

# The Nuclear Weapons and the Disaster Ahead: A Brief History of Nuclear Weapon States Live from the Nuclear Arms Racecourse

This article tries to explain the nuclear disarmament initiatives by both nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states across the globe. Also, it displays how nuclear states on one side upgrade their nuclear arsenals and on the other side vociferously spoke for the nuclear disarmament. This study also highlights how non-nuclear weapon states went nuclear after the implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Additionally, this study shows how nukes will be destructive if exchanged presently by the nuclear states which are much destructive than the bombs dropped on Japan by the United States in 1945.

## Introduction

Arms control is a term for international restrictions upon the development, production, stockpiling, proliferation and usage of small arms, conventional weapons, and weapons of mass destruction. Arms control is typically exercised through the use of diplomacy which seeks to impose such limitations upon consenting participants through international treaties and agreements, although it may also comprise efforts by a nation or group of nations to enforce limitations upon a non-consenting country. Whereas Disarmament is the act of reducing, limiting, or abolishing weapons. Disarmament generally refers to a country's military or specific type of weaponry. Disarmament is often taken to mean total elimination of weapons of mass destruction, such as nuclear arms. A global halt to nuclear weapons testing was first proposed in 1954 by Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru as a step towards ending the nuclear arms race and preventing nuclear proliferation. A ban on nuclear testing has been a key national security objective of the United States since the late-1950s, when United States President Dwight D. Eisenhower initiated US-UK-USSR comprehensive test ban negotiations.

Nine countries together possess around 15,000 nuclear weapons. The United States and Russia maintain roughly 1,800 of their nuclear weapons on high-alert status – ready to be launched within minutes of a warning. Most are many times more powerful than the atomic bombs dropped on Japan in 1945. A single nuclear warhead, if detonated on a large city, could kill millions of people, with the effects persisting for decades.

The failure of the nuclear powers to disarm has heightened the risk that other countries might acquire nuclear weapons. The only guarantee against the spread and use of nuclear weapons is to eliminate them without delay. Although the leaders of some nuclear-armed nations have expressed their vision for a nuclear-weapon-free world, they have failed to develop any detailed plans to eliminate their arsenals and are modernizing them.

## Nuclear Disarmament Initiatives

The initiatives for disarmament was laid before the second world war or nuclear explosions. For instance, in February 1932, the League of Nations Disarmament Conference began at Geneva. Sixty countries took part, including the USA and the Soviet Union. The League wanted all countries to give up aggression. ... Hitler withdrew from the Disarmament Conference and also from the League of Nations in October 1933. The failure of the League of Nations culminated into the deadly second world war. It also payed way to states to denote nuclear weapons in order to become super power, however, resulted into the thousands of deaths when atomic bombs were dropped on Japan without any warning.

The first nuclear explosion was conducted by the United States in New Mexico on 16 July 1945. Not three weeks later, the world changed. On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. It killed or wounded nearly 130,000 people. Three days later, the United States bombed Nagasaki. Of the 286, 00 people living there at the time of the blast, 74,000 were killed and another 75,000 sustained severe injuries. Japan agreed to an unconditional surrender on August 14, 1945; it also resulted in the end of World War II.

In subsequent years, the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom conducted several nuclear weapons tests. These nuclear weapon tests worried many newly emerging states like India. In 1954, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru called for a ban on nuclear testing. It was the first large-scale initiative to ban using nuclear technology for mass destruction. In 1958, nearly 10,000 scientists presented to United Nations Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold a petition that begged, "We deem it imperative that immediate action be taken to effect an international agreement to stop testing of all nuclear weapons." However, France exploded its first nuclear device in 1960 and China entered the "nuclear arms club" in October 1964 when it conducted its first nuclear test.

Before Chinese nuclear explosion, on 5 August 1963, representatives of the United States, Soviet Union and Great Britain signed the Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which prohibited the testing of nuclear weapons in outer space, underwater or in the atmosphere. Between 1962-1963, President John F. Kennedy pursued comprehensive test ban talks with Russia, but the two sides could not agree on the number of on-site inspections. Instead, the two sides agreed to the Limited Test Ban Treaty, which prohibits nuclear test explosions in the atmosphere, outer space, and underwater. Since the late-1960s, the conclusion of a comprehensive ban against nuclear testing has also been understood to be an essential part of the nuclear weapon states' commitment to fulfill their nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) Article VI nuclear disarmament commitments.

