

Subject: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Monday, November 9, 2009 10:28:52 PM GMT

Last modified date: Monday, November 9, 2009 10:28:52 PM GMT

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Author: Anonymous

Date: Tuesday, November 4, 2008 12:12:15 PM GMT

Subject: Week 7

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*TARGET IRAN: THE TRUTH
ABOUT THE WHITE HOUSE'S PLANS
FOR REGIME CHANGE*

Scott Ritter

*(New York: Nation Books, 2006),
228 pages.*

Scott Ritter, the outspoken UN weapons inspector who achieved notoriety in Iraq in the 1990s, examines the striking similarities between the United States' policy toward Saddam's Iraq and revolutionary Iran. His book Target Iran: The Truth About the White House's Plans for Regime Change brings to light the attempts by the United States and Israel to prove to the international community that Iran is seeking to acquire nuclear weapons.

Ritter succeeds tremendously in his fanatical attention to the facts: Iran is seeking nuclear power, not nuclear weapons; Iran is in compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; the United States' repeated attempts to prevent Iran from seeking nuclear power are not in accordance with international law; Iran has submitted to intrusive and vigorous inspections at the hands of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and despite a few technical discrepancies mainly regarding procurement, Iran has come out clean.

It is in the conclusion where Ritter's story is most poignant. He critically and convincingly blames the Israel Lobby for misrepresenting facts, which may endanger American lives, and points out the implausibility of a U.S.-led war against Iran, Ritter successfully demonstrates that the United States is "unable to disassociate a policy of regime change with a policy of non-proliferation." Because Iran is determined to acquire nuclear energy and the United States is determined to prevent this eventuality, Ritter concludes that the only way to avoid conflict is for the American public to speak out.

The book has a number of drawbacks. Ritter largely ignores the issues of human rights, democracy and terrorism as they relate to the nuclear debate. Moreover, with Ritter's political-thriller style of writing, the message tends to get lost in the minutia of countless anecdotes and vignettes surrounding the issue.

Despite this, the subject of the book is an important one, and the reader is presented with a factual and objective background to the issue.

Joe Speicher

To Ritter's courageous and sober analysis I have the following to add:

The best deterrence for Iran's nuclear ambitions is a binding promise that the US will not attack Iran directly or via a proxy like Israel. The only deterrence for any state's future nuclear ambitions is a concrete deadline for the nuclear disarmament of all existing nuclear powers: US, Russia, France, China, Britain, Israel, India and Pakistan.

The existing global norms against nuclear proliferation are made by nuclear states and have therefore no moral validity. Nuclear powers are saying to those who aspire to become nuclear powers themselves – whether out of fear, self-respect, or aggressive intent – ‘do not build nuclear weapons since that is a right and responsibility we reserve for ourselves’. And while they preach nuclear non-proliferation they neither make credible efforts to dismantle their nuclear arsenals nor to stop updating their nuclear weapons technology.

Is there any wonder that nuclear non-proliferation efforts have not worked in the case of India, Pakistan and now Iran!

Kevin

Subject: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

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Author: [N. Wright](#)

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Posted date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 10:36:36 AM GMT

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Total views: 27 **Your views:** 11

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Is there any wonder that nuclear non-proliferation efforts have not worked in the case of India, Pakistan and now Iran!

Kevin

Hi Kevin,

It is difficult to argue with much of this. Two points spring to mind from what you have written, though.

The first is the **oft-forgotten positive stories** of Brazil and South Africa which have both had the opportunity to develop nuclear weapons programmes, but eschewed these. In both cases we could certainly argue that this enhanced their moral standing and authority in the world, although it would be difficult to separate this from other variables, such as the moral authority of leaders such as Presidents Lula and Mandela. Should

we get into a serious international discussion on nuclear disarmament as President Obama seems genuinely to want to, it will be interesting to see how weighty the opinions of these two states are.

The second is a **question** which is difficult to answer but is designed to stimulate further thought on this. The "genie" of nuclear weapons is very much out of the bottle - and what has been learned cannot be "unlearned". Even if major powers such as the US, Russia, China etc did all decide to eliminate their nuclear weapons stock-piles, the knowledge of the power such weapons could bring - especially for smaller and potential "rogue" states (I use this term advisedly) - will surely mean that it will always be an attractive option. How do we address this?

Moreover, surely the danger is not of a state-to-state nuclear exchange between the Americas and Russias of the world, but of much lower-level usage. A nightmare scenario, for example, might see Pakistan and India using these weapons. How does the rest of the world intervene - which they surely have to?

I look forward to your thoughts,

Nick

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 5:25:39 AM GMT

Last modified date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 5:25:39 AM GMT

Total views: 17 **Your views:** 6

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Hi Nick,

This addresses your first point.

Both Lula and Mandela have deservedly carved themselves into the history books and brought much credit and prestige to their nations. In behind-the-scenes negotiations with aspiring nuclear nations, I am certain that Brazil and South Africa are often invoked as examples to follow. However, their choice for peace will not have the same impact as that of a superpower since they do not feature large (though increasingly important) in international relations and have either never been more than incipient (South Africa) or aspiring (Brazil) nuclear powers.

The scenario I contemplated works best if the United States makes the first move towards nuclear disarmament. This is so for several reasons: (1) it is the first nuclear power, (2) it possesses the most and the most lethal nuclear heads, (3) it is the only nation to have ever used nuclear weapons (and to have used them on non-military targets and dense civilian population centres, i.e. Hiroshima and Nagasaki), (4) it is the most important and aggressive international player, (5) it is the only nation that continues to advance its nuclear technology and weaponization even though it is far in the lead, (6) it has the most mobile and the most widespread nuclear arsenal through its dominant fleet of submarines, (7) it has the most explicit intent to use nuclear weapons if necessary, (8) it is the only nation that uses its nuclear prowess to affect geopolitical outcomes in places far away from home and without being actually threatened by aggressive intent, be it conventional, nuclear or otherwise, (9) it is the most vociferous advocate for peace and freedom, (10) it is the only nuclear power that has covert (with Israel) and overt (with India) military programmes of nuclear technology assistance and is therefore the only “legal” proliferator of nuclear weapons.

