



**Forum:** Security Council

**Issue:** Reducing the Threat of Nuclear Conflict

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### Overview of the Issue

On August 6, 1945, the first nuclear grade weapon was detonated over Hiroshima with the intention of a mass killing. Dubbed 'Little Boy', this dangerous explosive was the catalyst that would usher in an age of competition, tension, and fear.

Nuclear weapons are dangerous means of total destruction that can render the land it impacts infertile for decades. Such weapons are often developed with the waste products of nuclear power and have become significantly more powerful (see appendix 1 for comparison of the explosive power of contemporary explosives).

With the advent of these weapons, two major superpowers (The United States of American and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) began to compete technologically. This competition, known as the Cold War, resulted in several proxy conflicts and a subsequent accumulation of nuclear weaponry.

Over that period, numerous events occurred that nearly resulted in apocalyptic cataclysms. One major omnicidal conflict was the Cuban Missile crisis. Starting on October 16, 1962, this 13-day missile scare occurred as a result of the United States installing nuclear weaponry in Turkey with the Russians retaliating by doing the same in Cuba.

In 1969, the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) took place that lead to the creation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABMT). This treaty essentially lead to a bilateral agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States to limit their Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) to those with strategic purpose as defined by the treaty. The effects of this agreement can be seen in the residual stockpiles of nuclear weapons across the subsequent decades (see appendix 03).

Additional agreements have been made on an international scale such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) (See appendix 02). This treaty sought to encourage peaceful collaboration in the workings of nuclear technology and to discourage the prospect of nuclear war. As part of the agreement, 5 states are designated



to have Nuclear Weapons (the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Russia, France and China).

The Cold War ceased as a result of Gorbachev's reforms and break up of the Soviet Union. Since then, with the release of numerous declassified, American, governmental, documents, over 1,000 various events have nearly resulted in some form of nuclear detonation, which may or may not have resulted in nuclear war. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the United States gave 6 months notice for its withdrawal from the ABMT, leading to the formation of the Missile Defense Agency.

Along with the dissolution of the Cold War, large reserves of plutonium (material required for the creation of nuclear weapons) have disappeared from official registration, indicating the possibility of a black market trade of nuclear material. Nations like Germany also have tons of plutonium lying underground. With the missing plutonium in mind, there is the possibility that nuclear technology could also be used alongside terrorism.

The threat of nuclear conflict is still extant however. Three major threats are prominent on the international scene. The first issue is that of the Indo-Pakistani standoff. Although not prominently a nuclear crisis, the conflict between the two nations started since 1947 as a result of the partition between the two nations. Such a partition has led to hostility between the Hindu majority of India and the Muslim majority of Pakistan. Both nations have not signed the NPT and both own nuclear weaponry. Current Kashmir conflicts are contributing to the hostility.

The second possibility of nuclear conflict is present in Israel. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most complex socio-geopolitical issues that face the planet today. Israel has a policy of deliberate ambiguity; not explicitly confessing to owning such weapons but is suspected of owning them. The conflict is extremely volatile and if fatal conflict were to occur may result in nuclear catastrophe.

The third source of nuclear conflict stems from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). North Korea had been developing a Nuclear Weapons program with the Aid of the Soviet Union since the 1960s and has since had help from other nuclear states such as Libya and Pakistan. North Korea's activities sparked international anxiety and led to the Six Party Talks to convince North Korea to rejoin the NPT. Unfortunately, in response to sanctions imposed by the UN and USA, North Korea responded by withdrawing from the Six Party talks and the NPT in 2003. Ever since that time, North Korea has claimed to be developing nuclear weaponry. Controversy has arisen as to the effectiveness of sanctions on North Korea as it practices a philosophy known as 'Juche' (self-sufficiency) and its response to the sanctions only end up angering their leader.

The tension is not helped by Twitter conflict caused by the current president of the United States, Donald Trump, who has been provocative towards their leader Kim Jong Un. Nations and bodies such as the UN, China and the USA are placing stronger

sanctions on North Korea's trade. North Korea is also suspected of arming African nations as previous cargo has been shipped to various nations such as Mozambique and Senegal (cargo such as military tech, metals and bronze statues).

With these issues (terrorism with nuclear technology, the Indo-Pakistani Conflict, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the North Korean Missile Crisis) in mind, it is important that Security Council find a means of curbing this threat in relation to all possible threats of nuclear conflict.

