

Toward A World Without Nuclear Weapons

2026 Joint Media Project

From Remembrance to **Responsibility**,
From Deterrence to **Disarmament**,
From Conflict to **Cooperation**.



Remembering the Past



Pursuing Justice and Responsibility



Reducing Nuclear Risks



Advancing Dialogue and Diplomacy



Strengthening Cooperation



Building a Sustainable and Peaceful Future



CREDITS

The news articles, analyses and opinions in this report were published between April 2025 and March 2026 on the project website <https://www.nuclear-abolition.com/>, a joint media project of INPS Japan and Soka Gakkai International in consultative status with ECOSOC.

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This multilingual publishing platform and knowledge database connects readers around the world with the lives and voices conveyed in its articles. By encouraging reflection and action in daily life, it helps transform the ideals of peace and coexistence into a living reality.

PREFACE

*By Mr. Katsuhiro Asagiri,
President, International Press Syndicate Japan*



This Report represents the latest installment of the Joint Media Project conducted by International Press Syndicate Japan ([INPS Japan](#)) in partnership with Soka Gakkai International ([SGI](#)), a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Covering the period from April 2025 to March 2026, it marks the 17th year of this collaborative initiative. The articles in this volume were written and produced by INPS Japan and its international media partners, including Inter Press Service, the London Post, Nepali Times, and other collaborators, or selected for republication because of their relevance to the project's aims. They reflect our shared commitment to advancing global awareness, dialogue, and action toward a world free of nuclear weapons. All articles were published on INPS Japan's dedicated website, *Toward A Nuclear Free World* (<https://www.nuclear-abolition.com/>), launched in 2009 as both a knowledge database and an advocacy tool. The website promotes awareness of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, amplifies the voices of the voiceless — [the Global Hibakusha](#) — and stresses the urgent need for the complete abolition of nuclear arms. Freely accessible throughout the year, it remains an open resource for all committed to peace, disarmament, and human security. The reporting period was marked by a grave deterioration in the global nuclear order. Most consequentially, the war against Iran by Israel and the United States, including strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities at Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan, carried implications far beyond the Middle East. The International Atomic Energy Agency confirmed that these sites had been hit, underscoring the danger of nuclear facilities becoming targets in armed conflict. The ramifications for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) are especially serious. Iran, as a non-nuclear-weapon state party to the NPT, has long been subject to IAEA safeguards and scrutiny. The use of force against safeguarded nuclear facilities risks weakening the central bargain of the NPT: that non-nuclear-weapon states accept restraints and verification in exchange for access to peaceful nuclear technology, progress on disarmament by nuclear-weapon states, and a security environment in which compliance is not punished by attack. If military action is seen as a substitute for diplomacy and verification, the credibility of the non-proliferation regime itself will suffer. This danger is not confined to Iran. The precedent of attacking nuclear infrastructure in the name of non-proliferation may deepen mistrust among states already skeptical of the nuclear order. In Northeast Asia, it may reinforce North Korea's claim that nuclear weapons are essential to regime survival. In South Asia, where India

and Pakistan remain locked in recurrent crises, it may strengthen the perceived value of nuclear deterrence. In Europe, Russia's continuing war against Ukraine has kept nuclear threats central to security debates. Across the Global South, the crisis may further erode confidence in a system seen by many as imposing strict obligations on non-nuclear-weapon states while allowing nuclear-armed states and their allies to retain exceptional privileges.

These developments come as the arms-control architecture is already under severe strain. Nuclear-armed states continue to modernize their arsenals, while the expiration of New START in February 2026 has left the United States and Russia without legally binding limits on their strategic nuclear forces. The 2026 NPT Review Conference convenes in this highly polarized environment, with the regime's credibility under renewed pressure. Meanwhile, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) continues to provide an essential humanitarian and normative framework, challenging the legitimacy of nuclear deterrence and placing victims, survivors, and affected communities at the center of the disarmament agenda. The year also carried profound moral significance. The 80th anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, together with the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Nihon Hidankyo, renewed global attention to the testimony of the Hibakusha and their lifelong appeal that no one should ever again suffer the catastrophe of nuclear weapons. Their message remains the moral foundation of all serious efforts toward nuclear abolition. The articles in this volume examine these challenges from governmental, intergovernmental, civil society, humanitarian, and ethical perspectives. They address the erosion of arms control, nuclear modernization, humanitarian consequences, regional wars, and the urgent need to defend and strengthen international law. Above all, they remind us that nuclear disarmament is not merely a diplomatic agenda. It is a human imperative. To maximize the project's global reach, all articles have been translated into Japanese, and many into Arabic, Spanish, German, Turkish, Italian, Hindi, Norwegian, Swedish, Indonesian, Thai, Malay, Chinese, Korean, and Russian. By making these perspectives available across languages and regions, we hope to strengthen a global conversation rooted in empathy, historical memory, and shared responsibility. I express my sincere gratitude to Soka Gakkai International for its sustained partnership with INPS Japan in pursuing this vital goal. Our correspondents around the world are greatly encouraged to know that among our engaged readers are many SGI members whose deep interest in this theme is inspired by one of SGI's fundamental precepts, *Dōku* — “shared suffering” or “empathetic resonance.” This spirit calls on us to stand in solidarity with all those affected by the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and to transform awareness into action. Finally, I extend heartfelt thanks to our correspondents for their invaluable contributions; to Dr. Karen Hallberg, Secretary General of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, for her foreword; and to Ms. Chie Sunada, Director of Disarmament and Human Rights at the SGI Peace Center, for her message of support. It is my hope that this compilation will inspire further dialogue, deepen public understanding, and strengthen collective action among states, international organizations, civil society, faith communities, educators, journalists, and youth advocates toward the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

MESSAGE

By Ms. Chie Sunada

Director, Disarmament and Human Rights, Soka Gakkai International Peace Center



The year 2025 marked eighty years since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, while the international landscape is more volatile and fragmented than at any point since the Cold War.

In an era defined by the conflict in Ukraine and escalating instability across the Middle East, the global security architecture is under unprecedented strain. The rhetoric of nuclear deployment and the threat of attacks on nuclear infrastructure have

moved from the realm of theory to immediate concern. We face a profound systemic crisis: a world trapped in the logic of "nuclear deterrence," where national security is anchored to the threat of total annihilation. Realism dictates that as long as these weapons exist, the

probability of human extinction through miscalculation or intent remains a permanent variable.

To disrupt this dangerous status quo, Soka Gakkai International (SGI) has prioritized grassroots disarmament education and awareness raising activities. A cornerstone of this effort is the exhibition "Portraits of Hibakusha— 80 Years Remembered." Conveying the reality of the atomic bombings through the power of art, the exhibition features the portraits of 52 *hibakusha* (atomic bomb survivors) from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, alongside their enduring messages of peace.

During this exhibition, I observed a significant moment of individual transformation. A 14-year-old student, initially unfamiliar with the historical specifics of the bombings, was visibly shaken by the evidence of the devastation. However, her reaction moved beyond mere emotional distress. She demonstrated a remarkable level of agency—returning to the beginning of the exhibition to meticulously record the testimonies of all 52 survivors.

This was not an act of passive consumption, but of proactive ownership. Her subsequent essay, published in a municipal booklet, represents the transition from a bystander to a stakeholder. This

evolution underscores the functional value of education: it converts historical data into a commitment to future stability.

If we are to move beyond the current impasse, we must redefine the core of disarmament education. Keiko Ogura, a survivor and advocate, articulates a concept that functions as a necessary counterbalance to technical security doctrines:

The most vital element of disarmament education is the imagination to feel the pain of others. If a child is weeping across the ocean, can we feel those tears as our own? If a nuclear weapon were to fall here, what would become of our own beloved families? Fostering large numbers of individuals who can imagine the concrete reality of such suffering is, in truth, the ultimate deterrent to ensure these weapons are never used.

For the realist, these words represent the most impregnable barrier against the triggering of a nuclear launch. Behind the sterile metrics of

security frameworks are the human lives that bear the ultimate cost. Fostering a global citizenry capable of visualizing the granular reality of nuclear impact is a strategic necessity for preventing the "rational" escalation to nuclear use.

Regardless of the current geopolitical drift, we cannot allow the prospect of progress to be eclipsed by fatalism. The capacity to alter the trajectory of history does not reside solely in the military capabilities of nation-states, but in the collective will of the individual. Education is the primary mechanism for cultivating this will and forging the solidarity required for long-term stability.

The path toward a world free of nuclear weapons is steep and fraught with complexity, yet it is a strategic imperative we must pursue. We will continue to prioritize individual dialogue and grassroots action, driven by the conviction that human agency remains the most powerful force for transforming global reality.



FOREWARD

By Prof. Karen Hallberg

Secretary General, Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs



Remember Your Humanity

Eighty years since the dawn of the nuclear age, which began with the first nuclear test in New Mexico, USA, and with the tragic atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, humanity faces a deep existential crisis. This crisis is much more unstable and unpredictable than the gravest Cold War confrontations. In 1955, when there were only three states with nuclear weapons and the first thermonuclear weapon was being developed, the Russell-Einstein Manifesto posed a profound question: “Shall we put an end to the human race; or shall mankind renounce war?” Today, with 9 states

possessing nuclear weapons and several thousand thermonuclear devices, this question becomes an ultimate choice.

The [Pugwash Conferences](#) is deeply concerned about the deterioration of the international system, in which the threat and use of force has become preferable to diplomacy. Current military confrontations involving nuclear-weapon states pose an existential risk to civilization, a risk that can be drastically increased by a new wave of nuclear proliferation.

With the expiration of the New START between the United States and the Russian Federation, the international community has officially entered an era without a binding, verifiable agreement to constrain the world’s two largest nuclear arsenals. For the first time in more than fifty years, dating back to the era of the 1972 SALT I, the two preeminent nuclear powers are operating without the essential guardrails that provided control, stability, predictability and transparency to the global order and were instrumental in reducing the total number of nuclear warheads from around 70,000 in the mid-eighties to current ~12,200 (or a yield larger than 146,000 Hiroshima-bombs equivalent!). However, despite historic progress in reducing

global nuclear stockpiles, the current trajectory suggests a troubling reversal of those hard-won security gains in times of a resurgent nuclear arms race, heightened global tensions and military confrontations involving nuclear-armed states.

The ongoing expansion and modernization of the nuclear arsenals of most nuclear-armed states is adding new pressures to global strategic stability, particularly in the absence of any arms control dialogue. These developments reflect the growing salience of nuclear weapons in international security, undermining global non-proliferation and disarmament efforts, in particular, Art. VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which has definitely constrained the spread of nuclear weapons for more than half a century and is now under severe strain.

At the same time, the growing support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons reflects the determination of many states and civil society actors to advance the goal of the complete abolition of nuclear weapons. While differences remain regarding pathways to disarmament, the Treaty has reinforced the humanitarian imperative of eliminating nuclear weapons and has helped keep the vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world firmly on the international agenda.

Recent discussions about extending nuclear deterrence arrangements within Europe to additional non-nuclear-weapon states, together with emerging political voices advocating in favor of nuclear weapons in East Asia and other regions, risk igniting a new, uncontrollable wave of proliferation to safeguard their own survival.

Equally troubling are irresponsible threats by some nuclear-weapon states to resume nuclear testing. Such rhetoric contributes to a potentially dangerous escalation and threatens the continuation of the longstanding moratorium on nuclear explosive testing established in anticipation of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which still awaits ratification by key states.

The current situation poses great challenges ahead, which can and should be addressed immediately, without delay:

- Nuclear-weapon states should reconfirm their Joint Statement issued on January 2022 on preventing nuclear war and avoiding a nuclear arms race sending a clear signal on the political will to the diminish the role played by nuclear weapons in international security. In doing so, they would also reaffirm their obligations under Article VI of the NPT, which commits all parties to pursue negotiations in good faith toward ending the nuclear arms race and achieving nuclear disarmament.

- Nuclear-armed states must recognize their responsibility to identify areas of common interest and engage in serious diplomatic efforts aimed at revitalizing multilateral arms control negotiations.

- All nuclear-armed states should reiterate their voluntary commitment to a moratorium on nuclear explosive testing and take the necessary steps to secure the prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Any resumption of nuclear testing would represent a dangerous step toward renewed arms racing and strategic instability.

- Nuclear-armed states should strengthen negative security assurances by reaffirming that they will neither use nor threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-armed states, adopt no-first-use commitments, and work toward making these assurances legally binding.

- Strengthening the verification and monitoring role of the International Atomic Energy Agency will remain essential for ensuring compliance transparency, and confidence within the global non-proliferation regime, including non-nuclear-weapon states.

- Consolidate nuclear weapons free zones, in particular establish one in the Middle East, as agreed at the 1995 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences.

These measures could serve as practical confidence-building and risk-reduction steps, helping to increase global stability and preventing a spiraling "nuclear breakout". They could also serve as a diplomatic bridge towards a more cooperative, comprehensive and modernized future security architecture capable of addressing modern challenges including artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, hypersonic weapons, missile defense systems, space-based military capabilities and autonomous weapons.

Raising public and political awareness of the existential risks posed by nuclear weapons is of utmost importance, as stated in the recent [Declaration of the Nobel Laureate Assembly](#), "we call on scientists, academics, civil society, and communities of faith to help create the necessary pressure on global leaders to implement nuclear risk reduction measures." The responsibility lies with us all. Let us be inspired and guided by the closing words of the Russell-Einstein Manifesto: "We appeal as human beings to human beings: remember your humanity, and forget the rest."

As Landmark Treaty Expires, No Binding Limits on US-Russia Nuclear Arsenals

By Thalif Deen

UNITED NATIONS (IPS)

– When the nuclear Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) between the US and Russia expired last week, it ended a historic era— but triggered widespread speculation about the future.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said “February 5 was a grave moment for international peace and security”.

For the first time in more than half a century, he pointed out, “we face a world without any binding limits on the strategic nuclear arsenals of the Russian Federation and the United States of America – the two States that possess the overwhelming majority of the global stockpile of nuclear weapons.”



US President Barack Obama delivers his first major speech, stating a commitment to seek peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons, in front of thousands in Prague, Czech Republic, April 5, 2009. Credit: Official White House Photo by Pete Souza

US President Donald Trump dismissed the termination of the treaty rather sarcastically when he told the New York Times last month: “if it expires, it expires”— and denounced the expiring treaty as “a badly negotiated deal”.

“We will do a better agreement”, he promised, adding that China, which has one of the world’s fastest growing nuclear arsenals, “and other parties” should be part of any future treaty.

The Chinese, according to the Times, “have made clear they are not interested”.

Currently, the world’s nine nuclear powers are the US, UK, Russia, France and China—all permanent members of the Security Council—plus India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea.

Collectively, they possess an estimated 12,100 to 12,500 nuclear warheads, with Russia and the US owning nearly 90% of the total even while all nine are actively modernizing their arsenals.

Jonathan Granoff, President, Global Security Institute told IPS the START Treaty should be extended at least a year by formal or informal means. Is that as good as obtaining a new treaty that would include China as the US administration wants? No.

“Is it as good as fulfilling legally required steps such as adherence to the International Court of Justice’s (ICJ) unanimous ruling to negotiate the universal elimination of nuclear weapons or the fulfillment of the promise of nuclear disarmament embodied in Article 6 of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT)? No”.

However, argued Granoff, doing nothing is asserting that a modest threat reducing easily obtained step now should not be taken because there are better ways forward. A modest positive step is no impediment to moving in other desired manners.

Fully terminating START communicates to the entire world that the US and Russia are so diplomatically inept that they cannot be trusted to continue to hold the entire world hostage to annihilation by holding thousands of first-use-ready nuclear weapons over everyone’s heads without adequate reasonable restraint, said Granoff.

The arguments being put forth as to why nothing can be done are inadequate.

First, the US argues that a new arrangement, a new treaty, is needed to bring China into the fold of restraint, he said.

“A modest step of extending START for a year by mutual presidential decrees while new negotiations take place does not negate creating a new treaty that would include China.”

Second, the arguments used to rationalize the new arms race fail to consider the folly of producing more accurate, usable, and powerful nuclear weapons”, declared Granoff.

Guterres pointed out the dissolution of decades of achievement could not come at a worse time – the risk of a nuclear weapon being used is the highest in decades.

“Yet even in this moment of uncertainty, we must search for hope. This is an opportunity to reset and create an arms control regime fit for a rapidly evolving context.”

“I welcome that the Presidents of both States have made clear that they appreciate the destabilizing impact of a nuclear arms race and the need to prevent the return to a world of unchecked nuclear proliferation.

“The world now looks to the Russian Federation and the United States to translate words into action. I urge both States to return to the negotiating table without delay and to agree upon a successor framework that restores verifiable limits, reduces risks, and strengthens our common security’, said Guterres.

In a statement released last week, Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), a global network of legislators working to achieve a nuclear weapons-free world, said the importance of the New START treaty is hard to overstate.

“As other nuclear treaties have been abrogated in recent years, this was the only deal left with notification, inspection, verification and treaty compliance mechanisms between Russia and the US. Between them, they possess 87% of the world’s nuclear weapons.”

The demise of the treaty will bring a definitive and alarming end to nuclear restraint between the two powers. It may very well accelerate the global nuclear arms race, PNND warned.

This was one of the key reasons that on January 27, 2026, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists reset the Doomsday Clock to [85 Seconds to Midnight](#).

Last year, PNND Co-President Senator Markey introduced [draft legislation](#) into the US Senate urging the government to [negotiate new post-START agreements with Russia and China](#). The legislation is

supported by a number of other Senators and by a [companion bill](#) in the House of Representatives. But this seems to have fallen on deaf ears in the Trump Administration.

Granoff, providing a deeper analysis, told IPS the scientific data makes clear that a full-scale nuclear war between the US and Russia would annihilate humanity and that a limited nuclear exchange of less than 2% of the world’s arsenals would put around 5 million tons of soot into the stratosphere leading billions of deaths and the devastation of modern civilization everywhere.

“Realism reveals that the alleged need to duplicate the arsenals of adversary nations is not needed for deterrence. Realism also reveals that there is actually little to no meaningful difference between a nation having 600 (as China does now) or over 1400 deployed nuclear weapons, mirroring the US and Russia, or 30,000 nuclear weapons as Russia and the US each had at the height of the last arms race”.

“The reality is that devastation globally of a small portion of the world’s nuclear arsenals would be unambiguously unacceptable to any sane person. We could say that realism informs us that we have moved from Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) to Self-Assured Destruction (SAD). The fact is that if any of the 9 states with the weapons were to use several hundred nuclear weapons that nation itself would also be devastated. MAD today reveals a new acronym, SAD.”

Meanwhile, a posting in the US State Department website reads:

Treaty Structure: The Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, also known as the New START Treaty, enhances U.S. national security by placing verifiable limits on all Russian deployed intercontinental-range nuclear weapons. The United States and the Russian Federation had agreed to extend the treaty through February 4, 2026.

Strategic Offensive Limits: The New START Treaty entered into force on February 5, 2011. Under the treaty, the United States and the Russian Federation had seven years to meet the treaty's central limits on strategic offensive arms (by February 5, 2018) and are then obligated to maintain those limits for as long as the treaty remains in force.

Aggregate Limits

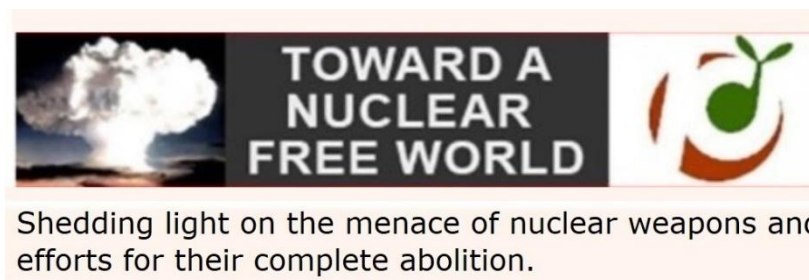
Both the United States and the Russian Federation met the central limits of the New START Treaty by February 5, 2018, and have stayed at or below them ever since. Those limits are:

Aggregate Limits

Both the United States and the Russian Federation met the central limits of the New START Treaty by February 5, 2018, and have stayed at or below them ever since. Those limits are:

- 700 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), deployed submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and deployed heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments;
- 1,550 nuclear warheads on deployed ICBMs, deployed SLBMs, and deployed heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments (each such heavy bomber is counted as one warhead toward this limit);
- 800 deployed and non-deployed ICBM launchers, SLBM launchers, and heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments.

『INPS Japan/IPS UN Bureau Report』



To what Extent Are Tokayev's Concerns About Increasing Nuclear Threats Justified?

By Raza Syed

London (London Post) –

As an Journalist in international security and Central Asian geopolitics, viewing the issue through Kazakhstan's lens—a nation scarred by Soviet-era nuclear testing at Semipalatinsk and the voluntary relinquishment of the world's fourth-largest nuclear arsenal in the 1990s, I assess President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's warnings on escalating nuclear dangers as profoundly justified.

Kazakhstan's history, marked by over 450 nuclear detonations that inflicted enduring environmental devastation, health crises, and social trauma, underpins a moral authority in advocating non-proliferation. Tokayev has consistently highlighted these risks, notably in his September 2025 address to the UN General Assembly, where he



Image Credit: akorda.kz

decried collapsing arms control treaties and called for high-level dialogue among nuclear powers to avert catastrophe. In December 2025, at the United Nations University in Tokyo, he reiterated that global security cannot rely on nuclear deterrence, emphasizing Kazakhstan's shared trauma with Japan and urging multilateral action to reduce nuclear threats. From Astana's perspective, these concerns are not alarmist but rooted in proximity to nuclear giants like Russia

and China, economic interdependence, and a commitment to treaties such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.



Bulletin President and CEO Alexandra Bell moves the minute hand on the Domsday Clock. (Image by Jamie Christiani)

The global nuclear landscape validates Tokayev's alarms, with tangible escalations in 2025 amplifying risks of miscalculation or deliberate use. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) 2025 Yearbook reports nine nuclear-armed states possessing approximately 12,241 warheads, of which 9,614 are in military stockpiles, all undergoing modernization amid weakened arms control. This inventory, coupled with rising geopolitical tensions, underscores a shift from post-Cold War reductions to a new arms race. The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists advanced its Domsday

Clock to 85 seconds to midnight in January 2026—the closest ever—citing nuclear risks, including veiled threats in ongoing conflicts like Ukraine. For Kazakhstan, situated as a bridge between East and West, this trajectory threatens regional stability, echoing the Semipalatinsk legacy where radiation poisoned land and people for generations. Tokayev's advocacy, including proposals for an International Agency for Biological Safety and Security, reflects a pragmatic response to these verifiable trends, prioritizing trust-building over brinkmanship.

A primary justification lies in the collapse of the arms control architecture, exemplified by the impending expiration of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) on February 5, 2026—the last binding limit on U.S. and Russian strategic arsenals. Russia suspended participation in 2023, halting inspections and data exchanges, while the U.S. countered similarly; Putin's September 2025 offer for a one-year voluntary extension of limits remains unaddressed, leaving no framework for verification. This erosion, following the 2019 demise of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the Open Skies Treaty, fosters opacity and heightens escalation risks. Logically, without transparency, mutual suspicions drive modernization: SIPRI notes all nuclear states are upgrading arsenals, with Russia and the U.S. holding nearly 90 percent of global warheads.

From Kazakhstan's vantage, this disintegration revives Cold War instabilities in its neighborhood, undermining the security assurances

that prompted its disarmament. Tokayev's call for renewed dialogue, as voiced at the Astana International Forum in 2025, addresses this void, warning that over 13,000 warheads pose risks of accidental or escalatory use amid strained superpower relations. Kazakhstan's

experience as a post-Soviet state reliant on multilateral norms makes this breakdown acutely threatening, potentially exposing Central Asia to fallout from proxy conflicts or nuclear posturing.

Russia's nuclear coercion in the Ukraine war provides a stark, fact-based example of justified concern. Entering its fourth year in 2026, the conflict has featured persistent nuclear signaling, with Putin invoking tactical weapons to deter Western aid and deploying nonstrategic warheads to Belarus—a NPT non-nuclear state—in 2023, expanding Russia's nuclear perimeter. In 2025, rhetoric intensified: Russia tested a nuclear-powered cruise missile in October, discussed resuming nuclear testing at Novaya Zemlya, and revised its doctrine to lower the threshold for nuclear use against conventional threats supported by nuclear powers. Drone incursions into NATO



Group photo of delegates. Photo credit: Akorda

territory heightened European alerts, while U.S. assessments note Russia's aim to inflict "unacceptable damage" amid perceived existential threats.

Logically, this normalizes nuclear intimidation, eroding the taboo against use—scholar Nina

Tannenwald argues the war has "severely damaged" normative constraints. For Kazakhstan, sharing a 7,600-kilometer border with Russia and tied through the Collective Security Treaty Organization, this is existential: any escalation could trigger radiological fallout reminiscent of Semipalatinsk, disrupting energy partnerships and neutral diplomacy. Tokayev's warnings, including at the 8th Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, align with expert views that nuclear conflict probability is at decades-high levels, justifying Kazakhstan's push for de-escalation.

China's rapid nuclear expansion offers a second compelling illustration. By mid-2024, China's arsenal exceeded 600 warheads, up from around 300 in 2019, with projections surpassing 1,000 by 2030 and continued growth to 2035, including a full triad of delivery systems



Central Asia Nuclear Free Zones

and new silos at sites like Lop Nur. This buildup, per Pentagon reports, diversifies capabilities amid great-power competition, potentially accelerating a triangular arms race with the U.S. and Russia. Logically, enhancements provoke countermeasures, raising accidental escalation odds—evident in 2025 Asia-Pacific tensions and India-Pakistan frictions. Kazakhstan, bordering China over 1,700 kilometers, views this as a direct peril: Sino-U.S. or Sino-Russian strains could spill over, complicating its multi-vector foreign policy and uranium exports. Tokayev's emphasis on complete disarmament, as in his Tokyo lecture, counters this, advocating steps like the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty's entry into force to halt testing preparations. China's proliferation activities, including missile tech exports to Iran and North Korea, further amplify regional instability, validating Kazakhstan's zero-tolerance stance forged from its nuclear past.

Kazakhstan's dual role as a disarmament advocate and peaceful nuclear energy developer bolsters the credibility of Tokayev's position. Hosting the IAEA Low-Enriched Uranium Bank and promoting nuclear-free zones, it exemplifies security through cooperation, not deterrence. Yet, domestic plans for nuclear power plants demand robust safeguards, reflecting a balanced approach amid global militarization. This perspective—victim-turned-vanguard—positions Kazakhstan to warn that ignoring these trends risks a return to the brinkmanship that once ravaged its land.

In sum, Tokayev's concerns are not only justified but urgent, grounded in historical scars, empirical data, and strategic vulnerabilities. The erosion of treaties, Russia's coercive tactics in Ukraine, and China's arsenal surge provide concrete evidence of rising threats, demanding multilateral revival. As a middle power in a fracturing world, Kazakhstan urges rationality: resuscitate dialogue, reinforce the NPT, and invest in peace over arms. Dismissing these warnings as mere diplomacy overlooks the headlines of 2025 and the ticking Doomsday Clock—humanity's obligation is to heed and act, lest the perils Tokayev foresees become irreversible.

『INPS Japan/London Post』



The World's Ongoing Conflicts Underline Nuclear and Non-Nuclear States

By Thalif Deen



Injured civilians, having escaped the raging inferno, gathered on a pavement west of Miyuki-bashi in Hiroshima, Japan, at about 11 a.m. on 6 August 1945. Credit: UN Photo/Yoshit Matsushige

On the 80th anniversary, which was commemorated in August 2025, Izumi Nakamitsu, UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, said: “We remember those who perished. We stand with the families who carry their memory,” as she delivered the UN Secretary-General's message.

She paid tribute to the hibakusha – the term for those who survived Hiroshima and the atomic bombing of Nagasaki – “whose voices have become a moral force for peace. While their numbers grow smaller each year, their testimony — and their eternal message of peace — will never leave us,” she said.

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) – The two current ongoing conflicts, which have claimed the lives of hundreds and thousands of people, are between nuclear and non-nuclear states: Russia vs Ukraine and Israel vs Palestine, while some of the potential nuclear vs non-nuclear conflicts include China vs Taiwan, North Korea vs South Korea and the United States vs Iran (Venezuela, Mexico, Colombia, Cuba and Denmark).

The growing list now includes another potential conflict: nuclear China vs non-nuclear Japan is the world's only country devastated by US atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 which killed over 150,000 to 246,000, mostly civilians.

A statement last month by Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi warned that her country could intervene militarily if China were to attack Taiwan—a statement that has the potential for a new conflict in Asia.

According to the New York Times, Beijing has “responded furiously,” asserting that self-governing Taiwan is an integral part of Chinese territory. The government has also urged millions of tourists to avoid Japan, has restricted seafood imports and increased military patrols.

Meanwhile, amidst rising military tension, the Japanese government has called for a snap general election on February 8, to seek a fresh public mandate for the new administration.

In an article titled “An Anxious Nation Restarts One of its Biggest Nuclear Plants,” the Times said on January 22 that “Tokyo Electric Power (TEPCO)—the same utility that operated the Fukushima plant—has restarted the first reactor, Unit 6, at its Kashiwazaki-Kariwa complex, one of the world’s largest nuclear facilities.”

Before 2011, nuclear power provided about 30 percent of Japan’s electricity, the Times pointed out.

According to the Stockholm Peace Research Institute, Japan’s military budget in 2024 had grown to the 10th largest in the world. China’s military budget has also been growing, in 2024 being second only to that of the United States.

Jackie Cabasso, Executive Director of the Western States Legal Foundation, Oakland, California, and North American Coordinator for “Mayors for Peace,” told IPS that Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi’s recent statement that an armed attack on Taiwan by China could constitute an “existential threat” to Japan is very worrying indeed.

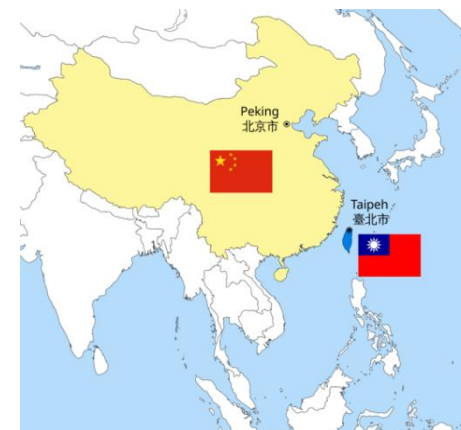
In 1967, she said, Japan’s then–Prime Minister Eisaku Sato set out the Three Non-Nuclear Principles—of not possessing, not producing,

and not permitting the introduction of nuclear weapons—which were formally adopted by the House of Representatives in 1971.