Russia and China, the second and third most powerful nuclear states meet few of the above criteria and their unilateral disarmament would therefore have a lesser global impact than that of the US. The unilateral disarmament of France and Britain would have an even smaller international impact than that of Russia and China. Last, Pakistan and India would only affect their region, while North Korea would only elicit a global sigh of relief.

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Author: [N. Wright](#)

Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:01:57 PM GMT

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Kevin

Hi Kevin,

Some interesting points here, but I want to take issue with you on a few of them. You wrote:

(4) it is the most important and aggressive international player

Whilst it may be the most important, I think characterizing it as the most aggressive is deeply problematic. There are a number of other countries that are more overtly aggressive. A case in point is the most obvious: North Korea. This country has been perhaps more overt than any other about its willingness to use force (potentially nuclear) if it does not get what it wants - although what that may be remains unclear.

(5) it is the only nation that continues to advance its nuclear technology and weaponization even though it is far in the lead

Again, you ignore other states: Russia, China India, Pakistan, France, etc, etc - all the nuclear states will be working to maintain and upgrade their nuclear technology.

(7) it has the most explicit intent to use nuclear weapons if necessary

This needs to be qualified as I can think of other states that have made their intentions pretty clear as well.

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How? Where?

My point is that it is far too simple to scape-goat the USA in the debate on nuclear proliferation. Whilst I fully agree with you that gestures it makes in regard to nuclear disarmament will have far more influence than those of other states, I would also suggest that it remains far less likely to use nuclear weapons than a number of other states, particularly the smaller ones.

Over the last few years the notion that if only the USA changes then everything will be alright has been far too prevalent in recent years, whether it be in terms of climate change, the international criminal court, nuclear proliferation, etc, etc. It allows the rest of us - whether in Europe, Russia, Asia or wherever - to avoid asking hard questions of ourselves and our own governments, and ultimately does the international system no favours.

Food for thought, I hope!

Nick

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Friday, November 13, 2009 3:38:16 PM GMT

Last modified date: Friday, November 13, 2009 3:38:16 PM GMT

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Food for thought, I hope!

Nick

Hi Nick,

I will try to substantiate my statements one by one. Please do keep in mind that I am having a very busy week and I am running on fumes, so to say.

Here is a good exposition of why I have stated that "**the US has the most explicit intent to use nuclear weapons if necessary**". The excerpt comes from Andy Butfoy's "Washington's Apparent Readiness to Start Nuclear War" (Survival, Vol. 50, no. 5, Oct/Nov. 2008).

"In 2002 US President George W. Bush suggested it was right to develop plans to strike Syria with nuclear weapons.¹ Early the following year US officials reportedly considered the use of nuclear weapons against Iraq; despite the subsequent controversy the government refused to rule out the possibility. In 2004 General John Abizaid, head of US Central Command, made an implied threat to use nuclear weapons against Iran if it attempted to exploit events while US forces appeared stretched in Iraq and Afghanistan.³ In 2006 Bush made a similar threat in the context of Tehran's evolving nuclear programme; 4 at the same time, it was reported US officials were examining how this threat might be made operational.⁵ Also in 2006, the United States was the only country out of over 170 to vote 'no' to a UN proposal to develop legal measures 'to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons'.⁶ Then, in 2007, Bush suggested Tehran's efforts at uranium enrichment could lead the United States into 'World War Three'.⁷

None of this meant US officials were looking for an excuse to trigger a nuclear conflagration. But the reports underlined the fact that Washington's nuclear-weapons strategy stretched beyond the idea of 'central

deterrence', or the deterrence of nuclear attacks on the US homeland. The suggestion that the United States could launch a nuclear attack amounted to a latent threat to escalate crises in regions such as East Asia and the Middle East. US officials seemed to be asserting a right and readiness to transform a future regional confrontation into a nuclear war.

To be sure, many informed observers found the fuss surrounding Washington's supposed nuclear recklessness almost routine, and reminiscent of previous false alarms. After all, previous US administrations had been asked by foreign governments and journalists to rule out the option of starting a nuclear conflict many times before, and had generally refused to do so, believing the first-use option vital to national security, strategically useful, beneficial for world order and legitimate.

But Washington's first-use stance was supposedly constrained by 'negative security assurances' (NSAs). NSAs are agreements not to attack other states, and are closely associated with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Non-nuclear-weapons members of the NPT want clear NSAs protecting them from the brandishing of nuclear weapons by the officially privileged members of the nuclear club as recognised by the treaty (the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France and China). The idea is that this club ought not to preach nuclear abstinence to others while at the same time trying to get leverage from their own weapons. Over the years, international support of the NSA framework has been repeatedly reaffirmed, but Washington has shown increasing reluctance to see its strategy tied down by this sort of agreement and has advocated relatively flexible NSAs, which contain significant get-out clauses.

...Not only does resistance to stronger NSAs appear almost institutionalised in Washington, but the incoming administration will likely continue to face the sort of strategic challenges that have persistently held the United States back from ruling out first-use options."

The article is worth reading in its entirety and I highly recommend it to my fellow students.

Kevin

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Friday, November 13, 2009 4:15:30 PM GMT

Last modified date: Friday, November 13, 2009 4:15:30 PM GMT

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Author: N. Wright

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:01:57 PM GMT

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Hi Kevin,

Some interesting points here, but I want to take issue with you on a few of them. You wrote:

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Whilst it may be the most important, I think characterizing it as the most aggressive is deeply problematic. There are a number of other countries that are more overtly aggressive. A case in point is the most obvious: North Korea. This country has been perhaps more overt than any other about its willingness to use force (potentially nuclear) if it does not get what it wants - although what that may be remains unclear.

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Again, you ignore other states: Russia, China India, Pakistan, France, etc, etc - all the nuclear states will be working to maintain and upgrade their nuclear technology.

