ODUMUNC 2023 Issue Brief
First Committee: Disarmament and International Security

Compliance with non-proliferation, arms limitation and disarmament agreements

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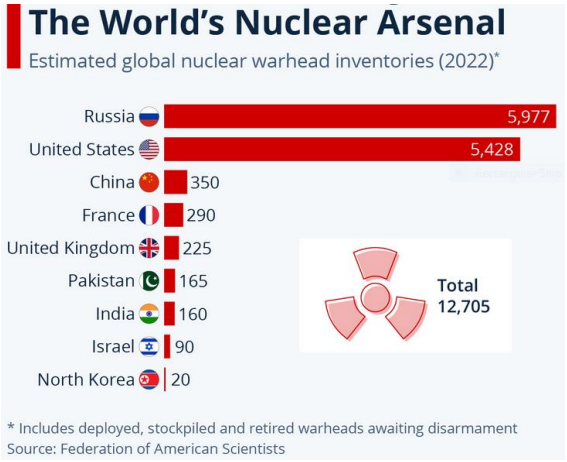
I. Introduction

The invasion of Ukraine in 2022 marks a dividing moment in the history of nuclear nonproliferation, arms limitation and disarmament. Since beginning Russia's 'Special military operation' on 24 February 2022, President Vladimir Putin and other Russian leaders have repeatedly raised the possibility of using nuclear weapons in Ukraine, or possibly against its supporters. It is the first time national leaders threatened nuclear attack since Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev's 'rocket rattling' in 1956.

Recent Russian threats do not violate any arms control agreement. Those only restrict possession of nuclear weapons, their numbers and testing. While use of chemical, biological and some conventional weapons is prohibited, use of nuclear weapons still is permitted under international law. But threats to use them undermine the credibility of the entire arms control and disarmament process. Already suffering as states find agreement hard to win and harder to sustain, arms control and disarmament are in danger of dying completely. What can the UN general Assembly to revive arms control? Should it?

Ukraine is one of the few countries that held stockpiles of nuclear weapons—inherited after the collapse of the Soviet Union—to give them up completely. With Belarus and Kazakhstan, Ukraine gave up its nuclear weapons, sent them to Russia, in exchange for security guarantees from Russia when it signed the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances. Ukraine and the others then signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), permanently giving up its right to acquire nuclear weapons.



Nuclear non-proliferation, arms limitation and disarmament already were suffering. In 2002, American President George W. Bush withdrew his country from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. The AMB Treaty limited missile defenses and committed the US and Soviet Union to rely on nuclear deterrence. By escaping the treaty, the United States was free to build more missile defenses instead. New interceptors have been installed in Alaska and California, where they could intercept missiles from China or North Korea, although there is little confidence in their ability to destroy attacking missiles.

Since then, other arms control agreements from the Cold War era have gradually fallen apart as one country of another makes exceptions, freezes their cooperation or withdraws. Countries are relying more and more on themselves for security. But security has long been understood to be a mutual problem,. Its solution requires the cooperation of all parties at

once. That was the role arms control and disarmament tried to fill. Nuclear arms control's last achievement were the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) agreed by Russia and the US in 2010, and the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (the TPNW or Ban Treaty), which ash wide global support but is opposed Russia and the US. New START, which they do support, commits both parties to keep their strategic nuclear arsenals to no more than 1,550 nuclear warheads. President Trump sought to withdraw from that agreement, but President Biden recommitted the United States in 2021

The General Assembly is free, under this topic, to consider action on any aspect of weapons proliferation, conventional weapons, arms control and disarmament. Chemical weapons, for example, pose new dangers. Syria used chemical weapons hundreds of time, and several types, in its civil war starting in 2013. Weaponization of outer space and cyberspace are new domains for competition and danger between states. Because nuclear weapons continue to proliferate and pose extraordinary dangers of destruction, they often receive the bulk of attention in non-proliferation, arms limitations, and disarmament. In the summer of 2022 the 187 states party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) met to review the agreement, but were blocked from reaching a conclusion by veto from Russia.

Although there is broad agreement on many principles, progress on non-proliferation, arms limitations, and disarmament has been incremental in even the most stable years. Through the Budapest Memorandum, Russia pledged respect for Ukraine's security and sovereignty, which it failed to comply with through its invasion. This failure of compliance likely makes nations second-guess existing or future compliance requirements of their own. This Russia situation is especially difficult for the United Nations, as the invading nation is a permanent member of the Security Council, which effectively vetoes any action which might constrain the tools of its aggression. This is on the heels of a somewhat mixed response to the alleged use of Russian-back Syrian use of chemical weapons and the eventual toppling of Libyan ruler Muammar after giving up his own Weapons of Mass Destruction program.[1]

The United Nations faces a world in which states are less willing to rely on restraint to ensure their security, more willing to try to go it alone, to break agreements, and rely on their own military capabilities. Nuclear threats are increasing, chemical weapons are in limited use, and accusations of biological weapon development fly back and forth amongst member states.