“However, Japan’s commitment to these Principles has been called into question over the years, and it is widely believed that Japan has the capability to rapidly produce nuclear weapons, should the decision be made to do so.”

Beijing is ratcheting up the rhetorical heat. Whether true or not, a recent report by the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association and the Nuclear Strategic Planning Research Institute, a think tank affiliated with the China National Nuclear Corporation, alleges that Japan is engaged in a secret nuclear weapons program and poses a serious threat to world peace. Meanwhile, China is rapidly modernizing and increasing the size of its own nuclear arsenal, said Cabasso.

“Japan, as the only country in the world to have experienced the use of nuclear weapons in war, has the unique moral standing to be a champion for dialogue and diplomacy, peace, and nuclear disarmament.”



An illustrative map highlighting the intricate political history between the People’s Republic of China and Republic of China (Taiwan)

Japan and China's leadership—and for that matter, all world leaders—should listen to the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who on January 20 issued a Joint Appeal on behalf of the 8,560 members of Mayors for Peace in 166 countries and territories, declaring, “We urge all policymakers to make every possible diplomatic effort to pursue the peaceful resolution of conflicts through dialogue and to take concrete steps toward the realization of a peaceful world free from nuclear weapons.”

Dr. M.V. Ramana, Professor and Simons Chair in Disarmament, Global and Human Security and Director pro tem, School of Public Policy and Global Affairs at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, told IPS even without nuclear weapons being utilized, the use of military force in Taiwan would be disastrous for global security, and especially for the people of Taiwan.

“Any resolution of the dispute over Taiwan should follow two fundamental principles: it should be settled through dialogue and discussion, and it should prioritize the wishes of the inhabitants of Taiwan. Finally, all parties should avoid provocative remarks,” he declared.

The new developing story also figured at a recent UN press briefing.

Question: *We know that there is a long-standing policy of Japan, called the three non-nuclear principles, which basically says that Japan shall neither possess nor manufacture nuclear weapons nor*

shall it permit their introduction into Japanese territory. But currently, the Japanese Government is under a discussion of revision of some of those security documents, including this policy, which draws quite anger from people from Hiroshima and Nagasaki and some of the Nobel Peace Prize winners. What's the position of the UN?

UN Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric: Look, I think the Secretary-General's position on denuclearization has been clear and he has stated it a number of times. Obviously, Member States will set whatever policy they wish to set. What is important for us is that the current tensions between the People's Republic of China and Japan be dealt through dialogue so as to lower the tensions that we're currently seeing... I think the Secretary-General's position on denuclearization and non-proliferation is well known and has been unchanged.

At a party leaders' debate last November in Japan, Tetsuo Saito, representative of the New Komei Party, which was founded in 1964 by the late Dr. Daisaku Ikeda,



At a party leaders' debate last November in Japan, Tetsuo Saito questioned Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi in the Diet about the government's stance on the Three Non-Nuclear Principles and Japan's security policy.

Source: Komeito

leader of Japan's [Soka Gakkai](#) Buddhist movement, questioned Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi in the Diet about the government's stance on the Three Non-Nuclear Principles and Japan's security policy.

He criticized remarks by a senior government official suggesting Japan should possess nuclear weapons, calling them *contrary to Japan's post-war policy and damaging to diplomatic and security efforts*.

He emphasized that the principles—not to possess, not to produce, and not to permit nuclear weapons on Japanese soil—and [Japan's obligations under](#) the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty are fundamental and must remain unassailable.

- Saito stated that the Takaichi administration's position leaves room for ambiguity, especially when Takaichi's replies were perceived as non-committal about maintaining the principles.
- [He expressed](#) concern that this ambiguity could open the door to future revision and said Komeito will continue to press the government to uphold the principles without qualification in future Diet sessions.
- In December 2025, Saito reiterated in public remarks that the Three Non-Nuclear Principles and Japan's policy against nuclear weapons should be preserved.
- He has [urged the government](#) to reaffirm this commitment clearly to both domestic and international audiences and to

listen to hibakusha (atomic-bomb survivors) and civil society voices advocating nuclear abolition.

Elaborating further, Cabasso said that given Japan's brutal invasion of China during World War II and China's growing threats to reclaim Taiwan, dangerous long-simmering tensions between the two countries have reemerged. In an increasingly unstable and unpredictable geopolitical world, Japan and China's war of words is a train wreck waiting to happen.

Article 9 of Japan's 1947 Peace Constitution, imposed on Japan by the United States in an act of victor's justice, states, "the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right and the threat of use of force as a means of settling disputes," and armed forces "will never be maintained."

However, these provisions have been eroding in the 21st century, with Japan in 2004 sending its Self-Defense Forces out of area – to Iraq – for the first time since World War II. And in 2014, then [Prime Minister Shinzo Abe](#) reinterpreted Article 9, allowing Japan to engage in military action if one of its allies were to be attacked.

The following year, she pointed out, the Japanese [Diet](#) enacted a series of laws allowing the Self-Defense Forces to provide material support to allies engaged in combat internationally in an "existential crisis situation" for Japan. The justification was that failing to defend or support an ally would weaken alliances and endanger Japan.

『INPS Japan/IPS UN Bureau Report』

The History of Israel's Nuclear Ambiguity: how it affects the region

By Roman Yanushevsky



Image: INPS Japan

For more than six decades, Israel has maintained one of the most unusual nuclear postures in the world. While it is widely regarded by experts and intelligence agencies as a nuclear-armed state, Israel has never officially confirmed or denied possessing nuclear weapons.

Tel Aviv/Tokyo (INPS Japan) – For more than six decades, Israel has maintained one of the world's most unusual nuclear postures.

Although many experts and intelligence assessments regard Israel as a nuclear-armed state, it has never officially confirmed or denied possessing nuclear weapons.

This deliberate silence—often called nuclear ambiguity, or *amimut*—has become a central pillar of Israel's national security doctrine and a defining feature of the Middle East's strategic landscape.



РОМАН ЯНУШЕВСКИЙ (Roman Yanushevsky)

Silence Is the Strategy

Israel maintains nuclear opacity for several reasons. The first is quiet deterrence without open provocation. If potential adversaries believe an attack could bring catastrophic consequences, Israel can discourage war without issuing explicit threats or making public demonstrations.

Ambiguity also allows Israel to avoid the risks that come with openly declaring nuclear capability. The Middle East is highly volatile, arms-

control mechanisms are weak, and rivalries run deep. By keeping its status unclear, Israel seeks to reduce the chances of nuclear brinkmanship—and to limit political pressure on other governments to “respond” by pursuing their own weapons. Uncertainty, in this sense, becomes a strategic tool.

A second reason is **legal and diplomatic insulation**. Israel has never signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Because it does not openly declare a nuclear arsenal, it also avoids many of the inspection demands, sanctions risks, and legal constraints that might follow a formal acknowledgment.

Ambiguity has also helped Israel manage relations with Washington. Israel did not conduct an overt nuclear test, did not declare its status, and did not transfer nuclear technology to other states. Under those conditions, U.S. administrations have often found it easier to avoid a direct confrontation over the issue.

Finally, Israel’s security doctrine is shaped by history. The trauma of the Holocaust and repeated wars for survival have left a deep imprint. In that context, nuclear capability—if it exists—is widely understood in Israel as **defensive and restrained**, intended to prevent national catastrophe rather than to serve as an everyday instrument of warfare.

Israel’s most prominent regional adversary today is the Islamic Republic of Iran. Many Israeli officials and analysts argue that Iran has repeatedly threatened Israel’s existence and has pursued nuclear-related capabilities despite international constraints.

This creates a sharp contrast in Israel’s narrative: Israel presents its own nuclear posture (unacknowledged and framed as purely defensive) as fundamentally different from Iran’s ambitions, which Israel views as destabilizing and potentially existential.

The Origins of Israel’s Nuclear Program

Israel’s pursuit of nuclear capability began soon after the country’s founding in 1948. Surrounded by hostile neighbors and shaped by the memory of the Holocaust, early Israeli leaders saw national survival as inseparable from strategic self-reliance. Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, in particular, believed advanced scientific and military capabilities were essential to deter existential threats.

In the late 1950s, Israel began building a nuclear facility near Dimona in the Negev Desert. With substantial assistance from France, the site was presented publicly as a civilian research reactor. In practice, it was designed with infrastructure capable of producing plutonium—an essential material for nuclear weapons.

By the early 1960s, Western intelligence agencies had concluded that Dimona could support a military nuclear program. Yet Israel avoided

Israel and Iran: A Central Contrast



Negev Nuclear Research Center at Dimona, photographed by American reconnaissance satellite KH-4 CORONA, 1968-11-11. Credit: Public Domain

an open clash with the United States. While Washington pressed for inspections and assurances, Israeli leaders managed disclosures carefully: limited visits were allowed, but strict secrecy was maintained around the facility's most sensitive capabilities.

The Emergence of Nuclear Ambiguity

Rather than declaring itself a nuclear power, Israel chose a strategy of deliberate ambiguity. This was crystallized in the well-known phrase

that Israel would “not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East.”

The wording was intentionally vague. It allowed Israel to signal deterrence without making a formal admission—leaving space to argue about what “introduce” means, and whether it refers to possession, testing, deployment, or public declaration.

This policy served several goals at once: deterring adversaries who assumed Israel had nuclear capability, avoiding diplomatic fallout that could follow an explicit declaration, and sidestepping international obligations—especially joining the NPT, which Israel has consistently declined to sign.

Secrecy and Controlled Disclosure

For decades, Israel's nuclear program remained among the world's most closely guarded secrets. The most significant breach occurred in 1986, when Mordechai Vanunu, a former technician at Dimona, provided detailed information to the British press. His disclosures suggested Israel had produced a significant number of nuclear weapons and had advanced technical capacity.

Vanunu was later abducted, tried, and imprisoned in Israel—an episode that underscored the state's determination to preserve secrecy. Yet even after the revelations, Israel did not change its official stance.

Over time, Israel developed advanced missile systems and, according to widespread assessments, a second-strike capability linked to submarines. Still, Israeli leaders have largely avoided public discussion of nuclear weapons, maintaining ambiguity as a consistent policy line.

Implications for Regional Security

Israel's nuclear ambiguity has had far-reaching consequences for the Middle East Deterrence and Stability

At its core, ambiguity has functioned as a deterrent. Many analysts argue that the widespread belief in Israel's nuclear capability has discouraged large-scale conventional wars against it since the 1970s. By keeping adversaries uncertain about its exact capabilities and red lines, Israel aims to raise the cost of any existential attack—without openly escalating tensions.

Challenges to Non-Proliferation

Israel's position outside the NPT remains controversial. Critics argue that an undeclared nuclear arsenal weakens global non-proliferation norms, especially in a region where other states face intense scrutiny. Supporters counter that Israel's security environment is exceptional and that its long record of restraint distinguishes it from other proliferation cases.

Regional Arms Dynamics

Israel's posture has shaped the calculations of other states. Several countries have cited Israel's presumed arsenal as justification for pursuing nuclear-related programs in the past. Although many such efforts were halted, the perception of an uneven strategic balance continues to fuel mistrust and tension.

Iran and Contemporary Pressures

In recent decades, Israel's ambiguity has taken on renewed importance amid ongoing concerns about Iran's nuclear trajectory. Israel presents its own undeclared capability as a defensive necessity while strongly opposing any Iranian move toward nuclear weapons. This contrast complicates diplomacy and deepens polarization, since Israel's deterrent exists outside formal international frameworks.

『INPS Japan』



80 Years into the Nuclear Age: A Book Highlighting Latin America and the Caribbean's Commitment to Disarmament

By Guillermo Ayala Alanis

The volume examines the legacy of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the new challenges facing nuclear disarmament, from cybersecurity to the growing crisis of deterrence.

Mexico City (INPS Japan) – At a time when nuclear deterrence appears to be re-emerging as a central pillar of global power, Latin America and the Caribbean continue to press a counter-argument: that genuine security is best achieved without nuclear weapons.

A 80 años de la era nuclear: ¿Dónde estamos y a dónde vamos? Una mirada desde México y América Latina (80 Years into the Nuclear Age: Where Are We and Where Are We Headed? A View from Mexico and Latin America) reviews the progress, risks, and enduring dilemmas of nuclear disarmament from the perspective of the world's first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.

The book is coordinated by María Antonieta Jáquez Huacuja, Coordinator for Disarmament, Non-Proliferation, and Arms Control at Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and **Abelardo Rodríguez Sumano**, professor and researcher at Universidad Iberoamericana. They emphasize that the publication updates the theoretical and



Presentacion del libro A 80 años de la era nuclear ¿Dónde estamos y a dónde vamos? Una mirada desde México y América Latina; de izquierda a derecha : Martha Mariana Mendoza, Luis Gonzáez, Abelardo Rodríguez, María Lourdes Sosa, María Antonieta Jáquez, Liliána Padilla, Gerardo Suarez y Jans Fromow. Fuente : @imatiasmomero

conceptual debate on nuclear weapons while addressing diplomacy, multilateralism, and emerging risks.

These include evolving threats linked to nuclear terrorism, artificial intelligence, and cybersecurity—particularly the dangers posed by hacking and the manipulation of information related to nuclear systems.

When Not Having Nuclear Weapons Creates Greater Security: Latin America’s Gamble

The war in Ukraine, recent U.S. military actions in Venezuela, and threats directed at Greenland all point to a broader realignment of the international order. Yet even as major powers rethink their security doctrines, Latin America and the Caribbean remain firmly committed to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to strengthening Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZs).

In an interview with INPS Japan, Dr. Rodríguez Sumano argued that the absence of nuclear weapons is the strongest security guarantee for Latin American and Caribbean states at a time when the policies of major military powers—including China, Russia, and the United States—are under reassessment.

“Not having nuclear weapons does not generate additional pressure for the United States to intervene in countries it may consider adversaries or contrary to its interests,” he said. “That equation significantly reduces pressure, confrontation, and even the likelihood of intervention or political overthrow of any regime Washington might eventually view as a threat.”

Rodríguez Sumano also highlighted the enduring importance of the **Treaty of Tlatelolco**, which will mark its 59th anniversary on February 14. By banning the manufacture and dissemination of nuclear weapons across the 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the treaty laid the foundations for a regional system of peace and security.



Image: Book A 80 años de la era nuclear ¿Dónde estamos y a dónde vamos? Una mirada desde México y América Latina

He noted that the treaty—and the creation of the Latin American and Caribbean Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone—served as a model for the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in other parts of the world, with similar frameworks spreading to four additional regions—the South Pacific (Treaty of Rarotonga), Southeast Asia (Treaty of Bangkok), Africa (Treaty of Pelindaba), and Central Asia (Treaty of Semipalatinsk). Together, these zones now bind **117 states**, covering **more than 50 percent of the Earth’s surface**, to legally binding commitments against nuclear weapons proliferation.

The region’s choice is all the more significant given its history. In 1962, Latin America and the Caribbean could have become the site of an unprecedented nuclear confrontation during the Cuban Missile



Photo: The spectre of war between Europe and Russia looms large. Source: The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies

Crisis, when the United States and the Soviet Union stood on the brink of war.

Deterrence as a Tool of Hegemony and Survival

Despite this experience, Rodríguez Sumano cautioned that nuclear-armed states continue to rely on deterrence as a means of preserving both hegemony and survival.

“This is how the United States thinks, and Moscow thinks in much the same way,” he said. “They believe sovereignty is guaranteed to the extent that survival within the international system can be ensured—

and from that perspective, nuclear weapons are seen as the means to achieve that survival.”

He stressed that the behavior of major powers changes markedly when dealing with countries that possess nuclear capabilities.

“They behave differently,” he said. “Russia, for example, acts differently toward China or North Korea. The United States, too, has refrained from direct military action against North Korea. Nuclear capability fundamentally alters strategic calculations.”

Rodríguez Sumano also pointed to a broader reshaping of the Atlantic order. Europe, he argued, now faces a dual challenge: responding to Russia’s expansionist ambitions while also managing new forms of pressure, including military threats linked to the possible annexation or acquisition of Greenland.

New Risks Driven by Technological Change

One of the book’s key strengths is its direct focus on emerging risks that traditional approaches to arms control are increasingly ill-equipped to address. The spread of cyberattacks, artificial intelligence (AI), and information warfare is making the systems used to manage nuclear weapons far more complex—and potentially more vulnerable.

The book points, for example, to the risk of unauthorized intrusions into the systems responsible for nuclear command and control, as well as the possibility that early-warning data used to detect missile launches could be manipulated. It also warns that if AI-assisted decision-making malfunctions, it could lead to dangerous misjudgments. Such scenarios could introduce new sources of instability into an already fragile framework of nuclear deterrence.

The editors argue that these challenges are not distant, hypothetical threats but practical problems the world is already beginning to face. For that reason, they call for updated rules suited to today's realities, alongside renewed efforts to strengthen cross-border cooperation.

In this respect, the book suggests that Latin America's experience—rooted in diplomacy, verification mechanisms, and international agreements—offers lessons that remain relevant well beyond the region.

A Freely Accessible Book with Global Reach

In addition to its print edition, *A 80 años de la era nuclear* is available for **free download** from the website of the Mexican Association of International Studies (AMEI): <https://amei.mx/biblioteca-virtual/80-era-nuclear/libro-completo/>

An English translation is currently in preparation, and efforts are underway to support a Japanese edition as well.

The volume includes contributions from prominent international figures, among them Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency; Jans Fromow Guerra, a member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN); Martha Mariana Mendoza Basulto, International Relations Officer at OPANAL; and Maritza Chan Valverde, Costa Rica's Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

What the contributors' analyses collectively underscore is that even in an era of renewed nuclear risk, the disarmament path pursued by Latin America and the Caribbean is far from outdated. Rather, it represents an alternative approach to security—one that can function within the realities of international politics.

Eighty years after the dawn of the nuclear age, as the world shows signs of returning to the logic of “deterrence,” the region's experience once again forces a fundamental question: does security truly have to depend on nuclear weapons?

『INPS Japan』

China's evolving Nuclear Doctrine: Implications for global disarmament and strategic stability

By Adam Hancock



London Post

Singapore (London Post) – China's nuclear posture has historically been defined by restraint, with a small arsenal and a declaratory policy emphasizing defensive deterrence. Since conducting its first nuclear test in 1964, Beijing has adhered to a "no-first-use" (NFU) pledge, committing never to initiate nuclear strikes under any circumstances and extending unconditional assurances against using or threatening nuclear weapons toward non-nuclear states or nuclear-weapon-free zones. This policy, unique among the five recognized nuclear-weapon states under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), positions

China as a proponent of minimal deterrence—maintaining only the forces necessary for assured retaliation—while avoiding arms races with superpowers like the United States and Russia.

As of late 2025, Chinese officials continue to reaffirm NFU unequivocally. In a November 2025 white paper on arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation, Beijing described the policy as a cornerstone of its self-defensive nuclear strategy, aimed at reducing the role of nuclear weapons in national security. Foreign Ministry statements and contributions to P5 (permanent UN Security Council members) dialogues echo this, with China promoting mutual NFU agreements among nuclear powers as a practical step toward risk reduction. Despite persistent Western speculation about potential ambiguities in crisis scenarios—such as conventional attacks on nuclear assets or heightened tensions over Taiwan—no official shift has occurred. China frames NFU not merely as doctrine but as diplomatic signaling, portraying itself as a responsible actor critiquing more offensive postures elsewhere.

Yet this doctrinal continuity contrasts sharply with the rapid modernization and expansion of China's nuclear forces, marking the most significant buildup in its history. Independent estimates from

sources like the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, and the U.S. Department of Defense converge on approximately 600 operational nuclear warheads as of mid-2025, up from around 500 the previous year and more than double the figure from 2020. Projections suggest growth to over 1,000 by 2030 and potentially 1,500 by 2035, with annual additions of about 100 warheads in recent years.

This expansion encompasses a full nuclear triad: land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and air-delivered weapons. Key developments include the DF-41 ICBM, capable of carrying multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs); the JL-3 SLBM with extended range exceeding 5,400 nautical miles; and nuclear-capable H-6N bombers equipped with air-launched ballistic missiles. China has constructed hundreds of new ICBM silos—around 350 completed or nearing completion by early 2025—across multiple fields, with reports indicating over 100 missiles loaded in some sites. Hypersonic glide vehicles, such as those on the DF-17 and DF-27, enhance penetration against missile defenses, while investments in early-warning systems suggest potential shifts toward higher alertness or launch-on-warning postures.

Beijing justifies these advancements as defensive responses to external threats, particularly U.S. ballistic missile defenses, precision conventional strikes, and regional alliances that could erode China's second-strike credibility. Officials insist the arsenal remains the

“minimum level” required for security, far smaller than U.S. or Russian stockpiles, and focused on survivability rather than parity or warfighting. Nonetheless, the scale raises questions about whether modernization subtly erodes strict reliance on NFU, potentially enabling more flexible options in protracted conflicts.

China's engagement with global nuclear regimes reflects this dual approach: advocacy for disarmament alongside safeguards for its deterrent. As an NPT signatory since 1992, China supports the treaty's pillars—nonproliferation, disarmament, and peaceful uses—advocating a “step-by-step” process where the United States and Russia, holding over 90 percent of global warheads, bear primary responsibility for deep cuts. Beijing participates in NPT review conferences and P5 processes, but resists trilateral arms control talks until arsenal disparities narrow.

On the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), adopted in 2017 and entering force in 2021, China aligns with other nuclear states in non-participation. While endorsing its humanitarian goals and long-term vision of abolition, Beijing argues the treaty diverges from security realities, lacks nuclear-state involvement, and risks undermining the NPT. China boycotted negotiations and votes against related UN resolutions, favoring incremental, inclusive measures that preserve stability.

These dynamics profoundly affect strategic stability, particularly in East Asia, a region of intensifying competition. China's growing capabilities intersect with U.S.-China rivalry, Indian modernization, North Korean provocations, and alliance enhancements by Japan and South Korea. Fears of miscalculation—over Taiwan or the South China Sea—grow as thresholds blur amid advanced conventional and nuclear integration. Missile defense advancements by adversaries may spur further Chinese diversification, perpetuating security dilemmas.

Globally, China's trajectory challenges traditional arms control frameworks, long bipolar and U.S.-Russian focused. Expansion risks fueling multipolar races, eroding NPT disarmament obligations, and complicating negotiations. Transparency deficits—China discloses little about arsenal details—breed misperceptions. Yet opportunities exist: NFU's persistence could model risk reduction, and China's multilateral advocacy might bridge nuclear and non-nuclear divides if paired with reciprocal steps.

In conclusion, China's nuclear doctrine balances historical restraint with adaptation to a contested environment. NFU and minimalism endure declaratively, bolstered by 2025 reaffirmations, but unprecedented modernization signals resolve for credible deterrence amid perceived vulnerabilities. For global disarmament, this presents paradoxes: expansion undermines momentum, yet China's positions highlight superpowers' obligations. Sustaining stability demands inclusive dialogue—P5 mechanisms, crisis communications, and

eventual multilateral talks—addressing mutual concerns. Without such efforts, evolving capabilities risk escalating competition over cooperation, heightening nuclear dangers in an already volatile world. As 2025 closes, the international community must prioritize confidence-building to ensure China's rise contributes to, rather than destabilizes, enduring peace.

『INPS Japan/London Post』



People's Republic of China credit: Wikimedia Commons

Middle East as a Potential Nuclear Flashpoint: Strategic Dynamics and Nuclear Risks

By Roman Yanushevsky

Jerusalem (INPS Japan) – The Middle East is often described as one of the world’s most volatile regions. Long-running conflicts, deep ideological rivalries, weak regional security frameworks, and the involvement of global powers combine to make it especially sensitive to nuclear risks.

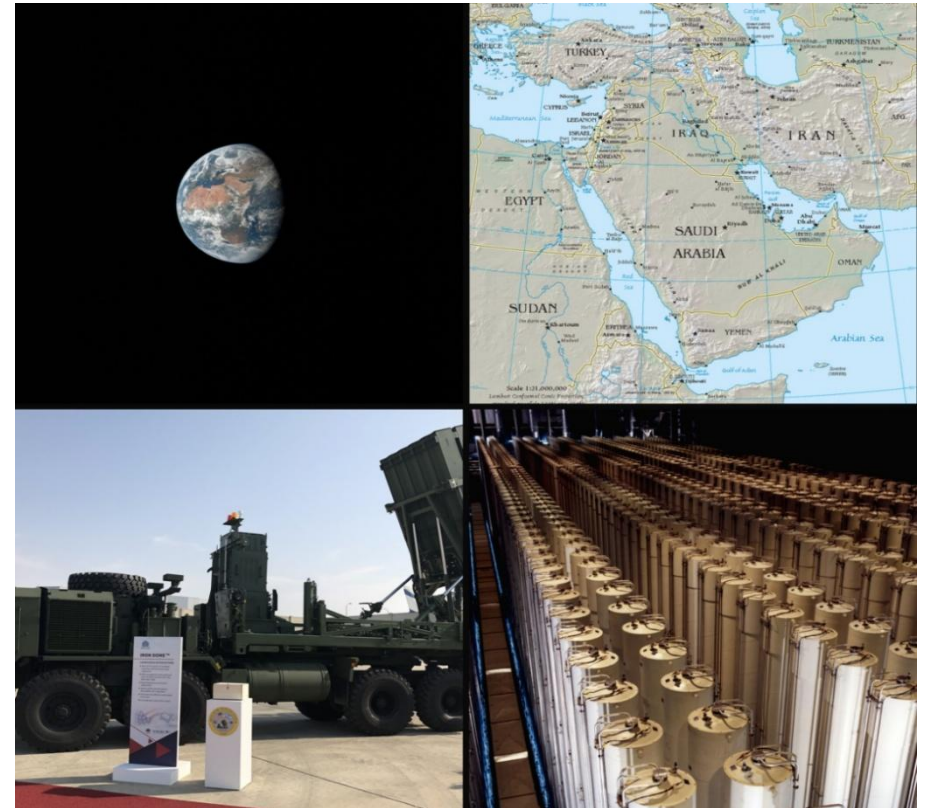
While only one country in the region is widely believed to possess nuclear weapons, several others have sought – or are suspected of seeking – nuclear capabilities. Together, these dynamics enhanced by regional strife make the Middle East a potential nuclear flashpoint.

Who Possesses Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East?

Israel

Israel is widely regarded as the only Middle Eastern state with nuclear weapons, although it has never officially confirmed or denied this. This policy of “nuclear opacity” has been in place for decades.

Common expert estimates range from 80 to 200 nuclear warheads. Israel is believed to have a nuclear triad, including aircraft, land-based missiles, and submarine-launched capabilities.



Collage of photos. Credit: Wikimedia Commons.

Israel views nuclear weapons as an ultimate deterrent, designed to prevent existential threats in a hostile regional environment. No other Middle Eastern country is currently assessed by mainstream international bodies to possess operational nuclear weapons.

Which ME Countries Strive to Possess Nuclear Weapons?

Iran

Iran is the central concern in discussions of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. It officially denies seeking nuclear weapons, stating its program is for civilian purposes. But in reality, Iran has developed advanced uranium enrichment capabilities and reduced cooperation with international inspectors at various points.

At the same time Iran develops a sophisticated long range missile program. These ballistic missiles could be equipped with nuclear warheads.

Many analysts argue Iran is approaching a “nuclear threshold” – the ability to build a weapon relatively quickly if it decides to do so. Iran’s potential nuclearization is widely seen as the most significant trigger for a regional arms race. It has a negative impact on other states.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has increasingly signaled its intention to develop a nuclear program, officially framed around civilian energy needs but closely tied to regional security concerns. The kingdom argues that nuclear power is necessary to diversify its energy mix, reduce reliance on oil, and meet rising domestic electricity demand under Vision 2030.

At the same time, Saudi leaders have repeatedly warned that if Iran acquires nuclear weapons, Riyadh will seek equivalent capabilities, making the program strategically sensitive.

Saudi Arabia has explored building nuclear reactors, expanding uranium mining and fuel-cycle research on its territory, and negotiating nuclear cooperation agreements with countries such as the United States, China, South Korea, and Russia.

The central point of contention with Washington has been Saudi reluctance to accept strict limits on uranium enrichment and reprocessing, which are seen internationally as pathways to weapons capability.

Turkey

Turkey is a NATO member and hosts US nuclear weapons under NATO's nuclear sharing arrangements. Turkish leaders have periodically questioned why some countries can have nuclear weapons while others cannot.

NATO membership and international commitments currently limit Turkey's options, but its rhetoric raises long-term questions.

Egypt

Egypt pursued nuclear research in the past and has long advocated for a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction. But now the country is officially committed to non-proliferation.

Egypt closely watches Israel's nuclear capability and Iran's program, seeing both as strategic imbalances.

Other ME countries with nuclear capacities

Several Middle Eastern countries possess civilian nuclear capabilities without declared ambitions (so far) to develop nuclear weapons, at this stage focusing instead on energy, research, medicine, and industry under international oversight.

The United Arab Emirates is the clearest example, operating the Barakah nuclear power plant under strict nonproliferation commitments and without enrichment or reprocessing.

Jordan runs a small research reactor used for training, medical isotopes, and scientific research.

Egypt is building the El Dabaa nuclear power plant with Russian assistance as part of its long-term energy strategy, remaining within the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Turkey is developing nuclear power through the Akkuyu plant to diversify its energy mix, without pursuing sensitive fuel-cycle technologies.

In North Africa, **Morocco** and **Algeria** operate research reactors for civilian purposes such as scientific research and medical applications, under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. While these programs provide technological know-how and infrastructure, they are officially framed as peaceful and transparent, with no stated intention to move toward nuclear weapons.

Major Nuclear Risks in the Middle East

1. Regional Arms Race

If Iran were to cross the nuclear threshold, other regional powers – particularly Saudi Arabia – could follow. This would multiply the number of nuclear actors in a region already marked by instability and give incentive to other states in the region to strive for nuclear weapons.

2. Low Trust and Weak Communication

Unlike the Cold War rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union, Middle Eastern rivals lack robust crisis-management mechanisms, hotlines, and arms-control agreements. Miscalculation would be more likely.

