

Research report

Forum: [General Assembly 1]

Issue: [Implementing rules and regulations upon the use and the strength of Nuclear Weapons]

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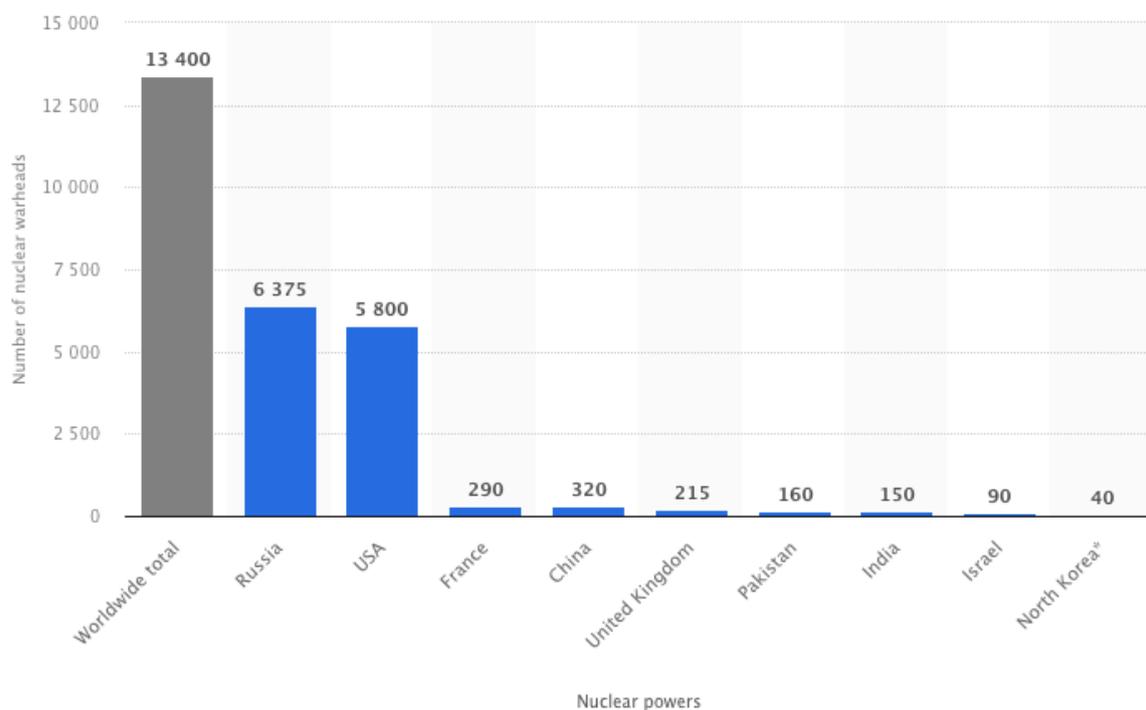
Introduction

The question of nuclear weapons and the regulations regarding them has been around for many years. On July 16th in 1945, the first ever nuclear weapon was successfully detonated. Then, in August of 1945, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed. As of 2021, these instances were the only use of nuclear weapons in armed conflict.

Nuclear disarmament has been a goal of the United Nations since 1946 when it was the subject of their first resolution, establishing the Atomic Energy Commission, created especially to propose rules and regulations regarding the use and strengths of nuclear weapons and any other weapons of mass destruction.

Since 1959, the general assembly accredited the idea of general and complete disarmament and, in 1979, even devoted the Special session of the General Assembly to disarmament. This caused the General Assembly to recognize that nuclear disarmament should be the main focus in the field of disarmament.

As of today, there are still 13,400 nuclear weapons left. Most of these nuclear weapons are in the hands of countries with long-term plans to modernize their nuclear weapons. The number of active deployed weapons has declined since the height of the cold war around 1970 when there were about 70.000. However, no nuclear weapons have been destroyed as a result of treaties.