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Over the last few years the notion that if only the USA changes then everything will be alright has been far too prevalent in recent years, whether it be in terms of climate change, the international criminal court, nuclear proliferation, etc, etc. It allows the rest of us - whether in Europe, Russia, Asia or wherever - to avoid asking hard questions of ourselves and our own governments, and ultimately does the international system no favours.

Food for thought, I hope!

Nick

Hi Nick,

The following is to substantiate my statement that “the US is the most important and aggressive international player” to which you took issue with by countering that “other countries are more overtly aggressive”.

North Korea is like a dog that barks but does not bite. The US barks loud and bites hard. North Korea has yet to invade any country or make use of its meagre nuclear arsenal. The US has invaded innumerable countries and is the only country to date to have used its nuclear weapons and to have done so not once but twice. What North Korea wants is oil and food since it is unable to keep its people warm or feed them. It uses its nuclear bombs as leverage to win concessions from the West that are vital to the survival of its doomed regime and system.

To keep things in perspective, see the following list of countries the US has invaded since 1890 and as a consequence of which Turkish newspaper have urged that the United States be listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the Country with the Most Foreign Interventions (see <http://academic.evergreen.edu/g/grossmaz/interventions.html>.)

The length of the list is truly mindboggling.

No other country in the world comes even close to matching America's aggressiveness and disregard for national sovereignty and political self-determination.

Kevin

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Nick

Hi Nick,

In regards to point 8, namely that the US "is the only nation that uses its nuclear prowess to affect geopolitical outcomes in places far away from home and without being actually threatened by aggressive intent, be it conventional, nuclear or otherwise", I once again refer everyone to Andy Butfoy's article.

Butfoy identifies the following countries the US has recently implicitly or explicitly threatened with nuclear attack: Syria, Iraq, and Iran. For a history of America's use of the nuclear threat, please read Butfoy's entire article.

What makes America's nuclear threat particularly dangerous is the country's history of aggression, its warped sense of national identity and mission, its dependence on the industrial-military establishment for economic wellbeing, its dogmatic policies and their disturbing religious undertones, its recent abrogation of the separation of church and state (non-explicit but real), its proselytizing zeal to reform the world and remake in America's image (God forbid!), its Bible thumping evangelical populace and their widespread belief in and crave for Armageddon, etc.

An interesting article in this respect can be found at
<http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1162/wopj.2009.26.3.115?cookieSet=1>.

Kevin

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Over the last few years the notion that if only the USA changes then everything will be alright has been far too prevalent in recent years, whether it be in terms of climate change, the international criminal court, nuclear proliferation, etc, etc. It allows the rest of us - whether in Europe, Russia, Asia or wherever - to avoid asking hard questions of ourselves and our own governments, and ultimately does the international system no favours.

Food for thought, I hope!

Nick

Hi Nick,

I hope you are right in stating that the US is the least likely to use its nuclear weapons. Having live in Canada since 1985 and witnessed America's steady slip towards extremism and arrogance, I do not share your optimism. Its proselytizing tendencies, fanatical sense of mission, self-awarded title as leader of the free world, militarization and increasingly rigid and repressive social controls do not bode well. Having grown up in a totalitarian country - Ceausescu's Romania - I know decay when I see it; and the US reeks of decay almost as badly as Romania when I left it in 1981. I have great hope that Obama and the liberal 50% of the country can pull the US out of the hole it has dug itself into under the Republican leadership goaded by the evangelical half of the nation.

We Canadians - and I take the liberty of referring to myself as Canadian in this case because my view on the US is shared by over 90% of Canadians - know the US best and we fear it and dislike it equally. Although firmly in America's sphere of influence and culturally very close, we know the US as a psychotic nation, given to excesses, delusions of grandeur, and utterly devoid of social conscience. America is ruled entirely by the profit and power motives and the liberty and freedom face it shows to the world is nothing more than a smoke screen.

If/when its brutal capitalist system crumbles and the nation starts to disintegrate, its nuclear arsenal will be as unsafe and available to misuse as Iran's or North Korea's. We should not delude ourselves by the notion that America is any more stable than any other nation and that therefore its nuclear arsenal will be safe in perpetuity. History has shown us that no country is immortal, that no empire escapes decay, and that peace is temporary; all of which are good reasons to demand that our leaders dismantle nuclear weapons.

Believing that deterrence will work forever is at best blindly idealistic and at worst irresponsibly credulous, especially when deterrence is preached and enforced by the world's worst nuclear practitioners who reserve rights for themselves they deny others. Justice is never the outcome of injustice, just as peace is never the outcome of aggression. The brand of deterrence currently practiced in the world has elements of both, injustice and aggression, which is why we should not see it as foolproof or accept it as adequate. Simply stated, it is neither nor.

Kevin

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Set Flag](#)

Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 4:10:14 AM GMT

Last modified date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 4:10:14 AM GMT

Total views: 6 **Your views:** 3

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Author: N. Wright

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:01:57 PM GMT

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Hi Kevin,

Some interesting points here, but I want to take issue with you on a few of them. You wrote:

[\(4\) it is the most important and aggressive international player](#)

Whilst it may be the most important, I think characterizing it as the most aggressive is deeply problematic. There are a number of other countries that are more overtly aggressive. A case in point is the most obvious: North Korea. This country has been perhaps more overt than any other about its willingness to use force (potentially nuclear) if it does not get what it wants - although what that may be remains unclear.

[\(5\) it is the only nation that continues to advance its nuclear technology and weaponization even though it is far in the lead](#)

Again, you ignore other states: Russia, China India, Pakistan, France, etc, etc - all the nuclear states will be working to maintain and upgrade their nuclear technology.

[\(7\) it has the most explicit intent to use nuclear weapons if necessary](#)

This needs to be qualified as I can think of other states that have made their intentions pretty clear as well.

[\(8\) it is the only nation that uses its nuclear prowess to affect geopolitical outcomes in places far away from home and without being actually threatened by aggressive intent, be it conventional, nuclear or otherwise.](#)

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Food for thought, I hope!

Nick

Hi Nick,

My statement that [“the US is the only nation that continues to advance its nuclear technology and weaponization even though it is far in the lead”](#) is where you caught me.