Soon after the Chinese entry in the nuclear club, the United States, Soviet Union and some sixty other countries signed a treaty to seek the end of the nuclear arms race and promote disarmament on July 1, 1968. The treaty bars nuclear weapons states from propagating weapons to other states and prohibit states without nuclear weapons to develop or acquire nuclear arsenal. It permits the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. It entered into force in 1970 and was extended indefinitely and unconditionally on May 11, 1995.

However, in 1974, India conducted its first nuclear test: a subterranean explosion of a nuclear device (not weapon). India declared it to be a "peaceful" test, but it announced to the world that India had the scientific know-how to build a bomb. Many experts argue that the nuclear explosion was military in character. India did not sign the NPT on the basis of discriminatory in nature. At that time, the five declared nuclear weapons states were the USA, USSR, the UK, France, and China.

President Jimmy Carter again sought to negotiate a comprehensive test ban treaty with Russia from 1977-1980, but that effort also fell short as U.S.-Soviet relations soured after Moscow's invasion of Afghanistan. In 1991, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev announced a unilateral nuclear test moratorium. Later that year, legislation was introduced in the U.S. Congress for a reciprocal test moratorium. The legislation, which became law in 1992, mandated a 9-month moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions. In July 1993, President Bill Clinton decided to extend the U.S. test moratorium.

During this period, North Korea was dreaming to went nuclear. In December, 1986, the South Pacific Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone was put into effect. American and North Korean delegations met in Geneva in autumn 1994 to establish a framework to resolve nuclear issues in the Korean peninsula. Under the agreement, North Korea would sign a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in exchange for U.S. support in building safe nuclear energy facilities and formal assurance against the threat or use of nuclear weapons by the U.S. against North Korea. Both sides agreed to take steps towards better political and economic relations. In subsequent years, South Korea and Japan have invested billions to help build safe nuclear energy plants in North Korea. However, by 2003, North Korea has cancelled this and all other international agreements on non-proliferation.

The United Nations on December 12, 1995, decreed an immediate ban on all nuclear testing and urged disarmament with the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. Later that month, ten Southeast Asian countries signed the Bangkok Treaty, establishing the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. In spring 1996, 43 African nations sign the Pelindaba Treaty establishing the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. From 1994-96, the world's nations came together to negotiate the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which prohibits all nuclear test explosions and is intended to help curb the spread of nuclear weapons and impede nuclear arms competition. On September 10, 1996, the United Nations, in a landslide vote, adopted

the CTBT and two weeks later, the United States was the first to sign it. The US Senate, however, rejected the treaty three years later.

It was apparent due to the flawed policies of the declared nuclear states, new states which happen to be underdeveloped also went nuclear proclaiming several reasons. For instance, on 11 May 1998, India shocked the world by exploding three nuclear devices amounting to about six times the destructive power of the American bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. The next day, it tested two more nuclear explosions. The world was stunned when Pakistan responded with six nuclear arsenal tests of its own.

World leaders admonished the two long-time adversaries in breaking the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Both India and Pakistan, however, rejected to sign the CTBT in 1996 due to discriminatory nature. India states that the treaty like NPT did not talk about the vertical proliferation, it allows the declared nuclear states to hold and upgrade their nuclear arsenals. Interestingly, the U.S. imposed strict economic sanctions against both countries and lobbied for the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and other countries to do the same. The sanctions were lifted in 2001 when the U.S. needed Pakistan and India's support to fight al Qaeda and other terrorist cells in Afghanistan.

In 1998, North Korea alarmed Japan by test-firing a medium range-missile (without weapons) over the Japanese mainland. The missile's apparent range, some 1,000 kilometers or 600 miles, meant that any part of Japan—and by default any part of South Korea—was within range of North Korean weaponry. Japan is the only country ever to have been attacked by nuclear weapons and anti-nuclear sentiment runs particularly deep.

In 2002, American President George W. Bush named Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as the Axis of Evil (Rogue state), in part due to U.S. suspicions of those countries having weapons of mass destruction. Later that year, unofficial reports suggest that North Korea has confirmed the existence of nuclear arsenals, and intelligence reports indicate that the North Korea might have enough plutonium to build five or six nuclear bombs by May 2003.

