

# **The Great Power Arms Races and Regional Security**

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# Why the interrelationship between the great power competition and regional security matters

- The Russia-US conflict triggers crisis of regional arms control in Europe
  - 2007: Russia suspends implementation of the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty
  - 2019: Treaty on Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) expires after US withdrawal
  - 2020: US withdraws from Open Skies Treaty?
- Regional conflicts deepen the crisis of multilateral arms control
  - The use of chemical weapons in Syria's civil war undermines Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)
  - The conflict in the Middle East weakens Iran nuclear deal
  - The Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East crucial for the success of 2020 NPT Review Conference

# Different understandings of the relation between regional and global security

Holistic approach: What can EU do for regional security?

“[T]he EU will **foster regional security arrangements** and regional arms control and disarmament processes. The EU’s dialogue with the countries concerned should take account of the fact that in many cases **they have real and legitimate security concerns**, with the clear understanding that there can never be any justification for the proliferation of [weapons of mass destruction].

(European Security Strategy 2003)

Regional competitors challenge for nuclear weapons possessors

“What can be done to lessen the **challenges** presented by **regional tensions and conflicts that can lead countries to conclude that their security requires nuclear weapons and delivery systems?**”

(US Creating the Environment for Nuclear Disarmament (CEND), Chris Ford, Lessons From Disarmament History for the CEND Initiative, 30 April 2019)

# Outline

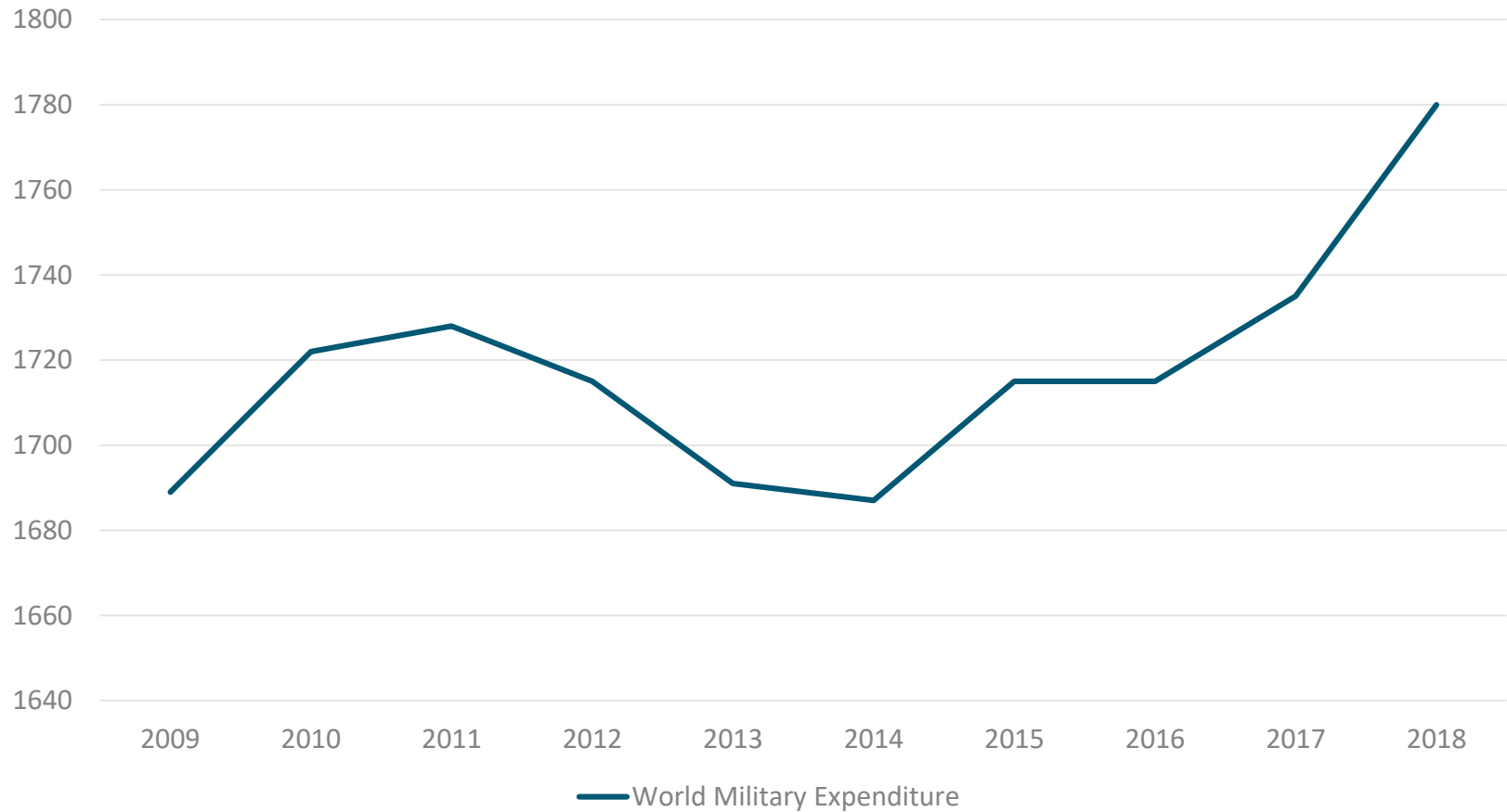
- Facts and figures:  
Great power arms races and regional arms races
- Negative interactions between great power relations and regional security
- Positive interactions between great power relations and regional security
- Two current issues