What I should have said – and thank you for taking me to task - is that America despite being far in the lead in nuclear weapons technology and destructive power, is still working on better and more destructive nuclear bombs.

The following excerpt from Wikipedia (see entry on ***Nuclear weapons and the United States***) makes my

point:

"During the presidency of George W. Bush, and especially after the 11 September terrorist attacks of 2001, rumors have circulated in major news sources that the U.S. has been considering design of new nuclear weapons ("bunker-busting nukes"), and potentially the resumption of nuclear testing for reasons of stockpile stewardship, and non-nuclear missile defense has received additional funding as well. Statements by the U.S. government in 2004, however, imply that by 2012 the arsenal will drop to around 5,500 total warheads.^[6] According to recent reports, much of that reduction was already accomplished by January 2008."

You are perfectly right in saying that all nuclear powers are working to maintain and upgrade their technology, but none of the others, with the exception of Russia perhaps, are nearly as advanced or as well armed as the US; and Russia has long ceased to pour money into nuclear weapons.

Of course, on this count, I am just conjecturing since the subject is highly classified in any country possessing nuclear weapons. The best I could offer, therefore, was a hopefully intelligent guess.

Kevin

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Set Flag](#)

Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 4:27:36 AM GMT

Last modified date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 4:27:36 AM GMT

Total views: 7 **Your views:** 4

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Author: N. Wright

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:01:57 PM GMT

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Food for thought, I hope!

Nick

Hi Nick,

The last paragraph of your reply is what caught my attention and captured my approval because there is so much truth and wisdom in it.

"Over the last few years the notion that if only the USA changes then everything will be alright has been far too prevalent in recent years, whether it be in terms of climate change, the international criminal court, nuclear proliferation, etc, etc. It allows the rest of us - whether in Europe, Russia, Asia or wherever - to avoid asking hard questions of ourselves and our own governments, and ultimately does the international system no favours."

I cannot begin to tell you how lamentable I find the behaviour of our countries (and by that I mean the other Western nations); the only exception here being possibly France. In declaring themselves willing to follow America's lead, they hide in its shadow to benefit when things go well and to run in the opposite direction when things go sour.

I believe our nations would be well advised to explicitly declare themselves in charge of their own destiny and to overtly decouple themselves from American leadership. The time is now.

Every nation must speak loudly and clearly in the name of its own people and in its own voice. Every nation has something valuable and original to contribute and in not doing so it does the world a disservice by allowing it to be painted with fewer brushes.

The US has run out of ideas and the rest better come up with ideas and initiatives of their own.

Kevin

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 6:53:26 AM GMT

Last modified date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 6:53:26 AM GMT

Total views: 18 **Your views:** 6

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Author: N. Wright

Date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 10:37:54 AM GMT

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Hi Kevin,

It is difficult to argue with much of this. Two points spring to mind from what you have written, though.

The first is the **oft-forgotten positive stories** of Brazil and South Africa which have both had the opportunity to develop nuclear weapons programmes, but eschewed these. In both cases we could certainly argue that this enhanced their moral standing and authority in the world, although it would be difficult to separate this from other variables, such as the moral authority of leaders such as Presidents Lula and Mandela. Should we get into a serious international discussion on nuclear disarmament as President Obama seems genuinely to want to, it will be interesting to see how weighty the opinions of these two states are.

The second is a **question** which is difficult to answer but is designed to stimulate further thought on this. The "genie" of nuclear weapons is very much out of the bottle - and what has been learned cannot be "unlearned". Even if major powers such as the US, Russia, China etc did all decide to eliminate their nuclear weapons stock-piles, the knowledge of the power such weapons could bring - especially for smaller and potential "rogue" states (I use this term advisedly) - will surely mean that it will always be an attractive option. How do we address this?

Moreover, surely the danger is not of a state-to-state nuclear exchange between the Americas and Russias of the world, but of much lower-level usage. A nightmare scenario, for example, might see Pakistan and India using these weapons. How does the rest of the world intervene - which they surely have to?

I look forward to your thoughts,

Nick

Hi Nick,

The following addresses your second point.

Global nuclear disarmament can only be accomplished within a global plan for peace. Here is the blueprint I envision.

Step 1:

US, Russia, China, Britain, France, Israel, Pakistan and India agree in principle to the following plan.

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Phase 2:

US and Russia commit to reduce their nuclear arsenals to the same level as China (c. 180 active nuclear warheads and 240 total warheads), and China in return agrees to comply fully with phase 3 (see Federation of American Scientists at <http://www.fas.org/>).

Phase 3:

US, Russia and China reduce their arsenals to 20 nuclear warheads each conditional upon the following:

Condition 1: Pakistan and India accept an independent Kashmir and UN military presence to ensure the integrity of its borders.

Condition 2: Israel and Palestine accept a two-state solution along the 1967 border and a divided Jerusalem as well as UN military presence along their shared border.

Condition 3: Britain, France and Israel duplicate the US/Russia/China phase 3 reduction.

Step 3:

All nuclear powers place control of their nuclear military facilities in the hands of a new nuclear entity – call it the Nuclear Council - made up of the six nuclear states already mentioned plus North Korea and Iran (which will inevitably be a nuclear power in a few years) and lend it the authority to possess a second key or code to every nuclear warhead in existence. They agree to the following:

1. The use of any nuclear warhead requires unanimous Nuclear Council approval in addition to declaration of intent from the host nation.
2. The Nuclear Council carries out a 50% reduction across the board.
3. The remaining nuclear warheads are preserved in perpetuity for unforeseeable circumstances (such as meteor destruction).
4. All new entrants to the nuclear club are inducted into the Nuclear Council and must accept the rights and responsibilities of membership.
5. The Nuclear Council must cease control of the weapons if or when there is a single global government.

A plan like the one I laid out can conceivably demonstrate that it is possible to realistically pursue idealistic goals.