3. Preemptive Military Strikes

The fear that a rival is nearing nuclear capability increases incentives for preemptive attacks on nuclear facilities. Such strikes could rapidly escalate into wider wars involving regional and global powers.

4. Non-State Actors

The Middle East is unique in the prominence of powerful non-state armed groups. Even if nuclear weapons remain under state control, the risk of attacks on nuclear facilities or attempts to acquire nuclear materials is higher than in more stable regions.

5. Escalation from Conventional Conflicts

Many Middle Eastern conflicts are fought just below the threshold of full-scale war. In a nuclearized environment, a conventional clash could escalate far more quickly, especially if leaders fear existential defeat.

6. Erosion of the Global Non-Proliferation Regime

Further nuclear proliferation in the Middle East would weaken the global non-proliferation system, encouraging similar behavior in other regions.



Map of Middle East Credit: Wikimedia Commons

Central Asia-Japan Leader's Summit in Tokyo Backs Trans-Caspian Corridor; Tokayev Warns Nuclear Risks Are Rising

By Katsuhiro Asagiri

Tokyo (INPS Japan) -

Leaders of Japan and the five Central Asian states met in Tokyo on Dec. 20 and adopted the “Tokyo Declaration,” launching a new leaders-level format under the “Central Asia plus Japan Dialogue” (CA+JAD). The declaration places at the core of cooperation two priorities: strengthening supply-chain resilience for critical minerals, and supporting the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route), which links Central Asia with Europe without transiting Russia.



Central Asia plus Japan Dialogue (CA+JAD) Credit: Prime Minister's Office of Japan,

Chaired by Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, the meeting reflected Central Asia's strategic importance as a Eurasian crossroads and as a region with mineral resources essential to decarbonization and advanced industries. As major powers step up engagement across the region, Central Asia's weight as a stage for diplomacy and trade has been growing.

The Japanese government emphasized a practical, implementation-oriented

approach—translating cooperation into deliverable projects. For Central Asian countries, the Trans-Caspian Corridor is also a means



President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev (left) and Prime Minister Sane Takaichi (right) signing a joint statement. Credit: Prime Minister's Office of Japan

to expand transport options and reduce dependence on any single transit route. It can help attract investment for modernizing ports, railways and customs systems, while increasing opportunities to capture transit and logistics revenues.

For Japan, corridor development and cooperation on minerals serve as a form of risk diversification in economic security. By diversifying both procurement sources and transport routes for critical minerals—such as rare earths and lithium—needed for batteries, renewable energy technologies and electronic devices, Japan aims to prepare for

heightened geopolitical risk. There is also a clear intent to expand opportunities for Japanese companies to participate in infrastructure, logistics and digital sectors.

Japan–Kazakhstan Joint Statement as the Anchor

Ahead of the leaders' summit, Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev paid an official visit to Japan, with a series of diplomatic engagements scheduled around the trip.

On Dec. 18, Prime Minister Takaichi and President Tokayev held a summit meeting and issued [a joint statement](#) on a “future-oriented expanded strategic partnership.” The statement reaffirmed a rules-based international order grounded in the principles of the U.N. Charter, and the two leaders agreed to advance cooperation through concrete initiatives in areas including critical minerals, the energy transition, and transport and logistics connectivity.

On the Trans-Caspian Corridor, the joint statement specified practical measures aimed at easing customs and port bottlenecks—such as training for customs officials in cooperation with the World Customs Organization (WCO) and support for improving cargo inspection scanners (cargo inspection equipment) at Aktau Port in western Kazakhstan. The two leaders also welcomed plans to launch regular direct flights in 2026 and agreed to begin intergovernmental negotiations toward the conclusion of a bilateral air services agreement. In addition, the joint statement expressed an intent to

exchange information and explore potential avenues of cooperation with the “UN Regional Centre for the SDGs for Central Asia and Afghanistan”, which was established in Almaty.

Tokayev Warns of Nuclear Risks in Tokyo

Kassym-Jomart Tokayev delivered a lecture at the United Nations University

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qliL1viDUhk&t=5s>)

On the following day, Dec. 19, President Tokayev delivered a lecture at the United Nations University in Tokyo, warning that “nuclear risks are rising again.”

He referred not only to the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki but also to Kazakhstan’s Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, where the former Soviet Union conducted more than 450 nuclear tests, arguing that both Japan and Kazakhstan are countries that know the devastating consequences wrought by nuclear weapons. He said practical steps must be steadily accumulated to advance nuclear disarmament and reduce nuclear risks.

Tokayev also cited Kazakhstan’s decision to relinquish the nuclear weapons left on its territory after the Soviet collapse, suggesting that security should not depend solely on nuclear deterrence.

Kazakhstan has, around Aug. 29—the date the Semipalatinsk test site was closed and also the U.N.-designated International Day against Nuclear Tests—hosted meetings in Astana that foreground the

inhumane impacts of nuclear weapons and call for strengthening norms underpinning the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. These gatherings have included participation by civil society groups such as [the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons \(ICAN\)](#) and [Soka Gakkai International \(SGI\)](#).

Three Priority Areas: Resilience, Connectivity, Human Development

At the Dec. 20 summit, President Tokayev attended alongside the presidents of Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. Prime Minister Takaichi noted that Central Asia’s growing population and rapid economic expansion have raised the region’s international profile, and stressed the importance of regional cooperation and engagement with external partners.



Semipalatinsk former nuclear test site. Credit: Katsuhiko Asagiri



A Group photo of participants of the regional conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and nuclear-free-zone in Central Asia held on August 29, 2023. Photo Credit: Jibek Joly TV Channel.

Japan announced the “CA+JAD Tokyo Initiative,” setting out three priority areas for cooperation: (1) green and resilience (including the energy transition, disaster risk reduction and supply-chain resilience for critical minerals); (2) connectivity (including the Trans-Caspian Corridor and A.I. cooperation); and (3) human development (including scholarship programs and cooperation in health and medical fields).

The Tokyo Declaration also explicitly set out the launch of the “Japan–Central Asia Partnership for AI Cooperation,” with a view to applying A.I. to resource development and related areas. More than 150 documents were signed and announced by public and private stakeholders on the margins of the meeting, and a goal was presented to develop business projects totaling 3 trillion yen over the next five years.

Multipolar Engagement and Kazakhstan’s “Multi-Vector” Diplomacy

The Tokyo gathering also underscored the reality of accelerating summit diplomacy around Central Asia. China convened a leaders’ meeting with the five Central Asian states in Kazakhstan earlier this year, and the United States invited the same five leaders to Washington in November.

Kazakhstan, in particular, has long pursued a “multi-vector” foreign policy—cultivating relations in parallel with competing major powers to preserve sovereignty and strategic options. The Tokyo agreements—combining diversification of transport corridors, expanded cooperation on minerals and technology, and the use of development cooperation through international institutions—align with this balancing strategy.

For Japan, the new leaders-level format provides a means to deepen engagement with Central Asia by connecting resources, logistics and technology. For President Tokayev, the visit also served as a platform to argue that, as nuclear risks re-emerge at the forefront, Eurasia’s economic future cannot be separated from the security challenges that shape it.

『INPS Japan』

The Religious & Ethical Debate: Is Nuclear Weapons Development Halal (Permissible) in Islam?

By Raza Syed, Lolisanam Ulugova

London (London Post) – The question of whether nuclear weapons are *halal* (permissible) or *haram* (forbidden) in Islam stands as one of the most profound ethical challenges of the modern age, where ancient religious principles confront a technology of ultimate destruction. This debate is not a mere academic exercise in applied theology; it is a sacred struggle over the soul of the Islamic tradition, waged in the corridors of power in Muslim-majority states and in the conscience of the global *Ummah* (Muslim community). The inquiry forces a direct reckoning: Can the foundational Islamic ethic of restraint, mercy, and inviolable life accommodate the logic of apocalyptic deterrence? The jurisprudential landscape reveals a critical, if uncomfortable, consensus: while a narrow argument exists



Image Credit: canberratimes.com.au

for the *possession* of nuclear arms for defensive deterrence, the overwhelming weight of Islamic law, ethics, and scholarship declares any conceivable *use* of such weapons to be categorically impermissible and a grave transgression against divine command.

The Sacred Framework: Prohibiting Transgression and Protecting Life

To navigate this modern quandary, scholars return to the immutable sources of Islamic law—the Quran and the Sunnah (traditions of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him)—which establish an uncompromising ethic of warfare. This framework is anchored by the principles of distinction, proportionality, and necessity, designed to confine conflict and minimize human suffering.

The core command in the Quran is unequivocal: “Fight in God’s cause against those who fight you, but do not overstep the limits: God does not love those who overstep the limits” (Quran 2:190). The Arabic directive “*la ta’tadu*” (do not transgress) is interpreted as a comprehensive prohibition against initiating aggression, targeting non-

combatants, and employing disproportionate force. This is operationalized in the Prophet's explicit instruction to his armies: "Do not kill a decrepit old man, or a young infant, or a child, or a woman." The sanctity of innocent life is elevated to a universal principle in the warning that killing one innocent person "is as if he had slain all mankind" (Quran 5:32).

These principles of restraint were institutionalized by the first Caliph, Abu Bakr, who commanded soldiers to avoid harming women, children, the elderly, monks, livestock, and even fruit-bearing trees. The objective of force is strictly military necessity, not wanton destruction. This ethical bedrock creates an immediate and severe tension with the nature of nuclear arms, whose blast, heat, and radioactive fallout are inherently indiscriminate, cannot distinguish between soldier and child, and cause generational environmental corruption (*fasad fil-ard*).

The Deterrence Argument: A Narrow Justification for Possession

In the face of this tension, how have some Muslim states and scholars justified the pursuit of nuclear capabilities? The primary theological anchor for proponents is a single Quranic verse: "Prepare against them whatever forces you [believers] can muster, including warhorses, to frighten the enemies of God and of yours" (Quran 8:60).

This verse is invoked to support the concept of deterrence (*rad'*). From this perspective, acquiring formidable military strength—including, by modern extension, nuclear arsenals—to deter aggression and prevent a larger war is a permissible, even obligatory, act of communal self-preservation. The logic is strategic: a credible threat of retaliation secures peace and protects the sovereignty and security of the Muslim community. This view is often framed within the jurisprudential concepts of *maslaha* (public welfare) and *darura* (extreme necessity), arguing that in a world of nuclear-armed adversaries,

possession is a tragic necessity to prevent a greater harm.

However, this permission is exceptionally narrow and is almost universally constrained by a critical caveat. The vast majority of scholars who entertain the deterrence argument simultaneously assert that the **first use** of nuclear weapons is absolutely *haram*. It constitutes an unprovoked aggression and a catastrophic violation of the prohibition against transgression. The gray zone, therefore, exists only in the possession of weapons intended solely to deter, with their actual use remaining beyond the pale of Islamic permissibility.

The Prohibition Argument: The Insurmountable Ethical Barrier

The more formidable and dominant scholarly position holds that nuclear weapons are intrinsically incompatible with Islamic law due to their indiscriminate and disproportionate nature. This argument moves beyond the specifics of intent to the weapon's inherent

characteristics, which violate core Islamic prohibitions.

The central objection is that nuclear weapons cannot, by their design, comply with the Islamic law of distinction. They obliterate the fundamental line between combatant and non-combatant, guilty and innocent. Their long-term effects—radiation poisoning, genetic damage, and environmental devastation—constitute a form of corruption on earth that harms future generations, directly contravening the Quranic injunction against spreading mischief (Quran 2:205). The principle of proportionality is rendered meaningless; a nuclear response to any attack would almost certainly constitute a disproportionate “overstepping of the limits,” forbidden by Quran 16:126 and 2:190.

Consequently, a powerful consensus has emerged among contemporary Islamic scholarly bodies. Institutions like the International Islamic Fiqh Academy of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and leading authorities such as Egypt’s Al-Azhar have issued declarations stating that

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs), including nuclear arms, are forbidden. They argue these weapons “are evil in themselves” and their use “constitutes a crime against humanity,” irreconcilable with Islam’s humanitarian ethos and the higher objectives of Sharia (*maqasid al-shari’ah*), which prioritize the preservation of life, religion, and intellect.



Image Credit: canberratimes.com.au

Case Studies in Contradiction: The Fatwa and the “Islamic Bomb”

The tension between these theological positions is vividly illustrated in the policies of two Muslim-majority nuclear states: Iran and Pakistan.

Iran’s Strategic Fatwa: For two decades, Iranian diplomacy has been framed by a *fatwa* (religious ruling) attributed to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, declaring nuclear weapons “*haram*.” This ruling is presented as a binding, faith-based prohibition that guides state policy. A closer examination, however, reveals a calculated ambiguity typical of strategic statecraft. The public fatwa explicitly forbids the “*production, stockpiling, and use*” of nuclear weapons. Yet, critics and analysts note that the clerical and political discourse within Iran often focuses narrowly on the sin of *use*, while being deliberately vague on the technological threshold of “*production*.” This ambiguity was starkly highlighted in 2021 by then-Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi, who stated, “The Supreme Leader has said... nuclear weapons are against sharia law... But a cornered cat may behave differently.” Thus, Iran’s position exemplifies how a religious-ethical argument can serve as both a genuine moral stance and a flexible instrument of geopolitical strategy, leaving a deliberate gray zone between prohibition and existential readiness.

Pakistan's Doctrine of "Islamic

Deterrence": In contrast, Pakistan, the only Muslim-majority state with declared nuclear weapons, represents the deterrence argument in practice. Faced with a nuclear-armed India, Pakistan's program has been framed by some domestic voices as a necessary "Islamic bomb" for the defense of the *Ummah*. Its justification rests squarely on the principles of *darura* (necessity) and the Quranic command to "prepare power" (8:60). Pakistani strategists argue that their nuclear arsenal is purely for defensive deterrence, with a declared no-first-use policy aligning (in theory) with the Islamic prohibition on initiating aggression. This case demonstrates how national security imperatives can dominate the ethical discourse, legitimizing possession through a selective application of jurisprudential principles, even as the terrifying destructive power of the weapons themselves continues to provoke profound ethical unease among many Islamic scholars globally.

Conclusion: An Imperative for Ethical Leadership and Disarmament

The Islamic debate on nuclear weapons does not yield a simplistic verdict. It presents a graduated and deeply troubled ruling: a contingent, heavily debated, and politically fraught allowance for *possession* as a deterrent, existing in permanent tension with a near-absolute theological and ethical *prohibition on use*. This creates a morally precarious position—a security doctrine reliant on the threat of an act considered religiously abhorrent.

The ethical trajectory within global Islamic discourse, however, is bending decisively toward prohibition and disarmament. From the formal rulings of major scholarly academies to the multi-faith declarations at the United Nations, there is a growing recognition that the logic of nuclear deterrence is fundamentally at odds with the imperative to "safeguard future generations" and uphold the sanctity of God's creation. The ultimate challenge for Muslim scholars, intellectuals, and political leaders is to

deepen this ethical conversation, moving it beyond the pragmatics of strategic posturing. The true task is to affirm a clear, principled stance rooted in the core of the faith: that genuine security for the *Ummah* and for all humanity lies not in the balance of nuclear terror, but in the courageous, faithful, and urgent pursuit of peace, justice, and total disarmament.

[[INPS Japan/London Post]]



Russia and the Future of Nuclear Arms Control: Between Deterrence and Disarmament

By Shuchita Jha

Bayeux, France

(London Post) - The global nuclear order is at its most fragile point since the end of the Cold War. With the New START Treaty set to expire in February 2026 and no serious negotiations underway to replace it, Russia's nuclear posture has become the central variable shaping the future of strategic stability. Moscow currently fields the world's largest nuclear arsenal, with approximately 5,580 warheads, of which 1,588 are strategically deployed under New START counting rules as of September 2024. It maintains a diverse triad and is modernizing virtually every leg of its strategic forces: RS-28 Sarmat ICBMs, Borei-A submarines with Bulava

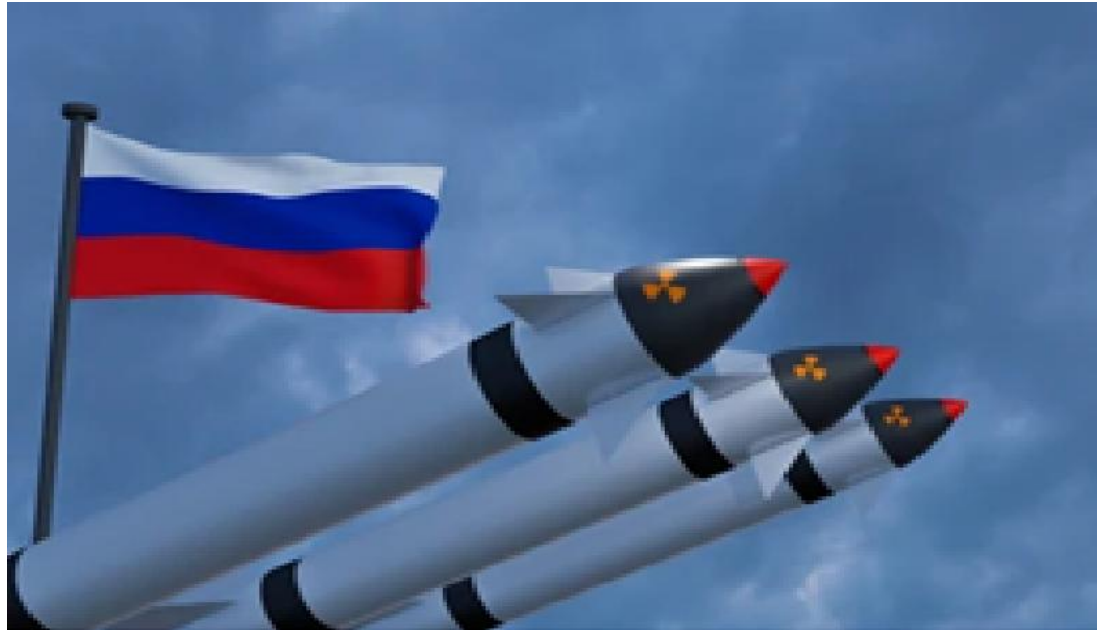


Image Credit: shutterstock.com

missiles, Tu-160M2 strategic bombers, and novel systems such as the Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle and the Poseidon nuclear-powered torpedo. This modernization reflects both a desire to ensure survivability and a determination to offset perceived U.S. and NATO

technological advantages.

The stabilizing architecture of arms control, painstakingly built over decades, is collapsing. For over fifty years, treaties from SALT I to New START capped and reduced deployed strategic weapons, providing predictability and transparency. That era now appears to be ending. Russia's suspension of its participation in New START in

2023 crippled the treaty's verification regime, leaving both sides operating with increasing uncertainty. The de-ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in November 2023 further signaled Moscow's willingness to live without constraints. Without New START's limits,

Russia could theoretically increase its deployed arsenal by up to 60% by uploading more warheads onto existing missiles and bombers.

While Moscow has floated temporary extensions, these are stopgaps, not solutions. Analysts such as SIPRI warn that bilateral nuclear arms control between Russia and the United States is now “almost over,” creating a vacuum that threatens to spur a new, more complex, and riskier arms race.

Russia’s nuclear behavior since its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 has eroded norms as much as treaties. Persistent nuclear saber-rattling, the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus, and repeated drills simulating limited nuclear strikes in Europe have blurred the line between deterrence and coercion. This weaponization of rhetoric undermines the longstanding “nuclear taboo” and makes the global environment more volatile. Russia’s doctrine has also shifted: updates in 2020

and 2024 lowered the threshold for nuclear use, listing conventional attacks on Belarus, massive aerospace strikes, or threats to sovereignty as possible triggers. Nuclear signaling has become a deliberate tool to deter NATO intervention and to coerce political concessions.

Two contrasting expert interpretations dominate the debate on where Russia is heading and what it means for arms control. Dr. Olga Oliker of Crisis Group argues that Russia no longer believes bilateral, legally binding arms control with the United States is possible or desirable. In her view, Moscow’s strategic goal is assured retaliation under any circumstances, not numerical parity. The suspension of treaties is not an emotional reaction but a deliberate signal that Russia is prepared to live in a world without constraints as long as its second-strike capability remains unquestioned. According to this school of thought, Russia is shifting from “arms control” to “risk management.” Future stability will rest on unilateral confidence-building

measures, tacit red lines, and political frameworks rather than treaties. Moscow may accept a non-binding successor to New START after 2026, but only if it includes U.S. intermediate-range missiles in Europe, Chinese strategic forces, and space-based assets—conditions Washington currently rejects.

A more pessimistic reading comes from Prof. Dmitri Trenin, formerly of the Carnegie Moscow Center, who contends that Russia has abandoned the intellectual framework of mutual assured destruction in favor of escalation dominance and warfighting credibility. He sees Russia’s deployment of tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus and its repeated drills as evidence of a posture designed not merely to deter NATO but to coerce it. From this perspective, numerical arms control is a Cold War relic that constrained Moscow while the West built conventional and missile-defense superiority. The Kremlin is deliberately moving toward a posture where it can credibly threaten limited nuclear use in

regional conflicts while maintaining strategic parity. In this world, arms control is not merely frozen—it is irrelevant.

Other experts echo these divergent logics. Dr. Sergei Ivanov emphasizes deterrence as rational survival in a hostile environment, arguing that treaties are tools of leverage rather than constraints. He sees Russia's violations as tactical moves to gain concessions. By contrast, Dr. Elena Petrova insists that disarmament is the only rational path, warning that doctrinal ambiguity increases the chance of miscalculation and that exotic systems like Poseidon destabilize strategic stability. Similarly, Dr. Elena Morozov portrays Russia as a rational actor seeking updated rules in a multipolar world, while Prof. Aleksander Grant views it as a revisionist power exploiting nuclear risk for coercive diplomacy. Together, these perspectives highlight the trilemma facing nuclear arms control: security through deterrence, stability through treaties, and trust through compliance. Russia's challenge is

to balance these imperatives, though its current trajectory leans heavily toward deterrence.

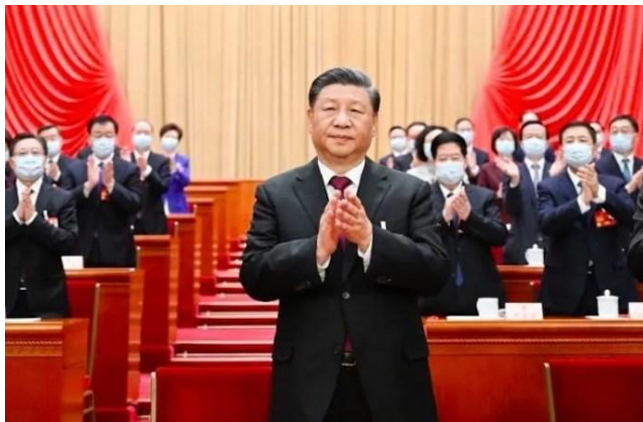


Image: President Xi Jinping of China, 10 March 2023. Credit: Xinhua News

The broader context complicates matters further. China is engaged in a historic nuclear buildup, potentially tripling its warhead count to at least 1,500 by 2035. India, Pakistan, and North Korea are also expanding their arsenals. This multipolar nuclear landscape makes future arms control vastly more complex. The United States insists that any post-New START agreement must include China, a demand Beijing rejects. Meanwhile, rapid

advances in artificial intelligence, cyber capabilities, hypersonic missiles, and space-based weapons create new domains of potential conflict that old numerical treaties cannot address. Public opinion research suggests that deterrence and disarmament are not mutually exclusive in the global imagination: while the ultimate goal remains a world free of nuclear weapons, the immediate priority is managing and reducing nuclear risk.

Navigating away from the current precipice will require pragmatic steps. Even without a formal treaty, the U.S. and Russia should salvage transparency through reciprocal data exchanges and military-to-military communication to prevent miscalculation. Risk reduction measures such as de-alerting, clearer protocols for dual-capable systems, and rules of the road for cyber interactions with nuclear command systems could lower the chance of accidental use. A broader framework must eventually emerge, perhaps beginning with a



Nuclear weapons sent by Russia to Belarus will target Europe. Source: YouTube Kanal 13 Global

trilateral U.S.–Russia–China freeze on stockpile sizes, followed by inclusive dialogue with other nuclear powers. Verification mechanisms must adapt to new technologies, and multilateral institutions like the UN and IAEA must develop next-generation tools to monitor compliance even in periods of treaty breakdown.

The conclusion is stark. Legally binding, verifiable nuclear arms control between Russia and the United States is effectively

suspended for the foreseeable future, and possibly for good. Where experts differ is on Moscow's endgame: some see a cold, interest-based stabilization without treaties, others see preparation for controlled escalation. Until Russia's war in Ukraine ends and U.S.–Russian relations fundamentally change, neither a new treaty nor a return to Cold War–style détente appears likely. The world is entering an era where nuclear deterrence will be managed less by agreed numbers and more by raw calculations of

survivability, resolve, and red lines—with all the risks that entails. The path chosen in the coming months will resonate for generations.

A failure to re-establish guardrails will normalize nuclear brinkmanship, incentivize proliferation, and make the unthinkable—the use of a nuclear weapon—incrementally more likely. The alternative, a renewed commitment to cooperative security and pragmatic risk reduction, offers the only viable route back from the brink. As long as these weapons exist, history teaches that one day they may be used, by accident, miscalculation, or design. The choice between managed deterrence and catastrophic conflict rests on decisions made today.

『INPS Japan/London Post』

Any Resumption of US Tests May Trigger Threats from Other Nuclear Powers

By Thalif Deen

UNITED NATIONS

(IPS) – President Donald Trump's recent announcement to resume nuclear testing rekindles nightmares of a bygone era where military personnel and civilians were exposed to devastating radioactive fallouts.

In the five decades between 1945 and the opening for the signature of the [Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty](#) (CTBT) in 1996, over 2,000 nuclear tests were carried out all over the world. The United States conducted 1,032 tests between 1945 and 1992.

According to published reports and surveys, it was primarily military personnel who



A nuclear test is carried out on an island in French Polynesia in 1971. Credit:CTBTO

participated in U.S. nuclear weapons testing. The U.S. government initially withheld information about the effects of radiation, leading to health problems for many veterans.

And it was not until 1996 that Congress repealed the Nuclear Radiation and Secrecy

Agreements Act, which allowed veterans to discuss their experiences without fear of treason charges.

Although a 1998 compensation bill did not pass, the government has since issued an apology to the survivors and their families.

Some civilians were exposed to radioactive fallout from early nuclear tests, like the Trinity test in New Mexico. And like atomic veterans, these civilians also suffered from long-term health effects due to their exposure to radiation, the reports said.



M.V.-Ramana

Dr. M.V. Ramana, Professor and Simons Chair in Disarmament, Global and Human Security Director pro tem of the School of Public Policy and Global Affairs at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, told IPS one doesn't know exactly what

kind of nuclear tests might be conducted.

Even though the United States has not ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, in 1963, it did sign and ratify the "Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water," commonly known as the Partial Test Ban Treaty.

Since then, he pointed out, all of its nuclear tests have been conducted underground. There are two kinds of environmental dangers associated with underground nuclear tests. The first is that radioactive

contamination may escape into the atmosphere, either at the time of the explosion or more gradually during routine post-test activities.

"More than half of all tests conducted at the Nevada Test site have led to radioactivity being released to the atmosphere. The second is that the radioactivity left underground makes its way over a long period of time into groundwater or to the surface."

In 1999, he said, scientists detected plutonium 1.3 kilometers away from a 1968 nuclear weapons test in Nevada. In addition to these environmental dangers, the greater danger is that if the United States resumes nuclear weapon testing, then other countries would follow suit.

"Already, we have seen calls to prepare to resume testing from hawks in other countries, such as India."

Decades ago, Ramana pointed out, when the US government planned to test nuclear

weapons at Bikini atoll, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) said, "What should be vaporized is not an obsolete battleship but the whole process of the manufacture of the atomic bomb."

"That statement is still relevant. We should be shutting down the capacity to build and use nuclear weapons, not refining the ability to carry out mass murder," declared Dr. Ramana.

Meanwhile, in the five decades between 1945 and the opening for signature of the [Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty](#) (CTBT) in 1996, over 2,000 nuclear tests were carried out all over the world.

- The United States conducted 1,032 tests between 1945 and 1992



Ground zero after the “Trinity” test, the first atomic test, which took place on July 16, 1945/ Public Domain

- The Soviet Union carried out 715 tests between 1949 and 1990.
- The United Kingdom carried out 45 tests between 1952 and 1991.
- France carried out 210 tests between 1960 and 1996.
- China carried out 45 tests between 1964 and 1996.
- India carried out 1 test in 1974.

Natalie Goldring, Acronym Institute’s representative at the United Nations, told IPS that President Trump’s threat to resume US

nuclear testing is remarkably shortsighted and dangerous, even by his impulsive and reckless standards.

“President Trump seems to be making the incorrect assumption that the US government always gets the last move in foreign policy. He attempts to conduct foreign policy by issuing pronouncements, rather than engaging in the hard work of policymaking and diplomacy or even ensuring that his actions are legal.”

In this case, he is apparently assuming that the US government can unilaterally decide to resume nuclear testing without prompting the same actions from other countries, she said.

Proponents of permanent nuclear weapons development and nuclear weapons testing claim that testing preserves the reliability of the arsenal and sends a message of US strength to potential adversaries.

“But the United States already has a robust testing program to ensure the reliability of its nuclear weapons. Rather than demonstrating

strength, a US return to nuclear weapons testing could be used as a justification to do the same by other current and prospective nuclear weapons states. In effect, it could be a self-fulfilling prophecy.”

As William Broad recently reported in the New York Times, part of the challenge of interpreting President Trump’s pronouncement on nuclear testing is that it’s not clear what he means. Does he mean full-scale, supercritical testing, or is he talking about testing that produces an extremely small explosion, such as hydronuclear testing?

Either way, the US government would be breaking the testing moratorium that it has observed since 1992, she pointed out.

“Nuclear testing has ramifications and costs in many areas, including human, political, economic, environmental, military, and legal. States with nuclear weapons tend to focus on the perceived military and political aspects of these weapons.”

But they frequently ignore the profound human, economic, and environmental costs for those who were soldiers or civilians at or near test sites or in the areas surrounding those sites. Little attention or funding has been provided to survivors or to cleaning up the land poisoned by nuclear testing, said Goldring.

Rather than resuming nuclear testing, those funds could be used to help remedy the effects of past tests, including reducing some of the human and environmental costs.

