

Strengthening organizational controls on nuclear energy

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For stronger nonproliferation organizations--strengthen policy

- Organizations are creatures of their members. It is mainly the policies of the members that matter.
- What kind of policies do we want in order to be secure that nuclear energy use will not lead to bombs? To avoid making it too easy to obtain bombs we need a sizeable technological security margin.
- Despite all the concern and studies, there is no goal in this area comparable, say, to global zero in talking about the nuclear disarmament.
- Most of the studies and recommendations involve marginal issues at the edges of the basic problem—the overlap in civilian and military nuclear technology.

Five goals for using nuclear energy in relative security from diversion to bombs

1. NPT withdrawal. It should be essentially impossible for countries with nuclear facilities to leave the NPT. We can't rewrite the NPT but we can decide how to deal with defectors.

2. Technology. There needs to be a clear line around what nuclear technology is allowed by NPT Art. IV. We can eliminate plutonium recycle without economic penalty. We need to find a way to apply a common rule on enrichment in a way that limits national enrichment (perhaps a uniform safeguard tax on all enrichment, large and small).

3. Inspection. Expand inspection to mandatory Additional Protocol, and more, to be able to rule out existence of clandestine facilities.

4. Enforcement. Uniform enforcement of NPT rules—which is not the case now—is necessary for universal support. It would be useful to have a permanent NPT secretariat.

5. NPT non-members. They are a bad example of what you can get away with. One approach would be to universalize the Treaty and regard the four holdouts as in non-compliance, providing incentives for them to take steps toward compliance.

Unrealistic?

- These goals, especially those limiting NPT withdrawal and imposing duties of membership to non-members are universally regarded – even by the nonproliferation community – as demonstrating a lack of awareness of the contrary views of the majority of NPT members.
- But these goals are no more unrealistic than global zero that the same nonproliferation community takes seriously and pursues.
- Unrealistic has another sense than whether it is feasible of adoption. It is also unrealistic to think we can cope with a world of lax nuclear energy rules that permit dozens of countries to be technologically within arm's reach of nuclear explosives.
- If we are not willing to do, or cannot do, what is necessary to prevent such a state of affairs, we need to face the consequences of not doing so.

- I can't resist relating a story that bears on what is realistic.
- Many years ago I worked at the Rand Corporation in California. It was during the Vietnam War. We invited Itzhak Rabin, then the victorious general of the Six Day War, to give a talk on military strategy.
- When he finished the first question was, “Gen. Rabin, what do we have to win the war against North Vietnam?” He replied, “You have to capture the North Vietnamese capital, Hanoi.”
- Immediately all the Rand strategic experts shouted that this suggestion was completely unrealistic—because of the possible reactions by the Soviets, or by the Chinese, or by the US public, or our lack of capabilities, and also other reasons.
- Rabin listened patiently to all the objections, and then he said, “OK, if you can't do what you have to do to win, you will lose.” Which we did.
- In the same way, if effective controls on nuclear energy use are unrealistic, so is the notion that we can escape the consequences.