Kevin

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Set Flag](#)

Author: [Sean LAWRENCE](#)

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Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 3:33:14 PM GMT

Last modified date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 3:33:14 PM GMT

Total views: 10 **Your views:** 4

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 6:53:26 AM GMT

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

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Kevin

Hi Kevin

I took the pleasure to peruse your plan for global nuclear disarmament, and I found it to be very well thought out. I am in total agreement regarding steps 1 and 3; however, I may have some reservations about step 2 and here's why. My issue with step 2 lies within phase 3 condition 2 which states "*Israel*

and Palestine accept a two-state solution along the 1967 border and a divided Jerusalem as well as UN military presence along their shared border". Due to history (Israel and Palestine), and the failures of Clinton and Bush to bring peace between these two rival states - civilisations, if you will, my view of Israel accepting condition 2 (as stated above) is rather bleak; be cognizant that though Hamas is willing to accept the 1967 boundaries, Hamas refuses to recognize Israel right to exist as a state. The latter is a paramount issue for Israel to accept this deal. In this light, the one-state solution (bi-national state) would not be practical either. Consequently, Obama continues his peace initiative concerning these two states. Nonetheless, the road map you have outlined for global nuclear disarmament is very impressive.

What do you think?

Sean

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 3:27:43 AM GMT

Last modified date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 3:27:43 AM GMT

Total views: 13 **Your views:** 4

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Author: Sean LAWRENCE

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 3:33:14 PM GMT

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Sean

Hi Sean,

I am in full agreement with you on the problematic nature of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It is certainly the most obstinate of all problems the world faces. In addition to Hamas' unwillingness to accept Israel, there is also Israel's unwillingness to stop building on Palestinian land or to accept the right of return the displaced Palestinians that are now spread throughout the world have according to international law.

However, given the small size of the two parties involved (Israel has only 7,5 million people while Palestine - West Bank and Gaza - has 4 million people), there is no reason why the international community should not be able to impose its will on them in light of the fact that their squabble threatens to destabilize the entire world (either by igniting a war of civilizations, which would see the US and Israel pitted against Islam; or by preventing the smooth flow of oil, which would bring the world to its knees).

What stands in the way of meaningful and firm action on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is, of course, the US. As long as the US acts solely in Israel's interests and stops vetoing any and all UN resolutions relating to Israel there will be no progress in the Middle East.

Of course, that will only happen when AIPAC is no longer allowed to use its money and influence to shape US policy or, alternatively, if J Street replaces AIPAC as the most influential Jewish lobby group in Washington. In the absence of this, the world could impose its will if it reforms the UN and dilutes the veto power of the Security Council members. If the UN is allowed to be a democratic organization, it will be very easy to pass a resolution that forces the leaders of Israel and Palestine to accept UN troops and the 1967 border.

Thank you for your input, Sean.

Kevin

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

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Author: [Sean LAWRENCE](#)

Posted date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 4:49:37 PM GMT

Last modified date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 4:49:37 PM GMT

Total views: 8 **Your views:** 4

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 3:27:43 AM GMT

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Thank you for your input, Sean.

Kevin

"If the UN is allowed to be a democratic organization, it will be very easy to pass a resolution that forces the leaders of Israel and Palestine to accept UN troops and the 1967 border".

Hi Kevin

I highlighted this from your posting, because I think its a fundamental issue in the international community if "objective international governance" is to take place for the mutual benefit off all players, especially regarding the Israeli - Palestinian conflict.

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 10:37:11 PM GMT

Last modified date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 10:37:11 PM GMT

Total views: 6 **Your views:** 3

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Author: Sean LAWRENCE

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Sean

Hi Sean,

I am preparing an answer to Nick that will address the issue of objective international governance. I hope to be able to find the time once everyone in my house goes to sleep, which is when I usually start working. Stay posted and let me know what you think if you shall find anything compelling in it.

Kevin

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

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Author: [N. Wright](#)

Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:12:13 PM GMT

Last modified date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:12:13 PM GMT

Total views: 11 **Your views:** 6

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 6:53:26 AM GMT

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Best wishes,

Nick

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Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Tuesday, November 17, 2009 2:22:32 PM GMT

Last modified date: Tuesday, November 17, 2009 2:22:32 PM GMT

Total views: 6 **Your views:** 3

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Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:12:13 PM GMT

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Nick

Hi Nick,

I just realized that I have missed answering your question. The phased plan for disarmament I have

presented turns nuclear weapons possession from an asset into a liability. Aspiring nuclear states will have no desire to go through the trouble of acquiring them if nuclear weapons can neither be used on others nor used to implicitly or explicitly threaten others.

Kevin

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

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Author: [P. WOJTAS](#)

Posted date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 6:01:48 PM GMT

Last modified date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 6:01:48 PM GMT

Total views: 22 **Your views:** 6

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Date: Monday, November 9, 2009 10:28:52 PM GMT

Subject: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

*TARGET IRAN: THE TRUTH
ABOUT THE WHITE HOUSE'S PLANS
FOR REGIME CHANGE*

Scott Ritter

*(New York: Nation Books, 2006),
228 pages.*

Scott Ritter, the outspoken UN weapons inspector who achieved notoriety in Iraq in the 1990s, examines the striking similarities between the United States' policy toward Saddam's Iraq and revolutionary Iran. His book Target Iran: The Truth About the White House's Plans for Regime Change brings to light the attempts by the United States and Israel to prove to the international community that Iran is seeking to acquire nuclear weapons.

Ritter succeeds tremendously in his fanatical attention to the facts: Iran is seeking nuclear power, not nuclear weapons; Iran is in compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; the United States' repeated attempts to prevent Iran from seeking nuclear power are not in accordance with international law; Iran has submitted to intrusive and vigorous inspections at the hands of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and despite a few technical discrepancies mainly regarding procurement, Iran has come out clean.

It is in the conclusion where Ritter's story is most poignant. He critically and convincingly blames the Israel Lobby for misrepresenting facts, which may endanger American lives, and points out the implausibility of a U.S.-led war against Iran, Ritter successfully demonstrates that the United States is "unable to disassociate a policy of regime change with a policy of non-proliferation." Because Iran is determined to acquire nuclear energy and the United States is determined to prevent this eventuality, Ritter concludes that the only way to avoid conflict is for the American public to speak out.