## Key Terms

**Anti-Ballistic Missiles** – IBMs are technology that are capable of intercepting ICBMs without causing massive explosions, the resulting debris may result in casualties but would avert nuclear explosions.

**Chernobyl Disaster** – The Chernobyl incident was a nuclear accident that resulted in a nuclear blast across this Ukrainian territory in 1986. Although this was caused by a meltdown of a nuclear core and not by nuclear weapons, the resultant fallout is a testimony to the longevity of the dangers that nuclear radiation poses.

**Cuban Missile Crisis** – The Cuban Missile crisis was a conflict between the USA and the USSR when the USA had installed missiles in Turkey aimed at the Soviet Union. They responded by installing missiles in Cuba, resulting in an American Blockade. At one point, when a Russian submarine was travelling past the blockade, the ships dropped low-power explosives to draw their attention and make contact with it. The submarine was loaded with nuclear-grade torpedoes and nearly engaged in combat with ships resulting in Nuclear War. This was averted because of the decisions of a senior officer but such a conflict could have resulted in apocalypse.

**I.C.B.M** – Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles are nuclear warheads capable of travelling long distances. North Korea claims to be developing such missiles capable of travelling from their nation to the USA.

**Juche** – The North Korean philosophy of self-sustainability.

**M.A.D.** – Mutually Assured Destruction is a doctrine of deterrence. It implies that if one nation were to fire its missiles, the other would retaliate with its own, thus neither nation should engage in firing in the first place. This doctrine may have been what prevented conflict during the Cold War.

**NPT** – The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is a UN treaty that seeks to discourage nations from creating nuclear weaponry. 5 Nuclear Weapon states are allowed to do so. Only 4 nations are not signatories, those nations being the DPRK, Israel, India and Pakistan.



**Nuclear Fallout** – Nuclear Fallout is the resultant material of radiation after the shockwave of the explosion that causes mutation and black rain.

**Nuclear Weapon States** – These are the 5 nations that are designated to have stockpiles of nuclear weapons according to the NPT, being the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Russia, France and China.

**Nuclear Winter** – A hypothesis that posits that too many nuclear fires could cause enough radiation to potentially block out the sun, reduce temperatures, kill crops, and induce global famine leading to omnicide.

**Plutonium** – The waste product from most light-water reactors that is the primary material used to create nuclear weaponry.

**SALT and ABMT** – The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty were agreements that occurred during the cold war with the intention of strategically and bilaterally reducing nuclear stockpiles.

**Six Party Talks** – The six party talks were talks between six nations (North Korea, South Korea, Japan, United States of America, China, and Russia). These talks were organized in response to North Korea's pulling out from the NPT and sought to encourage reintegration into the treaty as well as to discourage the proliferation of further nuclear technology. North Korea withdrew when angered by steps taken by the Security Council to impose further sanctions as a result of North Korea's continued development into Nuclear Weaponry.

**Tsar Bomba** – The most powerful explosive ever detonated (in test conditions). It has an observed yield of 50 Megatons but is capable of producing an explosive power of over 100 megatons if Uranium-235 Temper were used.

## Countries and Organizations Involved

**The United States of America** – The USA was the first and is the only nation to use Nuclear Weaponry for the purpose of killing. They have developed the most nuclear weapons and at one point had some of the largest stockpiles. The USA is a member of the P5 in the Security Council and is also a nuclear weapon state, entitling them to control over nuclear weaponry. As they drawn out from the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty, restrictions on their weapon count must continue to be reiterated to prevent complete dominance or abuse over such devastating tech.

**Russia** – The Soviet Union was once in an arms race with the United States, contributing to tension during the Cold War. Despite the dissolution of the Union, their



stockpiles still remain, as does their status as a Nuclear Weapons State. While residing in Asia, they are one of the closer countries to North Korea, Pakistan, and India.

**India** – India has one of the largest populations and strongest economies in the world. Its geography places it dangerously close to Pakistan, a nation it exercises tensions with and is most likely the reason for their development of nuclear weaponry.

**Pakistan** – Situated northwest of India is a nation that too is developing nuclear technology in response to tensions between India and the Kashmir conflict.

**Israel** – Israel is a controversial nation with numerous parties vying for different ends. The conflict in Israel is incredibly rigid and if it were to result in dissension could result in the use of nuclear weapons.

**North Korea** – North Korea is a difficult nation to communicate with, having dropped out from the Six Party talks. They are aggressively developing nuclear weapons in response to provocative language originating from the United States. It is necessary that nations exercise caution and find a means of handling this issue.

