YK '25 MUN

Antalya Private Yükseliş College Model United Nations Confrence 2025

69th General Conference of IAEA

Agenda Item:

Global Nuclear Security During War Periods

Under Secretary General:

Ada Yesilyurt & Ece Yigit

Academic Assistant:

Efe Ertekin

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1. Welcoming Letters

1.1 Letter from the Secretary-General

Esteemed Participants,
It is our paramount pleasure to welcome you to the second installment of Yükseliş Model United Nations Conference 2025. We, Neva Nas Aydın and Ramazan Yandı, will be serving you as your Secretary General's in the upcoming three days. Our Executive Team has put not only the best Academic Team but the best Organization Team so that you can enjoy creating memories in our conference.

Essentially Model United Nations Conferences are great opportunities to improve your debating capabilities, your confidence, your foreign language level and understand how policy is implemented. We can state that Model United Nations Conferences helped us both in our academic and social lifes. For this reason it is our duty to transfer these experiences to the next generations and ensure that they affect them in a similar way.

We hope you have one of the best MUN experiences of your lifes in YKMUN 2025!

Sincerely,
Neva Nas Aydın & Ramazan Yandı

1.2 Letter from the Under Secretary-General

Dear delegates,

I am Ada Yeşilyurt, and it is my utmost pleasure to welcome you all to the International Atomic Energy Agency as your Under Secretary General. This committee was a dream, and seeing it come to fruition has been a delight.

Before offering my advice, I would like to extend my thanks to the executive team for providing me with the opportunity to serve on this committee and work alongside my Co-Under Secretary General, Ece Yiğit, and Academic Assistant, Efe Ertekin. Ece and Efe were a great team, and I am happy to have worked with them. The academic and organization teams' efforts cannot be overstated; without their work, this conference would not be possible, so thank you all!

Delegates, please read this study guide thoroughly, for it contains all the information you will need throughout the committee, but this should not deter you from doing your own research, since this study guide cannot inform you on your respective country's policies and past actions. Your priority is abiding by your allocated country's stance on the matter.

If you have further inquiries in your preparation process, please do not hesitate to contact me at my email address.

I wish all of us a great conference ahead.

Shine on, you crazy diamonds!

Ada Yeşilyurt
Under Secretary General of the International Atomic Energy Agency
ada.yesy.project@gmail.com

1.3 Letter from the Under Secretary-General

Distinguished delegates of the IAEA Committee,

My name is Ece Yiğit, and I am the Under Secretary General of this Committee. I greet you with great dedication, and I am sure you are aware of the critical agenda that this committee serves in today's world. I urge you to do your work with great seriousness and dedication; the knowledge you will gain and the productivity you will create during the committee will be unparalleled. I am confident that you will get the best quality and experience from our committee. Please study this study guide that we have carefully prepared for you, and be prepared for us in the committee. If you have any questions or needs, you can contact me at the contact number I will leave below. I wish you success.

Kindest Regards
Ece Yiğit
Under Secretary General of the International Atomic Energy Agency
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+49 15755678162

1.4 Letter from the Academic Assistant

Dearest Delegates of the IAEA Committee,

I, as the academic assistant of the IAEA committee in YKMUN'25, welcome you all to the committee! It is my utmost honor to serve you all in this position.

Firstly, I would like to thank the Secretariat, the rest of the executive team, the academic team, and the organization team, which made this conference possible.

While I extend my thanks, two names that I can not overrule are Ada Yeşilyurt and Ece Yiğit, who have been my Under Secretaries General. We were the best trio imaginable, and I hope that this won't be our last time working together on a committee.

As the academic assistant of the committee, I can sincerely ensure that all of the participants will have a great time, learn new facts, and join the debate with ease. Our, as the Academic Team, one and only request from you is to read this study guide thoroughly. We highly encourage you to research upon your allocated country's policies and past actions upon the agenda item.

If you have any questions about the committee, please don't hesitate to reach me via efe.ertekin35@gmail.com

Now the floor is yours,

Efe ERTEKİN
Academic Assistant.
International Atomic Energy Agency

2. Introduction to the Committee

2.1. History of the Committee

The International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, was officially established in 1957 in response to the deep fears and expectations generated by the discoveries and diverse uses of nuclear technology, energy, and weapons. The Agency's genesis was U.S. President Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace Speech" in the General Assembly meeting of the United Nations on 8 December 1953.