## Arms race(s)? Shared perceptions of great power competition

- “World development at the present stage is characterized by **the strengthening of global competition**, tensions in various areas of inter-state and interregional interaction... There is a stage-by-stage redistribution of influence in favour of new centres of economic growth and political attraction. ... The main external military risks are:  
a) build-up of the power potential of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ... “ (*Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation, 2014*)
- “The United States will respond to the growing political, economic, and military **competitions** we face around the world. China and Russia challenge American power, influence, and interests, a emptying to erode American security and prosperity.“ (*National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2017*)
- “International strategic **competition** is on the rise. The US has adjusted its national security and defense strategies, and adopted unilateral policies. It has provoked and **intensified competition among major countries**, significantly increased its defense expenditure, ... Russia is strengthening its nuclear and non-nuclear capabilities for strategic containment, and striving to safeguard its strategic security space and interests.”  
(*China’s National Defense in the New Era, July 2019*)

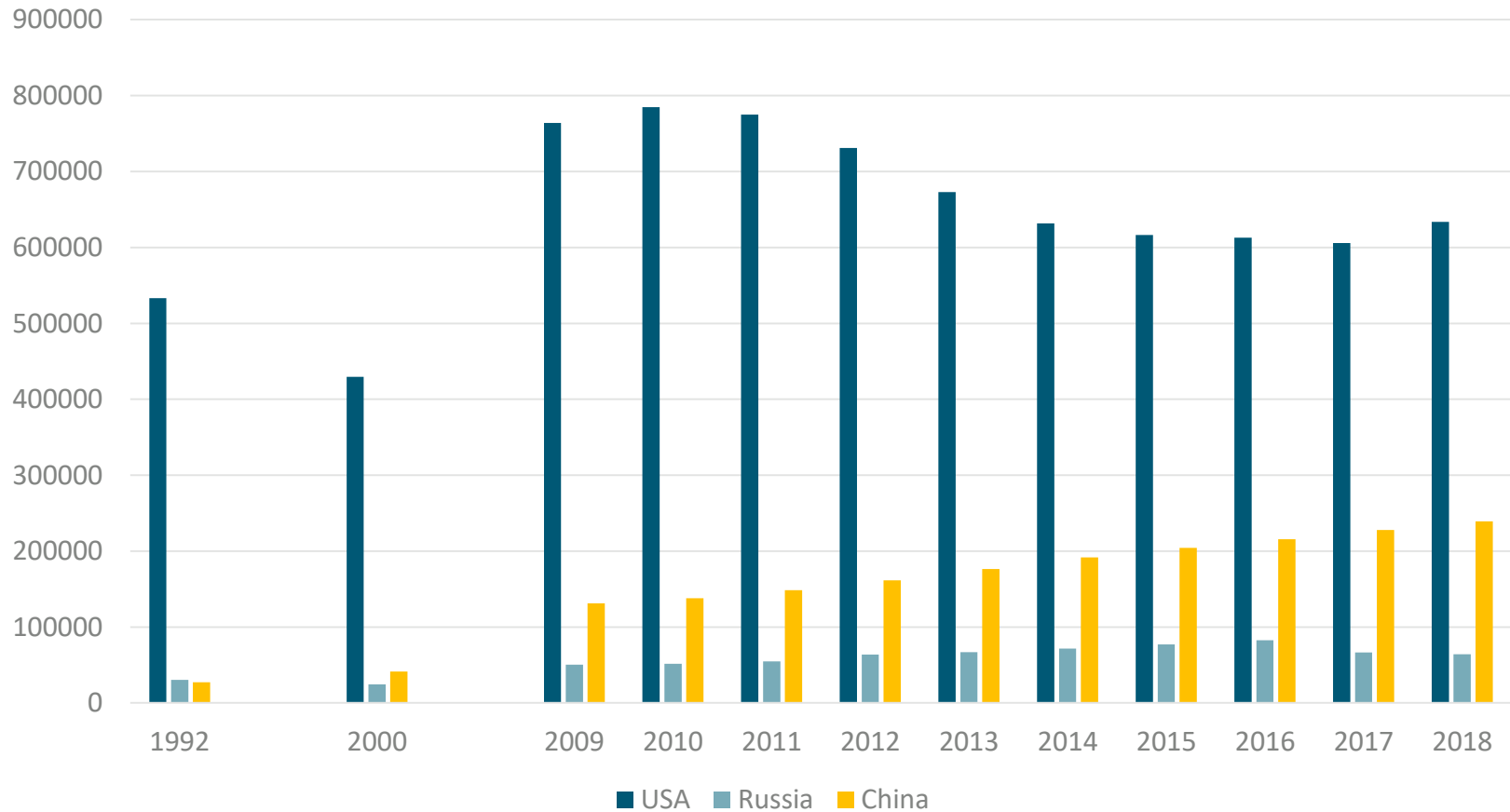
# Arms race: World military expenditure 2009-2018