The book has a number of drawbacks. Ritter largely ignores the issues of human rights, democracy and terrorism as they relate to the nuclear debate. Moreover, with Ritter's political-thriller style of writing, the message tends to get lost in the minutia of countless anecdotes and vignettes surrounding the issue. Despite this, the subject of the book is an important one, and the reader is presented with a factual and objective background to the issue.

Joe Speicher

To Ritter's courageous and sober analysis I have the following to add:

The best deterrence for Iran's nuclear ambitions is a binding promise that the US will not attack Iran directly or via a proxy like Israel. The only deterrence for any state's future nuclear ambitions is a concrete deadline for the nuclear disarmament of all existing nuclear powers: US, Russia, France, China, Britain, Israel, India and Pakistan.

The existing global norms against nuclear proliferation are made by nuclear states and have therefore no moral validity. Nuclear powers are saying to those who aspire to become nuclear powers themselves – whether out of fear, self-respect, or aggressive intent – ‘do not build nuclear weapons since that is a right and responsibility we reserve for ourselves’. And while they preach nuclear non-proliferation they neither make credible efforts to dismantle their nuclear arsenals nor to stop updating their nuclear weapons technology.

Is there any wonder that nuclear non-proliferation efforts have not worked in the case of India,

Pakistan and now Iran!
Kevin

You have made a very good point here Kevin. I could not agree more. In my opinion, current perception on nuclear dealings is bizarre. On the one hand policy-makers call for piece and absolute disarmament. They preach the world on non-proliferation. The issue seems to be on the top of everybody's agenda. On the other hand, it resembles Orwell's "Animal Farm"; some are allowed to possess; others are not. I would not like to be misunderstood on that matter. I do not believe access to nuclear arsenal ought to be open on the principal of fairness. The message I am trying to convey is that there should be some other non-proliferation measures in place as the current ones seem to violate the principal of equality. In all fairness, as Kevin aptly stated the message is;" do not even try because it is not for you; we can have it but you just cannot". Is that sort of message justifiable?

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 7:09:03 AM GMT

Last modified date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 7:09:03 AM GMT

Total views: 19 **Your views:** 4

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Author: P. WOJTAS

Date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 6:01:48 PM GMT

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Hi Pawel,

First of all, welcome back. It's great to have your intelligent comments as food for thought.

What seems to me incomprehensible is the obdurate insistence on the part of the prevailing powers (now as throughout history) that norms which are devoid of moral authority should have any chance of ever being accepted and enforced. History provides innumerable lessons that those who attempt to impose rules devoid

of justice upon others are doing so at their own peril and with limited time.

A superior civilization prevails not because of brute power but because it is irresistibly attractive and measurably better at providing for its people and solving problems.

Kevin

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Subject: A response to Kevin's views of America

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Author: [N. Wright](#)

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Posted date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 1:00:06 PM

GMT

Last modified date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 1:00:06

PM GMT

Total views: 13 **Your views:** 8

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Hi Kevin,

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In terms of my personal views on the merits (or not of the United States), I think I would have to disagree with you however. Whilst there is much to legitimately criticise the US for in terms of its policies and how it interacts with the wider world - not least the terrifying prospect of a foreign policy informed by biblical prophecy! - the United States remains much more than simply the sum of its foreign policy actions.

What is both exciting and deeply frustrating about the US in equal measure is what it represents versus what it seems to be in practice. We could spend weeks alone debating the principles espoused by the Founding Fathers and what is done in the name of such principles. However, the fact remains that for almost 50 years US foreign policy was governed by the guiding principal of ending the subjugation of large parts of the world by communism and the USSR, and the fundamental lack of freedoms that brought. We can rightly debate

whether the substitution of one ideology (communism) for another (capitalism) has brought the benefits many at the time claimed - that is another matter, however.

It is too cynical and also intellectually unfair to focus only on the negatives, and dismiss the good as merely the propagation of a defunct and decaying ideology.

The United States is very far from being perfect, but I would rather have the leading power of the world be a democracy and governed by the principles of the rule of law and freedom of speech, than be an autocracy where notions of freedom are arbitrary and uncertain at best.

We may not like the US, but the alternatives seem to me to be far worse.

Best wishes,

Nick

Subject: A response to Kevin's views of America

Subject: RE: A response to Kevin's views of America

[Reply](#) [Quote](#) [Set Flag](#)

Author: Kevin GALALAE

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Posted date: Sunday, November 15, 2009 4:32:49 PM GMT

Last modified date: Sunday, November 15, 2009 4:32:49 PM GMT

Total views: 7 **Your views:** 3

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Author: N. Wright

Date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 1:00:06 PM GMT

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We may not like the US, but the alternatives seem to me to be far worse.

Best wishes,

Nick

Hi Nick,

I used to be of the same persuasion, but then the US crossed a line by allowing itself to torture human beings, to perform extrajudicial killings, to imprison minors, to imprison without charges and indefinitely, to kidnap citizens from other countries (rendition) and then clandestinely fly them to secret jails, to tap into citizens' phone lines, library records and credit histories, and to subject prisoners to indecent abuse as at Abu Ghraib where sodomizing defenceless people was the order of the day.

These are blatant violations of human dignity and hard-won civil liberties (too many millions have died to win those liberties and to ensure that governments treat citizens with dignity), local sovereignty and human rights (too many millions have died defending those inalienable rights), and bring the US at a par with the behaviour of the Eastern Bloc or worse. My father suffered 6 years of imprisonment and torture (and his torture was not nearly as nasty as the kind employed by CIA agents on Muslims; anyone for simulated drowning, aka water-boarding?) as a political prisoner in Romania and I am not about to tolerate the same behaviour here in the West by excusing it as being the imperfect application of perfect intentions (the same could then be said about the Soviet Union before its fall, about today's China, or indeed about any pariah state), for if that were to become the norm there is nowhere left to immigrate to for safety and dignity.