Instead of threatening to resume nuclear tests and risking that other countries with nuclear weapons will follow our dangerous example, President Trump could take more constructive actions.

One immediate example is that the last nuclear arms control agreement between the US government and Russia, New START, expires early next year. This agreement limited the number of deployed nuclear weapons for both the United States and Russia and contained useful verification

provisions that are unlikely to continue when the agreement expires.

It's probably too late to negotiate even a simple follow-on agreement, but the US and Russia could still commit to maintaining New START's limits, said Goldring.

If President Trump really wants to be the peacemaker he claims to be, he could commit the United States to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

The TPNW is a comprehensive renunciation of nuclear weapons programs; States commit themselves not to develop, test, produce, acquire, possess, stockpile, use, or threaten to use nuclear weapons.

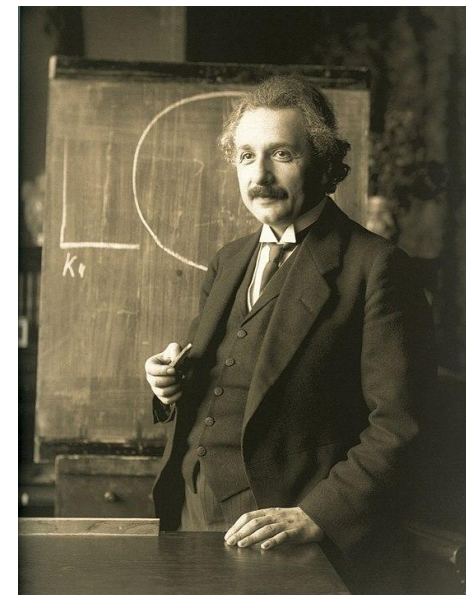
“Rather than taking us backwards, as President Trump proposes to do, we need to move forward.”

In 1946, Albert Einstein wrote, “The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking and

we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophe.”

The TPNW offers a way forward out of this predicament. Testing will perpetuate and exacerbate the human, environmental, and economic costs, among others, she said.

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Albert Einstein during a lecture in Vienna in 1921/ Public Domain

US Stands Alone Defying UN Vote on Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

By Thalif Deen

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) – The US took another step backward –to break ranks with the United Nations– when it voted against a draft resolution calling for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

The negative vote followed an announcement by President Trump last month that the US plans to resume nuclear testing after a 33-year hiatus. The US stood alone on the UN vote, which was supported by almost all member States in the General Assembly’s First Committee.

The resolution was adopted by an overwhelming majority: with 168 votes in favor, with one against (United States) and 3 abstentions (India, Mauritius, Syria).



CTBTO Executive Secretary Robert Floyd addressing staff, Vienna International Centre, Vienna, Austria, 2023. Credit: CTBTO Preparatory Commission



Jacqueline Cabasso, Executive Director, Western States Legal Foundation.

Photo Credit: Katsuhiko Asagiri, Multimedia Director, INPS Japan.

During Trump's first term, the US abstained on the vote. And in other years they had been voting in favour.

Jackie Cabasso, Executive Director, Western States Legal Foundation, which monitors and analyzes U.S. nuclear weapons programs and policies, told IPS the chaos and uncertainty arose from Trump's factually-challenged social media post that "because of other countries testing programs, I have instructed the Department of War to start testing our Nuclear Weapons on an equal basis."

The U.S. government's first ever "No" vote, on the annual UN resolution in support of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), raises further troubling questions about U.S. intentions.

Trump did not specify whether he meant explosive nuclear testing, missile tests, or something else. Russia and China are not conducting explosive nuclear tests, so the U.S. has no basis to respond in kind. They are conducting missile tests, but so is the United States, Cabasso pointed out.

In fact, she said, the U.S. conducted a "routine" test of an unarmed Intercontinental Ballistic Missile on November 5. The Department of Defense (now, Department of War) is responsible for missile tests, but it is the Department of Energy that is responsible for preparation for explosive nuclear testing.

Trump's announcement was followed by mixed signals.

On November 2, Energy Secretary Chris Wright sought to explain Trump's post when he told Fox News "I think the tests we're talking about right now are system tests. These are not nuclear explosions. These are what we call non-critical explosions."

The headline in a New York Times article was dead on target: Trump pushes Tests with a Nuclear Bang: A Top Aide Says Non-nuclear".

The waters were further muddied, said Cabasso, by Trump's unsubstantiated allegations in an interview with 60 Minutes (recorded October 31 but aired November 2) that Russia and China have been secretly conducting explosive nuclear tests deep underground.

In a written statement explaining its General Assembly vote, the U.S. – the only country to cast a No vote – stated, “The United States voted No... because several paragraphs are inconsistent with U.S. policy or are undergoing policy review.... The United States is not currently pursuing CTBT ratification and therefore cannot support calls for ratification and entry into force.”

Of the other nuclear-armed states, the Russian Federation, China, France, United Kingdom, Israel, and Pakistan voted Yes. India abstained, and North Korea did not vote. Thus, the United States distinguished itself as a “rogue” nuclear armed State.

Jonathan Granoff, President, Global Security Institute, told IPS “calling the statement dumb and dumber does not further the argument that such a resumption of nuclear weapons testing would be contrary to promises made to induce indefinite extension of the NPT, justify further more sophisticated weapons developments in violation of the good faith duties to pursue disarmament under the NPT, end the US advantage of knowing more because it has tested more, upgrade the salience of the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons as legitimate tools of communication amongst nations, lead to increased spending on developing weapons which destroy the user as well as adversaries if used, and stimulate greater international fear and instability.”

“We critically need to develop trust and cooperation to, inter alia, protect the oceans and the climate, end the scourge of corruption stealing between two and four trillion from the world’s productive

economies, stop the creation and production of new and even more dangerous weapons as we amplify adversity, ignore preparation for the inevitable next pandemic, eliminate poverty and generally pursue the sanity of human security rather than perpetual instability and the dangerous belief that by madness, mistakes by machines or humans, or design we will not lead ourselves into destroying civilization through the use of these horrific devices,” he said.

Elaborating further, Cabasso pointed out that under the 1980 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, a State is obliged to refrain from acts which would defeat the object and purpose of a treaty when it has signed the treaty.

The United States, Russia and China have all signed but not ratified the CTBT. Russia withdrew its ratification in 2023 to maintain parity with the U.S. The three countries moratoria on nuclear explosive testing until now are consistent with the intent of the CTBT, but Trump’s statements and the U.S. vote in the General Assembly call this commitment into question.

Indicating just how dangerous and uncertain this situation is, Russian President Vladimir Putin, in response, has ordered officials to draft proposals for a possible test of nuclear weapons.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov was quoted in TASS, saying “In order to come to a conclusion about the advisability of beginning preparations for such tests, it will take exactly as much time as it takes

for us to fully understand the intentions of the United States of America.”

“As we continue to advocate for nuclear risk reduction and the global elimination of nuclear weapons”, said Cabasso, “we must remain vigilant that the option of explosive nuclear weapons testing remains off the table”.

The United States should reverse course, commit to a permanent cessation of explosive nuclear weapons testing, ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and invite other nuclear armed states to follow suit. This would be a huge contribution to long term prospects for international peace and security, she declared.

According to the Washington-based Arms Control Association (ACA), if the United States resumes its nuclear testing, other countries, such as Russia, North Korea, and perhaps China, will likely follow suit, escalating the nuclear arms race, and increasing global tensions.

In response to Trump’s rhetoric, Representative. Dina Titus (Democrat-Nevada.) has introduced the *Renewing Efforts to Suspend Testing and Reinforce Arms Control Initiatives Now (RESTRAIN) Act* (H.R. 5894) which creates “a prohibition of explosive nuclear testing while simultaneously preventing any funding from going toward the Trump Administration’s effort to conduct explosive nuclear tests.”

And Senator Ed Markey (Democrat-Massachusetts) has introduced companion legislation in the Senate as the *No Nuclear Testing Act* (S.

3090) to block renewed testing and has called on the Senate to approve ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

In its appeal, ACA says: “We encourage you to reach out to your Member of Congress this week and tell them to block the resumption of nuclear explosive testing including by co-sponsoring the “RESTRAIN Act” and “No Nuclear Testing Act.”

ACA has been at the forefront of the effort to halt nuclear weapons testing for decades.

“Since Trump’s call for renewed nuclear testing, we have flown into action to get our message out, to rally Congressional opposition, to organize with other civil society organizations, and mobilize international opposition to the resumption of nuclear testing by any nation.”

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Nuclear Disarmament Conversations Cannot Lose Traction

By Naureen Hossain

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 6 2025 (IPS) – In recent days, nuclear state leaders have flouted the regulations and norms around nuclear non-proliferation and are flirting more openly with nuclear might in the name of projecting strength.

In the last week, the United States and the Russian Federation have made public shows of their nuclear messaging. On the 27th of October, President Vladimir Putin **revealed** a new nuclear-powered missile capable of staying airborne far longer than conventional missiles and even evading missile defense systems. Some experts have **suggested** that this is meant to reinforce Russia's nuclear might, which Putin has leaned on since the start of the Ukraine invasion in February 2022.

More recently, on 29 October, President Donald Trump announced via social media that he wanted to **resume** nuclear testing for the first time in thirty years. In his post he wrote, "Because of other countries testing



Titan II ICBM – decommissioned nuclear missile – at the Titan Missile Museum, Green Valley, Sahuarita, Arizona. Credit: Stephen Cobb/Unsplash

programs, I have instructed the Department of War to start testing our Nuclear Weapons on an equal basis."

As he made this announcement just before his meeting with President Xi Jinping, some experts have **considered** that China's expanding nuclear arsenal has prompted some calls in Washington D.C. to quickly modernize the U.S.'s own nuclear forces. Nuclear testing by major powers like China, Russia or the U.S. has not been conducted in decades. Yet analyses have **warned** that such an act would only further complicate relations between this triad.

All these developments should not come as a surprise. Even as countries have been aware of the dangers of nuclear weapons since 1945, this has not completely stopped them from expanding their forces. As of June 2025, there are over 12,400 nuclear warheads in the world in only a small percentage of countries. The U.S. and Russia

account for 90 percent of those warheads, both possessing more than 5,000 nuclear warheads. [According](#) to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), nearly all nine of the nuclear states moved to modernize their existing nuclear arsenals and acquire new missiles in 2024.

Increasing geopolitical tensions have increased feelings of uncertainty and instability, which seems to have led countries to prioritize national

The threat of nuclear weapons seemed to loom over major events this year, even as their efficacy as a deterrent was thrown into question. As India and Pakistan engaged in aerial battles and strategic strikes in May, the conflict demonstrated to the world how close two nuclear powers could come to war.

Meanwhile, in the context of the ongoing war in Ukraine and the perceived threat from Russia, European nations, including France and the U.K., are moving to [prioritize investments](#) in defense, including deterrence. Germany, Denmark and Lithuania are among some of the countries that have also expressed interest in hosting nuclear weapons for the nuclear states.

William Potter, Director of the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, expressed concern over the dangers posed by nuclear weapons due to miscalculations and misperceptions at a time when “there is a total lack of trust, respect, and empathy among the nuclear weapons possessors.”

security. The nuclear-armed states have made moves to expand the capabilities of their arsenals. SIPRI estimates that China now owns 600 nuclear warheads. Both the United Kingdom and France have ongoing programs to develop strategic weapons, including missiles and submarines. North Korea continues to expand its military nuclear program, accelerating the production of fissile material to make more nuclear warheads.

“The more nuclear weapons, the greater the risk of their inadvertent use, but even more dangerous is the absence of a political climate in which serious arms control and disarmament measures can be pursued,” Potter told IPS.

The safeguards for nuclear arms control are also being challenged. The NEW-Start treaty, the last remaining arms control treaty between the U.S. and Russia, is set to expire in February 2026, though both countries have [considered voluntarily maintaining](#) the limits on deployed strategic nuclear weapons for one year. Yet in this past week, that promise has been undercut by both parties.

At the same time, there are the continuous calls for nonproliferation and disarmament. Advocates from all over have raised awareness on the impacts of radiation on communities, on public safety and on the environment. The United Nations has platformed and rallied these advocates and has raised the alarm for disarmament since its official beginning on 24 October, 1945.

Amidst this, there is the fear of a new nuclear arms race. During the high-level meeting on the elimination of nuclear weapons in September [this year](#), the UN's Chef de Cabinet Courtenay Rattray, who delivered remarks on behalf of Secretary-General António Guterres, said that the world was “sleepwalking” into this new arms race, now defined by new technologies and new domains for conflict such as cyberspace. Rattney warned that “the risks of escalation and miscalculation are multiplying.”

So if the nuclear states are modernizing their arsenals, how do modern technologies fit in? Artificial intelligence (AI) is the latest frontier that countries are navigating and investing significant resources in to achieve progress. Given that, national and global regulations on the safe governance of AI are still nascent as countries still work to agree on universal agreements for the frameworks for the ethical applications of AI.

As it becomes increasingly sophisticated and more accessible, member states have been investing resources into incorporating AI in the military domain. Given that it does not fit neatly into pre-existing deterrence frameworks, this has also raised concerns over AI's possible “destabilizing effects,” according to Wilfred Wan, Director of the SIPRI Weapons of Mass Destruction Programme.

It has prompted stakeholders to engage in serious negotiations on AI governance in the military domain, including guardrails to reduce the risk of escalation, Wan told IPS. At the multilateral level, he cites the

example of the [Blueprint for Action](#) that came out of the [second summit](#) on Responsible AI in the Military Domain (REAIM) in 2024. It is a non-binding agreement among 61 countries, including nuclear powers like the U.S., the U.K., France and Pakistan, that provides a framework for the responsibility that parties need to take in integrating AI, and recognizing gaps that policymakers must take into account. There is also the UN General Assembly Resolution 79/239 on “[AI] in the military domain and its implications for international peace and security.”

“This is certainly not a substitute for disarmament progress, but in the current strategic context, it can help rebuild some of the trust and confidence necessary for revitalizing those efforts,” Wan said.

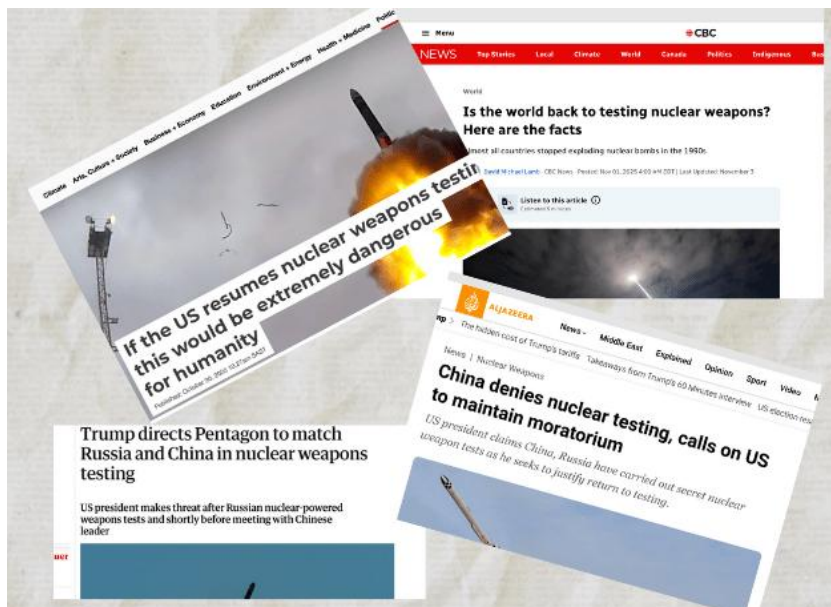
Researchers from SIPRI have found there are [no governance frameworks](#) specifically for the nuclear-AI nexus compared to those for conventional military systems. “In the nuclear context, discussions have largely centered on retaining human control in nuclear decision-making. This is an essential principle but does not address other ways in which AI integration can affect the environment in which nuclear decisions are made, directly or indirectly,” Wan explained.

“Absent a framework that addresses these aspects, including through regulatory and technical measures, there remains the risk of accelerated integration of AI among nuclear-armed states in a manner that destabilizes the security environment, threatens strategic stability, and impacts the risk of nuclear use.”

When assessing the existing approaches to the governance of military AI, it shows common areas of concern, such as raising awareness through multi-stakeholder engagement and preserving the capacity for human intervention, along with applying safety and security measures to mitigate escalation risks.

At this time, nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation are critical and may even provide insight into negotiating the governance of AI in nuclear forces. The approaches to fostering multi-stakeholder dialogue that include policymakers, non-nuclear states, experts and the private sector could similarly apply to discussions around AI in nuclear forces. Though it should be noted that their limited knowledge of nuclear force structures may constrain meaningful contributions to the debate. Nevertheless, their participation must be facilitated if nuclear parties truly value human control in this factor.

Nuclear and non-nuclear states must recommit to the anti-nuclear agreements, including the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Potter stressed the importance of disarmament and nonproliferation education, particularly to empower



Concerns about nuclear testing have been reflected in headlines.

Credit: IPS

future generations to “pursue creative ways to reduce pressing nuclear dangers.”

The UN can employ its influence in advancing disarmament efforts through dialogue and awareness efforts from the General Assembly and the Office of Disarmament Affairs (UN-ODA). The UN has also confirmed it will convene an independent scientific panel to assess the effects of nuclear warfare and an Expert Group on Nuclear-Free War Zones.

“Nuclear disarmament is more important today than ever before, but it is not simply a question of securing lower numbers of nuclear weapons,” Potter said. “At a time when the “nuclear taboo” has been eroded and discussions about the use of nuclear weapons have been normalized, it is vital that policymakers act boldly in a fashion commensurate with the threat.”

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US Threatens to Resume Nuclear Testing while Past Tests Have Devastated Victims Worldwide

By Thalif Deen

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) – The lingering after-effects of nuclear tests by the world’s nuclear powers have left a devastating impact on hundreds and thousands of victims world-wide.

The history of nuclear testing, according to the United Nations, began 16 July 1945 at a desert test site in Alamogordo, New Mexico when the United States exploded its first atomic bomb.

In the five decades, between 1945 and the opening for signature of the [Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty](#) (CTBT) in 1996, over 2,000 nuclear tests were carried out all over the world.

Since the CTBT was opened for signature in September 1996, 10 nuclear tests have been conducted:

On October 30, President Donald Trump, just ahead of his meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, announced on social media, that the US will resume testing nuclear weapons for the first time in over 30 years.

But this time on an “equal basis” with Russia and China.



On October 16, 1964, the People’s Republic of China conducted its first nuclear test, making it the fifth nuclear-armed state after the USA, the USSR, Britain and France. It was a uranium-235 implosion fission device, yield of 22 kilotons. Project 596 1964 – Lop Nur, China. Credit: Atomic archive.com.

The main former US nuclear test sites were the Nevada Test Site (now the Nevada National Security Site) and the Pacific Proving Grounds in the Marshall Islands and near Kiritimati (Christmas) Island.

Other tests also occurred in various locations across the United States, including New Mexico, Colorado, Alaska, and Mississippi.

The Nevada test site, located in Nye County, Nevada, was the most active, with over 1,000 tests conducted between 1951 and 1992.

Speaking at a meeting, September 26, on The International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons,” UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned “nuclear testing threats are returning, while nuclear saber rattling is louder than in past decades.”

Meanwhile, a New York Times story October 29, headlined “China is Racing to Lead World in Nuclear Power,” harks back to the 45 nuclear tests by China between 1964 and 1996.

According to one report, nuclear test survivors in China, particularly ethnic Uyghurs in Xinjiang, face a situation where their health issues from radiation exposure are largely unrecognized, and their voices are systematically silenced by the government.

“The Chinese state has actively suppressed information about the devastating consequences of its nuclear testing program on the local population”.

According to an AI generated overview, China’s tests included both atmospheric and underground tests, which included 22 atmospheric

detonations, which exposed the local population to significant radioactive fallout.

The Chinese government claimed the test site was a “barren and isolated” area with no permanent residents. In reality, Uyghur herders and farmers had lived there for centuries.

Independent research and anecdotal evidence paint a grim picture of the human and environmental costs.

Medical experts have documented a disproportionate increase in cancers, birth defects, leukemia, and degenerative disorders in Xinjiang compared to the rest of China.

Alice Slater, who serves on the boards of World BEYOND War and the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space, and is a UN NGO Representative for the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, told IPS regardless of China ‘s unfair treatment of downwinders at Lop Nor, is it any more egregious than the treatment of the downwinders in Nevada, Kazakhstan, and the Marshall Islands, who suffered the effects of US, Russian and French tests?

What can we LEARN from China during these terrible times if imminent nuclear annihilation?

They just reissued their joint appeal with Russia to negotiate treaties to ban weapons in space and war in space and pledged never to be the first to use or place weapons in space. Unlike the US and Russia which keep their nuclear bombs on missiles poised and ready to fire, China separates their warheads from their missiles, she said.

The Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons DID enter into force when 50 countries ratified it, she pointed out. Although many more than 50 have now signed and ratified it, NONE of the nuclear weapons states or any of the US allies harboring under the US nuclear “umbrella” have signed., said Slater.

Tariq Rauf, Former Head of Verification and Security Policy, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), told IPS: Is the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty a Flawed Treaty?

The objective of a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing originally had been truly comprehensive: non-proliferation and disarmament, but the CTBT lacks substantive link to nuclear disarmament, he pointed out.

“Throughout the treaty negotiations, the purpose of a ban on all forms of testing became progressively de-linked from the ultimate objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

In the final text, non-nuclear-weapon States were barely able to establish a relationship between the exhortations for disarmament in the preamble and the operative text.

The CTBT even permits non-explosive forms of testing, which, with advances in technology, may today be used to refine nuclear weapons and to design new ones. Nuclear test sites remain active in China, Russia, US (DPRK, India, Pakistan ??). France is the only NWS to have decommissioned its test site.

China, Egypt, Iran, Russia and the US need to ratify, but there is no pressure exerted on these NPT States in NPT meetings. And the same goes for non-signatories, DPRK, India, Israel and Pakistan, he said.

“It seems that the CTBT will never enter into force, but hopefully the moratoria on nuclear testing would continue?”

Kazakhstan and the Marshall Islands are leading efforts to set up an international trust fund for victims of nuclear testing, under the aegis of Article 6 of the TNPW. The CTBT lacks any provision on assistance to victims of testing, Rauf said.

According to the United Nations, The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty bans nuclear testing everywhere on the planet — surface, atmosphere, underwater and underground.

The Treaty takes on significance as it also aims to obstruct the development of nuclear weapons: both the initial development of nuclear weapons as well as their substantial improvement (e.g. the advent of thermonuclear weapons) necessitate real nuclear testing.

The CTBT makes it almost impossible for countries that do not yet have nuclear weapons to develop them. And it makes it almost impossible for countries that have nuclear weapons to develop new or more advanced weapons. It also helps prevent the damage caused by nuclear testing to humans and the environment.

Reacting to Trump's announcement, U.S. Senator Jack Reed (Democrat -Rhode Island), the top Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, said: "Once again, President Trump has it wrong when it comes to nuclear weapons policy."

This time, he seems to have ordered the Pentagon to resume nuclear explosive weapons testing. This confusing directive reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of our nuclear enterprise—it is the Department of Energy, not the Department of Defense, that manages our nuclear weapons complex and any testing activities.

"Breaking the explosive testing moratorium that the United States, Russia, and China have maintained since the 1990s would be strategically reckless, inevitably prompting Moscow and Beijing to resume their own testing programs".

Further, he said, American explosive testing would provide justification for Pakistan, India, and North Korea to expand their own testing regimes, destabilizing an already fragile global nonproliferation architecture at precisely the moment we can least afford it.

"The United States would gain very little from such testing, and we would sacrifice decades of hard-won progress in preventing nuclear proliferation."

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The first USSR nuclear test "Joe 1" at Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan, 29 August 1949. Credit: CTBTO

Breaking the Silence in Tokyo: A Kazakh Filmmaker Confronts the Nuclear Scars Through Her Documentary “Jara”

By Katsuhiko Asagiri



Agerim Seitenova introducing her documentary film “JALA”, credit: SGI

TOKYO (INPS Japan) – The screening room at the Toda Peace Memorial Hall in Tokyo fell silent as Kazakh filmmaker and human rights advocate [Agerim Seitenova](#) stepped forward in a black T-shirt and green skirt to introduce her 31-minute documentary, “[Jara – Radioactive Patriarchy: Women of Qazaqstan.](#)” The screening

event was co-organized by the Kazakh Nuclear Frontline Coalition (ASQAQQNFC), the Soka Gakkai Peace Committee, and Peace Boat, with support from [Japan NGO Network for Nuclear Weapons Abolition \(JANA\)](#).

The hall itself is symbolic in Japan’s peace movement. It is named after [Josei Toda](#), the second president of the Buddhist organisation Soka Gakkai, who in 1957 made his historic [Declaration Calling for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons](#) before 50,000 youth members. That appeal has become a moral pillar of Soka Gakkai’s global campaign for peace and disarmament.

Reclaiming Women’s Voices

“This film was made to make visible the voices of women who have lived in silence. They are not victims—they are storytellers and changemakers,” Seitenova told the audience of diplomats, journalists, students and peace activists.

Her documentary, *Jara*—meaning “wound” in Kazakh—tells the stories of women from Semey, formerly known as Semipalatinsk, the site of 456 Soviet nuclear tests conducted between 1949 and 1989.

Unlike earlier films that focused on physical devastation and disability caused by nuclear testing, *Jara* explores the unseen and intergenerational impacts: the stigma, the psychological scars, and the inherited fear of bearing children.

“Most films show Semey as ‘the most nuked place on Earth.’ I wanted to show resilience instead of fear—to reclaim our story in our own voice,” she said.



(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGY5aHjiyTc>)

Breaking the Silence

Seitenova’s personal connection to the issue began with humiliation.

As a university student in Almaty, the largest city in Kazakhstan, when she introduced herself as being from Semey, a classmate mockingly asked if she had “a tail.”

“That moment stayed with me,” she recalled. “It made me realise that nuclear harm is not only physical. It lives on in prejudice and silence.”

That experience would later drive her to create a film that breaks that silence.

Patriarchy and Nuclear Power

In *Jara*, women appear not as passive victims but as active participants in their communities, confronting the legacies of secrecy and discrimination.

“In militarized societies, nuclear weapons are symbols of superiority,” Seitenova said in her speech. “Peace and cooperation are dismissed as weak— as feminine. That’s the mindset we must challenge.”

Her feminist perspective connects nuclear weapons and patriarchy, arguing that both systems thrive on domination and power over others.

From the Steppes to Global Advocacy



Author made a documentary of the 2018 conference which Seitenova participated. Credit:INPS Japan.

Born into a third-generation family affected by radiation exposure in Semey, Seitenova said her activism was inspired by “quiet endurance and the absence of open discussion.”

In 2018, she joined the [Youth for CTBTO](#) and Group of Eminent Persons (GEM) ‘Youth International Conference’ organised by the Kazakh government. During the five-day programme, young representatives from nuclear-weapon, non-nuclear and nuclear-dependent states travelled along with nuclear disarmament experts overnight by train from Astana to Kurchatov, visiting the former test site. “It was the first time I saw the land that shaped my people’s history,” she said.

Years later, returning to Semey to film *Jara* became both a personal and political act of remembrance.

She cites [Togzhan Kassenova’s Atomic Steppe](#) and [Ray Acheson’s Banning the Bomb, Smashing the Patriarchy](#) as works that helped her articulate how nuclear policy and gender inequality are intertwined.

Shared Suffering, Shared Hope



Photo: Mr. Hiroshi Nose, director of Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum explaining the impact of Atom Bomb. Credit: Katsuhiko Asagiri, President of INPS Japan.

In October, Seitenova travelled to Japan to participate in the [24th World Congress of the International Physicians for the Prevention of](#)

[Nuclear War \(IPPNW\) in Nagasaki](#), meeting survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

“Japan and Kazakhstan share the experience of nuclear suffering,” she said. “But we can transform that pain into dialogue—and into peace.”

That spirit carried into the Tokyo screening, where diplomats, journalists and peace activists discussed nuclear justice, gender equality and youth participation.



Credit: SGI

“The fight for nuclear justice is not about the past—it’s about the future,” she said. “It’s about ensuring that no one else has to live with the consequences of nuclear weapons.”

As the applause filled the Toda Peace Memorial Hall, the resonance was unmistakable—linking a hall named for a man who condemned the bomb to the wind-scarred plains of Semey, where the voices of women are at last being heard.

『INPS Japan』

Turning Pain into Power

Through her organisation, the Kazakh Nuclear Frontline Coalition (ASQAQQNFC), Seitenova works to connect nuclear-affected communities with policymakers implementing [the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons \(TPNW\)](#).



A building with a diplomatic soul, now guardian of the historical memory of the Tlatelolco neighborhood in Mexico City

By Guillermo Ayala Alanis



Photo: Building of the Tlatelolco University Cultural Center (CCUT), former tower of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Author: Guillermo Ayala Alanis.

Inspired by the United Nations headquarters, the building was the epicenter of Mexican diplomacy for almost forty years. It was there that one of the most important chapters in the fight against nuclear weapons was written in 1967, with the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

Mexico City (INPS Japan) – To speak of Tlatelolco is to speak of history. This site, located in northern Mexico City, blends past and

present represented by three cultures: pre-Hispanic, colonial, and contemporary. It is a place marked by death and, at the same time, by the guarantee of life. Here there has been war and peace, trade and evangelization, modernity and repression, resilience, diplomacy, and the struggle for nuclear non-proliferation.

A 22-floor tower dominates the landscape of Tlatelolco. For almost 40 years—from 1966 to 2005—it housed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Secretaria de RE in Spanish). Today it is the Tlatelolco University Cultural Center (CCUT in Spanish), a space dedicated to preserving the memory of this emblematic neighborhood. “Spaces have echoes; walls tell us how architecture is steeped in history. This building is proof that the diplomatic sphere in this area of Mexico City was very important in a decade that required a presence,” said Roberto Barajas Chávez, CCUT Visual Arts Coordinator, in an interview with INPS Japan.

In the 1960s, the Mexican government sought to concentrate the country’s diplomatic activity, which was then scattered across several buildings, in a single location. Tlatelolco was chosen, where the newly inaugurated Nonoalco-Tlatelolco housing complex stood out as a symbol of progress and a showcase for the prosperity that Mexico

wanted to show the world. The SRE tower was inaugurated in 1966 and immediately became the epicenter of Mexico's foreign policy.