Of the remaining 13400 nuclear weapons, only 3570 are actually active nuclear war heads. The other, inactive warheads are stored or partially dismantled but, as mentioned earlier, not destroyed and these can be reassembled when they would be needed.

The United Nations has worked hard to eventually remove all nuclear weapons from existence. Nuclear weapons are more dangerous than any other weapon of mass destruction. Small nuclear bombs are still many times more dangerous than any biological or

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chemical weapon ever created. This is why the UN finds the issue so pressing and calls upon the nations to work together and come to complete nuclear disarmament.



Protests against nuclear weapons in the 1980s

Definition of key terms

Nuclear weapons

A nuclear weapon is an explosive device that derives its destructive force fission, nuclear fusion or a combination of the two. Nuclear weapons can also be called atom bombs, nukes, atomic bombs, nuclear warheads or nuclear bombs.

Fissile

If something is fissile, it means that it is able to undergo nuclear fission. This is used in nuclear energy or nuclear weapons and can occur in certain atoms.

Weapons of mass destruction

A weapon is one of mass destruction if it is a nuclear, biological or chemical weapon that is able to cause widespread loss of life and devastation.

Project Manhattan

The Manhattan Project was a top-secret project led by the United States of America that was set up in 1942 aiming and eventually succeeding to create the first nuclear bomb.

Proliferation

Proliferation means a quick growth in the amount of something. In this report it is used in the context of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The NPT aims to stop the expansion of the number of nuclear weapons, thus keeping the number the same and, ideally, resulting in the reduction of nuclear weapons.

General overview

History

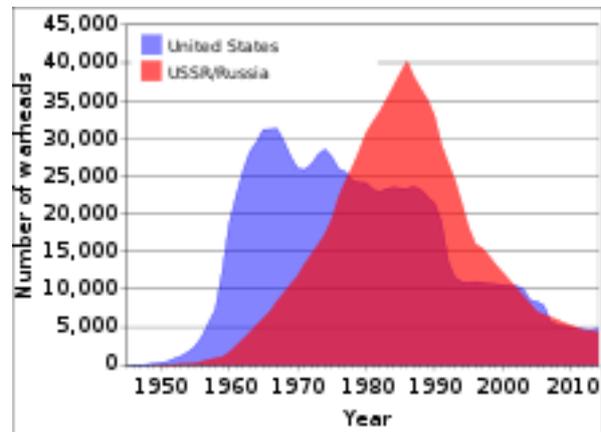
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Ever since world war II, nuclear weapons have been an issue. In 1942, the USA set up the Manhattan project as to create the first nuclear weapon. In 1945 the first successful test was conducted and both Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed. A year later in 1946, after the end of the war, the UN were established and the first thing they called for was a complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The UN also set up a commission with the purpose of addressing nuclear weapons.

Three years later, however, the Russian Federation started testing their first nuclear bombs. Thus, becoming the second country to successfully create and test nuclear weapons. During the next 15 years, the United Kingdom, France and China follow. During this time, the disarmament committee holds their first meeting.

In 1962, the Cuban crisis occurs. A tense stand-off begins when the US discovers missiles belonging to the Soviet Union in Cuba. Resulting in the US blockading Cuba for 13 days. This crisis brings the United States and the Soviet Union to the edge of a nuclear war.



Nuclear weapons owned by the USA and USSR over time

In 1963, the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) opened for signing. The PTBT was signed by the governments of the Soviet Union, United Kingdom and United States in Moscow on the 5th of August and went into effect on the 10th of October of 1963. Since then, 123 other nations have also signed. The PTBT stands for Treaty banning nuclear weapons tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer space and Under Water and prohibits all test of nuclear weapons apart from the ones conducted underground.

South America becomes nuclear weapon free after a treaty banning nuclear weapons in Latin America is signed in 1967. Parties involved agree not to test, create or acquire Nuclear Weapons.

