

# **Topic 2: Addressing the future of nuclear proliferation and arms control**

## **Overview:**

“Nuclear proliferation” is defined as the rapid increase in the creation of nuclear weapons.

Ever since the creation of the nuclear bomb, it has been used as a sign of power among nations, warding off any potential threats of other nations; and yet naturally, and quite ironically, many wars have been started since the creation of nuclear weapons due to nuclear proliferation and lack of arms control. From the Cold War in the 80s to North Korea or Iran in the 21st century, what is debatably a “necessary evil to maintain peace” is also debatably an “evil mark on the world that must be abolished”.

In order to combat Nuclear Proliferation and develop arms control strategies, the UN has utilized the Disarmament Committee, and has created the IAEA(International Atomic Energy Agency), which in recent years has primarily been focusing on controlling the creation of Iran’s nuclear program and many more relevant crises and disputes(to be discussed later).

## History:

The very first atomic bomb was created by J. Robert Oppenheimer as a part of the Manhattan Project, first tested in July of 1945, and first used on Nagasaki and Hiroshima in August of 1945; although its use ended the 2nd world war, it was the beginning of the nuclear age. Shortly after this, nuclear technology began to quickly spread, which led to the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, where both countries built incredibly large nuclear arsenals while competing with one another. The first Soviet nuclear test took place in 1949, which was then shortly followed by the development of the Hydrogen Bomb in the 1950s.

### Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty(NPT):

During the cold war period, other nations such as the United Kingdom, France, and China began developing Nuclear weapons at alarming rates, which led to the creation of the NPT in 1968, which was the first attempt at combatting the proliferation of nuclear arms at their height, while also allowing for the development of civilian nuclear energy programmes. However despite the signing of this treaty, many nations developed nuclear arms outside of the treaty's frameworks. These nations include: India, Pakistan, North Korea, and Israel.

Now, the most pressing issues today are still within the same nature of the aforementioned nations' actions. Developing nuclear arms at an incredibly fast rate without discussing it with other nations in the UN undermines the influence that the UN has on arms control and if Nuclear arms continue to be developed without the permission of the UN, it could cause sudden geopolitical power imbalances, not giving nations enough time to develop economically to sustain and manage so much power, etc...

## **Relevant Recent Crises and Disputes:**

### **1. North Korea's Chinese Border Missile Bases:**

A secret North Korean missile base near the Chinese border is suspected of housing Hwasong-15 or Hwasong-18 capable nuclear ICBMs. Additionally, during a US-South Korea drill, Kim Jong Un urged a rapid expansion of North Korea's arsenal while inspecting the Choe Hyon.

### **2. Belarus' Plans for Nuclear Rocket Launchers:**

Belarus is supposedly planning on arming its Polonez rocket launchers with nuclear warheads in order to potentially leverage Russia's tactical nuclear arms, which are stationed on Belarus' soil.

### **3. India's Successful Test:**

India recently successfully tested its Agni-5 IRBM, which is a nuclear-capable arm.

### **4. Iran's Nuclear Development Plans:**

Possibly the most well-documented example of the past 2 years, Iran has drastically increased uranium enrichment to 60% (~408kg), which could be enough for multiple nuclear weapons when it is fully enriched.

Iran's "Kavir Plan" seems to further nuclear arms development beyond the old AMAD project.

Iran's primary nuclear facilities have been attacked by the US and Israel in the past year, leading to Iran suspending its cooperation with IAEA in 2025.

## International Stances and Involvement:

Country	No. of Warheads	Supports Disarmament
United States	~5044	Supports “Future Disarmament” but not currently.
Russia	~5580	No.
United Kingdom	~225	Partially. Supports arms control treaties but is not in favor of abolition now.
Pakistan	~170	No. Sees nuclear weapons as necessary against India.
France	~290	No. Views its arsenal as necessary to European security.
India	~180	Publicly supports global disarmament, however refuses to take steps unless others also disarm.
North Korea	~50	No. Calls itself an “irreversible nuclear state”
China	~575	Partially. Supports disarmament in principle but is expanding its arsenal and believes that abolishment should be gradual over time.

## Relevant Sources:

### Articles:

1. <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/statements/statement-on-the-situation-in-iran-13-june-2025>
2. <https://www.britannica.com/place/North-Korea/Acceleration-of-North-Koreas-nuclear-program>
3. <https://education.cfr.org/learn/timeline/history-nuclear-proliferation>
4. <https://world-nuclear.org/information-library/appendices/nuclear-proliferation-case-studies>

### Videos:

1. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y\\_1rDUtFjkl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_1rDUtFjkl)
2. <https://youtu.be/Cyxq0rsVam8?si=RkP0bn0s6XliYhcd>