From this new place, then-Foreign Minister Alfonso García Robles promoted a historic event: The Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, better known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Signed on February 14, in 1967, it made the region the first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the world. Its relevance was enormous in the midst of the Cold War, when the planet was living under the threat of an unprecedented war between the United States and the Soviet Union that almost took Latin America and the Caribbean as its battleground, in the episode known as the 1962 missile crisis.

“This dispute, which seemed bipolar, was actually global because it affected everyone. The important thing is that the Treaty of Tlatelolco continues to resonate today; international organizations such as OPANAL remind us of this,” said Roberto Barajas.

The SRE tower was designed by architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez. Its white marble facade and dark glass windows, standing 102 meters tall, symbolize “cleanliness and verticality,” values that Mexican foreign policy sought to reflect. The structure was inspired by the UN headquarters in New York, both in its rectangular shape and in the interior layout of corridors, auditoriums, offices, and meeting rooms.

With the beginning of the new millennium, in 2006, the SRE moved its offices to downtown Mexico City, leaving the tower in Tlatelolco vacant. The building had withstood the 1985 earthquake, although it had suffered structural damage. In 2007, the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) took control of the building and transformed it into the Tlatelolco University Cultural Center, dedicated to the dissemination of art and the preservation of historical memory.



Photo: Roberto Barajas Chávez, Visual Arts Coordinator at CCUT. Author: Guillermo Ayala Alanís.

Today, the site houses two permanent exhibition halls. The first tells the pre-Hispanic history of Tlatelolco, founded in 1337 as a mirror city of Mexico-Tenochtitlan and key to trade between the region's populations. The second is dedicated to the student movement of 1968, when on October 2, the army, on the orders of then-President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, brutally repressed students from the UNAM and other institutions of higher education. This room commemorates the victims and the context of repression at the time.

Although there is no permanent room dedicated exclusively to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the CCUT keeps its memory alive. In 2025, it presented the exhibition Tlatelolco: Epicenter of Nuclear Disarmament and Feminism, which commemorated the 58th anniversary of the signing of the treaty and the 50th anniversary of the First World Conference on Women, held in 1975 in the same tower.

“The soul of this building was diplomatic and an architectural innovation. Engaging with the past is not just about recovering memory, but rethinking the present and even thinking about the future,” explains Barajas. That is why many CCUT exhibitions seek to link architecture and politics.

The memory of Ambassador Alfonso García Robles, winner of the 1982 Nobel Peace Prize for his promotion of nuclear disarmament, also lives on. The main auditorium and a bookstore on the premises bear his name. In that bookstore, there is a painting that seems to watch over the literature on the historical events of Tlatelolco, such as the student movement of 1968.

The old room where the Treaty of Tlatelolco was signed has been adapted to current needs. That large hall, where Mexican diplomats showed visitors from other friendly nations the fusion of the three cultures that gave rise to contemporary Mexico, is now used for temporary exhibitions and events. However, a smaller space in the CCUT recreates what the main hall looked like during those historic

negotiations that showed the world that Latin America was capable of working toward the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

In addition to exhibitions and conferences, the Tlatelolco University Cultural Center organizes concerts, workshops, and community activities that strengthen ties with neighboring neighborhoods. Its goal is to connect local history with new generations and help residents recognize themselves as part of a legacy that combines resistance, culture, and diplomacy.

On September 19, Tlatelolco commemorated the victims of the earthquake that shook Mexico City 40 years ago. In the Nonoalco-Tlatelolco multifamily complex, that modern symbol of 1960s Mexico, the Nuevo León building was destroyed and other buildings suffered less catastrophic damage, including the SRE Tower, which will celebrate its 60th anniversary in 2026. The Tlatelolco University Cultural Center is already preparing for the festivities.

『INPS Japan』



Nuclear Testing Threats are Returning & Saber Rattling is Getting Louder, warns UN Chief

By Thalif Deen

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) – Is the unpredictable Trump administration toying with the idea of resuming nuclear tests?

The New York times reported April 10 that some of Trump’s senior advisers had proposed the resumption of “test denotations for the sake of national security”. The last such US explosion took place in 1992.

But former US Representative [Brandon Williams](#), (Republican-New York), the new administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), which plays an integral role in the nation’s \$1.7 trillion nuclear weapons modernization effort, testified last April before the Senate Armed Services Committee he would not recommend the re-start of nuclear weapons testing.

The last confirmed full-scale nuclear explosive test was conducted by North Korea in September 2017—with perhaps more to come.



A nuclear test is carried out on an island in French Polynesia in 1971. Credit: The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO)

Speaking at a meeting, September 26, on “the international day for the total elimination of nuclear weapons,” UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned “nuclear testing threats are returning, while nuclear saber rattling is louder than in past decades.”

Hard-won progress – reductions in arsenals, the cessation of testing – these are being undone before our eyes. We are sleepwalking into a new nuclear arms race, Guterres warned,

“I call on every State to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, ending once and for all and for all the dark legacy of nuclear tests.

And every State must support the victims of nuclear use and testing – and confront the enduring harm: poisoned lands, chronic illness, and lasting trauma” declared Guterres.

Meanwhile, the devastating after-effects of past nuclear tests from a bygone era are still lingering.

During the British nuclear weapons tests in Australia between 1952 and 1963, Indigenous voices were systematically ignored, resulting in severe health and cultural devastation, according to a published report.

Through decades of relentless campaigning, survivors and their descendants have forced a belated official acknowledgement of the harm caused. However, the fight for full justice continues to this day, with the voices of many still unheard.

For years, both governments dismissed or covered up the health dangers associated with the tests, despite Aboriginal communities reporting severe health issues like rashes, blindness, and cancers. A 1956 letter from an Australian government scientist mocked a patrol officer for prioritizing the safety of a “handful of natives” over the British Commonwealth.

Despite state-sanctioned ignorance, Aboriginal survivors and their advocates refused to be silenced, ensuring their experiences were recognized.

Dr M.V. Ramana, Professor and Simons Chair in Disarmament, Global and Human Security and Director pro-tem, School of Public Policy and Global Affairs at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, told IPS a resumption of nuclear weapon testing by the United States will most likely lead other countries like Russia, China, India, and North Korea to test their nuclear weapons.

In turn, this will increase the likelihood of an accelerated nuclear arms race, and a greater likelihood of nuclear weapons being used somewhere in the world with catastrophic consequences.

But even without nuclear war, the people who live close to these test sites, which in many cases have included indigenous communities, will suffer from exposure to radioactive contamination and other environmental effects.

The only countervailing force that one can place some hope on under these circumstances is the peace and disarmament movement, that might be able to catalyze public opposition to testing, declared Dr Ramana.

Jackie Cabasso, Executive Director, Western States Legal Foundation, Oakland, California, told IPS: It is somewhat reassuring that the new head of the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration, Brandon Williams, during his confirmation hearings said he would advise against resuming explosive nuclear tests.

“However, the second Trump regime’s likely nuclear policy is spelled out in a manifesto by Project 2025, which proposes that a second Trump administration prioritize nuclear weapons programs over other security programs, accelerate the development and production of all nuclear weapons programs, increase funding for the development and production of new and modernized nuclear warheads, and prepare to test new nuclear weapons,” she pointed out.

Separately, Robert O’Brien, Trump’s national security advisor during his first term, wrote in Foreign Affairs, that in order to counter China and Russia’s continued investments in their nuclear arsenals, the U.S. should resume nuclear testing.

“And we must keep in mind that Russell Vought, one of the architects and co-authors of Project 2025, is now the Director of the powerful Office of Management and Budget,” said Cabasso.

Since 1945, she said, there have been 2,056 nuclear weapons tests by at least eight countries. Most of these tests have been conducted on the lands of indigenous and colonized people.

The United States conducted 1,030 of those tests in the atmosphere, underwater, and underground, while the USSR carried out 715 nuclear test detonations.

“Not only did these nuclear test explosions fuel the development and spread of nuclear weapons, but hundreds of thousands of people have died and millions more have suffered—and continue to suffer—from illnesses directly related to the radioactive fallout from nuclear detonations in the United States, islands in the Pacific, in Australia, China, Algeria, across Russia, in Kazakhstan, India, Pakistan, North Korea, and elsewhere,” said Cabasso.

According to an AI extract: Some of the major nuclear test sites include:

- Nevada Test Site, USA: A primary location for U.S. atmospheric and underground testing for over 40 years. Fallout from atmospheric tests was carried by wind over vast downwind areas.
- Pacific Proving Grounds: A U.S. site in the Marshall Islands where numerous high-yield tests, including the 1954 Castle Bravo shot, caused extensive radioactive contamination.

- Semipalatinsk Test Site, Kazakhstan: A major Soviet test site where 456 tests exposed as many as one million people to radiation, leading to high rates of cancer and birth defects.

- Novaya Zemlya, Russia: The Soviet Union's test site for the largest nuclear explosion in history, the Tsar Bomba, in 1961.

- Lop Nor, China: The location for all of China's nuclear tests.

- Reggane and Ekker, Algeria; Mururoa and Fangataufa atolls, French Polynesia: French nuclear test sites.

- Maralinga, Emu Field, and Montebello, Australia: British test sites.

Environmental and health effects include:

- Global radioactive fallout: Atmospheric testing spread radioactive particles, such as iodine-131, cesium-137, and strontium-90, globally. This significantly increased atmospheric radioactivity, which peaked in 1963.

- Increased cancer rates: Long-term exposure to radioactive fallout has been linked to increased rates of various cancers, including thyroid cancer, leukemia, and other solid tumors. The highest risks are often seen in communities living downwind of test sites and in those exposed during childhood.

- Acute radiation sickness: Individuals near test sites who were exposed to high levels of radiation suffered from immediate symptoms like nausea, vomiting, and hair loss.

- Soil and water contamination: Radioactive particles can contaminate soil, water, and air for decades, entering the food chain and posing long-term risks.

- Disruption of ecosystems: Radioactive fallout can cause genetic mutations and death in animal populations, leading to wider ecological disruption.

- Psychological impact: Survivors and affected communities have also experienced profound psychological trauma, anxiety, and fear.

- Downwinder compensation: In the U.S., the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) was established in 1990 to provide compensation to "Downwinders" who contracted specific cancers and diseases from fallout exposure from the Nevada Test Site.

『INPS Japan/IPS UN Bureau Report』



World Wars

By Kunda Dixit



Kathumandu (Nepali Times)

– Ukraine. Sudan. Gaza. Iran. This may not seem like a world war, but we are getting dangerously close to one. Here in Nepal, we may think we are far removed from it all, but there are about 2 million Nepalis in Israel and the Gulf states, and an escalation would devastate our remittance-driven economy.

The Israeli attacks on Bandar Abbas and Iran's threat to mine the Strait of Hormuz, set off some panic buying at petrol stations in Kathmandu this week. Petroleum makes up a quarter of Nepal's import bill.

Ten Nepalis were killed in the Hamas attack on 7 October 2023, and one is still held hostage in Gaza. Nepali soldiers in the

Russian Army are fighting and getting killed on the Ukraine front.

There are Nepali green card holders enlisted in the US military, and some of them took part in the Pyongyang-style military parade in Washington DC on 14 June. While the DPRK tries to deter enemies with military might, Trump's parade was a warning to his own citizens not to step out of line.

In the background are warlike warnings on 'Truth Social' from the leader of a global superpower about joining Israel to bomb Iran.

Meanwhile, the other superpower is hitting apartments in Kyiv with guided missiles. Tv talk show guests in Moscow talk flippantly about nuking London.

Ukraine's audacious drone attacks on Russia's strategic bomber fleet proved what had been obvious for some time — the nature and scope of warfare has changed.

India and Pakistan in May also used UAVs and missiles against each other. And in a new twist, Pakistani J-10 fighters are said to have shot down two Indian aircraft, at least one of them a French-built Rafale jet.

Even if those reports are not true, air forces around the world are reassessing the capability of Chinese weaponry.

In both the India-Pakistan aerial combat in May and the ongoing Israeli raids on Iran, some of the targets were nuclear installations. We have to see if President Trump follows through on his warning to evacuate Tehran, but analysts see the US possibly deploying bunker buster bombs on underground Iranian nuclear weapons facilities.



Kunda Dixit

Iran's leaders have warned of retaliation, and US bases in Bahrain, Qatar and UAE could be targets. If that happens, all hell will break loose. While hoping that saner voices prevail, the world has to prepare for the three flashpoints that carry the danger of crossing the nuclear threshold: Russia-Ukraine, Israel-Iran and closer to home, India-Pakistan.

Nuclear deterrence may have prevented New Delhi and Islamabad from incinerating each other's cities with atomic weapons, it also showed how a small miscalculation could have led to such escalation.

Both countries had primed their populations through propaganda and mass media to bay for blood. On social media Indians and Pakistanis

were already nuking each other with hate speech, exhorting their leaders to press launch buttons.

In all three conflicts, that is where the danger lies: public so consumed by manufactured hatred magnified by the social web that the notion of nuclear deterrence has become meaningless.

Ukraine's drone attacks deep within Russia and India's use of loitering munitions have changed conventional warfare. Expensive stealth bombers, main battle tanks, surface-to-air missile launch sites are all obsolete because these legacy weapons can be destroyed by drones which can be ordered online on Amazon.

The way these three world wars are being waged, and the loss of America's nuclear umbrella have also triggered a rearmament race. Money has been diverted from development, climate mitigation (and in a tragic irony) famines unleashed by wars.

We in Nepal worry about radioactive fallout from a limited or all-out nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan. But there is also the danger of a showdown between a wounded Iran and nuclear-armed Israel, or even Russia's use of tactical nuclear weapons in Ukraine. There are also the ever-present danger of nuclear terrorism by non-state actors.

And if all that was not worrying enough, here is another danger: the spread of millions of drones equipped with AI targeting.

As Stuart Russel at the University of California Berkeley warns in his film Slaughterbots, the world may need another disarmament treaty to control weapons that are not controlled by humans.

『INPS Japan/Nepali Times』



Image: INPS Japan

Propagate and Spread the Message of Peace Like Ripples in Water, 80 Years After Hiroshima and Nagasaki

By Kunda Dixit



Yasuaki Yamashita

Mexico City (INPS Japan) - Eighty years ago, the world witnessed the destructive power of perhaps the most devastating weapon ever unleashed by humankind. The Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki became the scenes of one of the darkest chapters in human history when they were targeted with nuclear bombs. Their destruction and human toll have reverberated across generations. More than 200,000 lives were lost, yet some who survived—now in their 80s or

older—continue to raise their voices with strength and conviction, calling for peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

At the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Cuajimalpa Campus (UAM Cuajimalpa) in western Mexico City, Yasuaki Yamashita, a survivor of the Nagasaki bombing of August 9, 1945, shared his testimony before dozens of attendees at a conference dedicated to remembering that tragic day.

He urged the audience to carry forward the prayer for peace of all those who endured the horror of the atomic bombs, so that the message would spread like ripples across water. *“The small voice of each one of you can spread throughout the world. These voices will travel far and wide, and one day we will be able to live without the threat of nuclear weapons. That is what we want—we want peace,”* Mr. Yamashita emphasized.



Photo: Yasuaki Yamashita, hibakusha. Credit: Guillermo Ayala.

A Childhood in Flames: Yamashita's Testimony

Mr. Yamashita's recollections transport us directly to that fateful morning. He was just six years old when an extraordinary flash—"like a thousand bolts of lightning striking at once"—lit up the sky, marking the onset of incomprehensible horror. He remembers being at home with his family when the bomb detonated. Their house, located about 2.5 kilometers from the blast's epicenter, collapsed under a storm of radiant heat and shockwave. His sister, in another part of the house, was wounded by shards of glass. Terrified, she mistook her bleeding head wound for "dangerous oil used by the U.S. military".

Destruction was everywhere. Buildings, roads, and homes lay in ruin. Many perished instantly while others were gravely injured. Amid the chaos, the city's hospitals were decimated; medical personnel were killed or incapacitated, leaving survivors without care. Starvation followed. Families walked for miles through the rubble to reach farmland, bartering whatever valuables remained for food. Yamashita recalls walking through devastation, the horror at once surreal and painfully real.

From Silence to Testimony: A Journey of Healing

For years, Yamashita remained silent about his experience. The stigma of radiation survivors in Japan—marked by fear, prejudice, and the belief that the "contagion" of their illness could harm others—forced many hibakusha into quiet solitude. He began his career in 1960 at the Japanese Red Cross Hospital for atomic-bomb survivors

(Nagasaki Genbaku Byoin), administering care—but also forging a bond with patients suffering from radiation-related illnesses. One leukemia patient, close in age to him, whom he frequently donated blood to, died tragically. The experience of witnessing this decline etched a heavy reminder in Yamashita: he too could fall ill at any moment.

In that environment, the trauma and the discrimination he witnessed—especially against young women fearful of having children affected by radiation—led him to conceal his hibakusha identity. Yet, his connection to Mexico would spark a dramatic turn in his life story. Inspired by Japanese fascination with Mexican culture—boleros by Los Panchos, muralism, and indigenous history—he began studying Spanish and Meso-American culture passionately. In 1968, during the Mexico City Olympics, he was chosen as an interpreter for the Japanese delegation and decided to stay. In Mexico, he deepened his cultural learning, studied Nahuatl, became an interpreter and translator for Japanese firms, and eventually became a Mexican citizen.

Only in 1995, while in Querétaro, did he break his long silence as a hibakusha and begin speaking publicly. Initially reluctant, he gradually embraced public testimony as a form of healing—and activism—it became his mission to bear witness and advocate for a world free of nuclear weapons.



“People like Yasuaki are now 80 years old or older. The responsibility falls on young people now. This is not something that should be treated superficially, as many schools have done. We must raise awareness. This is something that must never be forgotten,” Jessica said.

A Legacy Preserved in Print

At the event, the book *Hibakusha: Testimony of Yasuaki Yamashita* was also launched. Written by Dr. Sergio Hernández and published by Fondo de Cultura Económica, the work chronicles Yamashita’s life—from surviving Nagasaki and the persistent discrimination afterward, to his emigration to Mexico, and his eventual role as an activist and artistic creator.

“It’s a short but very moving book. What struck me most was the discrimination he endured... it was powerful, the fact that people wanted to hide it,” Jessica reflected.

The venue was adorned with a thousand colorful paper cranes—a Japanese symbol of peace and a pledge against war—intended to inspire healing and solidarity. “Folding a thousand cranes represents a promise to prevent the continued production of such terrible weapons. It’s become a symbol of the pacifist movement,” explained Dr. Hernández.

<https://www.nuclear-abolition.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Mr.-Yamashita-Interview.mp4>

A Young Artist’s Tribute: Manga Meets Memory

Back in Mexico City, the power of Yamashita’s story resonated deeply with students—among them, Jessica Escandón, a humanities student at UAM Cuajimalpa. Moved by his testimony, she created an exhibition melding manga art with photographs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki victims, located in the Miguel León Portilla Library.

Titled *Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Testimony of Survival and Resistance*, it featured 34 pieces, depicting the horror and heartbreak of those August days in 1945. Yamashita’s face appeared as a symbolic anchor: a hibakusha’s enduring resistance.

A Call to Action Across Borders

Mr. Yamashita took the opportunity to deliver a powerful warning: humanity has yet to fully learn from the horror of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. “We have worked for years in favor of disarmament, but the world is moving in the opposite direction. More and more nuclear weapons are being produced. Humanity has not truly learned from the tragedy,” he stressed.

He reiterated that no country is immune—even seemingly neutral ones like Mexico, which share proximity with nuclear-armed neighbors. “The movement for peace and a nuclear-free world must



Photo: Sergio Hernández and Yasuaki Yamashita discussing the book *Hibakusha: Testimony of Yasuaki Yamashita*. Credit: Guillermo Ayala

resonate not only in pacifist nations, but also in countries that possess nuclear arms—such as Russia, the United States, China, and North Korea—that continue to use nuclear threats as deterrence.”

Legacy of Light: From Memory to Movement

From the ruined streets of Nagasaki to the lecture halls of Mexico City, Yasuaki Yamashita’s journey epitomizes the ripples of peace that can emerge from a single voice, when raised with courage. His experiences—surviving an apocalyptic blast, enduring neglect and prejudice, leaving his homeland to find new beginnings, and ultimately emerging as a voice of conscience—remind us that peace demands not only memory, but action.

May his “small voice,” joined with others, travel the globe and one day bring us to a world untainted by the threat of nuclear weapons.

『INPS Japan』



Youth Lead Global Call to Support Hibakusha on UN Day Against Nuclear Test

By Katsuhiro Asagiri

Tokyo (INPS Japan) – Marking the United Nations’ International Day Against Nuclear Tests, young activists and experts gathered at the UN University in Tokyo for an event titled “*The Role of Youth in Supporting Global Hibakusha.*” The forum underscored how youth solidarity can amplify the voices of survivors of nuclear testing and bombings, known collectively as the “Global Hibakusha” — communities scarred by the use, production, and testing of nuclear weapons, from Hiroshima to the Marshall Islands — and strengthen global momentum toward nuclear abolition.

The event was part conference, part call to arms. Its message was clear: the nuclear age is not a matter of history, but a crisis that continues to live in the bodies, memories, and struggles of people worldwide. And young people, the



Marking the United Nation’s International Day Against Nuclear Tests, young activists and experts gathered at UN University in Tokyo for an event titled “The Role of Youth in Supporting Global Hibakusha.” Photo Credit: Katsuhiro Asagiri

organizers emphasized, must shoulder the responsibility of carrying those voices forward.

Youth Survey on Nuclear Awareness

The forum was convened by five groups with a history of advocacy: International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), the Qazaq Nuclear Frontline Coalition, Soka Gakkai International (SGI), the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Kazakhstan, and Marshallese Educational Initiative (MEI).

The five organizations presented the final results of a *Youth Peace Awareness Survey*, conducted between January 6 and August 9, across five countries—the United States, Australia, Kazakhstan,



Daiki Nakazawa (right) and Momoka Abe(left) presenting the final results of a Youth Peace Awareness Survey. Photo credit: Katsuhiko Asagiri

Japan, and the Marshall Islands. Targeting youth aged 18 to 35, the survey drew responses from 1,580 participants, examining their knowledge of nuclear weapons, attitudes, and readiness for action.

“In every country surveyed, those who had heard the testimony of survivors were more likely to be taking action for nuclear abolition,” said Daiki Nakazawa, a representative from SGI Youth. “It shows that listening to Hibakusha is not simply remembrance. It is a catalyst for activism.”

His colleague, Momoka Abe, added that for their generation, survivor accounts “remain one of the most powerful ways to understand both

the human costs of nuclear weapons and the urgency of preventing their use.”

Remembering Kazakhstan’s Nuclear Legacy

A live online dialogue linked participants in Tokyo with Almaty, Kazakhstan. Medet Suleimen of FES Kazakhstan recalled his country’s tragic legacy: during the Soviet era, 456 nuclear tests were conducted at the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test site in the country’s northeast, directly affecting some 1.5 million people and their descendants.

He reminded the Tokyo audience that much of the data on those tests was removed to Moscow during the Soviet collapse, leaving independent assessments patchy at best. “The consequences are still poorly understood,” he said. “But the human suffering is clear.”

Kazakhstan’s government closed the Semipalatinsk site in 1991, the year of its independence, and voluntarily renounced the world’s fourth-largest nuclear arsenal. It was that historic gesture that the U.N. chose to honor when it designated August 29 as a global day against nuclear testing in 2009.

A Japanese Perspective



Semipalatinsk Former Nuclear Weapon Test site/ Katsuhiro Asagiri

For young Japanese, the nuclear legacy is both intimate and distant. Hiroshima and Nagasaki remain central to national memory, but the experience of other nuclear victims — Indigenous Australians, Pacific islanders, Kazakhs — often lies beyond the frame.

Yuki Nihei, an SGI youth who traveled to New York in March for the Third Meeting of States Parties to the [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons \(TPNW\)](#), recounted a moment that made that gap vivid. At a side event on Global Hibakusha, she listened to testimony from an Indigenous Australian exposed to [British nuclear tests](#).

“There was no warning. No consent. And to this day, they receive little compensation, and their suffering is barely acknowledged,” she said.

“While Hiroshima and Nagasaki are often recalled in Japan as historical tragedies, but hearing from Global Hibakusha shows that nuclear harm is present-tense. A lot of people are still suffering now.”

That realization, she said, pushed her to think differently about solidarity: “As a Japanese youth, I want to stand with Global Hibakusha in pursuit of genuine nuclear abolition.”

The Treaty and Its Challenges

Keita Takagaki from the Youth Community for Global Hibakusha emphasized the groundbreaking nature of the TPNW, which for the first time obligates states to provide assistance to victims and undertake environmental remediation (Articles 6 and 7). But he was quick to acknowledge the difficulties: the refusal of nuclear-armed states to join, friction between governments and nongovernmental groups, and the limited resources of many Global South states that are party to the treaty. “The challenges are real,” he said. “But so is the vision. We need to keep pushing to make it real.”

Takagaki also offered a note of caution against reducing youth activism to inheritance. “We often hear that young people should ‘carry on the voices of Hibakusha,’” he said. “That is important, but it is not enough. Each of us must also decide what kind of society we want to build — and take responsibility for creating it.”

Kazakhstan's Call for Action

Anvar Mirzatillayev, Counselor of the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Japan, reaffirmed his country's post-independence choice to pursue peace without nuclear weapons. He called the event "vital not only to remember past tragedies but to inspire concrete action for the future."

Commenting on the survey finding that many young respondents wished to act for nuclear abolition but "did not know how," he said this highlighted the need for campaigns to be more accessible and participatory.



*Anvar Milzatillayev, Counselor of the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Japan
Photo Credit: Katsuhiko Asagiri*

"Testimonies of survivors must continue to be shared," he stressed, "because they have the power to transform awareness into action." Mirzatillayev expressed confidence in the "three powers of youth"—to spread the truth of nuclear harm, to connect across borders, and to mobilize society—adding: "Together with young people of Kazakhstan, Japan, and around the world, we will support the Global Hibakusha and build a nuclear-free future. I truly believe this is possible."

Professor Tshilidzi Marwala, the Rector of the United Nations University, also emphasized the responsibility to carry forward the voices of all those affected by nuclear weapons. Renewing the United Nations' founding pledge "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war," he called on the generations who will shape the future to take action for peace with foresight and courage.

『INPS Japan』



Group photo Credit: Katsuhiko Asagiri

From Semei to Hiroshima: Astana Times Editor on Bringing Global Solidarity Through Journalism

By Katsuhiro Asagiri



Photo: Atomic Bomb Dome by Jan Letzel and modern Hiroshima. Credit: Wikimedia Commons.

Eighty years ago, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki left a lasting reminder to humanity of the inhuman nature of nuclear weapons. Kazakhstan, too, is a nation deeply scarred by nuclear tests conducted during the Soviet era. Having covered the activities of [Soka Gakkai International \(SGI\)](#) in Kazakhstan—including its support for [exhibitions](#) and [documentary productions](#) on nuclear abolition in

Astana—, INPS Japan recently interviewed Zhanna Shayakhmetova, editor-in-chief of [The Astana Times](#), a leading English-language newspaper in the country that continues to convey messages of disarmament and peace to the world. In the interview, Shayakhmetova spoke about the role of religious leaders who will gather in Astana from around the world this September, the importance of passing on memories to younger generations, and the responsibility journalism holds in this endeavor.

Interview with Zhanna Shayakhmetova, the editor-in-chief of The Astana Times

Tokyo/Astana (The Astana Times) -

Q: This August marks the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – tragic events that continue to remind the world of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons. Amid ongoing conflicts and rising geopolitical tensions among nuclear-armed states, the Doomsday Clock now stands at just 89 seconds to midnight. While civil society movements are intensifying their calls for disarmament, achieving broader and sustained public

awareness—especially among younger generations, remains a pressing challenge. In this context, Kazakhstan will host the 8th Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions in September, an initiative known for promoting interfaith dialogue and tolerance. What potential do you see in the role of religious leaders in advancing peace and nuclear disarmament, particularly through education and moral leadership

A: The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki demonstrate the horrifying, destructive power of nuclear weapons. These explosions have a lasting impact on humanity. In one of his interviews, activist [Karipbek Kuyukov](#) said, “it was a moment of shame for the international community and of horror for the people of Japan. It is a moment upon which we should forever shine a light to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used to kill again.” Kuyukov is among the 1.5 million Kazakh people who have suffered as a result of the 456 nuclear tests conducted over 40 years at the Soviet Union’s Semipalatinsk Test Site. He was born without arms as a result of his parents’ exposure to those tests before Kazakhstan shut down the site in 1991. Kuyukov is an internationally recognized non-proliferation activist and painter, whose works capture the suffering of the victims of nuclear weapon testing.

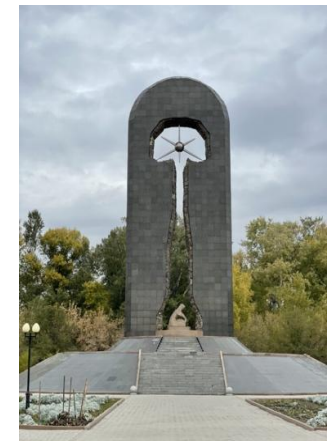


Zhanna Shayakhmetova

Religious leaders hold a special and consequential position when it comes to advancing peace and nuclear disarmament. That’s why Kazakhstan’s hosting [the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions](#) is very timely and deeply significant. Our country has taken bold steps toward disarmament. The gathering will bring together faith leaders and convey a powerful message that peace is not just a political goal, but also a spiritual one. If world leaders can speak with a united voice, especially to young people, they can shift the narrative from fear and apathy to one of responsibility and hope.

Q: Japan has undertaken extensive efforts to preserve the memory of its nuclear past through peace museums, education, and the testimonies of hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors).

In your view, how important is it for Kazakhstan to similarly preserve and communicate the experiences of those affected by Soviet-era nuclear testing? What methods do you consider most effective in ensuring these stories are remembered and passed on to future generations?



Stronger Than Death Monument, Semey

A: I believe it's vital that Kazakhstan continues to preserve and tell the stories of those affected by Soviet-era nuclear testing. These are not just historical facts; these are lived experiences that have shaped our communities, particularly in areas like Semei. The generations continue to feel the physical and emotional toll of these explosions.