The US is not the best we have. Scandinavia, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and any western European country are much better at safeguarding democracy, the rule of law, and freedom of speech. We should not short-change our own countries because the US is bigger and flexes its muscles. More importantly, the time is ripe to look beyond national entities to advance the cause of liberty and freedom. International organizations are already much better situated to accomplish this and the US is standing in the way of the United Nations and multilateralism.

The baton of what the US represents has long been taken by the international organizations that govern the global system. They have run with it faster and further than the US has or could. Today's America is more of a hindrance than a vehicle for democracy (look at the Middle East for innumerable examples), the rule of law, and freedom of speech.

What is most disturbing about America's behaviour is that it does so in the name of the free world and I, as a citizen of the free world, resent this immensely. I for one want nothing to do with this sort of behaviour and as a citizen of the free world I am implicated by the US in behaviours that are despicable and reprehensible. In good conscience, I cannot accept this; for history and our children will take us to task for acquiescing.

Kevin

Subject: RE: A response to Kevin's views of America

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

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Author: [N. Wright](#)

Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:14:47 PM GMT

Last modified date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:14:47 PM GMT

Total views: 7 **Your views:** 2

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Author: P. WOJTAS

Date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 6:01:48 PM GMT

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

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Hi Pawel - I think the "Animal Farm" analogy is very apt.

Nick

Subject: RE: RE:How should the international community resolve the challenge posed by Iranian nuclear proliferation?

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Tuesday, November 10, 2009 5:50:14 AM GMT

Last modified date: Tuesday, November 10, 2009 5:50:14 AM GMT

Total views: 36 **Your views:** 8

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Author: Anonymous

Date: Tuesday, November 4, 2008 12:12:15 PM GMT

Subject: Week 7

Please hit the 'Reply' button to respond to this thread.

As things stand, the world's efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation amount to no more than

whistling in the wind.

Waltz is of the opinion that any and every state that acquires nuclear weapons becomes cautious by virtue of the awesome responsibility and reassuring peace of mind the power of nuclear weapons give them. He has history on his side when he states that “*if a country has nuclear weapons, it will not be attacked militarily in ways that threaten its manifestly vital interests.*” Furthermore, Iran has good reasons to acquire nuclear weapons, America’s aggression in Iraq, Bush’s axis of evil comment, and the region’s volatility being three of them. Given these circumstances, any responsible Iranian leader would try to acquire the nuclear weapons since only they can ensure their country’s security. If Iran acquires nuclear weapons, deterrence will keep them from using them, as it has kept every nuclear power. Waltz makes a good case and I agree with him wholeheartedly.

Sagan believes that “*proliferation fatalism*” (i.e., they will get nuclear weapons no matter what we do) and “*deterrence optimism*” (i.e., so what if they get nuclear weapons? deterrence will keep them from using them) is dangerous thinking since nuclear weapons are controlled by flawed individuals and fallible institutions and Iran is not a monolithic government like China and the Soviet Union, which means that it can easily lose control of the weapons. Sagan makes a good case and I agree with him wholeheartedly.

Since in a world with multiple states possessing nuclear weapons we have to hope deterrence works (Waltz’s view), or that the existing nuclear powers go to war to prevent newcomers to the nuclear club (Sagan’s implied view), I believe that the only truly sensible and foolproof solution is to ensure that no one has nuclear weapons, for only then will the international community have removed the incentive to acquire nuclear weapons and conferred upon its institutions of non-proliferation the moral authority to ensure that indeed no one acquires nuclear weapons. Furthermore, since nuclear weapons proliferate because technology is stolen or sold, the total absence of nuclear weapons will be the most effective method for the prevention of nuclear proliferation. This way, there will neither be an incentive nor the means to acquire nuclear weapons.

Let us imagine for a second what the world’s reaction would be if the United States were to unilaterally declare that it is dismantling its nuclear arsenal to promote peace and understanding in the world, to rid the world of the curse it has brought upon humanity, to ensure that no other nation but itself stain’s its conscience by repeating Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and that no generation will have to ever contemplate the use of such pure evil. America’s soft power would be magnified a thousand fold and the goodwill and trust it will engender will pull the entire world in its wake. And since soft power is the only power usable in the multilateral, interdependent, and borderless world we live in, all of humanity will want to become

American... and will have good reason to want to become American. Conversely, if China or Russia were to first take this step, then they would instantly become the only power to be reckoned with on earth.

This is what I believe. And I believe it wholeheartedly.

Kevin

(Source: Sagan, S. & K. N. Waltz, 'A Nuclear Iran: Promoting Stability or Courting Disaster?', *Journal of International Affairs*, March 2007.)

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

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Author: [P. WOJTAS](#)

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Posted date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 5:45:40 PM
GMT

Last modified date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 5:45:40
PM GMT

Total views: 24 **Your views:** 5

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I must say I totally agree with you on your stance regarding absolute absence of nuclear weapons. Having said that, I must stress that such a step is highly unlikely. I do not accept as true that major players will ever take it. Undeniably, such a move would make the nuclear dealings much more transparent and obvious yet I cannot envisage such a degree of trust among the states. Even if there was a genuine will to disarm, I suppose the lack of confidence in others would largely inhibit such a process. In practical terms, I just cannot imagine all key players proclaiming a resolution making them neutralize their "stocks". Even if that happens, I am convinced that covert programs will survive any way. One cannot "unlearn" the learnt lesson. Clearly, being in such a prominent club brings fruits; therefore I do not envisage full disarmament, be it overt or covert.

Pawel

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

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Author: [N. Wright](#)

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Posted date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 9:46:14 PM

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Last modified date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 9:46:14 PM GMT

Total views: 19 **Your views:** 6

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Pawel

Hi Pawel,

Given that the "ideal" is unlikely, how do we proceed in promoting non-proliferation. In this case the perfect is

very much the enemy of the good - so how do we achieve the good, would you say?