On October 9, 2006, North Korea tested a nuclear weapon with the approximated power of the Hiroshima bomb. North Korea announced to the world that it has become the world's eighth nuclear weapons state. Its missiles have the range to hit targets in South Korea, Japan as well as U.S., Chinese, and Russian territories. The United States is the only known country to have missiles with range to attack any target on earth, but over thirty countries have unmanned planes that are undetected by missile defense systems, and can carry nuclear, biological or other weapons of mass destruction.

Currently nine states possess nuclear warheads and are busy in upgrading the nuclear arsenals for security, power, status, and pride. All the initiatives for nuclear disarmament were futile in nature which eventually culminated into proliferation of nukes.

**List of the Nuclear Haves in the World**

COUNTRY	NUCLEAR PROGRAMME	SIZE OF ARSENAL
United States	The first country to develop nuclear weapons and the only country to have used them in war. It spends more on its nuclear arsenal than all other countries combined.	6,800 warheads
Russia	The second country to develop nuclear weapons. It has the largest arsenal of any country and is investing heavily in the modernization of its warheads and delivery systems.	7,000 warheads
United Kingdom	It maintains a fleet of four nuclear-armed submarines in Scotland, each carrying 16 Trident missiles. Its parliament voted in 2016 to overhaul its nuclear forces.	215 warheads
France	Most of its nuclear warheads are deployed on submarines equipped with M45 and M51 missiles. One boat is on patrol at all times. Some warheads are also deliverable by aircraft.	300 warheads
China	It has a much smaller arsenal than the US and Russia. Its warheads are deliverable by air, land and sea. It appears to be increasing the size of its arsenal at a slow pace.	270 warheads
India	It developed nuclear weapons in breach of non-proliferation commitments. It is increasing the size of its nuclear arsenal and enhancing its delivery capabilities.	110–120 warheads
Pakistan	It is making substantial improvements to its nuclear arsenal and associated infrastructure. It has increased the size of its nuclear arsenal in recent years.	120-130 warheads
Israel	It has a policy of ambiguity in relation to its nuclear arsenal, neither confirming nor denying its existence. As a result, there is little public information or debate about it.	80 warheads
North Korea	It has a fledgling nuclear weapons programme. Its arsenal probably comprises fewer than 10 warheads. It is not clear whether it has the capability to deliver them.	10 warheads
Total		14,900 warheads

**Nations and Category, they Fall in Terms of Nuclear Weapons**

Nations with nuclear weapons	United States, Russia, Britain, France, China, Israel, India, Pakistan, North Korea
Nations hosting nuclear weapons	Belgium, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Turkey
Nations endorsing nuclear weapons	Albania, Australia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Norway,

Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain (plus the five host nations)
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### Consequences of a Nuclear War

Nuclear explosions produce both immediate and delayed destructive effects. Blast, thermal radiation, and prompt ionizing radiation cause significant destruction within seconds or minutes of a nuclear detonation. The delayed effects, such as radioactive fallout and other environmental effects, inflict damage over an extended period ranging from hours to years. Recent scientific studies have found that a war fought with the deployed U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals would leave Earth virtually uninhabitable.

In fact, NASA computer models have shown that even a “successful” first strike by Washington or Moscow would inflict catastrophic environmental damage that would make agriculture impossible and cause mass starvation. Similarly, in the January 2010 edition of Scientific American, Alan Roebuck and Brian Ton, the foremost experts on the climatic impact of nuclear war, warn that the environmental consequences of a “regional” nuclear war fought between India and Pakistan would cause a global famine that could kill one billion people. Roebuck and Ton predict that the detonation of 100 15-kiloton nuclear weapons in Indian and Pakistani megacities would create urban firestorms that would loft 5 million tons of thick, black smoke above cloud level, which would engulf the entire planet within 10 days. Because the smoke couldn't be rained out, it would remain in the stratosphere for at least a decade and have profoundly disruptive effects. Specifically, the smoke layer would heat the upper atmosphere, and cause massive destruction of protective stratospheric ozone, while simultaneously blocking warming sunlight and creating Ice Age weather conditions on Earth.

### Conclusion

The study finds that nuclear weapons are regarded as an important tool for nuclear deterrence, however, nukes failed to provide total security to nuclear states. The efforts for nuclear disarmament initiatives at the global level were discriminatory in nature that is why few states went nuclear despite that they were economically weak. The study concludes that nuclear disarmament initiatives should be not biased and efforts should be made to focus both on vertical and horizontal proliferation. It also understands that nuclear war might happen due to unresolved crisis between the nuclear states which would end with nuclear winter.

### Bio

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