(constant 2017 billion US dollars/ data by Sipri)



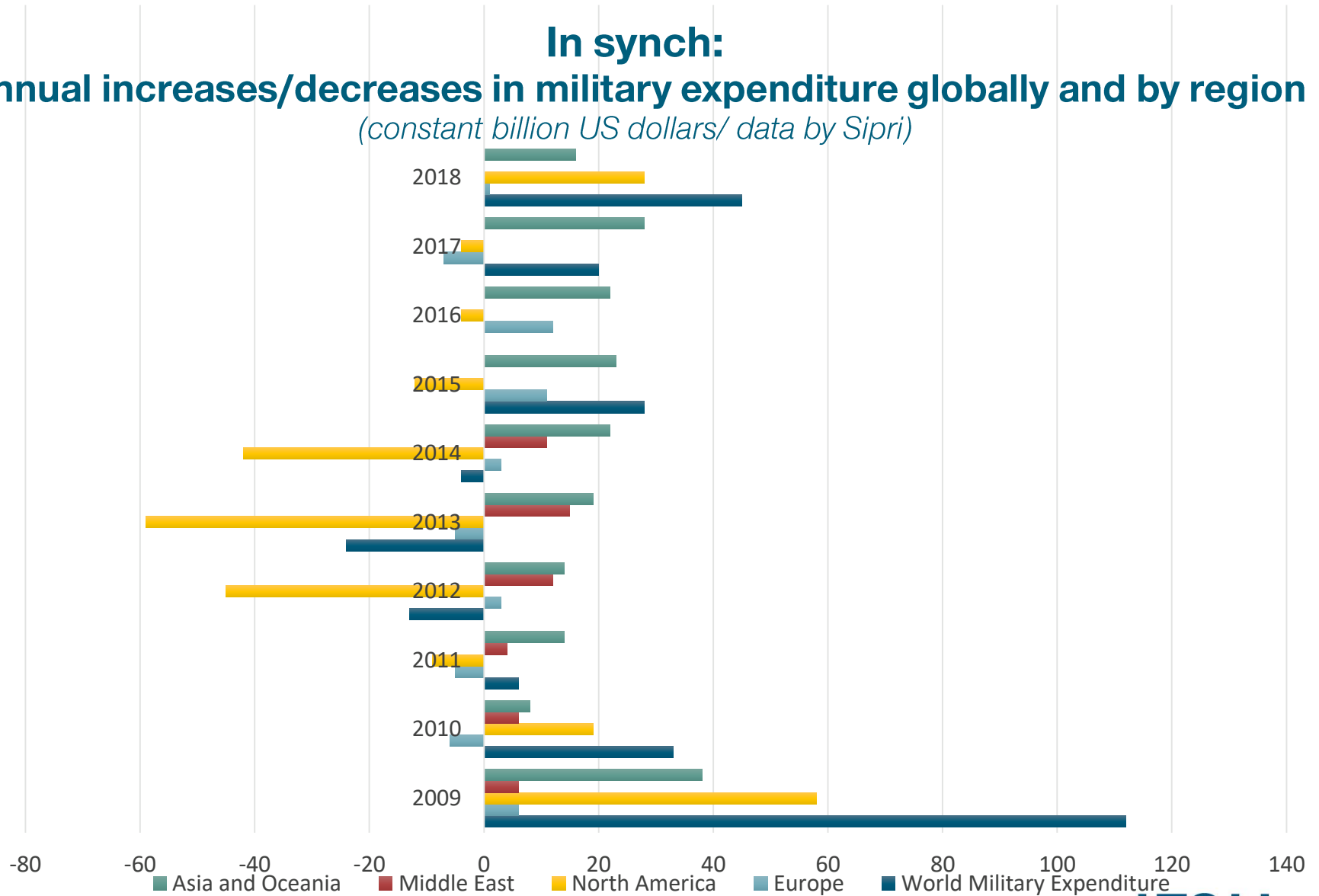
# Military Expenditure 2009-2018: China, Russia, United States

(constant 2017 billion US dollars/ data by Sipri)



