

Disarmament and Arms Control

An overview of issues
and an assessment of the future

EU-ISS research staff discussion

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18 December 2008

Defining the concepts

- Disarmament:
 - Reduction of levels of specified weapon categories to *zero*
 - Removal of the weapons category from military doctrine
 - Essentially requires international cooperation, although unilateral disarmament is possible
- Arms control (inc. arms reductions):
 - Management of levels of weapons within specified quantitative or qualitative boundaries
 - Weapon category retains (residual) value in military doctrine
 - Essentially requires international cooperation, although unilateral policies are possible

Why arms control; why disarmament?

- Legitimacy of use of a weapon in war
 - CBW: basically delegitimized in 1925 (Geneva Protocol)
 - Nuclear weapons:
 - 5 possessor states
 - Advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (1996)
 - Conventional weapons
 - 'Inhumane weapons'
- Humanitarian arguments
 - Macro versus micro-level of appraisal
- Emergence of non-proliferation approach
 - Different perceptions of proliferation before and after World War 2
 - Relevance in areas where there is no total prohibition on weapons
- Impact of perception of technology
 - Value neutral => 'use' of technology needs to be controlled
 - Having impact on society => technology itself is viewed as problematic

Nature of arms control and disarmament agreements

- **Global (multilateral)**

Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT, 1963), Outer Space Treaty (1967), Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT, 1968), Seabed Treaty (1971), Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC, 1972), Moon and Other Celestial Bodies Agreement (1979), Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC, 1993), *Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT, 1996), Mine Ban Convention (1997), *Cluster Munitions Convention (2008)

- **Regional (multilateral)**

Antarctic Treaty (1959), Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE Treaty, 1990), Nuclear Weapon Free Zones: Tlatelolco (1967), Rarotonga (1985), Bangkok (1995), *Pelindaba (1996), *Semipalatinsk (2006)

- **Bilateral**

Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM Treaty, 1972), Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty I (SALT I, 1972), *Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty II (SALT II, 1979), Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty, 1987), Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty I (START I, 1991), Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty II (START II, 1993), Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT, 2002)

Future options

- Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT)
- Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space (PPWT)
- Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC)

Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT)

- Mandate for negotiation in December 1993; stalled since then
- Aim: global, verifiable ban on production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices
- Problems:
 - Reduction / elimination of FM in existing weapon stockpiles
 - Non-inclusion of tritium, which enhances nuclear explosion (half life of 12 years => would immediately affect existing weapons)
 - Non-inclusion of other radioactive materials

Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space (PPWT)

- Aim to prevent future arms race in space
- Options are being explored within UN system
 - Treaty proposal by Russia
 - Strong opposition from the USA to any regulation
- Other states are also expanding space capabilities for military purposes

Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC)

- Exciting new area
 - Recognition of limitations non-proliferation policies
- Debate is being launched from the USA
 - Bi-partisan support
 - In Barack Obama's platform as President-Elect (<http://change.gov> => foreign policy)
- Need for fundamental shift in debate
 - Belief in feasibility will create enabling context
 - Search for alternative security policies is critical
 - Research into verification concepts & options required
- May be phased in time
 - Timeframe: up to 25 years?
 - Initial reductions in US and Russian stockpiles to 1000 nuclear weapons (not carriers)
 - Phase to bring in other nuclear weapon states (NWS) and nuclear-armed states (NAS)
- Support in EU, notably from UK
 - Will still produce vigorous debate in EU
 - Role of French stockpile
 - New EU members in East Europe
 - Impact on missile defence debate

Upcoming review conferences

- Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (2010)
- Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (2011)
- Chemical Weapons Convention (2013)

Old weapons, new threats

- New security actors
 - Criminals, terrorists with potential interest in BCNR materials
 - Existing treaties require re-interpretation by states parties to make them relevant to those new challenges
- Difficult area for the UN
 - Does not involve the governance of inter-state behaviour
 - Emphasis on *national* implementation of existing treaties controlling particular weapon categories through treaty review conferences by states parties with UN support
 - UN Security Council Resolutions relating to terrorism
 - E.g., UNSC 1540 (2004)
 - Advantage: applies certain treaty obligations to **all** states
 - However, danger of UNSC interfering in domestic legislative processes
 - Enforcement of resolutions may be difficult
- Development of UN Secretary-General mechanisms to deal with allegations of use of certain proscribed weapons