The U.S. Ratification of the Statute by President Eisenhower, 29 July 1957, marks the official birth of the International Atomic Energy Agency. In the press conference following the signing ceremony in the Rose Garden of the White House in Washington, D.C., President Eisenhower evoked his address to the UN General Assembly in December 1953, at which he had proposed to establish the IAEA.

In October 1957, the delegates to the ***First General Conference*** decided to establish the IAEA's headquarters in Vienna, Austria. Until the opening of the Vienna International Centre in August 1979, the old Grand Hotel next to the Vienna Opera House served as the Agency's temporary headquarters.

The IAEA also has two regional offices located in Toronto, Canada (since 1979) and Tokyo, Japan (since 1984), as well as two liaison offices in New York City, United States of America (since 1957) and Geneva, Switzerland (since 1965). The Agency runs laboratories specialized in nuclear technology in Vienna and Seibersdorf, Austria, opened in 1961, and, since 1961, in Monaco.

2.2. Intentions of the Committee

Simply, the committee aims to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health, and prosperity throughout the world. The committee also identifies and promotes best practices and safety standards and implements programs to assist states in applying these standards. The IAEA is also a key player in the effort to prevent nuclear terrorism.

The committee assists its Member States, in the context of social and economic goals, in planning for and using nuclear science and technology for various peaceful purposes, including the generation of electricity, and facilitates the transfer of such technology and knowledge in a sustainable manner to developing Member States; develops nuclear safety standards and, based on these standards, promotes the achievement and maintenance of high levels of safety in applications of nuclear energy, as well as the protection of human health and the environment against ionizing radiation; and verifies through its inspection system that States comply with their commitments, under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and other non-proliferation agreements, to use nuclear material and facilities only for peaceful purposes.

2.3. Budget of the Committee

The IAEA carries out its work in two main areas: the Regulated Program and the Technical Cooperation Program. These two programmes are financed from separate funds. They are additionally supported by extra-budgetary contributions from Member States and non-member state donors. The IAEA's budget is approved annually by the IAEA General Conference. The Regular Budget Allocations for 2024 are listed below.

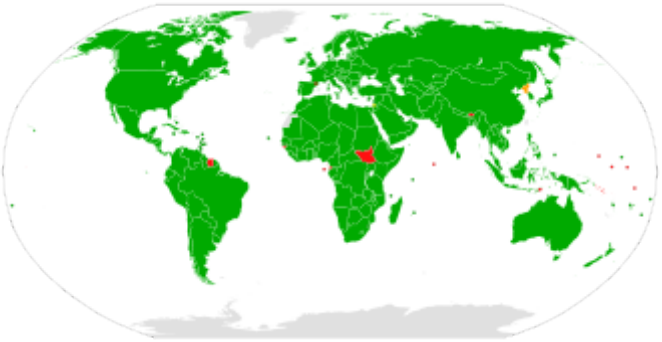
Nuclear Power, Fuel Cycle, and Nuclear Science	*47 500 612 €*
Nuclear Techniques for Development and Environmental Protection	*47 500 612 €*
Nuclear Safety and Security	*41 833 006 €*
Nuclear Verification	*167 729 812 €*
Policy, Management, and Administration Services	*92 267 806 €*
Management of Technical Cooperation for Development	*30 406 447 €*
Reimbursable work for others	*3 573 678 €*
Total Budget for 2024	**430 020 873 €**

The committee accounts at an exchange rate of US$1.00 to €1.00.

Note from the Academic Assistant: I highly suggest you read this section of the guide thoroughly, since you will be the delegates approving and amending the budget for the 2025-2026 period. You can use the inflation data in order to amend the budget for the next year.

2.4. Member States

The Committee consists of 180 member states. The last members, being the Cook Islands, Somalia, joined in 2024.



2.5. General Structure of the Committee,

2.5.1. The Board of Governors

The Board of Governors is one of two policy-making bodies of the IAEA. The Board consists of 22 member states elected by the General Conference, and at least 10 member states nominated by the outgoing Board.

The Board, in its five-yearly meetings, is responsible for making most of the policies of the IAEA. The Board makes recommendations to the General Conference on IAEA activities and budget, is responsible for publishing IAEA standards, and appoints the Director-General, subject to General Conference approval.

2.5.2. The General Conference

The General Conference is made up of all 180 member states. It meets once a year, typically in September, to approve the actions and budgets passed on from the Board of Governors. The General Conference also approves the nominee for Director General and requests reports from the Board on issues in question (Statute).