I consider personal storytelling and education effective methods. Documentaries and photo exhibitions in schools and public spaces can bring stories to life for younger generations who may not be familiar with this part of the past. Students can connect on a human level through literature, films and digital media by integrating survivor testimonies into school curricula.

As journalists, we have a responsibility to keep these stories visible, and not just on anniversaries, but as part of an ongoing dialogue about peace. Kazakhstan has a powerful story to tell, and we can't let it fade in silence.

One of the touching stories we covered was about [Tore Naerland](#) from Norway, who co-founded Bike for Peace in 1977. After losing his eyesight as a teen, he chose to dedicate his life to helping others. While biking across the world, he met a Hiroshima survivor whose life inspired him to focus on the nuclear disarmament movement. Stories like his remind us why these conversations still matter.

Q: Kazakhstan has gained international recognition for its leadership in nuclear disarmament – becoming the first nation to



Kariybek Kuyukov

close a major nuclear test site and voluntarily relinquish its atomic arsenal. How do you see the role of Kazakh media, including The Astana Times, in raising global awareness of this legacy and in promoting Kazakhstan's contributions to disarmament and non-proliferation?

A: At The Astana Times, we're committed to reporting accurately and consistently on disarmament. Our newsroom supports fact-based coverage on the nuclear file, and we see it as our mission to amplify Kazakhstan's continued contribution to global non-proliferation efforts.

We've also made space for the next generation. We regularly publish young voices on this topic and have worked with advocates like social scientist [Marzhan Nurzhan](#), who contributed articles to increase public awareness about the nuclear legacy consequences.

Our correspondent Nagima Abuova [covered](#) the Third Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) on March 3 – 7, 2025, at the UN Headquarters in New York. It was a proud moment for us, the Astana Times was the only English-language Kazakh outlet reporting directly from the event, and First Deputy Foreign Minister Akan Rakhmetullin chaired the meeting.

We also look ahead. This September, our journalist Aibarshyn Akhmetkali will represent Kazakh media at [the Science and Technology Conference series \(SnT2025\)](#) in Vienna, hosted by the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). It's another opportunity to put Kazakhstan's voice on the global stage and build momentum for a world free of nuclear testing.

Kazakhstan has something meaningful to contribute to the global disarmament dialogue, and we at The Astana Times are committed to ensuring the world hears it.

Q: Both Japan and Kazakhstan advocate strongly for a world free of nuclear weapons. From your perspective, how can journalism contribute to strengthening international solidarity among nuclear-affected communities and to advancing global

disarmament efforts, such as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)? What responsibilities do media professionals hold in fostering informed public dialogue on these issues?

A: Journalism is key in connecting nuclear-affected countries and advancing global efforts such as [the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons \(TPNW\)](#). Kazakhstan and Japan share a tragic history with nuclear weapons, and that shared experience creates a basis for solidarity between governments and people.

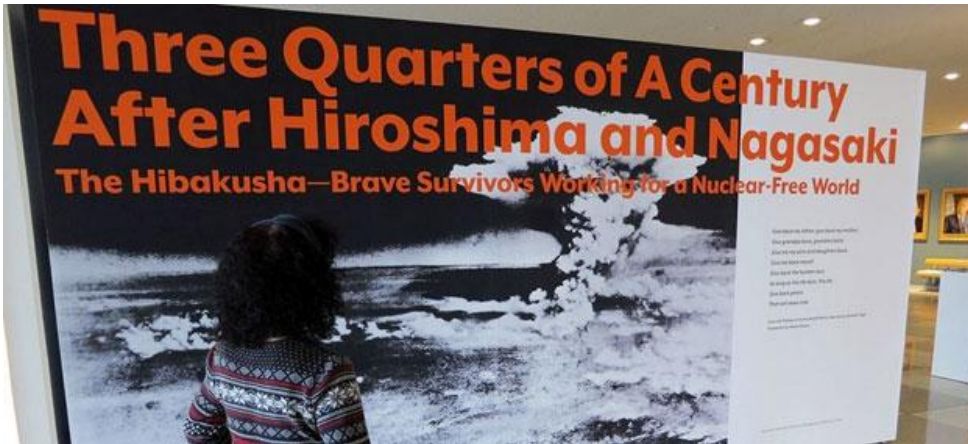
Our responsibility as professionals is to shine light on these human stories. We have a responsibility to give voice to survivors, activists, and scientists whose lived experiences often get overshadowed by politics. We help people globally to understand and see the nuclear weapon consequences that are personal, generational and unjust. By reporting on events such as the TPNW meetings and CTBTO conferences, and by publishing the voices of young people and expert perspectives, we contribute to a more informed and engaged public.

『INPS Japan』



Do Nuclear Tests Still Remain a Future Threat – as World Commemorates the 80th Anniversary of Hiroshima & Nagasaki?

By Thalif Deen



Erica Platt looks at the disarmament exhibition that she staged, "Three Quarters of a Century After Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The Hibakusha Brave- Survivors Working for a Nuclear-Free World". On 6 and 9 August 1945, the United States detonated two atomic bombs over the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, during World War II. Credit : UNODA/Diane Barns

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) – The 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II triggers the question: Is nuclear testing dead or is it still alive—and threatening?

The August 6-9 anniversary marks the devastating bombings, which claimed the lives of between 150,000 and 246,000 civilians— and still remains the only use of nuclear weapons in an armed conflict.

Are there any lessons learnt? And will the unpredictable Trump Administration resume nuclear testing?

The New York Times quoted Senator Jackey Rosen (Democrat-Nevada) as saying that her state hosted nearly 1,000 nuclear tests, mostly underground, during the Cold War.

The US has not ratified the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). While the U.S. signed the treaty in 1996, the Senate has not given its consent to ratification. The Senate rejected the treaty in 1999.

Until today, the Nevada Test Site remains contaminated with an estimated 11,100 PBq of radioactive material in the soil and 4,440 PBq in groundwater.

In the years following nuclear tests, thousands of residents developed cancers and diseases they believe were caused by the nuclear blast. Individuals known as “downwinders,” exposed in communities across the United States, have fought for nearly 80 years to receive government recognition.

The last nuclear test conducted by the United States was on September 23, 1992, at the [Nevada Test Site](#) (now known as the [Nevada National Security Site](#)). The test was part of [Operation](#)

[Julin](#), and specifically, it was the “Divider” test, [according to the Nevada National Security Site](#).

At a disarmament exhibition in UN Headquarters in New York, a visitor reads text about a young boy bringing his little brother to a cremation site in Nagasaki, Japan. Credit: UNODA/Erico Platt

Brandon Williams, who is expected to be the next keeper of the US nuclear arsenal, told the Senate Armed Services Committee last April, he would NOT recommend to re-start US nuclear testing.

Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump last week ordered two “nuclear submarines” to be positioned in regions near Russia in response to threats from former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. But left unsaid was: were they nuclear-armed submarines or nuclear-powered submarines?

“I have ordered two Nuclear Submarines to be positioned in the appropriate regions, just in case these foolish and inflammatory statements are more than just that,” Trump said in a social media post that called Medvedev’s statements highly provocative.

Dr. Natalie Goldring, the Acronym Institute’s representative at the United Nations, told IPS the 80th anniversary of the horrific bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is an opportunity to recommit to a world free of nuclear weapons, including by immediately adopting a permanent moratorium on nuclear weapons testing. In contrast, the

Trump administration is reportedly considering restarting nuclear weapons testing.

In the first several months of the second Trump administration, she pointed out, there has been ample evidence of the administration’s dependence on the Heritage Foundation’s “Project 2025”, formally known as “Mandate for Leadership: The Conservative Promise.” The Project 2025 section on the National Nuclear Security Administration stated that a conservative administration should:

“Reject ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and indicate a willingness to conduct nuclear tests in response to adversary nuclear developments if necessary. This will require that NNSA be directed to move to immediate and test readiness to give the Administration maximum flexibility in responding to adversary actions.”

Dr Goldring said “Implementing Project 2025’s recommendations would mean immediately moving toward resuming nuclear weapons testing, without even demonstrating that any adversary actions had occurred. This is an aggressive stance, and could be a self-fulfilling prophecy, prompting the behavior we should be seeking to dissuade.”

“Of course, we can’t reliably predict what President Trump will do, given his impulsive and mercurial nature. He could decide to resume nuclear testing in the mistaken belief that it would make the US look strong. He seems to be fond of dramatic gestures, with little apparent consideration for potential negative consequences. “

“Testing is a symptom of the enormous problem of reliance on nuclear weapons. When we get rid of nuclear weapons, we get rid of the nuclear testing problem. Absent abolition, there will likely be continued pressure to test”.

She said: “Nuclear weapons pose extraordinary risks – in their development, testing, deployment, use, and threats of use. The only real solution to the overwhelming risk associated with nuclear weapons is abolition. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons provides an effective blueprint for abolition.”

“If abolition of nuclear weapons is not accomplished, the question isn’t whether nuclear weapons will be exploded in wartime again. It’s only a question of when that will happen. And, of course, nuclear weapons are “used” frequently in other ways, including to threaten other countries, and to attempt to coerce them into particular actions or inaction.”

Dr Goldring said nuclear testing should have ended decades ago. Unfortunately, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty has not entered into force, in part because of the failure of the US Senate to ratify the treaty. Even so, with the exception of North Korea, a defacto nuclear testing ban has seemingly been in effect since the 1990s.

“The human and environmental consequences of nuclear weapons testing continue to be enormous. Rather than spending money restarting nuclear testing and developing and deploying new nuclear

weapons, we should be committing ourselves to long-term assistance to the affected communities. Such assistance must address their medical, economic, and environmental needs, among others,” declared Dr Goldring. [Project 2025](#):

Expressing his personal views, Tariq Rauf, former Head of Verification and Security Policy at the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), told IPS between 16 July 1945 and 3 December 2017, it is estimated that 2,121 nuclear test detonations involving 2,476 nuclear explosive devices have been carried out by ten States – in chronological order: USA, USSR, UK, France, China, India, Israel/South Africa, Pakistan and North Korea.

Though the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) prohibits all nuclear test detonations, in all environments, and has been signed to date by 187 States and ratified by 178, it still languishes having not entered into force.

In particular, he said, entry-into-force depends on 44 named States to have ratified. Nine such States are holding up entry into force: alphabetically, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, Russia, and USA.

Indonesia was the latest among this group of 44 States to have ratified in February 2012 – since then not a single State among the remaining nine has taken any steps to sign and/or ratify the CTBT, placing its future in doubt.

While the CTBT prohibits all nuclear testing once in force, nevertheless it has created a powerful global norm against further nuclear test detonations. On the other hand, all nine current nuclear-armed States are modernizing their nuclear explosive devices (warheads), in one way or another, and their nuclear weapon engineers and scientists direly would like to resume some limited explosive testing to validate new designs and certify older existing ones.

Only the CTBT stands in their way. Were any one of the nine nuclear-armed States to resume nuclear test detonations, it is quite probable that others would follow. Though not confirmed, it is speculated that pressure to test nuclear devices likely is strongest in India, followed by Russia, China, North Korea, Pakistan and the United States, said Rauf.

Meanwhile, Senator Edward Markey, co-President Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) — along with Senators Merkley, Sanders, Van Hollen and Welch – marked the 80th anniversary by introducing [Senate Resolution 317](#) urging the United States to lead the world to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race, including by:

“Eighty years after the Trinity test, much progress has been made to reduce nuclear dangers, but much work remains to be done,” said Senator Markey.

“The United States, Russia, and China must work together to reduce their arsenals. In particular, Washington and Moscow must work to replace the New START Treaty before it expires next year. If they do not, we may be on the cusp of a new and more dangerous nuclear arms race. When it comes to reducing the risk of nuclear war, we cannot afford to go backward.”

Jackie Cabasso, Executive Director, Western States Legal Foundation, Oakland, California, told IPS: “As we approach the 80th commemorations of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we are called upon to remember the estimated 210,000 human beings who were instantly incinerated by the blasts, or who died from agonizing burns and radiation sickness by the end of 1945.

Those who survived, she pointed out, have continued to suffer from physical and emotional damage for eight decades, and radiation-related illnesses among their children and grandchildren are being documented.

“Authoritarian nationalists now hold state power in seven of the nine nuclear-armed states that wield some 13,000 nuclear weapons, most an order of magnitude more powerful than the bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki – over 90% of them in the hands of the U.S. and Russia. Even limited progress towards arms control and disarmament has gone into reverse. The growing dangers of wars among nuclear armed states are palpable and intolerable”.

But Hiroshima and Nagasaki, she argued, were only the tip of the iceberg. Since 1945, there have been 2,056 explosive nuclear weapons tests by at least eight countries. Most of these test explosions have been conducted on the lands of indigenous and colonized people. The U.S. conducted 1,030 of those tests in the atmosphere, underwater, and underground, while the USSR carried out 715 nuclear test detonations.

Not only did these nuclear test explosions fuel the development and spread of new and more deadly types of nuclear weapons, but hundreds of thousands of people have died and millions more have suffered—and continue to suffer—from illnesses directly related to the radioactive fallout from nuclear detonations in the United States, islands in the Pacific, in Australia, China, Algeria, across Russia, in Kazakhstan, India, Pakistan, North Korea, and elsewhere.

“While we’re not seeing visible signs of resumption of full scale nuclear testing by the U.S., it is very disturbing that Project 2025 proposes that the second Trump administration prioritize nuclear weapons programs over other security programs, accelerate the development and production of all nuclear weapons programs, and increase funding for the development and production of new and modernized nuclear warheads,” said Cabasso.

It also proposes that the administration prepare to test new nuclear weapons. Separately, Robert O’Brien, Trump’s national security advisor during his first term, has written that in order to counter China

and Russia’s continued investments in their nuclear arsenals, the U.S. should resume nuclear testing.

“Should the United States conduct a full-scale explosive nuclear test, the moratorium on full-scale explosive nuclear testing that has largely held since 1992 would be shattered. It is almost certain that other nuclear-armed states would follow suit. It would be the final nail in the coffin of nuclear arms control and disarmament for the foreseeable future and would signal an unfettered new nuclear arms race,” she warned.

As the 2024 recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, Nihon Hidankyo, the organization of Japanese atomic bomb survivors, has warned: “*Nuclear weapons and human beings cannot co-exist.*” Nuclear weapons must be eliminated before they eliminate us.

As recognized in the 1945 Constitution of UNESCO, “*Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.*” It is incumbent on each of us to contribute in some way to this noble project.

『INPS Japan/IPS UN Bureau Report』

The Vanunu Affair: The Man Who Exposed the Nuclear Secrets Of Israel

By Roman Yanushevsky

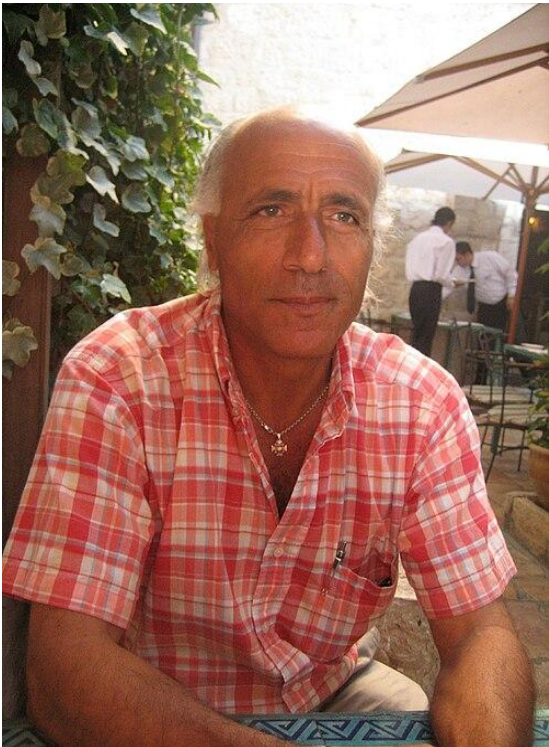


Declassified KH-4 CORONA November 11 1968

Negev Nuclear Research Center at Dimona, photographed by American reconnaissance satellite KH-4 CORONA, 1968-11-11. Credit: Public Domain

Jerusalem (INPS Japan) – The Vanunu Affair remains one of the most controversial episodes in the history of nuclear non-proliferation and whistleblowing. In 1986, Mordechai Vanunu, a former technician at Israel's top-secret nuclear facility in Dimona, revealed to the world that Israel possessed a significant and undeclared nuclear arsenal.

His disclosure not only shook Israeli politics but also sent shockwaves through the international community, raising difficult questions about transparency, national security, and the moral obligations of whistleblowers.



Mordechai Vanunu Credit: Wikimedia Commons

Who Is Mordechai Vanunu? Mordechai Vanunu was born in Marrakesh, Morocco in 1954 and immigrated to Israel with his Jewish family in 1963. After completing his military service, he began working as a technician at the Negev Nuclear Research Center near Dimona in southern Israel. For nearly a decade, Vanunu had access to sensitive areas of the facility, gradually piecing together the extent of Israel's covert nuclear weapons program.

Disillusioned with Israeli policy and increasingly sympathetic to leftist and pro-Palestinian viewpoints, Vanunu secretly began photographing the interior of the Dimona facility. In 1985, when he learned that he was about to be laid off from his job, he brought a photo camera to secret parts of the nuclear center and took 57 photographs there.

Eventually he left Israel and traveled first to Nepal, where he converted to Buddhism, and then to Australia, where he converted to Christianity. There he met Oscar Guerrero, a freelance journalist from Columbia who convinced him to sell this story for one million dollars. So he contacted British journalists and eventually shared his information with The Sunday Times in the UK.

Vanunu's photos and detailed testimony provided compelling evidence that Israel had developed between 100 and 200 nuclear warheads, making it one of the world's most powerful undeclared nuclear powers. The information contradicted Israel's long-standing policy of "nuclear ambiguity," under which it neither confirmed nor denied the possession of nuclear weapons.

On October 5, 1986, The Sunday Times published a front-page story featuring Vanunu's claims. The article included photographs and technical analysis, concluding that Israel had built advanced nuclear weapons, including hydrogen bombs. The story was a bombshell, undermining Israel's global image and complicating its diplomatic relationships—particularly with the United States.

Even before the article's publication, Israeli intelligence was tracking Vanunu. In a clandestine operation known as "Operation Diamond," Mossad agents lured him from London to Rome using a female agent named "Cindy," who posed as an American tourist. In Rome, he was kidnapped, drugged, and secretly flown back to Israel.

Vanunu was charged with espionage and treason. His trial was held behind closed doors, and he was sentenced to 18 years in prison, 11 of which he spent in solitary confinement. Israel imposed a total media blackout on his case, though international human rights groups and journalists continued to campaign for his release.

The Vanunu affair triggered intense international debate. While some condemned him as a traitor who endangered national security, others hailed him as a courageous whistleblower exposing a dangerous secret. The revelations highlighted the double standards in global nuclear policy, particularly the tolerance of Israel's arsenal by Western powers while pressuring other states, like Iran, to remain non-nuclear.

Israel's policy of nuclear ambiguity had long been a cornerstone of its defense doctrine. By neither confirming nor denying its nuclear capabilities, Israel avoided international scrutiny and the political costs of open proliferation. Vanunu's disclosures forced a de facto acknowledgment of these capabilities, though Israeli officials continued to avoid direct admission.

Vanunu was released from prison in 2004, but his freedom was limited. Israeli authorities placed severe restrictions on his movements, communications, and travel. He was forbidden from speaking to foreigners or discussing his knowledge of the Dimona facility. Despite numerous appeals and international support, his requests to leave the country were repeatedly denied.

The Vanunu case remains a flashpoint for debates about the ethics of whistleblowing, especially in matters of national security. Critics argue that Vanunu broke the law and jeopardized Israeli security. Supporters counter that he acted in the global public interest, exposing a major nuclear power operating outside of international regulation.

The impact of the Vanunu affair reverberates to this day. It exposed the hypocrisy in global non-proliferation policy and drew attention to the need for greater transparency and accountability. It also inspired numerous books, films, and academic studies on the limits of secrecy, the rights of whistleblowers, and the politics of nuclear deterrence.

Mordechai Vanunu paid a heavy personal price for his actions—nearly two decades of imprisonment and a lifetime of surveillance and restrictions. Whether viewed as a traitor or a hero, his revelations fundamentally altered global discourse around nuclear weapons. The Vanunu affair underscores the complex balance between national security and the public's right to know, a balance that remains as relevant as ever in today's volatile geopolitical climate.

『INPS Japan』

Nuclear abolishment vs. nuclear deterrence: Is a middle ground possible?

By Dr. Olamide SAMUEL



Image Credit: trendsresearch.org

Vienna, Austria (London Post) – For nearly eight decades, nuclear weapons have shaped global security, embodying a paradox: instruments of annihilation too horrific to use yet too strategically vital to discard. The debate between nuclear abolishment, which seeks the complete elimination of nuclear arsenals, and nuclear deterrence, which relies on the threat of retaliation to prevent conflict, remains deeply polarized. This tension pits moral imperatives against geopolitical realities, raising a critical question: can a middle ground reconcile these opposing visions? By exploring historical context,

recent examples like Russia-Ukraine and India-Pakistan, and potential pathways forward, this article evaluates whether a balanced approach can mitigate risks while preserving stability. With approximately 12,500 nuclear warheads held by nine nations, the stakes are immense (Global Zero, 2023).

Historical Context

Nuclear weapons emerged during World War II through the United States' Manhattan Project, culminating in the 1945 bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which killed an estimated 150,000–246,000 people (Atomic Heritage Foundation, 2023). These events, the only wartime uses of nuclear weapons, revealed their catastrophic potential. The Cold War (1947–1991) saw an arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union, amassing over 130,000 warheads by the 1980s (Rhodes, 1986). The doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) underpinned deterrence, ensuring neither side would initiate a nuclear attack due to the certainty of devastating retaliation.

The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world to the brink of nuclear war, exposing deterrence's fragility but proving diplomacy's potential to avert catastrophe (National Security Archive). Key treaties followed: the 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty, the 1968 Nuclear Non-

Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty limited testing, proliferation, and specific weapons. However, the INF Treaty's collapse in 2019 and the looming expiration of New START in 2026 highlight ongoing arms control challenges (UN Disarmament Affairs). Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZs) in regions like Latin America and Central Asia show progress, but North Korea's arsenal, Iran's ambitions, and recent tensions underscore the precarious nuclear order.

The Case for Nuclear Abolishment

Abolitionists argue that nuclear weapons pose an existential threat. Modern thermonuclear warheads, like the Tsar Bomba's 50-megaton yield, dwarf the 1945 bombs. A single warhead could devastate a city; a regional exchange could trigger a "nuclear winter," collapsing agriculture and killing millions through starvation (Carnegie Endowment, 2019). The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize, cites risks like accidental launches, referencing Cold War false alarms and "launch-on-warning" vulnerabilities (ICAN).

The 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), ratified by 93 states, declares nuclear weapons illegal, though nuclear-armed states have not joined (United Nations, 2023). Former U.S. officials like Henry Kissinger argue deterrence is less effective against non-state actors like terrorists, who are undeterred by retaliation (Kissinger et al., 2007). The spread of nuclear technology to unstable regimes heightens misuse risks. The International Court of Justice's 1996 opinion noted that nuclear weapon use is "scarcely reconcilable"

with humanitarian law, reinforcing ethical arguments. Continued reliance on nuclear arsenals diverts resources from challenges like poverty and climate change, perpetuating fear and mistrust.

The Case for Nuclear Deterrence

Deterrence advocates argue that nuclear weapons have prevented major wars for over 75 years. The Cold War's bipolar structure, reinforced by MAD, ensured the U.S. and Soviet Union avoided direct conflict (Sagan & Waltz, 1995). Kenneth Waltz asserts that nuclear weapons create a "nuclear peace" by making war's costs prohibitive. NATO's 1949 Strategic Concept emphasizes deterrence as essential for collective defense, maintaining a nuclear alliance as long as nuclear weapons exist (NATO, 2025). Extended deterrence, where the U.S. provides a nuclear umbrella for allies like Japan and South Korea, has curbed proliferation.

Recent examples underscore deterrence's role. Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, which gave up its Soviet-era nuclear arsenal in 1994 under the Budapest Memorandum, highlights the risks of disarmament without security guarantees. Russia's nuclear saber-rattling, including threats to deploy tactical nuclear weapons, reinforces deterrence's perceived necessity (Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 2024). Similarly, India and Pakistan's nuclear standoff, particularly during the 2019 Pulwama crisis, where both nations conducted airstrikes but avoided escalation, demonstrates deterrence's stabilizing effect in regional rivalries (Carnegie Endowment, 2019).

Critics of abolishment warn that eliminating nuclear weapons could increase conventional wars, as seen in pre-nuclear conflicts like World War I and II. Emerging technologies, like hypersonic missiles, complicate deterrence but underscore the need for credible second-strike capabilities (Global Zero, 2023).

Exploring a Middle Ground

The divide between abolishment and deterrence suggests a middle ground is challenging but feasible through **stabilized nuclear competition**, where states acknowledge mutual vulnerability and negotiate risk-reduction measures while maintaining limited deterrence (Carnegie Endowment, 2025). The NPT and New START demonstrate arms control's potential. Extending New START beyond 2026 and including China and India could rebuild trust. A **Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT)** could halt new nuclear material production, shrinking stockpiles without immediate abolition. Reducing reliance on nuclear weapons is another strategy. The U.S. and Russia, holding over 90% of global warheads, could cut deployed arsenals to 500–1,000 each (Union of Concerned Scientists, 2023). **No-First-Use (NFU)** policies, adopted by China and India, could eliminate preemptive strike fears, though NATO resists due to conventional threats. **De-alerting** warheads could prevent accidental launches; over 900 remain on high alert, a risk mitigated by 1990s U.S.-Russian efforts. Expanding **NWFZs** and risk-reduction mechanisms, like the U.S.-Russia deconfliction hotline used in Syria, could stabilize tensions.

Recent examples highlight both challenges and opportunities.

Russia's 2023 suspension of New START inspections strained arms control, yet backchannel talks prevented escalation during Ukraine-related tensions (United Nations, 2023). India and Pakistan's 2021 ceasefire agreement along the Line of Control shows that confidence-building measures can reduce nuclear risks even in volatile regions. However, distrust, technological advancements, and verification challenges—where a single hidden warhead could confer strategic advantage—persist.

Conclusion

The nuclear debate reflects a clash between idealism and pragmatism. Abolitionists emphasize catastrophic risks and moral imperatives, while deterrence advocates highlight stability, as seen in Russia-Ukraine and India-Pakistan dynamics. A middle ground lies in marginalizing nuclear weapons through incremental steps: reviving trilateral U.S.-Russia-China arms talks, enforcing NPT reduction timelines, and addressing emerging threats like cyber warfare. As General Omar Bradley warned in 1948, "We have achieved brilliance without wisdom, power without conscience" (Bradley, 1948). Nuclear weapons cannot be uninvented, but their dominance can be diminished through cooperation and transparency. The path to a nuclear-free world is long, but pragmatic measures can bridge the gap, ensuring humanity chooses wisdom over fatalism.

『INPS Japan/ London Post』

US Signs Strategic Civil Nuclear Agreement with Malaysia - while Planning a Security Alliance in the Asia-Pacific Region

By Thalif Deen

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) – The US is apparently contemplating the possible creation—either a formal or an informal— security alliance in the Asia-Pacific region on the lines of the longstanding collective defense pact, the 32-member North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

If the proposal materializes, the new alliance is expected to include Japan, South Korea, Australia, plus, the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), comprising Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, among others.

The New York Times last month quoted US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth as saying: "No one should doubt America's commitment to our Indo-Pacific allies and partners. We will continue to wrap our arms around our friends and find new ways to work together".



Malaysia is Chair of ASEAN for 2025.

He said Indo-Pacific is a "region where the United States favours continuity in security alliances more than disruption".

Ely Ratner, a former US assistant secretary of defense for Indo-Pacific security issues, has suggested. in an article in Foreign Affairs, that the US and its allies in Asia should form a collective defense pact, similar to NATO.

The proposed new alliance is primarily meant to be a protective shield against the two nuclear armed countries in the region: China and North Korea.

Of the world's nine nuclear powers, the only region with four nuclear-armed countries is Asia: India, China, Pakistan and North Korea—the others outside Asia include the US, UK, France, Russia and Israel.

Meanwhile, AUKUS, a trilateral security partnership linking Australia, the UK and the United States, is aimed at “promoting a free and open [Indo-Pacific](#) that is secure and stable”

Hegseth’s visit to the region was followed by a visit from another senior US official, Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

Addressing a press conference in Kuala Lumpur on July 10, Rubio said: “You know my very first meeting – I don’t know if you know this, but when I was sworn-in. I went to the State Department, I gave a speech on the steps, and then my first meeting right out of the box was with Japan, South Korea, and India”.

“And we’ve repeated that meeting numerous times since then with that group. We have a running internal joke with my counterpart from Japan: I have literally now seen him about 8 to 12 times, and our joke is that we see each other more than we see our own families,” he said.

Tammy Bruce State Department Spokesperson told reporters July 10 that Rubio was in Kuala Lumpur for the ASEAN-related foreign ministers’ meetings and bilateral engagements, reaffirming the United States commitment – our enduring commitment, “If I may add – to a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific”.

Rubio participated in the ASEAN-U.S. Post-Ministerial Conference and held meetings with Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar and

counterparts from Malaysia, Russia, Japan, and the Philippines. The Indo-Pacific region accounts for two thirds of global growth and remains a central focus of U.S. foreign policy, he said.

Rubio also signed a nuclear cooperation Memorandum of Understanding with Malaysia, advancing civil nuclear energy collaboration under the highest standards of safety, security, and nonproliferation.

Negotiations towards a 123 Agreement are underway. And once finalized, it would permit the transfer of nuclear material and equipment for peaceful purposes, further deepening bilateral energy, security, and economic ties.

Section 123 of the U.S. Atomic Energy Act generally requires the conclusion of a peaceful nuclear cooperation agreement for significant transfers of nuclear material or equipment from the United States.

Moreover, such agreements, commonly referred to as “123 Agreements,” facilitate cooperation in other areas, such as technical exchanges, scientific research, and safeguards discussions, according to the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA)

In conjunction with other nonproliferation tools, particularly the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), 123 Agreements help to advance U.S. nonproliferation principles. They establish the

legal framework for significant nuclear cooperation with other countries.

