanctions were lifted. ^[7]

Dominance of NWS's in most forums on the discussion of Denuclearization

This is a more inherent problem at the very core of the discussion on denuclearization. The entire discussion around denuclearization refers to getting NWS to denuclearize and to prevent new states from developing or acquiring nuclear weapons. For this idea to be achieved, NWS's need to cooperate with NNWS's. This cooperation is rare, especially in the area of denuclearization as most NWS want to hold on to their nuclear weapons as it helps them establish nuclear parity and retain their status as major regional and international powers.

A great example of how any actions on denuclearization cannot take place successfully without the consultation of NWS's is the TPNW. All NWS's boycotted the discussions of the treaty as they believed their interests were not being considered. In the end although the treaty promised strong reforms, it has not been able to deliver on this promise as it has not been recognized by the NWS's.

Related Countries

United States

The United States has one of the largest arsenals of nuclear weapons, and has been a major supporter of international denuclearization, they have attempted negotiations with both Iran and DPRK to promote denuclearization efforts. But, their actions are almost hypocritical as the United States is embarking on a 30 year plan to rebuild its nuclear arsenal which is said to be in direct violation of the NPT and will cost the United States about 1.7 trillion \$^[8]

Russia

The Russian federation is believed to have a stockpile of 6500 nuclear warheads, 1600 of which have been deployed. In 2019 satellite images captured nuclear storage sites in the western parts of Russia receiving significant updates. Furthermore, Russia also launched the Burevestnik nuclear propelled cruise missile. Furthermore, the US and NATO allies are concerned about the development of NM729 by the Russian Federation which was in direct violation of the INF treaty.^[9]

India

In 2018, India completed its nuclear triad mentioned in its nuclear doctrine by launching the INS Arihant. This can be seen as a major victory for India and something that has been concerning for both China, which is dependent on the Indian ocean for its oil supply and Pakistan which has been in conflict with India even since its Independence. India applies a No first use policy, which prevents it from launching nuclear weapons unless a first strike is launched against them.^[10]

DPRK

DPRK is one of the most controversial countries in the discussion around nuclear weapons, it claims to possess nuclear weapons although experts have doubted their claims and their ability to deliver said nuclear weapons. They are said to possess 20-30 warheads. Furthermore, during talks with the United States they completely ruled out complete denuclearisation.^[11]

Related Organizations

NATO

NATO is one of the key organizations when it comes to denuclearization, 3 members in the alliance possess nuclear weapons and the United States has actively committed itself to a policy of sharing nuclear weapons with NATO allies. The US currently has 6 nuclear weapon facilities in 5 NATO countries, which hold approximately 150 warheads in total. ^[12] Most NATO members argue that the TPNW is at odds with NATO's nuclear deterrence policy.

IAEA

The IAEA is the principal organization of the United Nations when it comes to denuclearization, the IAEA is also the main organization for reviewing a country's compliance with most treaties on nuclear weapons, IAEA inspectors have been tasked with reviewing Iran's compliance with the JCPOA as well as reviewing nuclear sites in the DPRK.

OPANAL

OPANAL, also known as the Agency for the prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. The organisation was created as a result of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which established a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone over Latin America and the Caribbean, OPANAL was tasked with ensuring nations complied with the treaty. The OPANAL and the LANWFZ have been integral in promoting NWFZ's globally. ^[13]

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Previous Attempts

TPNW

The TPNW was the most recent attempt at complete denuclearisation, it was the first legally binding treaty for nuclear disarmament in 20 years and was adopted by 122 countries. The signatories of this treaty believe that it is an essential step towards denuclearisation. But, countries which possess nuclear weapons boycotted the talks and refused to sign the treaty. Hence the effectiveness of the treaty still remains doubtful. ^[14]

US-DPRK talks

The US-DPRK talks were aimed at denuclearisation in the Korean peninsula among other aims, the talks broke down after 2 rounds of discussions in Singapore and Hanoi respectively. The DPRK regime made it clear that complete denuclearisation is off the table. But the regime took "positive steps" after the first summit in Singapore, only for the talks to collapse after the Hanoi summit.

CTBT

The CTBT, also known as the comprehensive test ban treaty was another attempt at

nuclear disarmament, it banned nuclear explosions of any kind including nuclear tests. But the treaty is not considered legally binding as India, China, Pakistan and the United States have not signed or ratified the treaty. ^[15]

Possible Solutions

Resumptions of Negotiations between the US and Russia

As mentioned by the Secretary General in his 5 point proposal on nuclear disarmament, an ideal step would be the resumption of negotiations between the Russian Federation and the United States, aimed at reducing their individual stockpiles, hence reducing the overall number of nuclear weapons. This solution seems unlikely considering the rising tensions between NATO and Russia and the increases in expenditure on nuclear program redevelopment by both sides, but this is a solution that both sides may agree to and could lay the path for reduction in stockpiles.

Efforts to make the CTBT legally binding

Another part of the Secretary Generals 5 point proposal, is the need to make the CTBT a more legally binding document, this is a solution that will require serious international pressure on all 4 countries that have not signed it, and on other NWS to abide by its clauses. ^[16]

Implement the solutions of the NPDI

12 countries in 2014 formed the NPDI with a goal to further the cause of nuclear disarmament through moderate means, they have adopted the Hiroshima declaration which has multiple moderate reforms aimed at nuclear disarmament, the implementation of these reforms seems like the most logical step in the current scenario.

Citation

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