Meanwhile, advanced technology is becoming more easily available to all states. Russia relies on Iran to supply drones it uses to attack Ukraine. The decreasing price of technology

[1] Moran and Bowen, "What North Korea Learned from Libya's Decision to Give up Nuclear Weapons."

makes the proliferation of weapons from small arms to weapons of mass destruction ever more affordable. Rising space powers and commercialization combine to create a more crowded and possibly less peaceful domain. Meanwhile, increasing reliance on interconnected technologies creates new risks and vulnerabilities and potential large-scale weapons. Many threats take advantage of the structure of the multinational system itself, requiring new approaches if non-proliferation, arms limitations, and disarmament are to be successful.

II. Background

It is important to understand the components of non-proliferation, arms limitations, and disarmament. Noted international theorist, Hedley Bull remarked that disarmament is "the reduction or abolition of armaments," whereas arms control is the "restraint internationally exercised upon armaments policy, whether in respect of the level of armaments, in their character, deployment, or use"[2]. Non-proliferation, nuclear or otherwise, is preventing the creation and use of weapons. The United Nations also sponsors processes and agreements that control small arms, land mines, conventional cluster bombs, certain especially injurious weapons.

It's tempting to think that the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) is so frightening that use is incredible. Restraint might be due to memories of chemical weapons use in World War One and nuclear weapons in Word War Two, and constant threats and reliance on nuclear deterrence during the Cold War. As these collective memories fade, and as new states gain WMD capabilities, it seems more likely that war's tendency toward uncapped escalation may return.

World War II set the conditions for an international order that included institutions such as the United Nations to distribute and set limits on the actions of states. The onset of the Cold War restricted this vision in some ways, shifting from a less liberal to a more realist approach between the USSR and the United States.

Many different tools emerged to help analyze and define threats. States were seen as unified actors, whose decision-making focused on maximizing their security, power and interests. Wargaming, operations research, and game theory played an increasing role in understanding not just nuclear weapon use, but non-proliferation, arms limitations, and disarmament.

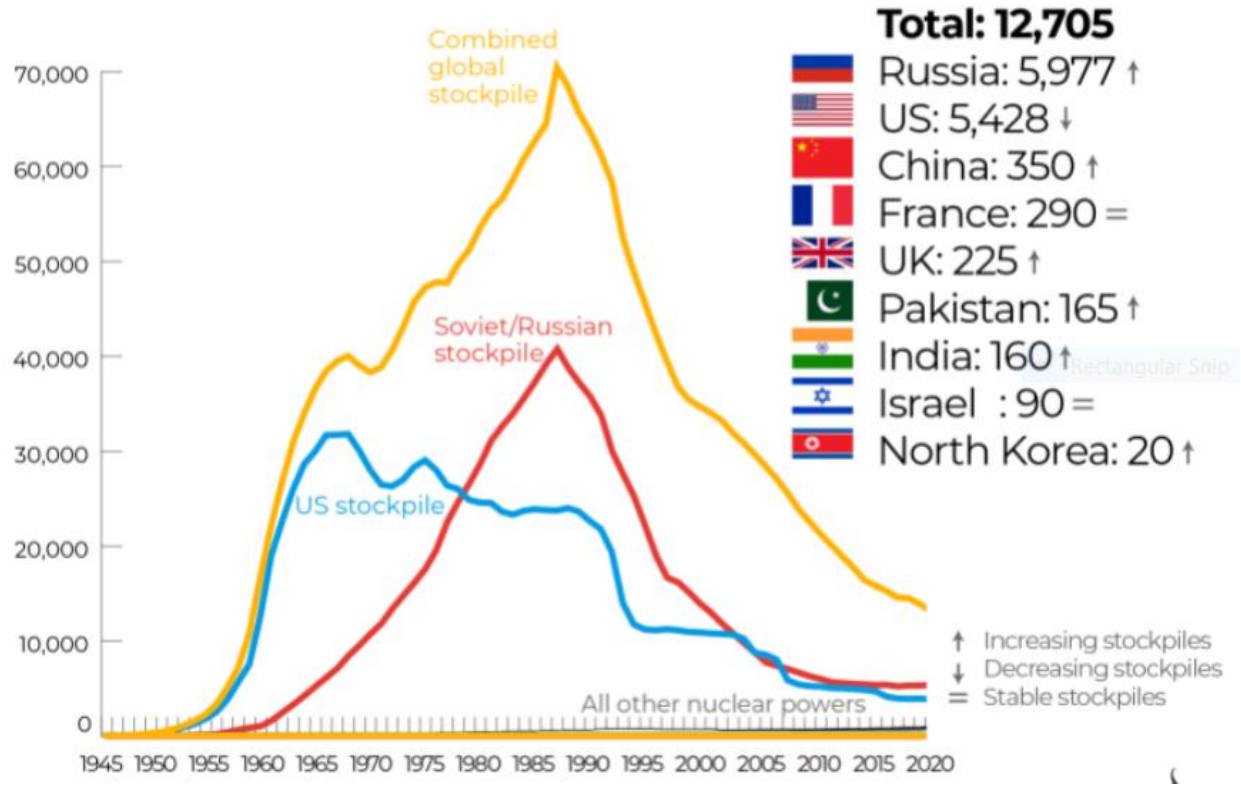
Since states did not want to compromise their power, it was difficult to achieve sweeping change, and by the 1950's new thinking. Instead of seeking universal and complete disarmament—their original goal—it sems easier to focus instead on narrower goals and partial measures, restraining the most dangerous weapons. Arms control emerged as a less ambitious, more readily achieved approach, stressing less ambitious fixes.[3]