The main function of the General Conference is to serve as a forum for debate on current issues and policies. Any of the other IAEA organs, the Director-General, the Board, and member states can table issues to be discussed by the General Conference (IAEA Primer).

2.5.2.1. Representation and the General Rules of Procedure at the General Conference

Note from the Academic Assistant: This section consists of the rules differing from the Harvard General Assembly Rules of Procedure.

Rule 1 - Determining the Budget of the IAEA

After the opening speeches of the delegates, the first specific motion should be "the motion to determine the annual budget for the IAEA."

Rule 2 - Electing New Members to the Board of Governors

The representatives of this committee will raise a motion to elect the new members for the board of governors. Before the final document is introduced and voted upon, in one of the operative clauses, the names of the countries that are candidates shall be written in a clause. The number is up to the committee. Each candidate state for the election will give a speech in the committee, regarding why they should be on the board.

Rule 3 - Voting

The Voting for the motion needs a simple majority (1/2) to pass, and the final document needs a 3/4 majority to pass.

3. History of Weapons of Mass Destruction

The General Assembly affirms the definition of weapons of mass destruction as "(...) atomic explosive weapons, radioactive material weapons, lethal chemical and biological weapons, and any weapons developed in the future which might have characteristics comparable in destructive effect to those of the atomic bomb or other weapons mentioned above." Modern weapons of mass destruction are either nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons—frequently referred to collectively as NBC weapons.

Chemical weapons use liquid or gas choking and blistering agents, as well as blood, nerve, and riot control agents, to disrupt the nervous system and corrupt the body from the inside. There are many examples of chemical weapon usage during war periods, starting with World War I.

Chemicals were used in warfare for centuries and centuries but the first studies on chemical weapons were done by Germany. In late 1914, Germany planted capsules containing tear gas, but they were not released to the enemy. Then, in early 1915 Germans fired shells filled with xylyl bromide at Russian troops, but the attempts were unsuccessful due to the gas freezing and ending up being unreleased. The first significant offensive was launched by Germany on the Western Front, causing many countries to partake in the destructive process of chemical warfare until the 1925 Geneva Convention.

The World Health Organisation describes biological weapons as either microorganisms like viruses, bacteria, or fungi, or toxic substances produced by living organisms that are deliberately produced and released, to cause disease and death in humans, animals, or plants.

The history of biological warfare goes back at least a millennium. Man has used biological weapons for as long as time after the discovery of contagiousness. There are many examples, but the usage of human bodies was the most common method of poisoning, whether it be water wells, food, or clothing. To that, the secretions of ill animals/humans were added. These methods were brutally used, and after the foundation of microbiology,

which offered grounds for a more systematic and rational basis for the design of the agents. The dangers were soon recognised, after the horrors of World War I, and resulted in two international declarations, but these declarations had no means of control and failed to prevent the development of bio-weapons.

Throughout World War II, Japan, one of the signatory parties to the protocol, engaged in biological warfare. This engagement not only included bio-weapon usage but also research, experimentation, production, and testing. Japan used biological weapons on China, but did not stop at that and experimented on human subjects, including war prisoners.

There is no documented bio-weapon usage in WWII after this, but both sides had research & development programs regarding biological warfare. Throughout the Cold War, more than a dozen out of the 190+ United Nations countries were suspected of conducting biological weapon programmes, though these attempts can be easily hidden as medical studies. After it entered into force, these programmes were bound to follow the Biological Weapons Convention (1972).

For nuclear warfare, though, things were different. It started in the early 1900s, with many discoveries regarding radioactivity and nuclear physics. Following these discoveries, in 1938, Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassmann's discovery of nuclear fission, accomplished by splitting the uranium atom, marked the beginning of a new era in nuclear chemistry. Later studies on the physics of fission, suggesting the idea of a massive energy release, went on to become the foundation for nuclear warfare. With World War 2, the idea of nuclear warfare had become a threat to many. The possible use of nuclear weapons by Nazi Germany alarmed the United States of America, preparing the ground for the Manhattan Project. As the project progressed, the Trinity Test took place, giving the authorities the assurance they needed. 21 days later, the bombing of Hiroshima took place, and 3 days later, Nagasaki was attacked. These marked both the beginning and the end of nuclear warfare, being the only example of its kind. After the bombings, the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission (UNAEC) was founded to address nuclear weapon control and promote peaceful atomic energy usage.