# In synch: Annual increases/decreases in military expenditure globally and by region

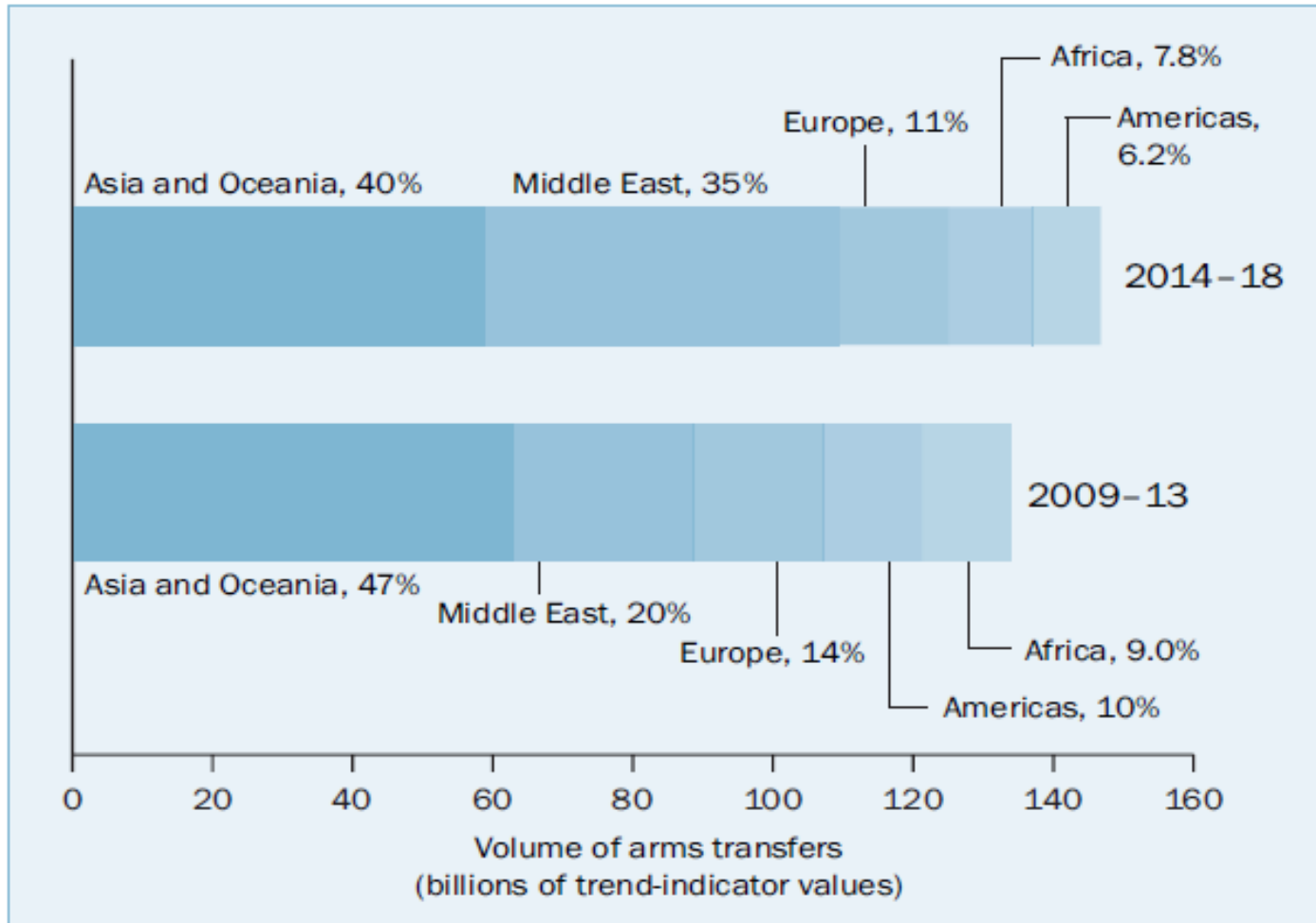
(constant billion US dollars/ data by Sipri)





# Arms transfers: Where the weapons go

Major arms imports, by region, 2009–13 and 2014–18, per cent of global share



## Arms exports: who is selling weapons

Weapons exports from 2014 -2018

(Data: SIPRI 2019)

- 87% of all major arms exports by states in Europe and North America.
- The five largest arms exporters: ‘  
United States, Russia, France, Germany, China.  
Together account for 75% of global arms exports.
- Increase of arms exports to Middle East between 2009-2013 and 2014-2018 by country:

USA: 134%, France: 261%, Germany: 125%, Italy: 74%, UK: 30%  
Russia: 19%.