Partial measures included the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Biological Weapons Convention, Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty I & II, and the Intermediate Nuclear Force Agreement. The NPT, for example, does not affect the nuclear arsenals of states that already had nuclear weapons when the treat was signed in 1968. They keep their forces. But other countries agreed to give up their sovereign right to acquire nuclear weapons. In exchange, the nuclear

[2] Bull and Institute for Strategic Studies (London, *The Control of the Arms Race: Disarmament and Arms Control in the Missile Age*.

[3] Baylis, Wirtz, and Gray, *Strategy in the Contemporary World*, 214.

weapons states agreed to pursue good-faith progress toward nuclear disarmament.



The end of the Cold War in the late 1980s and early 1990s saw new energy in the area of arms control. This led to successes such as the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties, permanent extension of the NPT, a new Chemical Weapons Convention, and the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START).

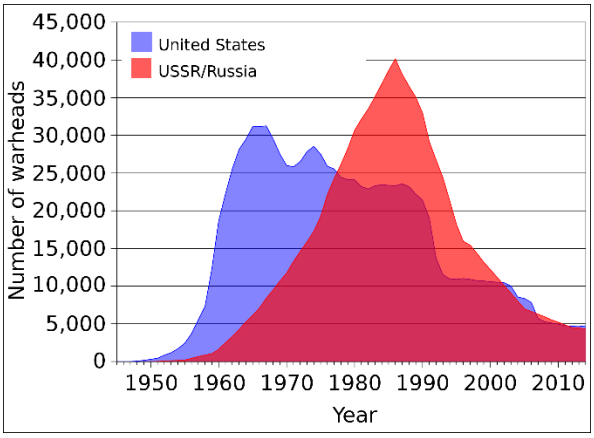
However, there were many unsuccessful attempts during this period as well, as the United States did not ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, completed in 1995, but as a result never came into force. India and Pakistan both tested nuclear weapons in 1998, North Korea tested nuclear weapons in 2006 and ICBMs in 2017. Iran does not have nuclear weapons, but clearly is developing the ability to manufacture them.[4]

Even before the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, fears were already rising about the possibility that non-state actors (NSAs) could use Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). After 9/11, the United States began a more aggressive use of military measures as a means of counter-proliferation, by actively targeting the capabilities of state and non-state actors it considered a threat.[5] This is also a technique that is attributed to Israel over the years in Iran, Syria, and other locations. More traditional forms of arms control, such as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, currently

[4] Baylis, Wirtz, and Gray, 218.

[5] Baylis, Wirtz, and Gray, *Strategy in the Contemporary World*.

displace counter-proliferation, and its use is still a possibility in the future.



Today the agreements created in earlier eras are becoming increasingly irrelevant as states withdraw when it suits their immediate interests, or ignore them without withdrawing (as in the case of Syria's chemical weapons attacks). There are not arms control or disarmament negotiations in progress anywhere. The future of arms control and disarmament is in doubt. Without such restraint, the danger of international anarchy and competition seems certain to grow worse. Can non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament be revived? Can the United Nations lead the way? Or is it destined to show only the depth of the problem?

III. Current Situation

The election of Joe Biden as U.S. President raised international hopes that arms control and disarmament, losing relevance, might be restored. In 2021 President Biden reversed his predecessor as president, Donald Trump, and renewed the 2010 New START treaty with Russia for another ten years. There were hopes for restoration of the non-proliferation agreement with Iran, previously terminated by President Trump, and a new global agreement to restrain arms supplies to non-state actors.[6] In November 2020 President Trump withdrew the United States from the Open Skies treaty, citing Russian limits on the flight. Similarly, the United States withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, alleging Russian deployments of missiles that violated the agreements.[7] Replacement treaties were back on the agenda.

