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## Introduction

*The NPT is a landmark international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament. The Treaty represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States. Opened for signature in 1968, the Treaty entered into force in 1970. A total of 187 parties have joined the Treaty, including the five nuclear-weapon States. More countries have ratified the NPT than any other arms limitation and disarmament agreement, a testament to the Treaty's significance.*

*To further the goal of non-proliferation and as a confidence-building measure between States parties, the Treaty establishes a safeguards system under the responsibility of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Safeguards are used to verify compliance with the Treaty through inspections conducted by the IAEA. The Treaty promotes co-operation in the field of peaceful nuclear technology and equal access to this technology for all States parties, while safeguards prevent the diversion of fissile material for weapons use. (<http://www.un.org/Depts/dda/WMD/treaty/>)*

## Challenges facing the NPT

Currently a crisis of confidence in NPT regime for 2 main reasons:

### 1) Failure of NPT signatories to meet obligations

The 5 (Britain , France , USA , China and Russia ) 'official' nuclear weapon states have failed to make progress to move away from a nuclear weapons capability and make an effort to disarm. They have continually treated their disarmament obligations as second class commitments, to be pursued at their own time and pace and only if completely convenient.

### Key issues:

- Failure to rule out first use-

The UK , USA and NATO have all failed to rule out first use of nuclear weapons in a conflict situation (even when the opposition does not possess nuclear capabilities).

- USA policy-

The USA has failed to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and has been hostile to international multilateral efforts to solve crises and has pursued an aggressive unilateralist stance in its Foreign Policy.

The current American foreign policy, especially the doctrine of 'pre-emptive war', is provocative towards other states and encourages a new arms race as States seek to protect themselves from US military aggression.

- Moves away from 'deterrence' and towards 'theatre use' of nuclear weapons-

The Bush administration's Nuclear Posture review calls for a shift away from a nuclear deterrence and argues that nuclear weapons should become practical weapons to be used in conflicts.

The double standard of these States in retaining and developing a nuclear capability while objecting to other states developing nuclear technology undermines the credibility of the NPT as no progress is made in the area of disarmament.

## 2) Non-signatories undertaking nuclear activities

Israel, India and Pakistan have developed nuclear weapons capabilities and are not interested in joining. North Korea has withdrawn from the NPT.

States developing nuclear technology outside of the framework of the NPT undermine the effectiveness of the non-proliferation regime and the IAEA to regulate the spread of nuclear technology.

As the UN High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change reported in early December 2004:

*"The nuclear non proliferation regime is now at risk because of lack of compliance with existing commitments, withdrawal or threat of withdrawal from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to escape those commitments, a changing international security environment and the diffusion of technology. We are approaching a point at which the erosion of the non-proliferation regime could become irreversible and result in a cascade of proliferation"* (<http://www.un.org/secureworld>)

## EU activities

The EU has a significant role to play as all EU Member States are signed up to the NPT and Britain and France are nuclear weapons states.

### **The EU Strategy against the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction**

As part of implementing the European Security, adopted by the European Council in December 2003, the Council also adopted an EU Strategy against the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction to address the threat posed by WMD.

One of the key measures of this EU WMD Strategy is firm engagement to promote the universalisation and reinforcement of multilateral agreements to prevent the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery.

The other key measures of the EU WMD Strategy are the reinforcement of export controls, within and outside the EU, and the criminalisation of activities which contribute to the proliferation of WMD and WMD-related materials (a declaration has been adopted by the European Council).

The EU Strategy against the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction can be found at:  
<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/03/st15/st15708.en03.pdf>

### **European Parliament Resolution on Nuclear Disarmament (February 2004)**

In its Plenary Session on Thursday the 26th February 2004 the Parliament adopted a resolution on Nuclear Disarmament (European Parliament resolution on nuclear disarmament: Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference in 2005 - EU preparation of third NPT PrepCom (New York, 26 April - 7 May 2004).

The text:

*"Recalls that the EU's objective is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and expects the declared and undeclared nuclear weapon states to engage actively with this issue and to make further progress towards reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons;"*

and

*"Calls upon the EU and its Member States - in a spirit of 'effective multilateralism' and solidarity and in pursuit of the EU Strategy Against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction - to form a common front at the NPT PrepCom and the NPT Review Conference in 2005, and make a positive contribution to the discussions; urges that their statements attach special importance to new initiatives on nuclear disarmament and the revitalisation of the UN Conference on Disarmament"*

Resolution text can be found at:

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/seance\\_pleniere/textes\\_deposes/prop\\_res\\_commune/2004\\_P5/0101/P5\\_RC%282004%290101\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/seance_pleniere/textes_deposes/prop_res_commune/2004_P5/0101/P5_RC%282004%290101_EN.pdf)

## **Supporting the Mayors for Peace and the 20:20 vision**

The 'Mayors for Peace Emergency Campaign' calls for the full implementation of the NPT through a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) by 2020. A model of this treaty is already available in draft form (available online at <http://www.lcnp.org/mnwc/index.htm>).

The timetable for this vision (as outlined in "As Time Goes By" - An Annual Assessment of Our Nuclear World, 2004) is as follows:

**2005:** Agree to open negotiations on a NWC

**2008:** Complete negotiations on a NWC

**2009:** Parliaments, congresses and diets ratify the NWC in country capitals around the world with appropriate ceremonies

**2010:** NWC enters into force, becoming the law of the planet

**2011-2020:** Begin and complete the elimination of nuclear weapons, which includes the following steps: make public declarations of all nuclear weapons, material, facilities, and delivery vehicles; remove targeting coordinates and navigational information from all nuclear weapon delivery systems; disable and dealert all nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles; designate for decommissioning and closure or conversion all nuclear weapons testing, research, and production facilities; stop producing proscribed nuclear material; stop all nuclear activities; stop producing nuclear weapon components and equipment; stop funding for nuclear weapons research; submit plans for fully implementing all obligations of the NWC.

As the Mayor of Hiroshima said in his testimony to the Foreign Policy Committee:

*"Europe has an historic role to play in leading humanity toward a nuclear-weapon-free future."*

*"Ideally, European nations or the European Union as a whole could do at the multilateral and international level what Mayors for Peace is doing at the city and national level, recruiting and campaigning actively to achieve that goal by 2020."*

## Proposals for action by the European Parliament

Work towards the EU and its Member States presenting a united multilateral and pro-disarmament position at the upcoming NPT Review Conference by;

- Reinforcing the Resolution adopted by the Parliament in February 2004 supporting the NPT and the elimination of nuclear weapons.
- Putting forward a resolution in support of the creation and adoption of a Nuclear Weapons Convention by all countries.

## Definitions

**'Vertical proliferation'** - the technological development of nuclear weapons technology

**'Horizontal proliferation'** - the spread of nuclear weapons technology to other actors (state and non-state)