## How global competition undermines regional security: Regional states as great power allies and proxies

- Regions as spheres of influence and potential battlefields
  - US/Russia nuclear weapon deployments in Europe
  - Return of intermediate-range (nuclear) weapons?
- Great powers tolerating, enabling, supporting WMD possession and use by regional allies
  - Western states supported chemical weapons program and chemical weapons use by Saddam Hussein
  - Russia tolerating and possibly supporting chemical weapons use by Syria
  - Collapse of chemical weapons disarmament efforts in Syria after 2015
  - Would US turn a blind eye towards North Korean short-range nuclear missiles?

## How regional rivalries undermine global regimes: spill-overs and spoilers

- Regional WMD possessors exploit great power competition
  - Turning a blind eye: Israel's policy of "nuclear opacity"
  - Favouritism: India exemption from Nuclear Supplier Group rules
  - Exploiting great power rivalries:  
North Korea playing China against United States
- Regional rivalries undermine universality of multilateral regimes
  - Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty: India / Pakistan
  - Chemical Weapons Convention hold-outs: Egypt / Israel
  - Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty:  
Iran / Israel / Egypt; India / Pakistan

# How great power coordination can bolster regional arms control, proliferation and disarmament:

## Shared concerns about conflict escalation and proliferation

- Post-conflict cooperation on arms control
  - Dayton Peace Agreement for the former Yugoslavia (1995)
- Cooperation on regional disarmament
  - US/Soviet Union: INF Treaty (1987-2019)
  - US/Russia/Europe: Nuclear disarmament of Ukraine and the Budapest Memorandum (1994)
  - US/Russia + others: chemical weapons disarmament in Syria (2013-15)
- Cooperation on non-proliferation
  - Cooperative threat reduction efforts: G8 Global Partnership against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (2002 - 2014)
  - E3/EU+3: The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran (2015)

## How regional efforts can bolster global disarmament and non-proliferation (1/2): Nuclear Weapon Free Zones



- Seven regional zones cover most of Southern Hemisphere
- 100+ states, 40% world population, 56% land area
- Prohibit “development, manufacturing, control, possession, testing, or transporting of any type of nuclear explosive device by states-parties”
- Protocols to NWFZs oblige NWS not to use/threaten use of NW against zone member states
- NPT Article VII: “Nothing in this Treaty affects the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties in order to assure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories”

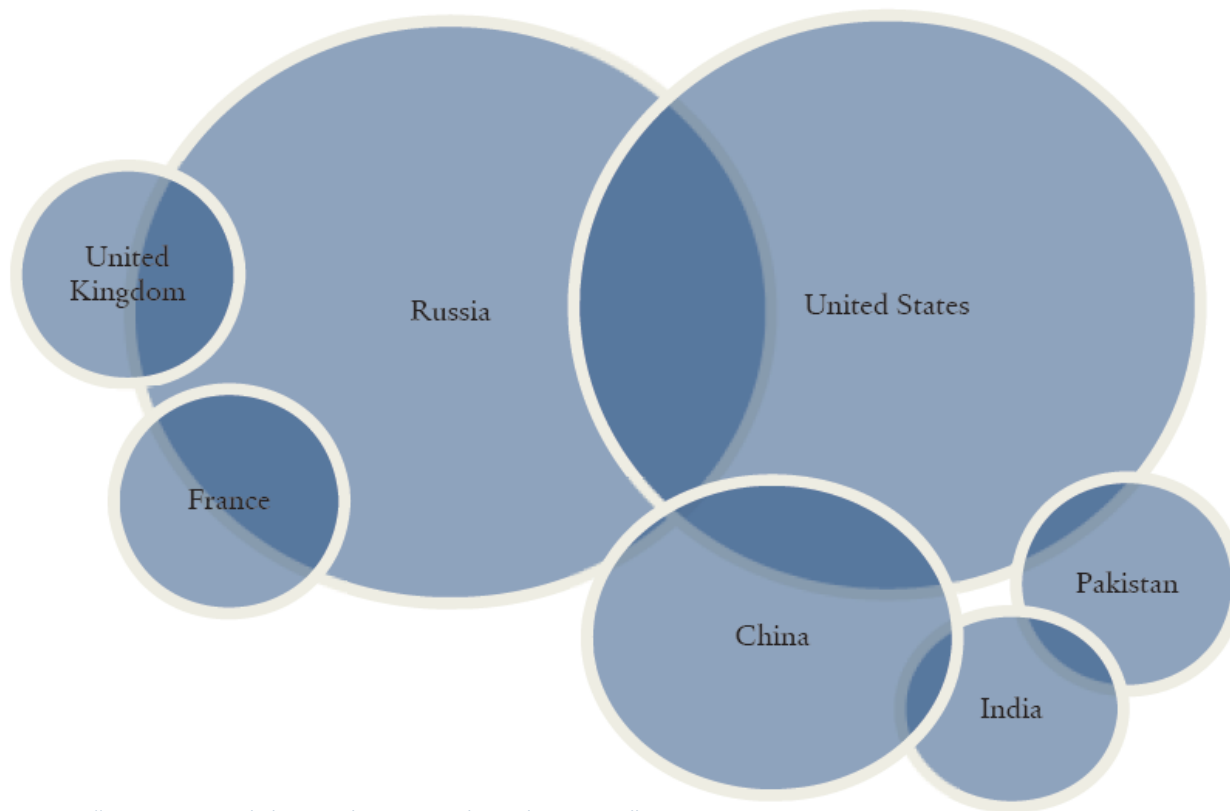
## How regional security can support global disarmament and non-proliferation: Strengthening treaties, transparency and institutionalization (2/2)