Actual progress was disappointing. China refused to be drawn into any arms control process, saying its nuclear arsenal was much smaller and should not be affected until Russia and the United States dropped to Chinese levels. The Russian invasion of Ukraine immediately became the largest challenge to non-proliferation, arms limitations, and disarmament. Beyond the violations of international rules and norms Russia committed by invading Ukraine, it undermined the principles—the security assurances to non-nuclear weapons states—on which non-proliferation rests. If a nation gives up its nuclear weapons but is later invaded by a nation that guaranteed its security, it undermines the credibility not just of the nation involved, but the principle of international security guarantees. In other words, countries will not believe that they are safe unless they maintain their nuclear capabilities.

Indicative of the new trends, in 2022 Belarus, a state close to Russia geographically and supportive of Moscow, abolished its restrictions on hosting nuclear weapons. Russia agreed to provide nuclear-capable Iskander-M short-range ballistic missiles and SU-25 bombers, although these delivery systems remain unpaired with nuclear warheads, so far.[8] Russian President

[6] "Despite a Difficult Year, a Win for Nonproliferation • Stimson Center."
[7] Browne, "US Formally Withdraws from Open Skies Treaty That Bolstered European Security."
[8] BBC News, "Russia Promises Belarus Iskander-M Nuclear-Capable Missiles"; Radio Free Europe, "Putin Says Russia to Supply Belarus with Iskander-M Missile Systems."

Putin directly threatened the use of nuclear weapons.[9] He emphasized that this threat "is not a bluff".[10] It is in this precarious situation that the United Nations continues its work on non-proliferation, arms limitations, and disarmament agreements and commitments.

IV. Role of the United Nations

The United Nations General Assembly has repeatedly passed resolutions urging compliance with existing non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament treaties. Concern with the issues goes back to the creation of the organization. The United Nations was created out of the destruction of the Second World War, and the principles of non-proliferation, arms limitations and disarmament are found in the Charter itself. As described in Article 11 of the UN Charter,

> …the General Assembly may consider the general principles of co-operation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments, and may make recommendations concerning such principles to the Members or to the Security Council or to both.[11]

In Article 26, the Charter says,

> In order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources, the Security Council shall be responsible for formulating, with the assistance of the (UN) Military Staff Committee referred to in Article 47, plans to be submitted to the Members of the United Nations for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments.

An Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) on display in North Korea, 2022

Through charter authorities, both the General Assembly (through Article 22) and the Security Council (Article 29) maintain several subordinate organs which deal with non-proliferation, arms limitations, and disarmament. The GA holds *special sessions* dedicated to disarmament, along with open-ended working groups.[12] The *First Committee of the General Assembly* deals specifically with disarmament, arms regulations, and international security. In 2022, 22 agenda items covered topics including the reduction of military budgets, prevention of arms race in outer space, complete disarmament, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.[13] As sessions began in October, the conversation began with the dangers and risks of nuclear weapons, and how states compliant with nonproliferation and disarmament treaties were getting little in return from larger nuclear states. With the war in Ukraine, North Korean missile testing, the possibility of Russian nuclear tests,

[9] "Обращение Президента Российской Федерации."
[10] "Обращение Президента Российской Федерации."
[11] Nations, "United Nations Charter (Full Text)."
[12] "Special Sessions of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament – UNODA."
[13] United Nations General Assembly, "Seventy-Seventh Session, First Committee: Allocation of Agenda Items to the First Committee."

and other large-scale tensions, the UN's 77th session is likely to be a controversial.

The *United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs* (ODU) is an agency under the UN Secretary-General that provides support to the General Assembly and Member States. Nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction remain a top priority, although both the humanitarian impacts of WMD and emerging threats such as autonomous weapons are dealt with as well. UNODA "promotes norm-setting and multilateral agreements in the areas of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation; facilitate dialogue among diverse stakeholders, and advocate for concrete and effective solutions to support sustainable peace and development."[14] It includes offices on WMD, Conventional Weapons, and Regional Disarmament. The office also assists in the post-conflict disarmament of former combatants. ODA coordinates closely with the Secretariat of the independent Arms Trade Treaty, which regulates conventional arms.[15]

Also created by the General Assembly and serviced by UNODA, the *United Nations Disarmament Commission* (UNDC) meets for three weeks each year to discuss questions of disarmament. Although it was first formed in 1952, it was massively overhauled in 1978 to include all nations of the GA and started meeting annually, generally covering two major issues. Therefore, it may be a venue best used to determine structural or technocratic elements for guidelines, procedures, and other programs. The commission has sometimes gone years or decades without a substantial published conclusion to their topics.