In 1968, the Treaty of Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) opened for signature. The treaty entered into force in 1970. A total of 191 States have joined the treaty, including the five nuclear weapon States.

In between 1985 and 1996, the South Pacific area, the continent of Africa and Ukraine become Nuclear-free areas.

On the 24th of September 1996, the total nuclear test ban opens for signature at the UN. China, France, the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation and the United States all sign the treaties. India does not.

Since then, India, Pakistan and North Korea have successfully conducted nuclear tests.

Current issue

Since the Cuba crisis that started in 1962, there have not been any direct nuclear threats. This does not mean that there is no longer a threat. Currently there are nine countries that possess nuclear weapons. These being: the United States, Russia, France, China, the United Kingdom, Pakistan, India, Israel and North Korea. The amount of active nuclear weapons has

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severely decreased since its peak in 1980 when there were around 60.000 active nuclear warheads. There are still 13.400 left. This is a big decline but not enough.

This decline is mostly due to the NPT. The Big Five have worked to decrease the number of nuclear weapons in their possession. However, The countries that currently possess Nuclear weapons and have not signed the treaty have not worked to decrease the amount of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear weapons are the most destructive of weapons and the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had, respectively, 66.000 and 39,000 deaths and 13,.000 and 64,000 total casualties as a result.

There have been many attempts to solve the issue but currently, none have been effective enough.

Creating resolutions

There have been successes on the reduction of nuclear weapons. However, there are still many challenges when trying to achieve complete disarmament. The fact that nations fail to work together and adhere to treaties carries on bringing challenges when attempting to reach international agreements.

An example of an agreement that shows that it is possible to come together and create treaties on nuclear disarmament is the 2015 joint Comprehensive Plan of Action from the Iran Nuclear Deal.

Total nuclear disarmament creates a safer and more peaceful world, forever removing the threat nuclear weapons bring with them. This will continue to be a goal of the UN General Assembly, aiming to achieve this goal through negotiation and consensus.

Major parties involved

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

The international atomic energy agency was established independently of the UN. They work together with the General Assembly and Security Council. The IAEA watches over the NPT and works together with countries that signed the treaty in inspecting regularly to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Countries currently in possession of nuclear weapons

There are at the moment nine countries that possess nuclear weapons. Five of those are in The Big Five of the NPT. The big five includes:

1. The United Kingdom
2. France
3. The United States of America
4. The Russian Federation
5. China

This leaves four more that are not recognized by the Non-Proliferation treaty but still in the possession of nuclear weapons. These being:

1. Pakistan
2. India

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3. Israel
4. North Korea

Countries previously in possession of nuclear weapons

Since the Non-proliferation Treaty opened for signature in 1968, two countries that previously owned, created and researched nuclear weapons, have dropped their programs. They first dropped their nuclear weapons program and then, about a year later signed the treaty. These are:

1. South Africa
2. Bellarus

Timeline of key events

August 1945	Hiroshima and Nagasaki are destroyed by Atomic Bombs and are estimates to have killed a total of 213,000 people on impact
1946	The UN creates its first resolution recognizing nuclear disarmament as a leading goal
1959	The General Assembly includes nuclear disarmament as part of a more comprehensive goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control (reso, 1378)
5 th of August, 1963	The partial Test Ban treaty opens for signature.
1967	The treaty of Tlatelolco is signed, establishing Latin America and the Caribbean as the first nuclear weapons-free zones.
July 1 st 1968	the Non-proliferation Treaty is Signed
March 5 th 1970	The NPT goes into force.
May 23- June 30,1978	The General Assembly holds the first Special Session on Disarmament in New York.