- Limiting arms transfers
  - EU Code of Conduct on arms exports
- Regional approaches on transparency, confidence building and verification as building blocks for global regimes
  - Euratom safeguards system as a regional control system
  - Argentine-Brazilian-Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC)
- Institutionalisation of regional arms control dialogues and instruments
  - Nato-Russia Council
  - OSCE: Vienna Document



# First trend: In a multipolar nuclear world, the boundary between regional and global arms races is blurring.

## *Deterrence relationships (without North Korea)*



Quelle: Koblenz, Gregory D. "Strategic Stability in the Second Nuclear Age."  
Council on Foreign Relations, New York, November 2014.



# The growing importance of non-nuclear weapon technologies with regional and strategic implications

- Missile defenses against regional threats perceived as strategic threats
- Autonomous weapons
- Proliferation of cruise missiles as a regional and strategic threat

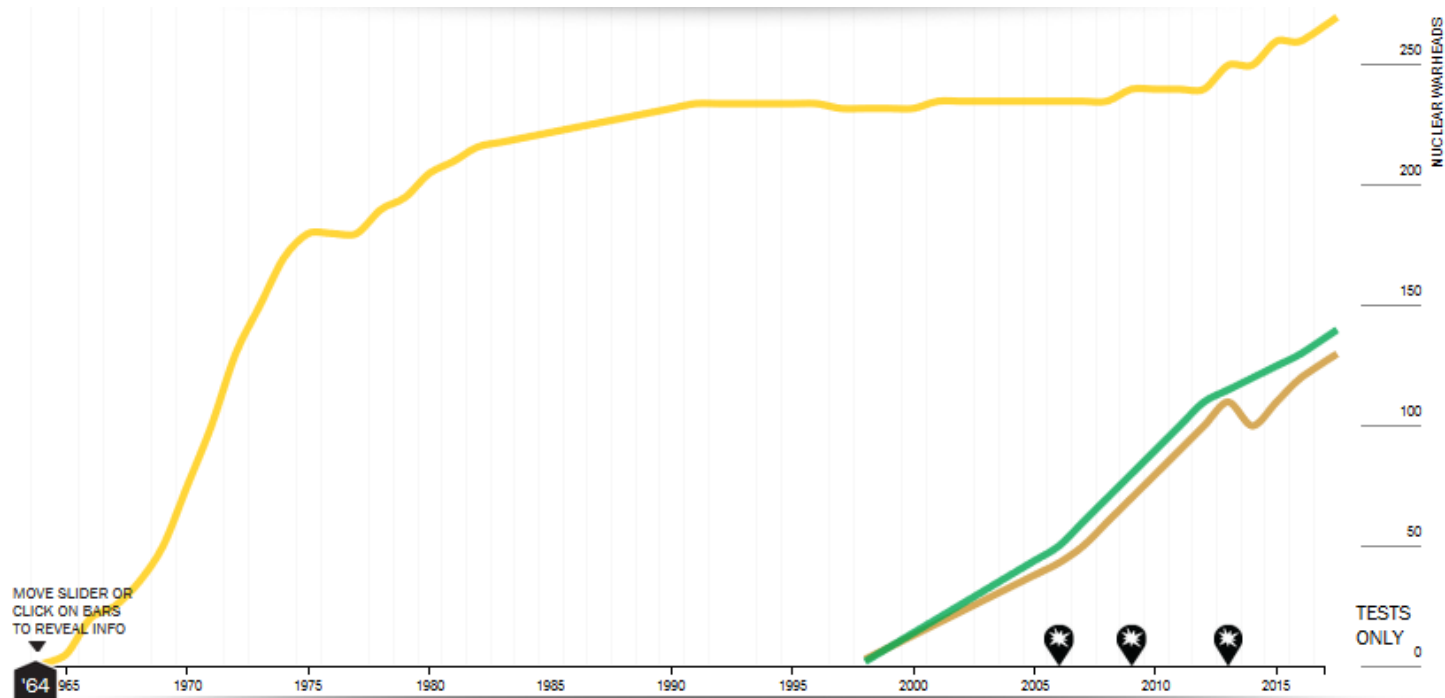
# Possible arms control responses to the blurring of regional and global nuclear orders