When the UN authorizes actual treaty negotiation, it is supposed to happen in the UN Conference on Disarmament (CD). This is a "single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community."[16] Work in the CD is supposed to be conducted by 65 states of "key military significance" and can be joined by non-member states for negotiations as well. In the 1960s and '70s and '80s, the CD helped negotiate landmark treaties such as the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT), the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction* (BWC), the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction* (CWC) and *Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty* (CTBT).[17]

The CD has been completely blocked for twenty-five years. It requires consensus (agreement of all participating states) and Pakistan refuses to permit any negotiations to advance, largely to show its opposition to a treaty to stop production of nuclear bomb fuel (the Fissile Materials Ban), which would end its ability to match the nuclear power of neighboring India. Pakistan also demands that the UN weigh in on its claims to Indian-occupied Kashmir. Pakistan has prevented the CD from adopting an agenda, the first step to any negotiation process, making it impossible to act. Since then, the UN works around the CD. Negotiations to create the *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons* (the Ban Treaty, or TPNW), for example, were done in the General Assembly itself in 2017.

United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is an excellent data resource to evaluate arms trade between nations, as self-reported by each state. Battle tanks, armored combat vehicles, large caliber artillery systems, combat aircraft, attack helicopters, warships, missiles, and small arms

[14] "Strategy – UNODA."
[15] "Treaty Text."
[16] "Conference on Disarmament – UNODA."
[17] "Conference on Disarmament – UNODA."

are regularly reported. This register helps create transparency in arms trade and accumulations.[18]

Since 1957, *the International Atomic Energy Agency* has sought "to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health, and prosperity throughout the world. It shall ensure, so far as it is able, that assistance provided by it or at its request or under its supervision or control is not used in such a way as to further any military purpose."[19] The IAEA helps states pursue nuclear programs for peaceful purposes, in ways that are less likely to support nuclear weapons programs. The IAEA "verifies through its inspection system that States comply with their commitments, under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and other non-proliferation agreements."[20] A large component of this work includes detecting the misuse or diversion of nuclear material for non-peaceful means. States that are signatories to the NPT are required to establish comprehensive safeguard agreements to verify compliance.

Under the UN Security Council, since 2004 is the *1540 Committee*. This oversees implementation and compliance with UN Security Council re Resolution 1540 (2004). This imposes binding obligations on all States to adopt legislation to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and their means of delivery, and establish appropriate domestic controls over related materials to prevent their illicit trafficking." [21] While the work of this committee is highly applicable to the current international situation, its current charter will expire in November 2022, unless renewed by the UNSC. Four Nuclear Safety Summits were called by US President Obama to implement UNSC 1540.

V. Landmark UN Resolutions

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Opened in 1968 and put into force in 1970, the NPT focuses on three pillars: nuclear weapon non-proliferation, disarmament, and peaceful use of atomic energy. States possessing nuclear weapons at the signing pledged not to spread nuclear weapons or explosives. Meanwhile, non-weapons states agreed not to pursue the manufacture of weapons.[22] All states are allowed to exchange information with the oversight of the IAEA for the peaceful use of nuclear material. India, Israel, Pakistan, and South Sudan have not signed the treaty.

Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. This treaty" bans all nuclear explosions, whether for military or peaceful purposes."[23] To date, 186 countries have signed the treaty, and 176 of these countries have ratified the agreement. China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, and the United States are key countries that have not ratified the treaty. India, Pakistan, and North Korea have not signed the agreement. The treaty provides for an International Monitoring System, International Data Center, and On-Site Inspection capability. The CTBT is seen as a complimentary treaty to the NPT, which may help move nuclear states to disarm. The technical systems of the CTBT are key for compliance with nuclear agreements. After the last required ratification is received, the treaty becomes effective 180 days later. The Preparatory Commission will be replaced by the permanent Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. [24]

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). In 1997, this agreement went into force to eliminate chemical weapons. While many

[18] "ROCA (United Nations Register of Conventional Arms)."
[19] International Atomic Energy Agency, "History."
[20] "The IAEA Mission Statement."
[21] "1540 Committee."
[22] "UNODA Treaties."
[23] "The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) | CTBTO."
[24] "The Preparatory Commission | CTBTO."

agreements have been made in history concerning poisonous weapons, the horrors of World War I saw the creation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, which outlawed chemical and bacterial weapons use. However, the CWC goes further by banning the development, production, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons. Compliance and verification are maintained through the Organisation for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons. There are several options for compliance through the OPCW Verification Division, including chemical demilitarization, declarations, industry verification, and laboratory facilities.[25] Because of the industrial processes and scale of chemical weapons production, it is relatively less difficult to verify, when compared to biological weapons.