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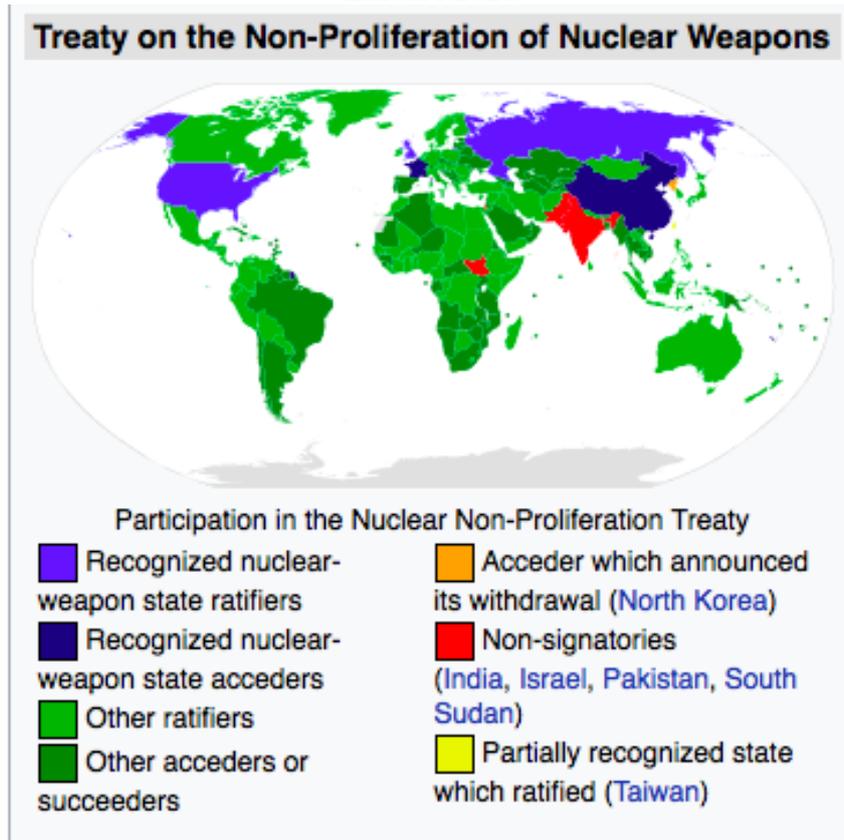
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1985	The south Pacific is declared the second Nuclear weapon free zone by the treaty of Rorotonga.
1991	the Nation of South Africa voluntarily joins the NPT, thus renouncing their nuclear weapons program.
October 24, 2008	Secretary-General of The UN Ban Ki-Moon announces his five-point plan towards nuclear disarmament
2013	the first high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament is held by the United Nations General Assembly
July 7 2017	The treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is adopted.
March 5 th 2020	The fiftieth Anniversary of the entry-into force of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.
September 26	International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

Previous attempts to solve the issue

Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

In 1968. The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) was opened for signatures. Currently, there are 191 countries that have signed. Among those 191 are the five countries that, according to the NPT, are allowed to have nuclear weapons. Some countries that have not signed but are suspected of possession, creation or research of nuclear weapons are India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and North Korea. North Korea is a notable outlier seeing as they previously had signed but retracted their signature. In 2006, the North Korean government announced that they conducted a successful nuclear test. The nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is one of the most successful treaties seeing that more countries have ratified the NPT than any other arms limitation and disarmament agreement. The fact that the NPT has also be signed by nations that previously possessed nuclear weapons but now do not any longer also testifies to the treaties' effectiveness.