## *The post-INF situation*

- Preserve existing arms control agreements
  - extension of New START
- New participants
  - Multilateralizing arms control: when and how to bring in China, (France, UK, ...)?
- Adjust regional focus
  - A deployment “moratorium“ in Europe?
  - Complement regional with subregional arms control: the Baltics?
- New focus: technologies at intersection of regional and global stability
  - Missile defenses
  - (Nuclear-armed) cruise missiles

## Second trend: Asia in the focus

### *The only regional with growing nuclear weapons arsenals*



STOCKPILED WARHEAD COUNT BY YEAR

CLICK A FLAG TO HIDE OR REVEAL

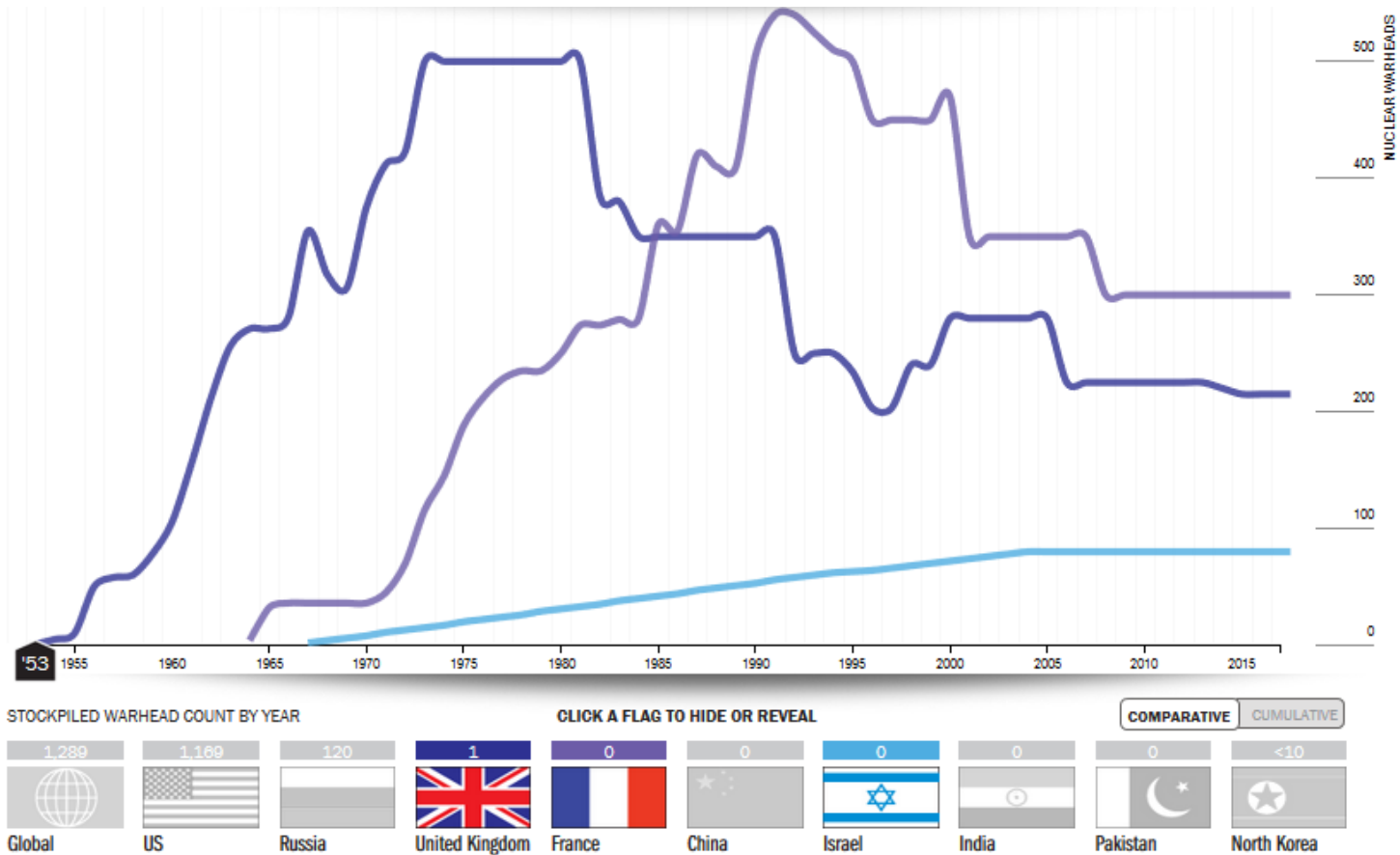
COMPARATIVE CUMULATIVE

Entity	Warhead Count
Global	34,710
US	29,483
Russia	5,242
United Kingdom	271
France	4
China	1
Israel	0
India	0
Pakistan	0
North Korea	<10

Source: *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists' Nuclear Notebook*, written by Hans M. Kristensen and Robert S. Norris, *Federation of American Scientists*