## Related UN resolutions and Previous Approaches to Solving the Issue

Resolution 1718 in 2006 demanded that North Korea cease nuclear testing and prohibited the export to North Korea of some military supplies and luxury goods. The UN Security Council Sanctions Committee on North Korea was established.

Resolution 1874 broadened the arms embargo and requested that ships carrying NK cargo were to be inspected.

Resolution 2087 requests that cargo going to North Korea with military tech be destroyed.

Resolution 2094 was passed in March 2013 after the third nuclear test. It imposed sanctions on money transfers and aimed to shut North Korea out of the international financial system.

Resolution 2270, passed in March 2016 after the fourth nuclear test, further strengthened sanctions. It banned the export of gold, vanadium, titanium, and rare earth metals. The export of coal and iron were also banned.

Sanctions have also been placed by the USA, EU, Japan, South Korea and Australia.

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## Appendix

### Appendix 01 – Comparison of Explosive power of various Nuclear Weapons

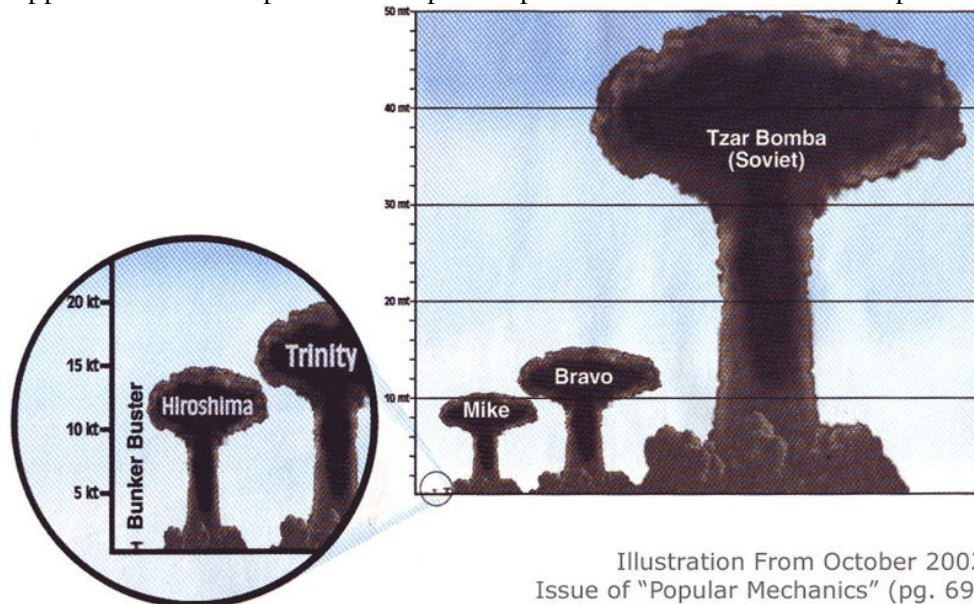


Illustration From October 2002  
Issue of "Popular Mechanics" (pg. 69)

## Appendix 02 – Main points of the Treaty of Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Article I: Each nuclear-weapons state (NWS) undertakes not to transfer, to any recipient, nuclear weapons, or other nuclear explosive devices, and not to assist any non-nuclear weapon state to manufacture or acquire such weapons or devices.

Article II: Each non-NWS party undertakes not to receive, from any source, nuclear weapons, or other nuclear explosive devices; not to manufacture or acquire such weapons or devices; and not to receive any assistance in their manufacture.

Article III: Each non-NWS party undertakes to conclude an agreement with the IAEA for the application of its safeguards to all nuclear material in all of the state's peaceful nuclear activities and to prevent diversion of such material to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

### Article IV:

1. Nothing in this Treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all the Parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of this Treaty.

2. All the Parties to the Treaty undertake to facilitate, and have the right to participate in, the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Parties to the Treaty in a position to do so shall also co-operate in contributing alone or together with other States or international organizations to the further development of the applications of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, especially in the territories of non-nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty, with due consideration for the needs of the developing areas of the world.

Article VI: Each party "undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control".

Article IX: "For the purposes of this Treaty, a nuclear-weapon State is one which has manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device prior to 1 January 1967."

Article X: Establishes the right to withdraw from the Treaty giving 3 months' notice. It also establishes the duration of the Treaty (25 years before 1995 Extension Initiative).



Appendix 03 – Aggregate Stockpiles of Nuclear Weaponry for the USSR and the USA