Nations and their status on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

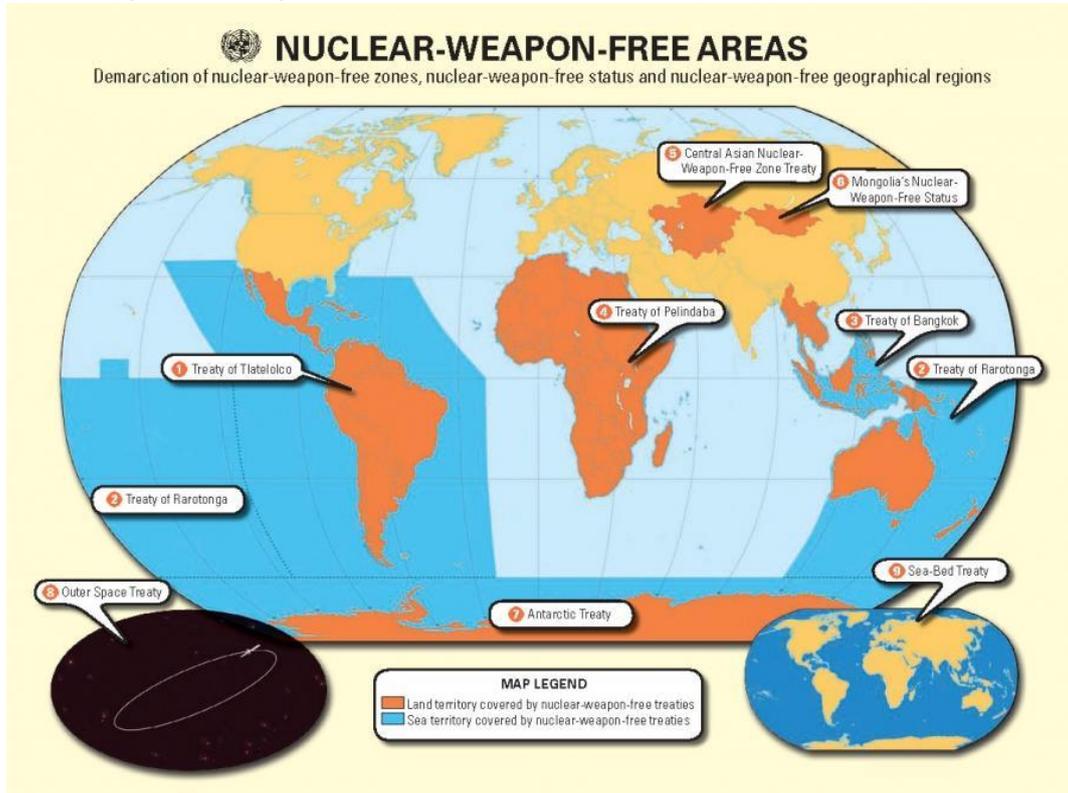
Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)

In 1973, the United Nations and Soviet Union began the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. This ended up leading to the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty. This treaty limits the parties to 100 anti-ballistic missiles and two production facilities. The treaty went into force in 1974 until it closed in 2002, when the United States withdrew.



Nuclear Weapons Free Zones (NFWZ)

Over the past 50 years, regions, nations and even continents have declared nuclear weapon free zones. The creation of such a zone results in the prohibition of possession or utilization of nuclear weapons for any nations in that certain area.



the nuclear weapon Free Areas and their treaties

The comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1996. The CTBT is meant to strengthen the NPT by prohibiting development of nuclear weapons for any purpose.

Possible solutions

International cooperation and coordination are key to the solving of this issue. There are a lot of steps to be taken to reduce nuclear weapons and eventually achieve complete disarmament. More international and regional monitoring can help but important are the overseeing units to provide infrastructure to enforcement.

We can also develop more common international systems for tracing weapons.

Also, a possible solution to a part of the problem is more transnational agreements. The lack of information is one of the biggest issues when talking about nuclear weapons. The lack of transparency between nations makes for an industry that is almost impossible to get a grip on. More expert panels and criteria for nuclear weapons must be developed, with international standards to determine the strength and number of nuclear weapons.

To prevent reactivation of old nuclear cores, UN member states must adopt some sort of policy promoting and incentivizing surplus and obsolete weapons.

Most important is better cooperation internationally. Information exchange and cooperation are essential to solving this issue. Nuclear weapons have always been a pressing issue, and now we finally have an opportunity to shine light on one of the biggest global problems.

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