Although the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons has continued since that date, their actual use has been prevented thanks to the diplomatic and legal efforts of the international community.

4. History of Mass Destruction Weapon Usage During War Periods

4.1. Early Instances of Weapons of Mass Destruction

1346 The Siege of Caffa

The siege of Caffa was between the Genoese and Mongolian forces. It was a long-running siege that was interrupted by the bubonic plague. Facing the plague-ravaged city, the commander of the Mongols, Jani Beg, resorted to biological warfare. His men catapulted their plague-infected soldiers over the city walls to cause one last turmoil before retreating. This is considered the first well-documented instance of biological warfare in medieval history.

Early 1800s Colonizations

In the early 1800's colonizers exposed natives to contagious diseases. Intentional or not, these actions caused great losses for the colonies. Some recorded examples are between Hernan Cortes and the Aztecs, and Spanish explorers and the Inca tribes.

1767 French-Indian War

The French and Indian War, which was between Great Britain and France, involved France's power combined with its North American allies. In this war, British forces gave smallpox-infested blankets to Native Americans and successfully decimated the "Indians".

4.2. World War I: Era of Chemical Weapons

Second Battle of Ypres, April 22, 1915

The Second Battle of Ypres was the first offensive Germany launched that had an effect on the enemy. The offensive started with the artillery bombing, then, as the Allied forces waited for the rest of the attack by the usual arsenal, they faced chlorine gas, roaming through the no-man's land. Although Germany managed to diminish the French and Algerian colonial troops, it wasn't enough of a success for the Germans to count it as a victory, considering Allied forces still had most of their positions. On the 24th of April, a second wave of attack reached the Canadian trenches, this time making Allied forces retreat to Ypres. The Second Battle of Ypres ended with insignificant wins on Germany's side, though it was the first of many chemical offensives in World War I.

Battle of Osowiec Fortress (Attack of the Dead Men),

The Battle of Osowiec, or the Attack of the Dead Men, was a skirmish that broke out in today's northeastern Poland. Osowiec Fortress provided a vital corridor with strong fortifications, making a traditional siege harder. With previous failed attempts, these conditions pushed Germany toward chemical warfare.

In the early morning of August 6th, German forces released chlorine and bromine gases onto the battlefield. Dense, yellow-orange-tinted air slithered to enemy trenches, staining every nook and cranny. Chlorine and bromine gases attacked everything in sight; everything they touched withered away, animals dropped dead, and plants lost color and became one with the dead soil. For the troops, the effects were much larger. Once inhaled, chlorine and moisture from the lung mucous membrane create hydrochloric acid (HCl), a highly corrosive acid, leaving the victim with chemical burns and destroying living tissue. The inadequate equipment and preparation of the Russian troops resulted in over 800 casualties.

German soldiers donned their gas masks and advanced, expecting little to no resistance from Russian soldiers. But they were wrong. Approximately 100 men, faces donned with bloody clothes, emerged. Germans, not expecting to see any men on the front, faced with walking dead, coughing up blood,

retreated. Some tried firing at them, but what bullet could kill an already dead man?

At the end, the Germans emerged victors, but not before the remaining Russian forces demolished the fortress, leaving the enemy with nothing to take control of.

This attack is considered the first full-scale chemical attack and has caused many things; treaties, bans, and developments in both chemical weapons and defensive gear being the most prominent examples.

4.3. World War II: The Era of Nuclear Warfare

Unit 731

Unit 731 was the name of the base used by Japan to conduct human experiments. The unit was active for a decade from 1935 to 1945 and reportedly caused 3,000+ deaths directly from laboratory experiments and 200,000+ deaths from broader attacks.

The main objective of Unit 731 was to examine the behaviors of existing diseases in people and develop new methods for the study and further usage of the aforementioned illnesses. To reach their objective, doctors used civilians and prisoners of war as test subjects.

Unit 731 stands as one of history's most notorious cases of government-operated warfare and systematic human experimentation. Japan’s surrender in 1945 marked the end of Unit 731. Instead of being tried, though, the United States provided immunity in exchange for its result data.

