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Topic: The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and its implications

Director: Hugo Galindo

Moderator: José González



Committee: General Assembly (GA)

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I. Committee Background

The UN General Assembly's mission is to debate, discuss, and find ways to expand international peace and security, as well as to promote the development of international law, human rights, disarmament, and cooperation among nations. The General Assembly Committee was created in 1945 in New York, United States.

The UN General Assembly is the only universal representative body of the United Nations. The other major entities are the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Secretariat, and the International Court of Justice. The President is in charge of the procedures — setting the agenda, opening debates, limiting speaking time, and more.

At the end of each session, the 193 Member States must vote, expressing their opinions on important topics such as peace, security, and the election of members to various UN bodies, including the Security Council. To participate in the General Assembly, a country must hold UN membership.

Reports indicate that Taiwan has been trying to gain membership for over two decades. The current President of the Assembly is Philemon Yang, former Prime Minister of Cameroon. The presidency rotates annually.



In recent years, Presidents have introduced a new procedural role allowing UN officials to brief the Assembly, which has sparked opposition from some Member States. For example, in 2011, Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser invited the High Commissioner for Human Rights to brief Member States on the Syrian war, despite opposition from Syria's allies.

II. Topic Information

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) seeks to prevent the use, production, and spread of nuclear weapons, thereby promoting nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Under this treaty, signatory countries that already possess nuclear weapons commit not to transfer them to other states, while countries without nuclear weapons commit not to acquire or develop them. The goal is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and encourage disarmament among nuclear-armed nations.

The NPT is considered a major step toward addressing the dangers posed by nuclear weapons, as it has significantly limited the number and spread of these weapons. However, it has also created a "nuclear elite" among the nations that possessed nuclear weapons before signing the treaty — namely, the United States, Russia, China, France, and the United Kingdom.

Current challenges to this treaty include:

- Some countries continue to develop and modernize their nuclear weapons despite being part of the treaty.
- International tensions, particularly due to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, have led some nations to consider acquiring nuclear weapons.



- Countries such as Iran have considered withdrawing from the treaty, while others, including North Korea, have already done so. Meanwhile, India, Pakistan, Israel, and South Sudan have never signed it.
- Critics, especially from countries like India, argue that the treaty is discriminatory, as it fails to promote equitable disarmament. They claim it preserves the nuclear dominance of a few nations while disadvantaging others.

a. History of the Topic

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was created in 1968 and entered into force in 1970. It prohibits the possession and manufacture of nuclear weapons, except for the five recognized nuclear powers — the United States, China, Russia, the United Kingdom, and France — which pledged not to transfer or support the development of nuclear weapons elsewhere. Countries without such weapons committed not to manufacture them. The treaty also promotes cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The NPT is monitored by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which is responsible for ensuring that countries that could have weapons comply with their commitments through a system of inspections and safeguards.

Recalling the horrific nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, and the subsequent nuclear arms race between the Soviet Union and the United States (later joined by the United Kingdom, France, and Taiwan), the growing expansion of nuclear arsenals raised serious concerns about global security risks — including potential regional wars, nuclear accidents, or nuclear terrorism.



These concerns led to the creation of the NPT, designed to control nuclear proliferation, deter the arms race, and promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy under IAEA supervision.

After nearly five years of negotiations (1965–1968), the treaty was opened for signature in 1968 and entered into force on January 1, 1970. It is based on three main pillars:

1. Non-proliferation – Nuclear-weapon states must not transfer weapons, and other states must not acquire them.
2. Disarmament – All states commit to working toward the elimination of nuclear weapons.
3. Peaceful use of nuclear energy – States have the right to access nuclear technology for non-military purposes under IAEA oversight.

Today, the treaty has 191 signatories, making it one of the most universal treaties in existence. India, Pakistan, and Israel have never signed it, while North Korea withdrew in 2003.

b. Current Issues

The first issue is the inequality between nuclear and non-nuclear nations. Only five countries — France, the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, and China — are permitted to possess nuclear weapons, while the rest are prohibited. Many nations see this as unfair and discriminatory.

Another issue is the lack of progress in nuclear disarmament. Although the treaty commits nuclear powers to pursue disarmament, progress has been slow or even reversed due to the modernization of arsenals by the U.S., Russia, and China.



Geopolitical conflicts — such as the war between Russia and Ukraine — have further increased global instability. Nuclear powers have turned to nuclear deterrence as a strategy, making the NPT increasingly fragile.

Although the IAEA conducts inspections, technical and political limitations hinder comprehensive oversight, allowing some states to conceal nuclear activities.

c. Bloc Positions

United States: Played a key role in the development of nuclear weapons, marking a historic milestone by applying atomic energy for military purposes during World War II. The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 demonstrated its nuclear capabilities and established it as a global power. During the Cold War, it shared responsibility for global security with the Soviet Union. Today, it remains one of the world’s leading nuclear powers.

Russia: Inherited the Soviet Union’s nuclear arsenal and remains a major nuclear power. It conducted the largest nuclear test in history (the Tsar Bomba, 1961). Recently, Russia has suspended agreements such as New START (2023) and revised its nuclear doctrine (2024), lowering the threshold for use and expanding the scenarios for nuclear response.

Germany: Although it renounced nuclear weapons after World War II, Germany hosts U.S. nuclear warheads under NATO’s nuclear-sharing program, allowing it to participate in nuclear defense without possessing its own arsenal.

China: Became a nuclear power in 1964 and adopted a “no first use” policy. However, in recent years it has accelerated the modernization and expansion of its arsenal, becoming the world’s third-largest nuclear power. Reports from 2024–2025 indicate that China now possesses more than 600 warheads,



aimed at deterring rivals such as the United States amid rising regional tensions, particularly around Taiwan.

United Kingdom: Became a nuclear power in 1952. Although decisions regarding the use of its weapons are sovereign, it relies heavily on U.S. technology, maintaining a strong transatlantic alliance. After withdrawing its tactical weapons in 1998, the UK has focused on modernizing its strategic nuclear force.

France: Maintains strategic independence in its nuclear policy, unlike the UK, which depends more on U.S. technology. France possesses a smaller but constantly modernized arsenal, ensuring its autonomy. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, France proposed extending its nuclear umbrella to European Union members to strengthen collective defense.

III. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty remains one of the most significant international efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and promote global peace. While it has successfully limited proliferation and encouraged the peaceful use of nuclear energy, deep inequalities between nuclear and non-nuclear states, slow progress on disarmament, and rising geopolitical tensions continue to challenge its effectiveness. Strengthening international cooperation, transparency, and trust among nations is essential to ensure that the treaty's goals of disarmament, security, and stability are truly achieved.

IV. Essential Questions

1. Which articles of the NPT are most important for states that do not possess nuclear weapons?



2. How has the international community responded to cases of non-compliance, such as Iran or North Korea?
3. What measures can be taken to ensure that peaceful nuclear programs do not become proliferation threats?
4. Have nuclear-weapon states fulfilled their obligations to move toward disarmament, as required by Article VI of the NPT?
5. Is it necessary to reform the NPT or complement it with treaties such as the TPAN (Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons)?

V. References

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