The Biological Weapons Convention. The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, or simply the Biological Weapons Convention, went into force on March 26, 1975. Like the CWC, the BWC has its roots in the Geneva Protocols and also extends bans on the use, development, production, stockpiling retention, or acquisition of biological or "germ" weapons. From a compliance standpoint, the BWC does not contain any formal compliance procedures amongst the 184 signatories. Its only mechanism is for states to cooperate to solve concerns and to appeal to the UNSC for investigation if a violation is believed to have occurred. Previous attempts to introduce stronger compliance measures have been unsuccessful.[26] This convention has been called "institutionally weak" by the Secretary-General.[27]

The **Sustainable Developmental Goals** (SDGs) and the seventeen goals that the UN General Assembly agreed in 2015 to guide all development activity world-wide through the year 2030. There is no specific SDG for disarmament or non-proliferation, but there are several areas of overlap with the path of Agenda 2030. Examples include:

> SDG 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies, justice, and strong institutions recognizes that durable peace and lasting conditions for security are necessary for long-term development. Arms control advances progress towards achieving SDG 3 on good health and well-being since armed violence is the leading cause of premature death and a key source of injuries, disability, psychological distress, and disease. SDG 5 focuses on gender equality, and gender-responsive disarmament and arms control plays a role in eliminating violence against women and girls. UNIDIR's work seeking solutions to urban violence contributes to SDG 11 on the safety, resilience, and sustainability of cities and human settlements as well.[28]

The SDGs can be sited in any UN resolution as a precedent and source of authority for any resolution on disarmament progress. In 2019, UNIDIR published a presentation entitled "Disarmament & SDGs: Making the Links," which crosswalks non-proliferation, arms limitations, and disarmament to be successful work and the Sustainable Development Goals.[29]

[25] "Verification."
[26] "Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) Compliance Protocol."
[27] United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, "Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament," 54.
[28] "About | UNIDIR."
[29] UNIDIR, "UNIDIR - Disarmament & the SDGs.Pdf."

VI. Country and Bloc Positions

China. China strong supports multi-lateral diplomacy on disarmament in the United Nations. The basic principle guiding its diplomacy is recognizing the sovereign equality and independence of all UN Member States, leaving them freedom of action within their own domestic societies. China avoid resolutions that single out any particular state for special attention, whether it is Iran or North Korea, or China itself. Universal principles—applicable to all states—are its basic demand. It is especially supportive of any initiative that reduces the advantages of the United States. China often finds support from members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

China is one of the five nuclear weapons states under the NPT (a P5 state) but is said to maintain the minimum amount of warheads (estimated at 290) in its nuclear triad to deter a nuclear strike by another nation. China has ratified all major nonproliferation and arms control treaties currently in effect, save the CTBT, which it has only signed. Combined, these factors China a unique position to leverage change in the international community. As part of the Conference on Disarmament, China called for "an 'effectively verifiable' fissile material cutoff treaty (FMCT)" and "prevention of an arms race in outer space".

China has been accused of proliferating technology to countries such as Iran, Libya, North Korea, and Saudi Arabia[30]. It has also steadily if slightly, increased its warhead numbers, rather than decrease them in recent years. From a compliance standpoint, the United States issued statements in 2021 that it did not have sufficient information to make a clear determination on compliance on issues concerning the CWC, BWC, missile limitations, nuclear nonproliferation, and nuclear testing.[31]

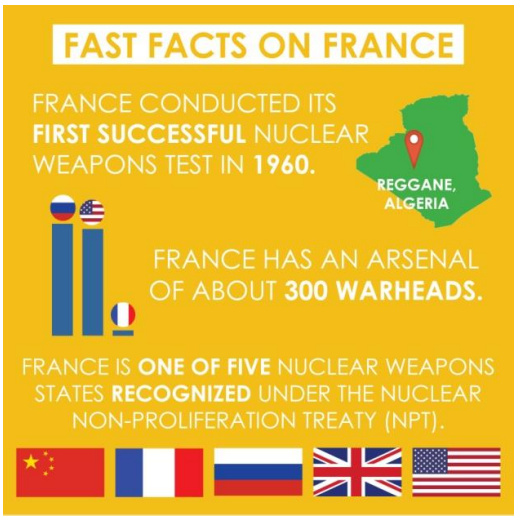
The European Union (EU): the 27 Member States of the EU, 11 associated states and even the United Kingdom—which quit the EU in 2016—strongly support progress on arms control and disarmament compliance. Their situation is tricky, though, because many rely on nuclear guarantees, deterrent threats, from the United States to ensure their security against Russia. The European members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are keenly aware of their awkward situation; simultaneously seeking to strengthen nuclear deterrence and reduce reliance on it. The nuclear threats from Russia in 2022 made this problem especially stark. They want to see these issues discussed, and states (mostly meaning Russia) agree to observe their current treaty obligations and international law. But most will not take action that antagonizes the United States, or weakens American nuclear assurances of their own security.

