
**2015 Review Conference of the Parties
to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation
of Nuclear Weapons**

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New York, 27 April-22 May 2015**Why we should have nuclear weapons and you should not****Working paper submitted by China, France, the Russian
Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland, and the United States of America****Introduction**

1. The Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the essential cornerstone of the international security and non-proliferation regime. As nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT, we have a special responsibility to ensure that everyone else understands exactly how things are, and how we intend they will remain.

Why we should have nuclear weapons

2. As nuclear-weapon States, recognised by the NPT, obviously we should have nuclear weapons, otherwise we would not be nuclear-weapon States. This is a solemn responsibility we take very seriously, on behalf of the international community. If we were to eliminate our nuclear weapons, as we have unequivocally undertaken to do, we would no longer be nuclear-weapon States. This would seriously undermine the Treaty and bring into question its continued legitimacy and relevance. Thus, in order to protect the NPT and to ensure that it continues to play a fundamental role in maintaining international stability and security, we are obliged to keep our strategic deterrents, while of course remaining committed to our shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

3. In addition to their key role of keeping us at the front and centre of the NPT, our nuclear weapons are important for maintaining global stability and security. Our nuclear weapons are weapons of peace: they protect us and our allies from any aggression by any State against our vital interests, wherever it comes from and in whatever form. Nuclear deterrence also contributes to maintaining our freedom of action and decision, under any circumstances. It enables us to prevent any threat of blackmail by another State aimed at paralysing us or harming our allies.

4. Furthermore, our nuclear deterrents stimulate our research and development efforts and contribute to the excellence and competitiveness of our industries, with consequent global economic benefits. It is thanks to this research that there have



been innovations and technological advances that have contributed to the economy and employment worldwide. Such is our commitment to ensuring global strategic stability while contributing to economic development that we will be investing trillions of dollars over the coming years in modernizing and upgrading our nuclear arsenals.

Why you should not

5. The NPT designates only us as nuclear-weapon States, so obviously it would be a violation of the Treaty for you to acquire nuclear weapons. It is also doubtful whether you have the moral character and sense of leadership and responsibility required to take on the grave burden of possessing nuclear weapons to ensure the safety and security of the international community.

6. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is one of the most serious threats to global stability. Any increase in the number of countries with nuclear weapons would be a major threat to peace, in the regions concerned as well as for international security. Nuclear weapons are very dangerous, and would be highly destabilizing in many regions. They may be used for blackmail and intimidation, and even where intentions are benign, the risk of escalation, miscalculation or accidental use is unacceptably high.

7. Thus it is entirely appropriate, for example, that we – having around 16,000 nuclear weapons between us – should be negotiating with the Islamic Republic of Iran (which has exactly zero nuclear weapons) a complex and arduous agreement aimed at ensuring that Iran never even gets close to having the capability of possibly one day acquiring nuclear weapons.

Recommendations

8. It would really be best to leave all NPT questions up to us to resolve. We undertake to inform all States parties of the outcomes of our deliberations, so that you may join the consensus.