In order for a partner to enter into a 123 Agreement with the United States, that partner must adhere to a set of strong nonproliferation requirements. The U.S. State Department is responsible for negotiating 123 Agreements, with the technical assistance and concurrence of DOE/NNSA and in consultation with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

According to the US Department of Energy, about 25 countries currently have 123 agreements in force.

But there is also a more militaristic perspective to the proposed security alliance.

Dr M.V. Ramana, Professor and Simons Chair in Disarmament, Global and Human Security, School of Public Policy and Global Affairs and Graduate Program Director, [MPPGA](#) at University of British Columbia, Vancouver, told IPS if it is created, this new forum will add to the already growing trend of militarization, which will increase the risk of war, especially with China, and divert money from other urgent priorities such as dealing with climate change.

“And, should it be set up, the U.S. government will try to make its members buy more expensive and destructive weapons from U.S. arms manufacturers, which will strengthen their political power over

policy making in the United States, and in turn will make the social landscape in the United States even worse,” said Dr Ramana.

Stressing the growing new relationships in the region, Rubio told reporters: “And so, these engagements are very important to us. And we’re going to continue to stay very committed, because this – as I said to all of our partners, this notion or idea that the United States would ever be distracted by the Indo-Pacific or even Southeast Asia is impossible.”

“You can’t be – maybe it doesn’t always – wars get more attention, but it’s impossible to not be focused. This is where much of the story of the 21st century is going to be written. This is where two thirds of economic growth is going to happen over the next 25 or 30 years.”

And many of the countries of Southeast Asia – not only are they some of the youngest countries in the world, but they’re about to see an enormous expansion of their labor markets, their labor pool, number of workers, he said.

“This is a historic, once-in-a-generation opportunity not just for these countries to revolutionize themselves from an economic standpoint, but further strengthen our relationship. We have over 6,000 American companies that have invested heavily in these economies over the last 20 or 30 years. These are – we’re not abandoning those relationships. On the contrary, we want to strengthen and build upon them.”

Dr Palitha Kohona, a former Chief of the UN Treaty Section, and until recently, Sri Lanka's Ambassador to China, told IPS China is nuclear armed but has a no-first-use policy. Nuclear armed North Korea has a policy centred on deterring attacks. In the circumstances to promote a NATO type arrangement in East and South East Asia as a deterrent would seem excessive.

China, he pointed out, has only one base outside mainland China (in Djibouti). North Korea has none. China nor North Korea have no military personnel outside their own territories. The US has thousands of military personnel in bases surrounding China. The US pivot to Asia had China in its cross hairs.

The best way to reduce real and imaginary tensions (some stoked intentionally), he pointed out, would be to encourage parties to enter into dialogue with each other. The world needs peace, not conflict, for human progress.

“We require alliances that promote infrastructure development for developing countries, that address the threat of climate change, which strive to eliminate extreme poverty, and which will make the world a better place. In the past, US military incursions in the region did not produce peace.”

On the contrary, the progress of countries was dramatically curtailed, thousands of combatants and civilians died and millions were maimed, declared Dr Kohona.

Stressing the strong relationship between the US and Japan, Rubio said: “We obviously have very strong commitments and an alliance with Japan. We continue to cooperate very closely with them. As I speak to you now, there are active exercises going on between the United States and Japan.”

So, our relationship with them will continue to exist.

“The idea that somehow Japan would be able to develop domestic – their own capabilities for mutual self-defense is not only something that we find offensive, it's something we'd be supportive of, obviously within the confines of their constitutional system. But they have some limitations on what they can do. But the idea that Japan's military would become more capable is not something we would be offended by; it's something we would actually be encouraged by”.

『INPS Japan/IPS UN Bureau Report』



From Deterrence to Disarmament: Global Advocates Call for Justice and Peace

By Katsuhiro Asagiri

SANTA BARBARA/Tokyo (INPSJ) — Marking 80 years since the dawn of the nuclear age, peace advocates, diplomats, educators, and atomic bomb survivors from around the world gathered for the **“Choose Hope” symposium** on March 12–13, 2025, in Santa Barbara, California. Co-organized by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (NAPF) and Soka Gakkai International (SGI), the event was held at the Music Academy of the West.

The symposium was inspired by the 2001 dialogue book *Choose Hope* co-authored by NAPF



Chie Sunada of SGI (left) moderates the first panel discussion, “From Deterrence to Disarmament: The Path Forward” Credit: SGI

founder David Krieger and [SGI President Daisaku Ikeda](#), revisiting the ethical and strategic urgency of nuclear abolition.

“This is not just about legacy,” said Dr. Ivana Nikolić Hughes, president of NAPF. “We are here to continue the journey they started and to build a world free from the threat of nuclear weapons.”

Tomohiko Aishima, Director of Peace Affairs at SGI, recalled witnessing their dialogue firsthand: “What impressed me most was that their dialogue was not

merely about ideals—it was a call to action, rooted in practical solutions.”

A Warning Against Nuclear Deterrence

In the keynote lecture, Pulitzer Prize finalist and author Annie Jacobsen posed the question, “What happens if nuclear deterrence fails?” Drawing from confidential

interviews with U.S. government and military insiders, Jacobsen warned: “No matter how it begins, nuclear war will end in total annihilation.” She explained that once a nuclear exchange is triggered, retaliatory strikes could spread globally within just seven minutes, leading to uncontrollable destruction and the collapse of human civilization.

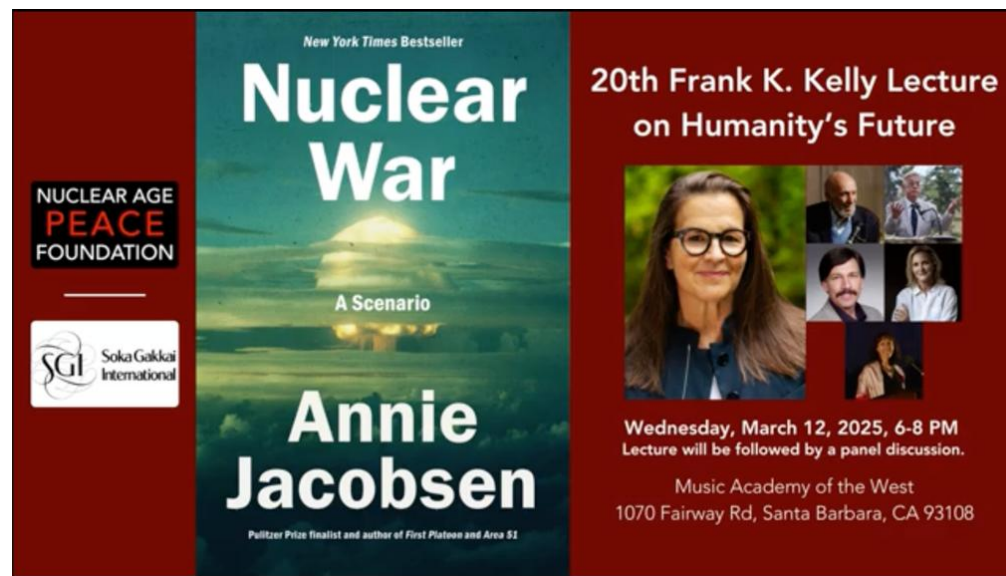
In a following panel, moderated by Dr. Hughes, Princeton University’s Professor Emeritus Richard Falk, Dr. Jimmy Hara of Physicians for Social Responsibility–Los Angeles (PSR-LA), Professor Peter Kuznick of American University, and ICAN Executive Director Melissa Parke addressed policy transformations urgently needed to prevent such a catastrophe.



Tomohiko Aishima of SGI opens the symposium with reflections on the dialogue between Daisaku Ikeda and David Krieger, which he witnessed during his time as a reporter at Seikyo Shimbun Credit: SGI

On the second day, SGI’s Director for Disarmament and Human Rights, Chie Sunada, moderated the session titled “From Deterrence to Disarmament: The Path Forward.” She warned against the increasing role of nuclear weapons in national security doctrines and reported: “At the Third Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW, it was reaffirmed that nuclear deterrence itself is a threat to human survival.”

Ambassador Elayne Whyte, who presided over the 2017 UN negotiations that adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), emphasized the need for sincere dialogue, even with those who hold opposing views.



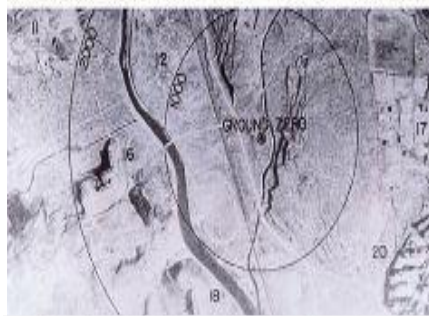
Annie Jacobsen, Pulitzer Prize finalist and author of *Nuclear War: A Scenario* delivers the 20th Frank K. Kelly Lecture on Humanity’s Future at the start of the symposium. Credit: Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

Listening to Testimony

Atomic bomb survivor Masako Wada from Nagasaki (representing Nihon Hidankyo) addressed the symposium via video message, urging participants to “continue telling the truth about the horrors of the bomb.”



Mary Dickson, a thyroid cancer survivor and U.S. “downwinder” affected by nuclear testing, declared: “We were deliberately exposed. Justice is needed not only for us, but for victims in the Marshall Islands, Kazakhstan, Polynesia, and everywhere else.”



Nagasaki, Japan, before and after the atomic bombing of August 9, 1945./ Public Domain

In the session “Legacy of Nuclear Use and Testing: A Call for Justice,” SGI United Nations Office Disarmament Program Coordinator Anna Ikeda shared testimony on the health effects, stigma, and trauma experienced by victims. “Nuclear justice means establishing the collective understanding that the use, testing, or threat of nuclear weapons can never be justified,” she said.

Dr. Togzhan Kassenova presented findings on the intergenerational health effects stemming from Soviet-era nuclear tests in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan. Christian Ciobanu, representing Kiribati



Anna Ikeda of SGI (center) speaks as a panelist on the second panel discussion, “Legacy of Nuclear Use and Testing: A Call for Justice” Credit: SGI

and NAPF, proposed establishing an international fund for victim assistance and environmental remediation. Veronique Christory of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) stressed the importance of humanitarian principles in disarmament efforts.

The Intersection with Climate Justice



Miyuki Horiguchi of SGI (left) moderates the final panel discussion, “The Intersection of Climate and Nuclear Justice: Empowering Youth for Change” Credit: SGI

The final panel, “The Intersection of Climate and Nuclear Justice: Empowering Youth for Change,” was moderated by SGI Disarmament Program Coordinator Miyuki Horiguchi.

Anduin Devos of NuclearBan.US reflected on how concern over the climate crisis led her to become involved in the anti-nuclear movement. “Resources spent on nuclear weapons should be redirected to address climate solutions,” she said.

Young activists Kevin Chiu and Viktoria Lokh spoke on the importance of integrating youth voices into nuclear policy discussions. Horiguchi

cited a Native American proverb—“We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children”—and a quote from *Choose Hope*: “Hope is another name for youth,” emphasizing the unique power of young people to open new eras.

Art as a Catalyst for Change

Film director Andrew Davis and artist Stella Rose discussed the role of art in inspiring awareness and action. “Art doesn’t just reflect truth—it makes us feel it, and move us to act,” said Davis.

The symposium’s final declaration also underscored the role of culture and creativity in promoting peace and deepening empathy.

The Declaration: Choosing Hope

[The Choose Hope Declaration](#) was published after the symposium. With the Doomsday Clock set at “89 seconds to midnight,” the declaration warned that a nuclear-free world is possible only through intentional and collective choices. “We choose hope over despair,” it stated.

『INPS Japan』

Kazakhstan's Path From Tragedy to Tolerance: Interfaith Dialogue, Peace, and Disarmament

By Katsuhiro Asagiri

Tokyo/ASTANA (INPS Japan) – On the windswept steppe west of Astana, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev led a solemn ceremony this week to mark Kazakhstan's Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Political Repressions and Famine—an annual reflection on one of the nation's darkest chapters.

The ceremony was held at the [ALZHIR Memorial Complex](#), a former Stalin-era camp where nearly 8,000 women—wives of those declared “enemies of the state”—were once imprisoned.

“The lessons of history must never be forgotten,” Tokayev declared, referring to the Stalin-era policies that left deep scars on Kazakhstan's cultural and intellectual life.

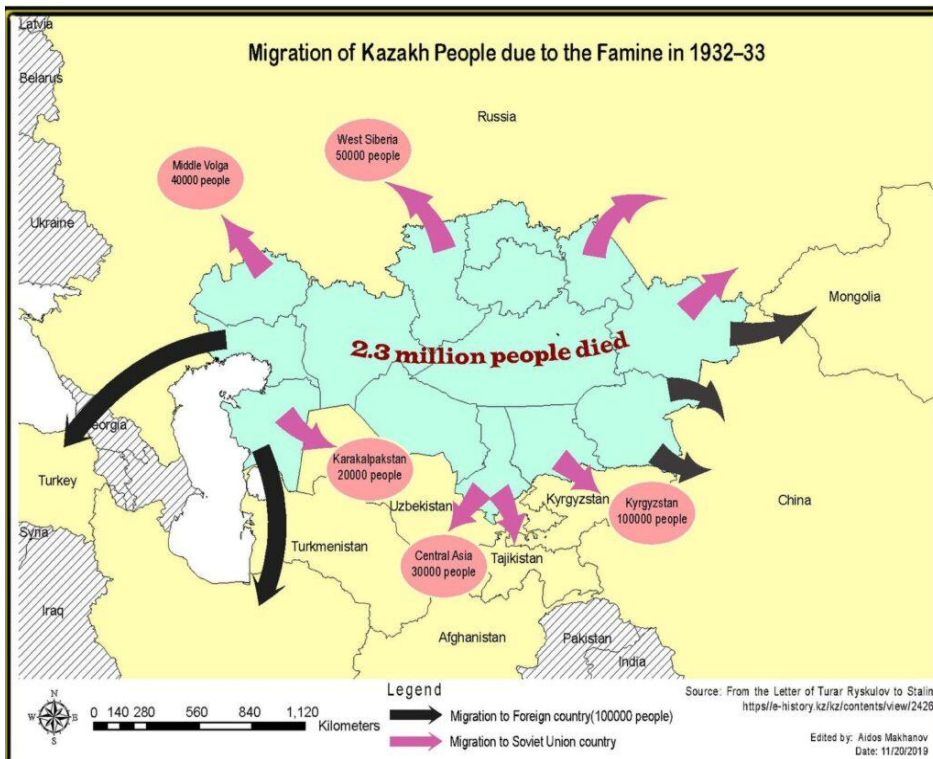


Kassym-Jomart Tokayev paid tribute to the victims with a minute of silence. Photo credit: Akorda.

and brutal conditions.

Kazakh citizens suffered even greater losses. In the early 1930s, famine caused by Stalin's agricultural collectivization policies and the forced destruction of the traditional nomadic way of life claimed as many as 2.3 million Kazakhs. This was followed by purges in which countless intellectuals and landowners were executed or exiled.

Kazakhstan's experience forms part of the broader story of Stalinist repression, which extended well beyond Russia's borders. After Japan's surrender in 1945, an estimated 560,000 to 760,000 Japanese prisoners of war and civilians were forcibly relocated and detained across Soviet territory. Among them, about 50,000 were sent to camps in what was then the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic (now Kazakhstan). In camps such as [Spassky near Karaganda](#), many perished under harsh forced labor



Migration of Kazakh People due to the Famine in 1932 - 33.

Since gaining independence in 1991, Kazakhstan has sought not only to confront this painful legacy but also to embrace the vision of a multiethnic and multifaith society rooted in tolerance. Its constitution guarantees equality for all ethnic and religious groups, and more than 300,000 victims have been officially rehabilitated. Declassified archives continue to shed new light on this era.

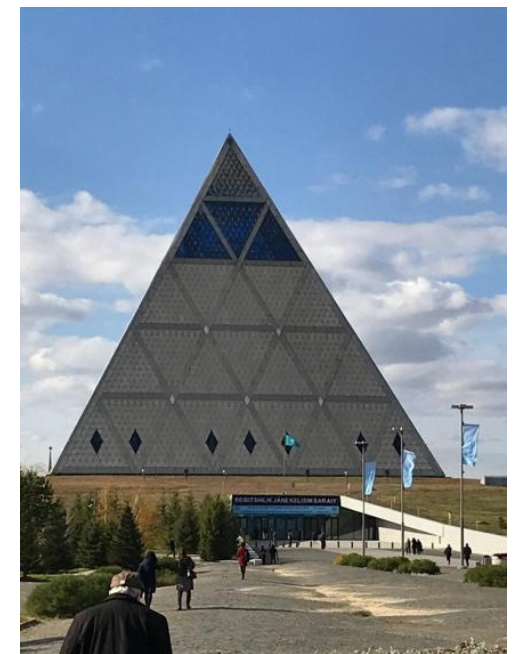
But Kazakhstan's progress is not merely about reconciliation with the past. It has also chosen to make tolerance and dialogue central pillars of its national identity.

As I wrote in a [2023 INPS Japan article](#), Kazakhstan's leadership has placed global interfaith dialogue at the heart of its foreign engagement. The Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, launched in 2003, has become a signature platform bringing together leaders from Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and other faiths for sustained dialogue.

The upcoming 8th Congress, scheduled for September 17-18, 2025, in Astana, is expected to draw religious leaders, scholars, and policymakers from around the world.

Hosted at the iconic [Palace of Peace and Reconciliation](#), the Congress reflects Kazakhstan's role as a bridge between East and West and its commitment to promoting peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, and dialogue.

This approach holds particular relevance in a world increasingly fractured by sectarian conflict and geopolitical tensions. Kazakhstan's efforts to transform a history marked by



Palace of Peace and Reconciliation
 photo: Katsuhiko Asaari



7th Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions Group Photo by Secretariate of the 7th Congress

division and repression into a model of inclusion and cooperation offer valuable lessons for the global community.

Such values were echoed by Pope Francis, who attended the 7th Congress in 2022. In his closing address, the pontiff stated, “Religions must never incite war, hateful attitudes, hostility or extremism, but instead become a beacon of hope for peace.” He emphasized the importance of interreligious dialogue and coexistence.

Kazakhstan is also confronting another grievous injustice from its Soviet past. From 1949 to 1989, 456 nuclear tests were conducted at the Semipalatinsk Test Site, exposing more than one million people to radiation—an enduring tragedy. In response, post-independence Kazakhstan chose to voluntarily renounce the world’s fourth-largest nuclear arsenal, making nuclear disarmament a cornerstone of its foreign policy.

This commitment to nuclear disarmament also extends to interfaith diplomacy. Since the 6th Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions in 2018, Kazakhstan has worked closely with [Soka Gakkai International \(SGI\)](#) of Japan and the Nobel Peace Prize-winning [International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons \(ICAN\)](#), advancing a shared vision of peace, dialogue, and the abolition of nuclear weapons, grounded in the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons use and the testimonies of Hibakusha, while promoting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and deepening international cooperation.

The ALZHIR Memorial itself continues to bear witness to the injustices of the past. Its preserved barracks and “Arch of Sorrow” leave a powerful impression on visitors.

Yet as this week’s remembrance ceremony and Kazakhstan’s ongoing interfaith efforts make clear, the country is determined to build a future grounded in tolerance, justice, and peace.

“Such injustices must never be repeated,” Tokayev affirmed—a principle that now informs both Kazakhstan’s domestic policies and its



A Group photo of participants of [the regional conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and nuclear-free-zone in Central Asia](#) held on August 29, 2023. Photo Credit: Jibek Joly TV Channel.

multi-vector diplomacy aimed at fostering dialogue and harmony on the international stage.

[Katsuhiro Asagiri](#) is the President of INPS Japan and serves as the director for media projects such as “Strengthening awareness on Nuclear Weapons” and “SDGs for All” In 2024, he was honored with the “[Kazakhstan Through the Eyes of Foreign Media](#)” award, representing the Asia-Pacific region.



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Agenda for Nuclear Non-Proliferation Review Conference Still Unclear

By Naureen Hossain

NEW YORK 2025 (IPS) – The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons must not be allowed to collapse under the weight of geopolitical cynicism, the preparatory committee at the UN heard.

This year, the Third Session of the [Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons \(NPT\)](#) (April 28-May 9) was intended to address procedural issues related to the treaty and the upcoming conference next year. The meeting was the third and final preparatory session before the review conference next year. As such, the session was an opportunity for countries to reaffirm the principles of the NPT by agreement.



The closing session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons(NPT). Credit: UN TV

Throughout the two weeks, delegations expressed their positions and deliberated over recommendations that would shape the agenda for the 2026 conference. Beyond member states, other stakeholders such as civil society groups were emphatic in expressing the urgency of the nuclear issue and calling for member states to take action.

“The continued existence of nuclear weapons remains one of the most urgent and existential dangers facing life on this planet,” said Florian Eblenkamp, an advocacy officer for the International Coalition Against Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). He went further to state, “The non-proliferation norm must not be allowed to collapse under the weight of geopolitical cynicism. If the NPT is to have a future, States Parties

must send an unambiguous signal: Nuclear weapons are not to be spread. Not to be shared. Not to be normalized.”

The committee’s chair, Ambassador Harold Agyeman, who serves as the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations, told reporters early on that the success of the review conference in 2026 would be “dependent on the political will of state parties” in demonstrating progress on their obligations of the treaty and to “strengthen accountability for the related implementation of existing commitments.”

“Indeed, many around the world are concerned by the lack of raw progress on nuclear disarmament, and emerging proliferations risk that could undermine the hard-won norms established to bring about a world free of nuclear weapons and a regime to achieve that goal,” said Agyeman.

The third preparatory session took place in a time of increasing global anxiety over nuclear proliferation and even escalation. The most recent conflict between India and Pakistan has the world on edge that two nuclear powers might engage in [war](#). Since April, Iran and the United States have been in [negotiations](#) over a new nuclear deal, which at times has seen both sides at a [deadlock](#) over limiting Iran’s nuclear programme.

Given that context, plus pre-existing tensions between other global powers, such as Russia and the war in Ukraine, this session was an



UN Headquarters/ Katsuhiko Asagiri

opportunity for countries to act with urgency towards non-proliferation and to respect their obligations under the NPT. By the end of the conference, however, it seemed no agreement was reached. Revised recommendations for the review conference failed to reach consensus. This continues a concerning pattern of preparatory meetings that also [failed](#) to adopt an outcome.

As the meeting reached its conclusion on May 9, delegations expressed regret that the draft agreement did not reach consensus. “We regret that the desired breakthrough on transparency and accountability in the context of the strengthened due process was not reached,” said one delegate from Egypt. “The discussion was mature and based itself on mutual respect and commitment to multilateralism.

Many delegations made sure to reaffirm their commitment to the NPT and to strengthening the review process. Yet there was also a recurring acknowledgement of the “complex geopolitical situation” that presented a challenge in reaching consensus.

Civil society organizations have also been vocal in their disappointment at the lack of agreement or outcome document. ICAN [stated](#) that the lack of an agreement reflected a “horrifying lack of urgency in response to current risks.” [Reaching Critical Will](#) went further to criticize nuclear-armed states for refusing to comply with international law and their obligations to the NPT, which calls for them to eliminate nuclear weapons.

The NPT Review Conference (RevCon) is expected to be held in New York from 27 April to 22 May 2026. The PrepComm [nominated](#) Vietnam to chair the RevCon. Ambassador Dang Hoang Giang, Permanent Representative of Vietnam to the United Nations, stated that the presidency would be “characterized by inclusive, transparent, and balanced proceedings” that would ensure that the perspectives and interests of all state parties would be respected.

“The road ahead will be challenging, but we remain confident that through collective wisdom and shared determination, meaningful progress is not only possible but achievable. A robust and effective treaty ensures a safer and more secure work for everyone,” said Giang.

The presence—and threat—of nuclear weapons looms large. For good reason, they cannot simply be relegated to history as a relic of hubris and ambition when we can observe their influence in modern geopolitics. If the spirit for nuclear nonproliferation is indeed still there, then the international community must be vigilant in advocating for the NPT and other disarmament treaties, rather than let a small percentage of parties dictate the global agenda. This must be an ongoing process, lest we see the continued undermining of nonproliferation and multilateralism.

『INPS Japan/ IPS UN Bureau Report』



ICAN



Iran : Future of the Non-Proliferation regime

By Raza Syed(London), Fereydon(Tehran)

As the world navigates the complexities of nuclear diplomacy in 2025, Iran remains at the center of debates over the future of non-proliferation treaties. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), once hailed as a triumph of multilateralism, now faces existential challenges due to systemic inequities and geopolitical double standards. Iran's nuclear program, long scrutinized by Western powers, exemplifies the tensions between states seeking peaceful nuclear energy and a regime skewed in favor of nuclear-armed nations. This article argues that the NPT's survival hinges on addressing historical injustices, recognizing Iran's compliance with international safeguards, and reforming a system that has disproportionately targeted non-



Image Credit::Google

aligned states.

Historical Context: Iran's Nuclear journey under the NPT

Iran's engagement with nuclear technology began in the 1950s under the U.S.-backed "Atoms for Peace" program, which promoted civilian nuclear energy in exchange for non-proliferation pledges. After ratifying the NPT in 1970, Iran submitted to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards

and consistently asserted its right to peaceful nuclear energy under Article IV. However, geopolitical shifts following the 1979 Islamic Revolution transformed Iran's program into a geopolitical flashpoint.

The 2002 revelation of undeclared enrichment facilities at Natanz and Fordow sparked accusations of clandestine weapons development. Yet, IAEA inspections never uncovered conclusive evidence of a nuclear weapons program. A pivotal 2007 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate concluded that Iran had halted weaponization efforts in 2003. Despite this, Western sanctions intensified, reflecting a disconnect between Iran's legal rights and geopolitical mistrust.

The JCPOA: A diplomatic triumph sabotaged

The 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) marked a watershed moment. Iran agreed to unprecedented restrictions—capping uranium enrichment at 3.67%, reducing stockpiles by 98%, and accepting 24/7 IAEA monitoring—in exchange for sanctions relief. By 2018, the IAEA had verified Iran's compliance 15 times. However, the U.S. unilaterally withdrew under President Trump, reimposing sanctions that cost Iran over \$200 billion in oil revenues and crippled its economy.

Iran's incremental breaches after 2018, including enriching uranium to 60% purity, were widely framed as provocations. However, Iran argues that these measures are legally justified under Article X of the NPT, which allows for withdrawal or deviation if a state's "supreme interests" are threatened. From Iran's perspective, the United States' unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA and reimposition of sanctions undermined the very diplomacy it had once endorsed, prompting Tehran's response.

2025: A landscape of stalled diplomacy and renewed tensions

As of 2025, the non-proliferation regime remains gridlocked. The Biden administration's tentative efforts to revive the JCPOA collapsed in 2023 amid domestic U.S. opposition and Iran's demands for guaranteed sanctions relief. Meanwhile, Iran's nuclear program operates under IAEA safeguards, with enriched uranium stockpiles (now at 142 kg of 60% material) still far below the 250 kg required for a single weapon.

Hypocrisy in the NPT's "Grand Bargain"

The NPT's foundational promise—non-nuclear states renounce weapons in exchange for disarmament by nuclear-armed states (NWS)—has failed. The U.S., Russia, China, France, and the U.K. retain over 12,500 warheads combined, while modernizing arsenals. In contrast, Iran faces relentless scrutiny for a civilian program that aligns with Article IV. As Dr. Seyed Hossein Mousavian, former Iranian nuclear negotiator, argues:

"The NPT's double standards are indefensible. Iran is penalized for legal enrichment, while nuclear states flout disarmament obligations. This hypocrisy fuels distrust."

Weaponized sanctions and humanitarian toll

U.S. and EU sanctions, justified as non-proliferation tools, have devolved into collective punishment. By 2025, Iran's inflation hovers

near 50%, with 30% unemployment. Medicine shortages, exacerbated by financial blockades, have caused preventable deaths. Such coercion radicalizes public opinion, undermining moderates who champion diplomacy.

Regional realities: A nuclear-armed neighborhood

Iran's security calculus is shaped by its proximity to U.S. bases, NATO member Turkey, and nuclear-armed Pakistan. Israel's undeclared arsenal—estimated at 90 warheads—remains unchallenged by the NPT. Saudi Arabia's 2023 vow to "pursue nuclear weapons if Iran does" underscores regional instability. Yet, Western powers ignore these dynamics, framing Iran as a singular threat.

Expert perspectives: Reforming a broken system

Dr. Nader Entessar (University of South Alabama)

Dr. Entessar, an expert in international security, argues that the JCPOA was a rare success in nuclear diplomacy, but its failure underscores the need for a revised approach to non-proliferation. He suggests that future treaties must incorporate stronger verification mechanisms and ensure that signatories adhere to their commitments.

Robert S. Litwak (Wilson Center)

Litwak, a senior fellow at the Wilson Center, believes that military options should not be the primary response to nuclear proliferation. Instead, he advocates for containment strategies and diplomatic engagement to prevent further nuclear escalation.

Dr. Trita Parsi (Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft):

"The JCPOA's collapse wasn't Iran's failure—it was a failure of U.S. leadership. By politicizing non-proliferation, Washington eroded trust in multilateralism. The path forward requires honoring agreements and addressing Iran's legitimate security concerns."



Credit: Stephen Coles, via Flickr CC-BY-SA

Dr. Narges Bajoghli (Johns Hopkins University):

“Sanctions have not deterred Iran; they’ve entrenched hardliners. The West’s refusal to acknowledge Iran’s compliance under the JCPOA fuels the narrative that diplomacy is futile. A reformed NPT must prioritize equity over coercion.”

Iran’s case for a fairer framework

1. **Right to Peaceful Nuclear Energy:**
Uranium enriched to 60% is used medically for cancer treatment. Iran’s program aligns with Article IV, yet it faces unique restrictions not imposed on U.S. allies .
2. **Security Guarantees:**
Non-proliferation cannot succeed amid existential threats. A regional security pact, akin to the 1975 Helsinki Accords, could address Iran’s concerns over foreign intervention and Israeli arsenals.
3. **Depoliticizing the IAEA:**
The IAEA’s credibility suffered under U.S. pressure. Former Director General Yukiya Amano admitted in 2020 that U.S. intelligence heavily influenced Iran assessments. Restoring neutrality is critical.