France: Like all Nuclear Weapon States, France has a delicate policy on these issues. France was the fourth nuclear state, testing its first bomb in 1960. It signed the NPT in 1995, agreeing not to aid the spread of nuclear weapons. France maintains a nuclear dyad of air and submarine-launched missiles, with a total inventory of approximately 300 warheads, similar in size to China's inventory.

While adamant about its nuclear force, France was a major force behind the nuclear deal with Iran in 2015 and French President Macron led global diplomacy in 2021-22 to prevent an invasion of Ukraine. It continues to lead European efforts to reduce the dangers of nuclear weapons, but remains committed to its nuclear deterrent. France ratified the

[30] Ian J. Stewart, "China and Non-Proliferation."
[31] United States Department of State Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, "2021 Adherence to and Compliance With Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and Commitments."

Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and gave up its right to test nuclear weapons. Together with the UK, France was the first nuclear-weapon State to sign the CTBT on 24 September 1996, and then to ratify it. It also is party to the CWC, BWC, Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, and the Missile Technology Control Regime.[32] France also adheres to the "zero-yield" standard with the United States and the United Kingdom.



Non-Aligned Movement (NAM): the 120 Member States and 17 Observer States of the largest UN voting bloc are generally supportive of measures to improve arms control compliance. They are especially concerned with the existing nuclear arsenals, those of Russia and the United States. Most NAM members agree that non-proliferation is a secondary concern. The possible nuclear arsenals of newcomers matter to them much less than the arsenals already in existence. They have a moral responsibility to act first. An important split in the NAM concerns supporters of Russia such as some African and Latin American states. They support—sometimes by voting for Russia, sometimes by abstaining—on resolutions calling on the US and its allies to act first to reduce their nuclear weapons and sign the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Major NAM members have nuclear weapons, especially India and Pakistan, which they refuse to submit to the NPT, demanding the states with larger nuclear forces got first.

Russia: Formal diplomacy from Russia strongly support arms control. In December 2021, Russia agreed to extension of the New START treaty with the United States. Moscow agrees in principle that a nuclear war cannot be won and should not be fought. Russia has reached an agreement with the United States to establish a new strategic stability dialogue. Russia also sought to expand the dialogue to control conventional precision weapons and missile defense systems, alongside nuclear weapons. Representatives of the Russian Federation referred to the NPT as a "cornerstone and an integral element of the international security system" and pledged "unwavering support."[33] Russia also signed the CTBT and completed 29 of 32 of its monitoring centers.[34] Russia highlights the United States as the primary reason that the CTBT is yet to go into force.

Yet Russia also shows itself willing to walk away from arms control agreement that it believes no longer serve its interests, such Open Skies, the Treaty on Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) and the Convention on Conventional Forces in Europe. Recent comments by the Russian President Putin and other leaders indicate that nuclear weapons may be used in Ukraine or elsewhere. Critics have labeled Russia's use of non-proliferation a "disinformation campaign." And others claim it uses international organizations mostly to

[32] "France."
[33] Ryabkov, "Russia's Nonproliferation Policy and Global Strategic Stability."
[34] Ryabkov.

constraint the United States and its NATO allies and allies like Japan and South Korea.[35]

The United Kingdom. The United Kingdom maintains the smallest nuclear weapons force of any of the five official Nuclear Weapons States. Unlike the other official nuclear weapon states, it does not maintain a nuclear triad or delivery systems; aircraft, land-based and sea-based missiles. Its nuclear weapons are exclusively housed aboard submarines.[36] While chairing the Conference on Disarmament in 2019, the UK's priorities included promoting discussions of nuclear risk reductions and creating steps to a world free of nuclear weapons through measures such as deterrence and verification.[37] The United Kingdom continues to support the Iran JPCOA and calls for North Korean disarmament and inspections in compliance with the NPT. However, the UK boycotted the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty due to a lack of verification of compliance.[38] The United Kingdom is especially sensitive to issues of chemical and biological weapons, since Russian agents used a chemical weapon (*Novichok*) in an assassination attempt on British territory in 2018.[39] Russia's invasion of Ukraine could reduce the momentum in Britain to agree to new measures that limit its strategic responses.