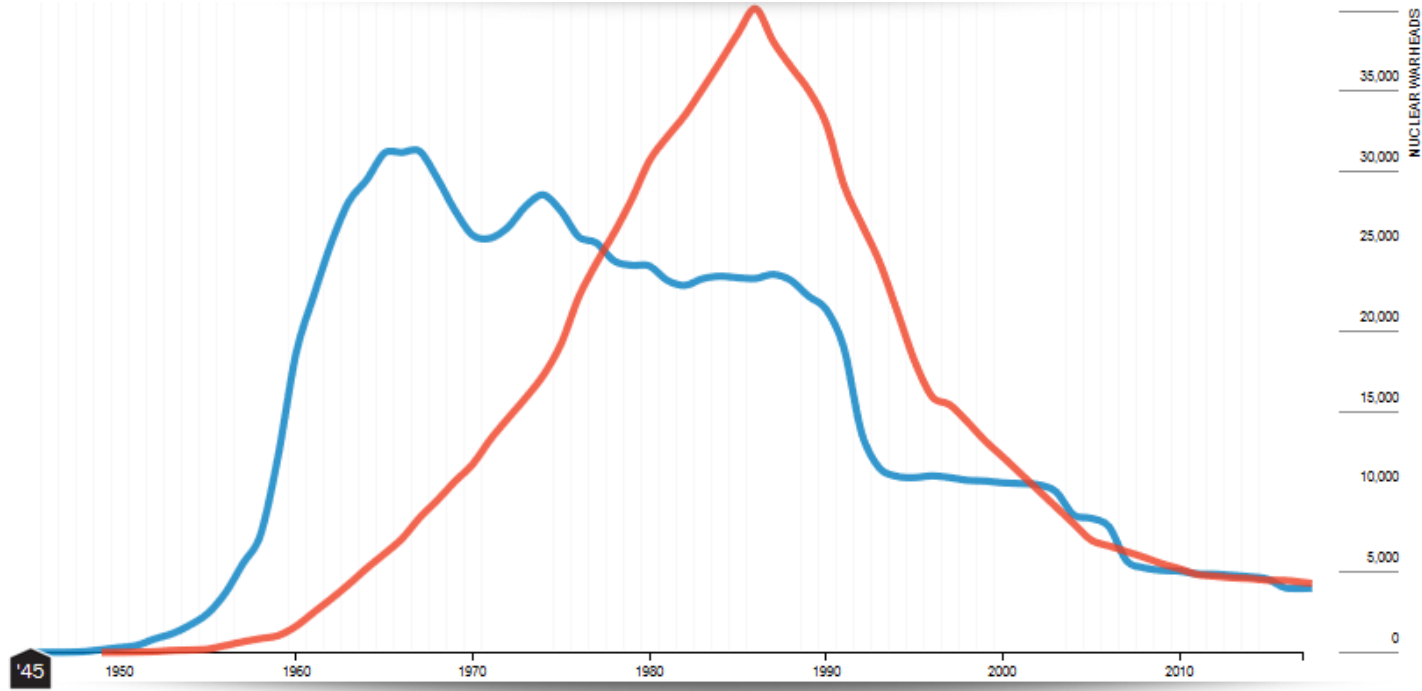


# Europe: consolidation and modernization of nuclear arsenals



Source: *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists' Nuclear Notebook*, written by Hans M. Kristensen and Robert S. Norris, *Federation of American Scientists*

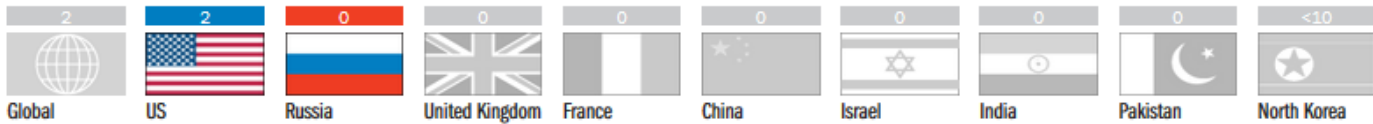
# Russia and the United States: Modernization and diversification



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## Take-aways

- Arms exports by Western states and Russia fuel regional arms races.
- Asia and the Middle East are security and proliferation hotspots.
- There is a complex interdependence between regional and global security arrangements.
  - Great power relations are key factor for the success of regional arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation accords.
  - Regional arrangements can be building blocks of multilateral regimes, while regional rivalries can undermine global arrangements.
- Different actors have different understandings of the relationship between global and regional security.
- Diffusion of power at the global and regional level as well as technological developments make it more difficult to differentiate between regional and global security.
- Preserving existing arms control agreements is a necessary precondition for new arrangements that capture new regional dynamics.

**Thank you very much!**

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## A PERPETUAL MENACE

NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORDER



WILLIAM WALKER