Pathways Forward in 2025

- **Revive the JCPOA with Binding Guarantees:**
A renewed deal must insulate Iran from unilateral withdrawal, possibly via UN Security Council ratification. Europe’s INSTEX trade mechanism should bypass U.S. sanctions.
- **Establish a Middle East Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ):**
Proposed since 1974, a NWFZ would address Israel’s arsenal and Arab states’ anxieties. UN-led talks in 2024 gained momentum, but U.S. and Israeli resistance persists.
- **Global Disarmament Momentum:**
Nuclear powers must reduce stockpiles transparently. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), ratified by 70 states, offers a model, though NWS boycott it.
- **End Economic Coercion:**
Sanctions relief must accompany compliance. The EU’s 2024 humanitarian corridor for medicine and food sets a precedent for decoupling essential goods from politics.

Conclusion: Toward an equitable Nuclear Order

The future of non-proliferation treaties hinges on reconciling the NPT’s ideals with 21st-century realities. Iran’s experience underscores systemic flaws: punitive measures, disarmament hypocrisy, and



Image: INPS Japan

geopolitical bias. As Dr. Parsi notes, “*Iran isn’t the problem—it’s a mirror reflecting the regime’s failures.*”

To survive, the NPT must evolve into a framework that respects the rights of non-nuclear states, enforces disarmament, and prioritizes diplomacy over coercion. The alternative—a fragmented world where the NPT is seen as a tool of hegemony—risks not only Iran’s exit but the collapse of global nuclear governance.

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『INPS Japan/London Post』



Fostering Dialogue for Disarmament Ahead of Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Review Conference

By Naureen Hossain

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) – The argument for nuclear disarmament is perhaps more relevant than it has been since the end of World War II, especially in a world where there is a growing gulf between nuclear states and between nuclear states and those who don't have the weapons.

In an event held at the sidelines of the Preparatory Committee for the [2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons \(NPT\)](#) (April 28-May 9), a panel of experts deliberated over how nuclear disarmament must be achieved in the modern day. The panel was co-organized by [Soka Gakkai International \(SGI\)](#) and the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the United Nations in New York.



A panel on nuclear disarmament held ahead of the 2026 Review of the Treaty of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear. Credit: Katsuhiko Asagiri

As new conflicts break out and pre-existing conflicts seem to drag on and escalate, there is a greater need for global parties to reach consensus on security matters, including the place of nuclear weapons in a post-Cold War era. William Potter, the director of the [James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies](#), expressed concern about the “erosion” of the norms for nuclear weapons.

“To say the least, the world is in a state of disarray. It’s hard to distinguish traditional allies from adversaries,” said Potter.

Potter remarked on a “growing gulf” between nuclear states—countries that possess nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction—and non-nuclear states when it comes to the urgency with which the issue of nuclear disarmament needs to be addressed.

“It is not the nuclear weapon itself... rather, the true adversary lies in the thinking that rationalizes and justifies the use of nuclear weapons,” said Chie Sunada, SGI’s Director of Disarmament and Human Rights. “It’s the dangerous mindset to annihilate others when they’re perceived as a threat or an obstacle to their objective. It is that way of thinking that disregards the sanctity of life, [which] we must collectively defend.”

Even as some global powers debate over relaxing the restrictions on nuclear weapon deployment, there are still effective, diplomatic tools that are being employed to promote disarmament. One such example is the Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zones, as codified in region-specific treaties.

Countries across Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Pacific, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia agree not to possess nuclear arms or conduct testing. For non-nuclear states, these zones allow them to “[assert] their agency” and “the right to dictate how their regional security is formulated,” according to Gaukhar Mukhatzhanova, Japan Chair for a World Without Nuclear Weapons (VCDNP). She further added that these nuclear-free zones limit the freedom of action of nuclear states by forcing them to respect the treaties that protect them.

The panel also advocated for giving more credence to a ‘no first use’ policy, in which a nuclear power refrains from using nuclear weapons when engaged in warfare with another nuclear power.

So far, China is the only nuclear power and P5 Member State that has a ‘no first use’ policy, meaning they would only use nuclear weapons in retaliation against a nuclear attack.

India has a ‘no first use’ policy, but it includes a caveat that allows for a response to biological or chemical weapons.

Meanwhile, the other P5 members—the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, and France—along with other nuclear powers, such as Pakistan and North Korea, maintain policies that permit the first use of nuclear weapons in a conflict.

By giving further credence to a ‘no first use’ pledge that countries can adopt, this could prevent misunderstandings and miscalculations that could lead to a devastating result. In such deliberations on nuclear treaties, there need to be what Director and Deputy to the High Representative of the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), Adedeji Ebo, referred to as “confidence-building dialogues,” which can be achieved through enhancing reporting and transparency measures.

This year’s PrepComm began with a discussion on the issue. Alexander Kmentt, Director of the Disarmament, Arms Control, and Non-Proliferation Department of the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, argued that in NPT deliberations, nuclear states seemed to have greater political priority and are more inclined to maintain the

status quo because their possession of nuclear weapons provides them a sense of security. This presents a power imbalance.

Meetings like this year's NPT PrepComm and the Meeting of State Parties on the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons must also create environments where delegations and other stakeholders are well-informed and can speak with authority.

Ebo argued that non-nuclear states are “indispensable” for “achieving meaningful progress in nuclear disarmament.”

Umbrella states—countries that have nuclear protection agreements with nuclear powers—should leverage their positions and extend support to non-nuclear states in their nonproliferation stances.

There is a need to “demystify the nuclear conversation,” Ebo remarked. Diplomats and other experts that will deal with nuclear issues need to be properly informed about this matter. He also spoke of the potential power that comes from regular citizens and grassroots movements to hold their elected leaders accountable on the matter of nuclear disarmament. By bringing this issue to the attention of their elected officials, it becomes “difficult to ignore.”

“The nuclear issue is too important to be left to the states alone,” he said.

Disarmament and nonproliferation education is being carried out through nongovernmental organizations and advocacy groups, such as SGI.

Since 1957, nuclear disarmament has been part of SGI's broader agenda for promoting the culture of peace. Sunada remarked that education plays a role in fostering “powerful, transnational solidarity” among people. To that end, SGI has organized and facilitated speaking engagements with *hibakusha*—survivors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings—to share their experiences with both Japanese and foreign audiences, along with workshops that reach over 10,000 people a year.

The panel recognized efforts toward nuclear disarmament through global diplomacy and grassroots movements. For nuclear treaties to be upheld and respected, perhaps at their core there should be a shared understanding of what constitutes a *nuclear taboo*, whether it prohibits the first use of nuclear weapons in warfare or if it is a complete prohibition.

Mukhatzhanova pointed out that understanding seems to vary among different groups, from policymakers and diplomats to academia and the general public and suggested that it could be beneficial to deliberate and debate on common ground for the NPT 2026 Review Conference.

『INPS Japan/ IPS UN Bureau Report』



Nukes in the neighbourhood

By Kunda Dixit



Nepali Times.

The water war has arrived in South Asia sooner than any of us imagined it.

Kathumandu (Nepali Times) – India and Pakistan are twins separated at birth. Tensions between them have been at a hair trigger ever since independence and has erupted into full scale conflict at least four times in the past 80 years.

The 22 April terrorist attack in Kashmir that killed 25 Indian tourists and a Nepali citizen, threatens to escalate tension between the two nuclear-armed nations. India has squarely blamed Pakistan for the attacks, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given his military “operational freedom” to respond. Pakistan has said it has credible intelligence of an Indian military strike and its officials have promised a “full spectrum” response — a code for a [nuclear retaliation](#).



Kunda Dixit

For Nepal, the killing of its national in the Pahalgam attack comes as another stark reminder that in conflicts from Afghanistan to Iraq, from [Ukraine](#) to Israel, [Nepalis are getting caught in the crossfire](#). The last time full-scale fighting broke out between [India and Pakistan](#) on

Kargil in 1999, at least 22 [Nepalis fighting for the Indian Army](#) were killed in action.

Three of Nepal's immediate neighbours (China, India, Pakistan) have nuclear weapons, and they do not have good relations. With China supplying weapons, [missile technology](#) and other support to Pakistan, this triangular friction could set off a regional conflagration.

[Research at Rutgers University](#) has calculated that even a week-long tactical nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan would throw up so much smoke and debris into the atmosphere that it would block out the sun for years, and lead to a collapse of the [global food system](#). This does not take into account the radioactive fallout that prevailing winds would blow up to [the Himalaya](#), contaminating glaciers that are the sources of [Asia's main rivers](#).

The impact of [climate breakdown](#) on High Asia was already ringing alarm bells about its [shrinking ice cap](#) reducing the dry season flow of water downstream. Water was going to be the next strategic commodity, geopolitical experts warned, and the next wars in Asia would be over water.

That water war is already happening. India retaliated to the Kashmir attack by suspending the [Indus Waters Treaty](#) of 1960 mediated by

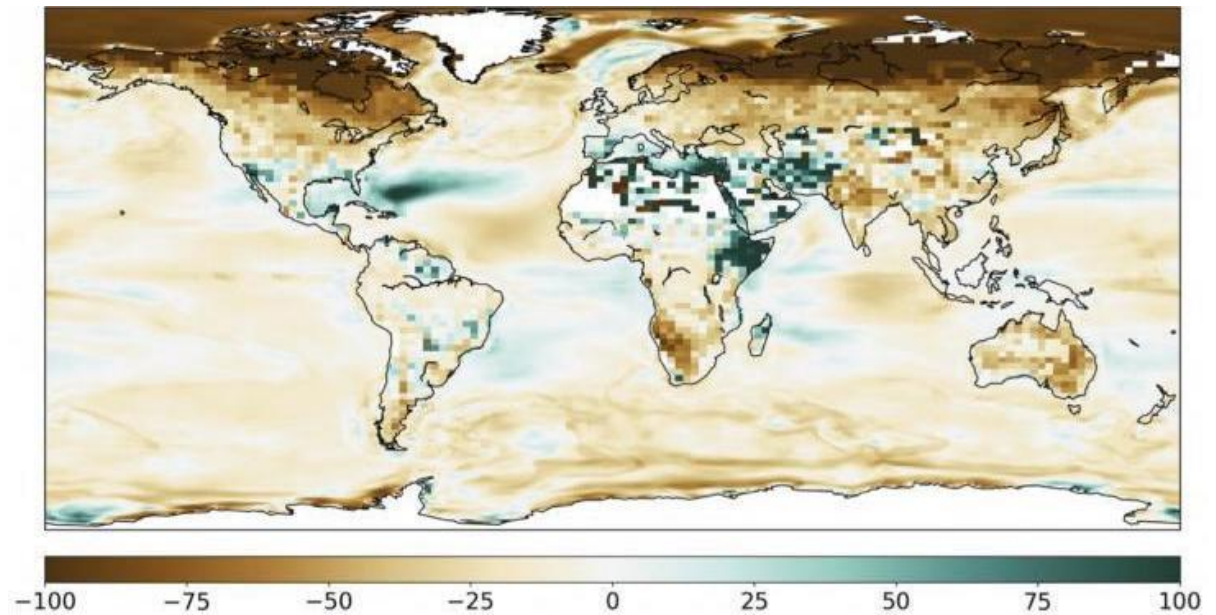


Image: A map showing the changes in the productivity of ecosystems around the world in the second year after a nuclear war between India and Pakistan. Regions in brown would experience steep declines in plant growth, while regions in green could see increases. (Credit: Nicole Lovenduski and Lili Xia). Source: University of Colorado Boulder.

the World Bank that has withstood at least three wars between India and Pakistan. The treaty gives India control over the three eastern tributaries of the Indus ([Beas](#), [Ravi](#) and [Sutlej](#)), while Pakistan got water from the Indus and two of its western tributaries ([Indus](#), [Chenab](#) and [Jhelum](#)).

Pakistan was assured of 70% of the annual flow, and India could use a reasonable amount of water for [irrigation and hydropower](#). Within days of its threat, India stopped water flowing down to Pakistan from the Chenab river and is reportedly preparing to do the same on the Jhelum.

The sabre-rattling has reached a crescendo. Besides threats and counter-threats there are also symbolic drills, with the Indian Air Force practicing landing on an expressway in Uttar Pradesh by its Rafale, Su-30 and Jaguar fighter jets to demonstrate 'operational readiness'. In response Pakistan test-fired its Abdali ballistic missile that can carry a nuclear warhead and has a range of 450km.

The danger is that with ultra-nationalist rhetoric and the beating the war drums by both sides, India's government and Pakistan's military may have to 'do something' to appease domestic public opinion. But any tactical strike, an artillery exchange, or territorial incursion could quickly escalate out of control.

Expecting an Indian retaliation for the Pahalgam killings, Pakistan is using [nuclear deterrence](#) and warning of "catastrophic consequences". The two neighbours came close to a nuclear exchange in 2019 after an attack on the Indian military in Kashmir, and prompt international intervention led by the United States cooled tensions.

This time, the [Trump administration](#) is too distracted and not as engaged. Pakistan has denied it was responsible for the terrorist attack and called on Washington to stop a possible Indian retaliation. India and Pakistan have stopped overflights by each other's airlines, and some international carriers have even stopped flying over Pakistan fearing an air war.

Washington, Beijing, the UN and the EU have all urged restraint. Iran, which has good relations with both India and Pakistan has sent



Image: INPS Japan

its foreign minister to urge both countries not to go into a tit-for-tat war. Iran has its own nuclear flashpoint to worry about with tensions in Israel, Yemen and Syria.

India and Pakistan both share similar problems of joblessness, [poverty](#) and [environmental threats](#). Neither side needs the threat of a senseless war, and we in the neighborhood do not need it either.

『INPS Japan/Nepali Times』



If the US Nuclear Umbrella Collapses, Will it Trigger a Euro-Bomb?

By Thalif Deen

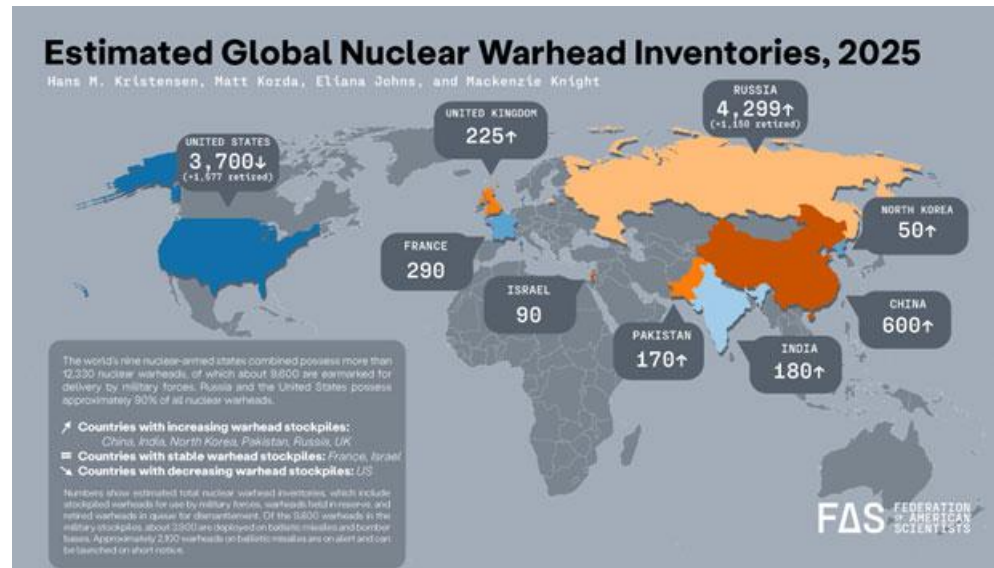
UNITED NATIONS (IPS) – The Trump administration’s hostile attitude towards Western Europe—and the threat to pullout of the 32-member military alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) – signifies the danger of losing the longstanding protection of the US nuclear umbrella over Europe.

Jana Puglierin, director of the German office of the European

Council on Foreign Relations, was quoted as saying: “Trump may, or may not, want to leave NATO officially, but he has every means to undermine NATO”.

Trump’s antagonism towards NATO also extends to the 27-member European Union (EU), which he said, was created, “to screw the US.”

The widespread speculation, in the current political climate, is whether the UK and France could provide nuclear protection to Western



Credit: Federation of American Scientists (FAS)

Europe—or will countries like Germany, Poland and the Nordics be forced to go nuclear?

The New York Times said last month that Prime Minister Donald Tusk of Poland, with its long history of Russian occupation, might eventually develop its own nuclear weapon.

Of the world’s approximately 12,331 nuclear warheads, roughly 9,604 are in the military stockpiles for use

by missiles, aircraft, ships and submarines. The remaining warheads have been retired but are still relatively intact and are awaiting dismantlement, according to FAS.

The world’s nine nuclear-armed states are the UK, US, Russia, France, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel.

Both UK and France have only 515 warheads compared to about 3,700 in the American arsenal, with an additional 1,300 waiting to be deactivated.

Tariq Rauf (former Head of Verification and Security Policy, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), told IPS “for some time now, I have believed that NATO’s European members have failed to integrate Russia into a common European security architecture”.



Tariq Rauf

It is a concerning reality that some of the new members of NATO, former East bloc countries, have endeavoured to get some form of revenge for the wrongs inflicted upon them by the USSR, and have found ways to provoke Russia which in turn has led to bad behaviour by Russia.

“Now the proverbial chickens have come home to roost and a shooting war has been going on for three years. US pull back from Europe has long been on the books, President Trump is the latest US leader who seems to let the Europeans fend for themselves. Eighty years after the end of WW2, EU economies are thriving but their

foreign policy remains confused and now there are concerns about “friendly proliferation”.

The Polish president, Rauf pointed out, has openly voiced interest in developing own nuclear weapons if the US does not station nuclear weapons in his country. Interestingly, this did not elicit any concerns from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) or other countries as Poland is a non-nuclear-weapon State party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Both France and the UK still labour under delusions of being global powers and have pretensions of providing “extended deterrence” to their European friends as the US distances itself.

In the UK, Prime Minister Starmer is cutting support to pensioners and other social programmes, as well as overseas development assistance, to fund new nuclear-missile submarines and maintaining an arsenal of about 260 operational nuclear weapons.

In France, President Macron is reversing President de Gaulle’s policy and is openly offering to bring in EU countries under a French nuclear “umbrella”, even as the economy declines and social problems increase.

While France has about 300 operational nuclear warheads, it has permanently closed and dismantled its nuclear weapon test sites and facilities to make nuclear material for nuclear weapons.

Germany has reversed policy as well and will again host US medium-range nuclear-armed ballistic missiles; as will the UK which will bring back US nuclear-armed bombers.

The 55-year old NPT system is on the verge of collapse and it that happens the result will be a cascade of nuclear proliferation in Europe and the Asia-Pacific, warned Rauf.

Jackie Cabasso, Executive Director, Western States Legal Foundation, Oakland, California, told IPS talk of a potential “Eurobomb” goes back decades, but it has escalated sharply since the Trump administration’s antipathy towards its NATO allies has caused some of them to question the reliability of the U.S. commitment to Article 5 of the 1949 NATO treaty.

Article 5, at the heart of the treaty, commits NATO states to help out any member that comes under armed attack, with the response they deem appropriate, including military responses, widely understood to include the U.S. ‘nuclear umbrella’.

In 2020, French President Macron called for a ‘strategic dialogue’ on ‘the role of France’s nuclear deterrent in [Europe’s] collective security.’ In an attempt to open discussions on this issue with Germany, France repeated the offer in 2022, but there were no takers.

Last month, Macron offered to ‘open the strategic debate’ with interested European countries to determine ‘if there are new co-



Jacqueline Cabasso, Executive Director, Western States Legal Foundation.

Photo Credit: Katsuhiko Asagiri, Multimedia Director, INPS Japan.

operations that may emerge.’” Officials from Germany, Poland, Denmark, Lithuania, and Latvia have welcomed Macron’s call for a strategic dialogue, which would also aim to include nuclear-armed UK.

“Donald Trump’s wildly erratic pronouncements and behavior makes it impossible to predict how the U.S. will react. But clues might be found in Project 2025, widely seen as the playbook for the second Trump administration,” she said.

Project 2025 seeks to ‘Transform NATO so that U.S. allies are capable of fielding the great majority of the conventional forces required to deter Russia while relying on the United States primarily

for our nuclear deterrent, and select other capabilities while reducing the U.S. force posture in Europe’.

While Trump threatened to withdraw the U.S. from NATO during his first term, the U.S. government as a whole is deeply committed to NATO, as is illustrated by the fact that in 2024 Congress passed, and President Biden signed, a law – supported by then Senator/now Secretary of State Marco Rubio, requiring that a withdrawal from NATO be approved by Congress.

“I think it’s unlikely, though not impossible, that the Trump administration will pull the U.S. out of NATO”, said Cabasso.

But, in light of the Russian Federation’s ongoing illegal war of aggression in Ukraine with its attendant drumbeat of nuclear threats, and a U.S. ally increasing seen as unreliable, a number of former and current European government officials and politicians have called for some form of an independent European nuclear force.

Such a development would violate the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and other applicable laws. But more alarming is the growing normalization of nuclear threats and legitimization of nuclear proliferation suggested by its proponents.

At a time when all of the nuclear armed states are qualitatively and, in some cases, quantitatively upgrading their nuclear arsenals, a new multipolar arms race is underway, and the dangers of wars among

nuclear armed states are growing. Adding more nuclear-armed actors to the world stage is a truly terrifying prospect.

Germany and other NATO members should rebuff any suggestion of acquiring nuclear weapons and take the lead in rejecting reliance on nuclear weapons, use every diplomatic means at their disposal to lower the temperature with Russia and bring the Ukraine war to an end, and promote negotiations among nuclear-armed states to begin the process of nuclear disarmament.

Instead of engaging in a strategic dialogue about a potential Eurobomb, European leaders should be engaging in a dialogue to commence negotiations on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Europe, ultimately to include Russia. It’s very difficult to imagine in these dark times, but as Albert Einstein said, ‘Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life’s coming attractions’.

Elaborating further, Rauf also pointed out that the 1996 nuclear-test-ban treaty languishes and still is not in force, nuclear explosive testing moratoria seemingly are hanging by a thread. We are now in a much more precarious situation regarding accidental or deliberate nuclear war, than even in the worst times of the Cold War. Political leadership is absent – the challenges seem beyond the ken of today’s leaders who are desperately flailing for solutions.

It is well past time to dial back the confrontational rhetoric and heed the call of the UN Secretary-General addressing the UN Conference

on Disarmament in Geneva, “The nuclear option is not an option at all. It is a one-way road to annihilation. We need to avoid this dead-end at all costs. Humanity is counting on us to get this right. Let us keep working to deliver the safe, secure and peaceful world that every person needs and deserve.”

In an article published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) last January, Dr Wilfred Wan and Dr Gitte du Plessis, point out that in [July 2024](#) Norway’s Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace signed a contract with the Norwegian Defence Materiel Agency (NDMA) for the development of a next-generation ‘supersonic strike missile’, as part of a collaborative project between Norway and Germany first announced in [November 2023](#). The plan is for the new manoeuvrable naval strike missile, dubbed the Tyrfinn, to be operational in 2035.

This is just one of several recent high-profile efforts involving Nordic states that aim to enhance European conventional capabilities in order to deter aggression and maintain strategic stability.

Others include Finland’s [announcement](#), in May 2024, that it is acquiring Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile-Extended Range (JASSM-ER) weapons from the United States, which comes on top of its 2021 [order](#) of US F-35 combat aircraft. Around the same time, Sweden [announced](#) that it would provide Ukraine with early warning and control aircraft equipped with its [Erieye radar system](#). This

is [expected](#) to represent a ‘big force multiplier’ for Ukraine’s F-16 combat aircraft.

These moves in the Nordic region reflect broader European trends in the development and deployment of advanced conventional precision-strike capabilities. Investments in longer-range, manoeuvrable missiles and delivery systems—including the Tyrfinn and the [planned deployment](#) on German soil of US hypersonic systems and ground-launched missiles that would have been prohibited under the now-defunct Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty ([INF Treaty](#))—contribute to the spectre of a ‘[new missile crisis](#)’ in Europe.

[Planned upgrades](#) to European global navigation satellite systems (GNSS) will further bolster the ability of these weapon systems to rapidly locate, target and ultimately destroy targets.

For the Nordic states, and especially for new NATO members Finland and Sweden, Russia’s war in Ukraine has provided clear justification for such developments. They are seeking both to demonstrate solidarity with other NATO members and to strengthen the alliance’s conventional capabilities in order to complement the extended US nuclear deterrent. But these decisions have many implications—and come with risks—that European policymakers may not have fully considered.

『INPS Japan/IPS UN Bureau Report』

Alfonso Garcia Robles, promoter of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, can emerge from the youth

By Guillermo Ayala Alanis

The exhibition 'Everything You Treasure-For a World Free From Nuclear Weapons' organized by Soka Gakkai Mexico was displayed at the Anahuac University with the aim of raising awareness among young people about the danger of nuclear weapons 80 years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Mexico City (INPS Japan) – An exhibition hall at the Anahuac University, located north

of Mexico City, was the epicenter for young students to understand the danger posed by nuclear weapons and the importance of the fight for their non-proliferation undertaken by civil society organizations



Inauguration of the Expo Everything You Treasure-For a World Free From Nuclear Weapons at Anahuac University. Patricia Eugenia Ruiz, Anahuac University; Flavio Roberto Bonzanini, OPANAL; Sonia Barneche, Anahuac University; Rafael Medina, Garcia Rpbles Foundation and Nereo Ordaz, Soka Gakkai Mexico. Credit: Guillermo Ayala, INPS News.

such as the Soka Gakkai, the Alfonso García Robles Diplomatic Foundation and international organizations such as OPANAL.

Inauguration of the Expo Everything You Treasure-For a World Free From Nuclear Weapons at Anahuac University.

Patricia Eugenia Ruiz, Anahuac University; Flávio Roberto Bonzanini, OPANAL; Sonia Barneche, Anahuac University; Rafael Medina,

García Robles Foundation and Nereo Ordaz, Soka Gakkai Mexico. Credit: Guillermo Ayala, INPS News.

Students from various degree courses such as International Relations, Communication, Design and Engineering were able to see the exhibition 'Everything You Treasure-For a World Free From Nuclear Weapons' organized by Soka Gakkai Mexico.

'Alfonso García Robles, the driving force behind the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which protects all of Latin America from the danger of nuclear weapons. From Tijuana to Tierra del Fuego,' said Nereo Ordaz, president of Soka Gakkai Mexico, in an interview with INPS Japan.

The exhibition features 42 information boards produced through a collaboration between Soka Gakkai International and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, ICAN. The posters invite



Young people visiting the expo Everything You Treasure-For a World Free From nuclear weapons at Universidad Anáhuac. Credit: Guillermo Ayala, INPS News.

people to reflect on the danger that nuclear weapons pose to the life of the planet and the struggle of civil society to prevent their proliferation.

'We understood that the driving force is in the youth. Young people are the greatest treasure a nation can have. They have creativity, strength, purity, heart,' added Nereo Ordaz. Meanwhile, Patricia Eugenia Ruiz, Director of Internationalization of Universidad Anáhuac commented that

It is very important for students to be aware of the reality in which we live, regardless of what they are studying. She added that it is necessary for students to understand 'how we can all contribute and have an impact on the kind of world we want to live in'.

In the last three years, nearly one hundred thousand people, including students, teachers, administrators and civil society, have been able to see the exhibition in various universities in Mexico. The exhibition includes posters informing about the financing of nuclear weapons research and production. It highlights that 329 banks, pension funds

and other financial institutions from 24 countries are involved in the issue. In addition, you can learn about the consequences of nuclear weapons on health and the environment, and the consequences they had on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, precisely in the year that marks the 80th anniversary of this event.



Award ceremony for Soka Gakkai by the Alfonso García Robles Diplomatic Foundation. Rafael Medina Martínez (right), president of the Diplomatic Foundation Alfonso García Robles, presents the Medal of Merit for Peace and Nuclear Abolition to Julio Kosaka (left) Credit: Soka Gakkai México: Soka Gakkai México.

‘There is no need for nuclear weapons... it seems silly to me that they still exist after all they have done... we young people should make ourselves known about it,’ commented Julieta Arias, a design student at Universidad Anáhuac while viewing the exhibition. Meanwhile, Alex, an engineering student pointed out that ‘a war under these (nuclear) conditions would be quick and irreversible and the consequences it would leave would be lamentable’.

Soka Gakkai Mexico is present in 68 cities in the country such as Merida, Playa del Carmen, San Miguel de Allende, Tijuana and Veracruz.

On 26 January, Soka Gakkai International celebrated its 50th anniversary and its work to promote values to foster a world of peace should be more relevant than ever, especially among young people. In this context, in the city of San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Soka Gakkai

International received an award from the Diplomatic Foundation Alfonso García Robles for its work in benefit of the struggle for peace and nuclear disarmament.

In an interview for INPS Japan, the president of the García Robles Foundation, Rafael Medina, emphasized that it is essential for new generations to sow the seeds of peace and nuclear disarmament. He asked the younger generation to be proud that Mexico was the driving force behind the world’s first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and that efforts for nuclear disarmament should be increasingly intense and

deeper. 'The threats we are facing today are not a game; and they are not threatening in the air. They are certain and substantiated threats from great powers that are in conflict'.

Rafael medina also reported on the promotion of a documentary film that exposes the work of the Father of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, Alfonso García Robles, in his struggle for a world free of nuclear weapons, which won him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1982.



Yumi Sato, OPANAL. Credit: Guillermo Ayala, INPS News.

The exhibition event 'Everything You Treasure-For a World Free From Nuclear Weapons' was also attended by OPANAL Secretary General Flávio Roberto Bonzanini, who also insisted that young people can build a safe and peaceful world. He invited them to become informed and vocal against nuclear proliferation and asked them to reflect on how nuclear weapons pose a threat to what is most precious in life.

Together with Ambassador Bonzanini, a young Japanese woman from Hiroshima, Yumi Sato, joined the OPANAL delegation. Mrs. Sato is an intern at OPANAL and is the granddaughter of a female survivor of the Hiroshima atomic bomb. She is in her final semester of her Master's degree in Nonproliferation and Terrorism Studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California. She said that young people in both Japan and Latin America have a similar opinion about eliminating nuclear weapons in the future and said she was happy to be living in Mexico with young contemporaries her age.

The exhibition 'Everything you treasure for a world free of nuclear weapons' will continue to be presented in various universities and public places. The director of Soka Gakkai Mexico, Nereo Ordaz, noted that they will soon also present an exhibition on sustainability and the environment in various Mexican educational places.

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