Note from the Under Secretary General: *This warfare program includes topics such as sexual assault, human vivisection, and weapon experimentation; upon further research, reader discretion is advised.*

Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Little Boy & Fat Man)

Little Boy & Fat Man were the names given to the atomic bombs that were used in the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Little Boy was aimed at Hiroshima on 6 August 1945. It was a gun-type bomb with a Uranium core and had an explosion yield of about 15.000-20.000. The estimated loss of lives is around 140.000 by the end of 1945, only in Hiroshima. Fat Man was released 3 days later, on 9 August 1945, aiming at Nagasaki. It was a slightly bigger, implosion-type bomb with a Plutonium core. It is estimated to be the cause of 70.000 lives lost.

Immediately after the bombings, indicators of acute radiation syndrome were seen in survivors. Acute radiation syndrome is one of the early tissue reactions. It includes diverse symptoms (such as hair loss or nausea). Atomic bomb survivors who had been exposed to high radiation doses of about 1 to 10 gray suffered from the syndrome. At very high doses, it leads to death within days to months.

In the following five to six years of the bombings, a rise in leukemia cases was seen among survivors. After about a decade, a noticeable increase in cases of thyroid, breast, lung, and other cancer types appeared. Exposure also heightened the risk of heart failure and stroke, asthma, bronchitis, and gastrointestinal conditions. Out of the pregnant survivors, most faced miscarriages or infant deaths. Their children were more likely to be born with mental disabilities, impaired growth, and cancer risks.

Background

After Franklin D. Roosevelt's death, his vice president, Harry S. Truman, took his place as the President of the United States. After the appointment to his position, Tuman was informed by the Secretary of War about the Manhattan Project which he called "the most terrible weapon ever known in human history". This top-secret effort to build an atomic bomb was so guarded that it was even kept a secret from Truman throughout his Vice Presidency.

By that time, it was evident that the Allies had won the war, but Japan refused to surrender. With that, the bomb would most certainly force Japan to surrender, ending WW2, but would also risk unimaginable destruction and be an unprecedented example in warfare history. In the end, the United States decided to drop the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

This was a hard and important decision as it would be the end of many and, later, the one and only instance of its kind.

5. Nuclear Threats and Near-Use During War Periods

Hermann states that an organizational crisis threatens an organization's high-priority values, presents a limited timeframe in which to respond, and is unexpected or unforeseen by the organization. The utility of this definition is arguably due to its simplicity in capturing the nature of crises in an organizational context in terms of difficulty, urgency, and surprise. These three characteristics are explained in detail in connection with the case studies examined below:

Challenge

Crises challenge an organization's values and its ability to achieve its core and fundamental objectives. All of the crises examined below in this handbook have challenged the ability of nuclear organizations to carry out their core activities - be it energy production, as in the case of Fukushima, or research, as in the cases of LANL and the Cerro Grande wildfire.

With nuclear safety increasingly seen as one of the core missions of nuclear organizations and a business enabler, these crises have also posed a challenge in this respect.

Urgency

Crises develop rapidly and require rapid decision-making and solutions; the significance of the threat increases the urgency with which the crisis must be addressed. All of the crises analyzed in the handbook unfolded relatively quickly, sometimes within minutes and hours in the case of Fukushima, and within days and weeks in the case of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Surprise

Crises are often considered unpredictable or so unlikely that they are often not given much attention until it is too late. They can also be the result of complacency. Indeed, most of the crises analyzed in this handbook were largely unpredictable.

The characteristics of surprise and challenge mean that crises tend to be triggered by low-probability, high-consequence events. However, when Hermann's three characteristics are not met, the event in question is not a crisis but a problem that needs to be addressed.

Resilience is a term that has been increasingly used in recent years, including in relation to nuclear security. Simply put, resilience encompasses the capacity of a system or organization to recover from internal or external shocks. As defined in a recent study, "Resilience is the capacity of a social system (e.g., an organization, city or society) to proactively adapt to and recover from perceived disturbances that fall outside the scope of normal and expected disturbances within the system." There is a wide range of actions commonly cited as helping to build resilience, for example, information sharing, clear reporting structures and lines of communication, organizational learning, robust risk assessment methods, and adequate training. Building resilience within nuclear organizations - increasing their ability to respond and adapt to internal, but especially external shocks - is critical to ensure nuclear safety, security, and business continuity.

Nuclear operators, regulators, government agencies, facilities, and their personnel - in short, all nuclear organizations - must respond to crises, whether they are prepared or not. In the field of nuclear security, emergency preparedness and response to nuclear emergencies are of paramount importance. Similarly, in the nuclear security field, emergency preparedness and response to nuclear security incidents involving theft, sabotage, or materials outside regulatory control are of paramount importance.

