



**Forum:** Security Council

**Issue:** The Question of the Danger of Nuclear Weapons

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## INTRODUCTION

The danger of nuclear weapons is a question discussed worldwide. In fact, the use of these armaments can damage both people and the environment of an area for years after the detonation. Nuclear weapons have been divided into four categories: atmospheric, underground, exoatmospheric, and underwater.

Some leaderships (e.g. the United States) think they should keep nuclear weapons so that they can prevent the attack of other nations. But many other countries claim that nuclear weapons must be abolished.

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Counterforce: it is one that has a military value, such as a launch silo for intercontinental ballistic missiles, an airbase at which nuclear-armed bombers are stationed, a homeport for ballistic missile submarines, or a command and control installation

Nuclear weapons tests: experiments carried out to determine the effectiveness, yield, and explosive capability of nuclear weapons.

Decontamination: The removal of unwanted radioactive material from an area.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

After the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), created first of all to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, only five states are considered nuclear weapon states: United States of America, France, United Kingdom, China, and Russia.

India, Pakistan and North Korea have also conducted nuclear weapon tests with a positive outcome, and Israel is presumed to be in possession of them too.

Considering that there are also the NATO nuclear weapons sharing states and the states formerly possessing nuclear weapons it has been estimated the number of 10,144 nuclear weapons worldwide.

Some of these are hundreds of times more powerful than those that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Until now the superpowers plot to invest over a trillion dollars raising their nuclear armaments, which can increase the risk of nuclear proliferation, nuclear terrorism, and accidental nuclear war.

## **RECENT DEVELOPMENTS**

The discovery of nuclear winter, the nuclear freeze movement, and the end of the Cold War directed countries to drop the global nuclear supply by about 75%.

In 2002 it was revealed that two episodes during the Cuban missile crisis had brought much closer to nuclear war than had been previously believed. Nowadays we produce more material for nuclear weapons, useful knowledges for the construction of nuclear weapons are widespread, and terrorist organizations are becoming increasingly interested in acquiring nuclear capabilities.

## **MAJOR PLAYERS INVOLVED**

### *United States of America*

It is one of the five recognized nuclear powers by the signatories of the NPT. The Pantex Plant near Amarillo, Texas, is the only location in the United States where weapons from the aging nuclear arsenal can be refurbished or dismantled.

### *France*

It is not known to possess or recover any chemical or biological weapons. By 1968 only France and China were detonating nuclear weapons in the open air and the toxic waste caused by the H-bomb flare led to a global protest movement against possible future French atmospheric tests.

### *United Kingdom*

It has four submarines based at HMNB Clyde in Scotland, armed with nuclear-leaned Trident missiles. The British government announced its plans to restore its missiles and build new submarines to carry them, and stated that the renewal is fully attuned with the UK's treaty commitments and international law.

### *Russian Federation*

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Trilateral Agreement between Belarus, the USA, and Russia, all the armaments were transferred to Russia which became the sole inheritor of the Soviet nuclear arsenal.

## *People's Republic of China*

It has developed and possesses weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and nuclear weapons. In 2011, China published a defence white paper, which repeated its nuclear policies of maintaining a minimum deterrent with a no-first-use guarantee.

### **TIMELINE OF EVENTS**

- 16 July 1945: US conducts the first nuclear test, code-names “Trinity” in New Mexico.
- 24 January 1946: the UN calls for elimination of atomic weapons and sets up a commission to deal with the problem of the atomic discovery.
- 9 July 1955: Russell-Einstein manifesto issued – some leading scientists issue a manifesto warning of the dangers of nuclear war.
- 1 July 1968: the NPT is signed – states agree never to acquire nuclear weapons, and the nuclear weapon states make a legal undertaking to disarm.
- 8 July 1996: World Court says nuclear weapons are illegal.

### **RELEVANT UN TREATIES AND EVENTS**

#### *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty*

The NPT exists since 1970, and 188 states have agreed to the treaty but North Korea chose to withdraw in 2003. Although the treaty is recognized by many as an effective plan that could lead to a reduction in nuclear weapons, there seem to be some problematic areas such as the failure to make any progress towards nuclear disarmament and realising the treaty has been problematic.

#### *Canberra Commission*

In 1996, the Prime Minister of Australia created the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. They want the removal of warheads from delivery vehicles, the ending deployment of non-strategic nuclear weapons and also of the nuclear testing. The Canberra Commission believe that a nuclear weapon free world is within our reach provided that countries commit to it.

#### *Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty*

In September 1996, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was put into place, promoting the reduction of nuclear weapons and ban of nuclear explosions.

## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

No one doubts the catastrophic consequences of a nuclear war.

The long list of nuclear accidents, malfunctions, mishaps, false alarms and misses by a whisker, often triggered by mechanical and human error, continues to grow. The risk of failure of deterrence remains significant, in fact it is a complex and closely connected system. The members of the Security Council as well as member countries of the Treaty, must try to:

1. Prevent a nuclear attack by terrorists and sub-state actors, States must develop a successful strategy for denying them the opportunity to acquire nuclear weapons.
2. They can demand that all nuclear weapon states get rid of the first-use of nuclear weapons.
3. All the countries must end their nuclear confrontation and take down the tens of thousands of intact nuclear weapons which remain in their arsenals.
4. They must present warning policies that make accidental nuclear wars possible, so that citizens can be alerted of all dangers.
5. The Treaty should be revised and some clauses should be added.

It has been stated on the UNESCO's website that: "It is technologically possible to eliminate the functionality of all the world's nuclear weapons in a few days." The Security Council's members have to cooperate to prevent a possible future nuclear war, and adjust the already existing Treaty.

## USEFUL LINKS

- <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/Global/international/planet-2/report/2006/4/glossary-of-nuclear-terms.pdf>
- <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/04/22/opinion/the-best-solution-to-nuclear-proliferation-is-nuclear-disarmament.html>
- <http://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/safety-and-security/non-proliferation/safeguards-to-prevent-nuclear-proliferation.aspx>

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counterforce>
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## **NOTES FROM THE CHAIR**

I hope the report will be helpful and clear enough. This is just a sample that should help you understand in what way many countries around the world are involved in this topic. You can see that more influent countries are in this as well as minor countries. It's a worldwide issue.