The United States. The recent transition to the Biden-Harris administration led to some signs of progress in nonproliferation and arms control. While America is in the middle of a massive nuclear weapons modernization program—investing in in nuclear missile submarines, new ICBMs and bomber aircraft—the administration has initiated new negotiations as well. It re-opened talks to reenter the Iran nuclear agreement and an extension of the New START Arms Agreement.

However, as the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* points out, tensions between the three major nuclear powers remain high and each is developing strategic hypersonic systems that could create a new arms race.[40] The 2022 National Security Strategy declares that the United States is committed to decreasing the risks of nuclear war by reducing "the role of nuclear weapons in our strategy and pursuing realistic goals for mutual, verifiable arms control, which contribute to our deterrence strategy and strengthen the global non-proliferation regime."[41] The strategy pledges to strengthen the "Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization, International Atomic Energy Agency, and other United Nations bodies, to extend the more than seven-decade record of nuclear non-use."[42]

The same strategy declares that "to ensure our nuclear deterrent remains responsive to the threats we face, we are modernizing the nuclear Triad, nuclear command, control, and communications, and our nuclear weapons infrastructure, as well as strengthening our extended deterrence commitments to our Allies."[43] The United States seeks to denuclearize North Korea and prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

The new National Security Strategy also reserves Arms Control and Non-Proliferation as a separate section. The approach of the strategy is to work multilaterally to strengthen

[35] Abigail Stowe-Thurston, "Russia's Non-Proliferation Disinformation Campaign."
[36] United States Department of State Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance.
[37] "The United Kingdom's Non-Proliferation And Disarmament Diplomacy - BASIC."
[38] Jonathan Allen, "Non-Proliferation and International Stability."
[39] "Chemical Watchdog Confirms UK Findings on Salisbury Nerve Agent."
[40] "Current Time - 2022."
[41] The White House, "National Security Strategy."
[42] Ibid., 30.
[43] Ibid., 21.

mechanisms and pledges leadership in the field. The United States leaves the door open to cooperate with its "competitors" Russia and China for strategic stability and risk reduction. Beyond nuclear weapons, the strategy identifies "support the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Biological Weapons Convention and reinforce norms against the possession and use of chemical and biological weapons."[44] The strategy also pledges to control arms in space, cyber, and emerging technologies.

VII. Proposals for Action

Before Russia's latest invasion of Ukraine, the United Nations Office of Disarmament Published a document on behalf of the United Nations Secretary-General, called *Securing Our Common Future, An Agenda for Disarmament***.** This 87-page document lays out a way forward in the critical areas of non-proliferation, arms limitation, and disarmament agreements. The report highlights that treaty verification achievements and encourages Member States to live up to their commitments by implementing existing agreements.[45] In what might come as a surprise, the report note that,

> while limits and the verified destruction of nuclear weapon-capable delivery vehicles remain vital and important, to date, not a single nuclear warhead has been verifiably destroyed pursuant to an international commitment.

It calls for the integration of technical capabilities of member states toward this issue.[46] How to resume progress on these issue, non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament?

There are innumerable possibilities open to the General Assembly. A few possibilities include:

Call for a new UN Special Session on Disarmament to commit all Member States to clear, time-dated targets for achieving current, general disarmament commitments. The three special session on disarmetn before, in 1979, 1982 and 1988 clarified the will of the international community, but did not lead to actual disarmament. Today the need is much greater, to clarify the prohibition on nuclear weapons use, to slow modernization programs, and respond to the challenge of emerging new nuclear weapons states.

Call on Member States to fully implement their existing commitments, to sign and ratify the treaties they negotiated like the *Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty* (CTBT), to complete negotiations on ban on production of nuclear weapons feed stocks (the *Fissile Material Ban Treaty* negotiations), and make the real progress toward disarmament agreed and required under the 1968 *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty* (NPT).

Call for negotiation of new agreements. For example, the General Assembly can ask the member States to complete a treaty prohibited nuclear first use, calling on them to abandon nuclear deterrence. Alternatively, it could achieve much the same by calling for all nuclear weapons states to sign the 2017 *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons* (the TPNW, or Ban Treaty).

Target specific countries: The General Assembly is best at establishing universal principles for all 193 Member States to follow. But it target specific Member States if it wants to. A resolution calling on Russia to stop making

[44] Ibid., 30.
[45] United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, "Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament," 22.
[46] Ibid., p. 24

threats of nuclear attack, or calling on the United States to abandon reliance on nuclear deterrence, would be completely in order. A popular action for the Non-Aligned Movement would be for the General Assembly to focus its attention on the nuclear forces of Israel. While the United States and its allies might prefer attention be directed at North Korea, for the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, Israel almost always come first.

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