Preparedness and response are essential elements of resilience-building measures in nuclear organizations. However, in the context of preparing for and responding to the

impact of non-nuclear crises on nuclear assets and nuclear security, it can be argued that not enough attention has been paid to resilience in nuclear organizations.

Cuban Missile Crisis

The October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis involved the most well-known and dangerous Cold War nuclear alerts and threats. By secretly deploying nuclear-armed intermediate- and medium-range ballistic missiles in Cuba, Khrushchev sought to improve the Soviet strategic position and to use nuclear threats to shield Cuba from another U.S. invasion. After the United States discovered the missiles, the Kennedy administration blockaded Cuba and put U.S. strategic forces on a DEFCON 2 alert, one step away from a general war posture. The Soviets also raised their nuclear alert levels, but not as high as the United States. Neither Kennedy nor Khrushchev wanted war, but miscalculations and accidents could have realized their worst fears, motivating both to reach a settlement, lest the situation spins out of control. The U.S. DEFCON status symbolized the risks of further confrontation.

U.S. President John F. Kennedy speaks about the Cuban Missile Crisis during a televised speech to the nation on October 24, 1962, when the world was closer to a nuclear conflict than most people understood at the time. (JFK Photo by Getty Images)

Neither side ever raised its nuclear alert systems to such high levels again. The grave dangers of a nuclear crisis made Moscow and Washington more cautious, leading to a period of détente that unfolded in the following years. Nixon, elected president in 1968, pursued détente as an element of Cold War strategy, but threat-making was an important thread in his diplomatic approach. Influenced by his experience during the Eisenhower years and by his observations of Khrushchev, Nixon developed what came to be known as the “Madman Theory,” the notion that threatening excessive or extraordinary force could bring diplomatic gains. National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger later explained that the "president’s strategy has been to ‘push so many chips into the pot’ that the other side will think we might be ‘crazy’ and might go much further.”

During Nixon's first year in office, as he tried to settle his biggest political problem, the Vietnam War, he made various low-level threats and feints to warn of the risks of escalation in an effort to coerce North Vietnam to be more yielding in the peace talks. As tough-minded as Nixon thought he was, he saw nuclear weapons as militarily unusable in the Vietnam context. What he especially wanted from threats was to prompt the Soviet Union to motivate its North Vietnamese clients to be more cooperative. He and Kissinger deeply overestimated Moscow's clout with Hanoi, and none of the threats worked, making Nixon angry. To force Hanoi to make concessions, Nixon had plans to escalate the war in October 1969, but called them off because of the risks that escalation would spark U.S. domestic upheaval.

In an attempt to make the Soviets worried enough to help Washington negotiate with the North Vietnamese, Nixon secretly instructed the Pentagon in early October 1969 to raise the alert levels of nuclear forces. During the following weeks, as part of what was called the Joint Chiefs of Staff Readiness Test, SAC put its bomber forces on higher alert. The Navy raised the readiness levels of its forces while aircraft carriers and other ships conducted unusual maneuvers to get Moscow's attention. At the close of the alert, SAC flew sorties of nuclear-armed bombers over northern Alaska on 18-hour stretches. Likely as a sign of Nixon's concern about Moscow's support for Hanoi, the U.S. Navy shadowed Soviet merchant ships on their way to Hanoi. It was all low-key; Washington wanted the alert to jar Moscow, not to alarm. Even if they understood Nixon's underlying purpose, however, the Soviets did not help with Vietnam War diplomacy. In any event, because there was no crisis in its relationship with Washington, Moscow may have seen the U.S. alert actions as pointless or not credible.

Nixon did not abandon madman threats or alerts. During the September 1970 crisis in Jordan, Nixon expanded the U.S. naval presence in the eastern Mediterranean. During a supposedly off-the-record press briefing, he threatened intervention against Soviet-client Syria, suggesting it was not a bad thing if Moscow thought he was capable of "irrational or unpredictable action."13 Several years later, Kissinger used Nixon's tactics during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. On October 24, 1973, Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev informed Washington that Moscow might intervene unilaterally to enforce an agreed cease-fire by sending peacekeepers to help separate Egypt's

beleaguered Third Army from the Israelis. The statement was a bluff, but Kissinger and the U.S. National Security Council (NSC) overreacted by ordering U.S. strategic forces to go on DEFCON 3 as a warning. The Soviets were disconcerted, but did not react. Nixon did not participate in the decision because, reeling from Watergate developments, he was inebriated.

DEFCON 3 was in a higher state of readiness than the usual DEFCON 4, but it was not as threatening as the Cuban Missile Crisis DEFCON 2. With the Soviets having reached strategic parity with the United States, nuclear threats and confrontations had become too dangerous to consider or endure. This was the last major DEFCON until September 11, 2001. Nevertheless, unexpected incidents, such as false warnings of missile attacks or misunderstandings over military exercises (Able Archer 83), illuminated the continued perils of the superpower nuclear competition.

The history of nuclear threats and crises demonstrates that U.S. leaders found it easier to try to overawe the Soviets or the Chinese during the 1950s when the retaliatory capability of these adversaries was small or nonexistent. By the 1960s, confrontations were all too dangerous, as Kennedy learned, not least during a September 1963 NSC meeting when he was told how much devastation the Soviets could inflict on the United States.15 Thus, in the context of mutual assured destruction, threats to use nuclear weapons have low credibility because of their suicidal nature. Yet, threat language, including Putin's recent outbursts, must be assessed carefully. The terrible carnage in Ukraine raises the question as to whether Putin would break international norms by using nuclear weapons. Just as troubling is the prospect that if Putin raised alert levels during this crisis, the attendant dangers of accidents, incidents, or miscalculations could produce the escalation that nobody wants.

6. Treaties and Agreements Regarding the Matter

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) includes a comprehensive set of prohibitions on participating in any nuclear weapon activities. These include undertakings not to develop, test, produce, acquire, possess, stockpile, use, or threaten to use nuclear weapons. The Treaty also prohibits the deployment of nuclear weapons

on national territory and the provision of assistance to any State in the conduct of prohibited activities. States parties will be obliged to prevent and suppress any activity prohibited under the TPNW undertaken by persons or on territory under their jurisdiction or control. The Treaty also obliges States parties to provide adequate assistance to individuals affected by the use or testing of nuclear weapons, as well as to take necessary and appropriate measures of environmental remediation in areas untheir their jurisdiction or control contaminated as a result of activities related to the testing or use of nuclear weapons.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted by the Conference (by a vote of 122 States in favour, with one vote against and one abstention) at the United Nations on 7 July 2017, and opened for signature on 20 September 2017. Following the deposit with the Secretary-General of the 50th instrument of ratification or accession of the Treaty on 24 October 2020, it entered into force on 22 January 2021 per its article.

Meetings of States Parties

Article 8(2) of the Treaty specifies that "the first meeting of States Parties shall be convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations within one year of the entry into force of this Treaty. Further meetings of States Parties shall be convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on a biennial basis, unless otherwise agreed by the States Parties."

The first Meeting of States Parties was held in Vienna, Austria, from 21 to 23 June 2022. The Meeting adopted a Declaration entitled "Our commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons" as well as the Vienna Action Plan for further implementation of the Treaty. The Meeting also took a number of additional decisions, including notably the establishment of deadlines for the removal from operational status and destruction of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, and their removal from national territories, as required by Article 4 of the Treaty. The report of the first Meeting (TPNW/MSP/2022/6) contains a record of all decisions taken at the Meeting.

The second Meeting of States Parties was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 27 November to 1 December 2023. The Meeting conducted thematic discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and adopted a Declaration entitled “Our commitment to upholding the prohibition of nuclear weapons and averting their catastrophic consequences”. The Meeting took several decisions, including the establishment of a consultative process on security concerns of States and working towards the establishment of an international trust fund for victim assistance and environmental remediation at the third Meeting. The report of the second Meeting (TPNW/MSP/2023/14) contains a record of all decisions taken at the Meeting.

The third Meeting will take place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York in March 2025.

Scientific Advisory Group

By its decision 2, the first Meeting of States Parties established a Scientific Advisory Group to be composed of a maximum of 15 members. The Group has a broad mandate to inform States Parties about developments in scientific and technical fields relevant to the Treaty, including the implementation of Article 4 of the Treaty, humanitarian consequences and risks associated with nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation more widely.

The Members of the Group were appointed on 8 February 2023 and held their constitutive meeting on 1 March 2023. More information about the work of the Scientific Advisory Group can be found on Meetings Place.

Role of the United Nations

By its resolution 72/31 of 4 December 2017, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to render the necessary assistance and to provide such services as may be necessary to fulfil the tasks entrusted to him under the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Under Article 19, the Secretary-General is designated as the depository of the Treaty. He is also tasked with the transmission to the States Parties of declarations received pursuant to Article 2 of the Treaty and the convening of Meetings of States Parties and Review Conferences (Article 8).

Background

The initiative to seek a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons is an outcome of the discourse centered on promoting greater awareness and understanding of the humanitarian consequences that would result from any use of nuclear weapons.

Renewed interest in the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons was first manifested in the final document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In its conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions, the Conference expressed its deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and reaffirmed the need for all States at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law.

In 2012, expressing concern about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, the General Assembly adopted resolution 67/56 entitled "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations". By this resolution, the Assembly established in 2013 an open-ended working group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons, and the open-ended working group reflected its discussion in its report (A/68/514).

A series of three international conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, convened in 2013 and 2014 respectively in Norway, Mexico, and Austria, sought to present a fact-based understanding of the short and long-term effects of a nuclear weapon detonation.

These conferences, which included participation by a large majority of States, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and hundreds of representatives of non-governmental organizations, principally coordinated by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), played an important role in building demand for urgent action to advance nuclear disarmament negotiations.

7. Timeline

The world has lived with nuclear weapons since the first test explosion 77 years ago. At the height of the Cold War in 1986, there were 70,300 nuclear warheads. Although secrecy conceals exact figures and arsenals are growing, in early 2022 it is estimated nine countries (including stored and deployed warheads) possess 12,700 warheads: China (350), France (290), Israel (90), India (160), North Korea (20), Pakistan (165), Russia (5977), UK (225), USA (5428).

Reporting on the nuclear file is challenging because of its secrecy and complexity. A lack of a better understanding of nuclear basics has handicapped the press, particularly in the run-up to the 2003 Iraq war, when false evidence about the existence of nuclear weapons in Iraq and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD) went mostly unquestioned until their insubstantiality was revealed.

More than three-quarters of a century after their advent, nuclear weapons continue to pose an existential threat to humanity. Broader evidence-based reporting about them would be in the interest of the public, to whom there is little accountability, and inform a more protective policy.

First Nuclear Age, 1945-1991

On 16 July 1945, the first atomic bomb, ‘The Gadget’, was successfully tested at the Trinity test site in the desert near Alamogordo, New Mexico, in the US, ushering in the First Nuclear Age. Less than four weeks later, the US dropped nuclear weapons on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima, 6 August, and Nagasaki, 9 August 1945. The first nuclear age ended with the cessation of the Cold War around 1991. At the height of

the Cold War in 1986, there were 70,300 weapons in the world's nuclear arsenals. (Cuban Missile Crisis, Reykjavik)

Second Nuclear Age, 1991-2014

The shifting geopolitical compass needle from the predictability of East and West bloc adversarial relations to a multipolar world in which nuclear weapons continued to play a major role introduced the Second Nuclear Age. India, Pakistan, and North Korea became nuclear weapons possessors, clandestine weapons programmes and the nuclear black market emerged as new threats, and fears of non-state actors obtaining nuclear weapons were underlined by the savagery of the 9/11 attack on the US. Except for the opening for the signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 199,6, nuclear arms control was ill served.

Third Nuclear Age, 2014-Current

A scenario troubling analysts of contemporary nuclear affairs is the potential for information warfare, a cyber attack, rendering a nation's nuclear forces impotent, undermining a fundamental tenet of nuclear deterrence - mutual assured destruction. Although computers and information technology have long been part of nuclear command and control, threats of hacking and computer malware being used as weapons of war are part of what is regarded as the Third Nuclear Age. Other disruptive technologies threaten stability, and discussion addressing new threats is muted.

8. Questions to be Addressed

1) How much should the budget of the agency be for the 2025 - 2026 period?

2) Which states, and their representatives, should be on the newly established yearly election of the Board of Governors as candidates? (The Permanent Five Countries (China, France, Russia, the UK, and the USA) are protected)

3) Are existing treaties enough to ensure global nuclear safety? If not, what can be done to solve the aforementioned problem?

4) How can the IAEA assure cooperation between member states to prevent further risks to nuclear security?

5) What measures could have been taken in the name of retrospective nuclear wars? What interventions could have changed the course of these wars?

6) What has been the effectiveness of the treaties signed in terms of the nuclear threat and the measures taken? If different decisions could have been taken, what would they have been?

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