Nick

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

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Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 7:15:32 AM
GMT

Last modified date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 7:15:32
AM GMT

Total views: 17 **Your views:** 4

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Pawel

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Kevin

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

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Author: [P. WOJTAS](#)

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Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 4:08:18 PM
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Last modified date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 4:08:18

PM GMT

Total views: 14 Your views: 4

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Kevin

First of all, I must say your blueprint is remarkable. As I mentioned previously, I might be considered sceptic as to complete nuclear disarmament as I do not believe that states will trust one another enough to implement such a radical approach. As to the plan, as such, everything would depend on the first step where the most serious question would arise. "Would they agree?" The problem one faces at that stage is that all the mentioned countries follow different paths and have considerably different objectives, which derive from economic, military and cultural background. Thus, I am afraid reaching such an agreement would be somewhat challenging.

In my estimation, the likelihood of a complex plan encompassing a number of states being introduced is complicated to estimate. As much as I would like to witness how multi-state plans are put into practice, I do not envisage that to happen in the near future.

On assumption that the key players agree, I suppose such a step would undeniably reinforce the trust among the nuclear club, which is imperative to build a sustainable platform for non-proliferation. Should the US or Russia lead the path there might be a probability that other would follow the suit. Consequently, the chances of disarmament would be markedly increased; and only then could such complex endeavours be put into practise.

To summarize, I am of opinion that the preliminary phase is the most critical portion in the entire proposal of non-proliferation. As yet we have not seen a great deal of will to proceed with stock destruction as the sates are well aware how the fact of being in the "club" increases their significance in the international community.

In the absence of full disarmament prospect, I suppose one must concentrate upon effective management and control of the stocks in question. Most definitely, current bodies overseeing the arsenals ought to be reinforced and the rules and regulations governing today's nuclear reality must be altered to allow for comprehensive and thorough inspection and monitoring of nuclear arsenals. Of course, there must be measures taken to call for, at least, minimising the number of nuclear warheads and much more stringent controls must be exercised. I think only

the condition of inter-state symmetry can guarantee that WMD will not be used. I think perpetual deterrence, oddly enough, would be the most effective antidote. It has been working for over half a century so perhaps there is a system in this madness.

I am aware that I do not put forth any conclusive alternatives yet plainly speaking I cannot think of any plausible solutions. One must accept that we do not live in a black and white world so perhaps it is the high time we start to enjoy the grey colour?

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 3:53:02 AM
GMT

Last modified date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 3:53:02
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In my estimation, the likelihood of a complex plan encompassing a number of states being introduced is complicated to estimate. As much as I would like to witness how multi-state plans are put into practice, I do not envisage that to happen in the near future.

On assumption that the key players agree, I suppose such a step would undeniably reinforce the trust among the nuclear club, which is imperative to build a sustainable platform for non-proliferation. Should the US or Russia lead the path there might be a probability that other would follow the suit. Consequently, the chances of disarmament would be markedly increased; and only then could such complex endeavours be put into practise.

To summarize, I am of opinion that the preliminary phase is the most critical portion in the entire proposal of non-proliferation. As yet we have not seen a great deal of will to proceed with stock destruction as the states are well aware how the fact of being in the "club" increases their significance in the international community.

In the absence of full disarmament prospect, I suppose one must concentrate upon effective management and control of the stocks in question. Most definitely, current bodies overseeing the arsenals ought to be reinforced and the rules and regulations governing today's nuclear reality must be altered to allow for comprehensive and thorough inspection and monitoring of nuclear arsenals. Of course, there must be measures taken to call for, at least, minimising the number of nuclear warheads and much more stringent controls must be exercised. I think only the condition of inter-state symmetry can guarantee that WMD will not be used. I think perpetual deterrence, oddly enough, would be the most effective antidote. It has been working for over half a century so perhaps there is a system in this madness.

I am aware that I do not put forth any conclusive alternatives yet plainly speaking I cannot think of any plausible solutions. One must accept that we do not live in a black and white world so perhaps it is the high time we start to enjoy the grey colour?

Hi Pawel,

Thank you for your thorough analysis.

That initial agreement in principle would certainly be a monumental hurdle to overcome. Yet the most recent agreement between the US and Russia on stock reduction is promising. If the two can agree on reductions and carry them out (which they have done in the past), I don't see why China would not show the same willingness; and once the three superpowers are on the right track it won't be long before the others follow.

It seems to me that the more nuclear weapons one possesses and the longer a country has had to deal with the cost, security, storage and upkeep of its nuclear arsenal the more likely it will be to want to reduce that awesome burden and with it the risks to its citizens and to the world. Being a nuclear power is a heavy cross to carry.

The main strength of my plan is that it turns nuclear arms possession from an asset into a liability and that it does so gradually, in concert and while concomitantly addressing the conflicts that are most likely to trigger nuclear confrontation. Any nuclear disarmament plan, if it is to be worth the paper it is written on, must fulfill those three criteria. For who would want to possess nuclear weapons if they can neither use them nor threaten to use them?

Thank you for your input, Pawel.

Kevin

P.S. As a former citizen of a communist country, I am sick and tired of grey, both literally and figuratively. Aren't you?

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

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Author: [Sean LAWRENCE](#)

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Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 12:44:42 AM GMT

Last modified date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 12:44:42 AM GMT

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Date: Tuesday, November 10, 2009 5:50:14 AM GMT

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

As things stand, the world's efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation amount to no more than whistling in the wind.

Waltz is of the opinion that any and every state that acquires nuclear weapons becomes cautious by virtue of the awesome responsibility and reassuring peace of mind the power of nuclear weapons give them. He has history on his side when he states that "*if a country has nuclear weapons, it will not be attacked militarily in ways that threaten its manifestly vital interests.*" Furthermore, Iran has good reasons to acquire nuclear weapons, America's aggression in Iraq, Bush's axis of evil comment, and the region's volatility being three of them. Given these circumstances, any responsible Iranian leader would try to acquire the nuclear weapons since only they can ensure their country's security. If Iran acquires nuclear weapons, deterrence will keep them from using them, as it has kept every nuclear power. Waltz makes a good case and I agree with him wholeheartedly.

Sagan believes that "*proliferation fatalism*" (i.e., they will get nuclear weapons no matter what we do) and "*deterrence optimism*" (i.e., so what if they get nuclear weapons? deterrence will keep them from using them) is dangerous thinking since nuclear weapons are controlled by flawed individuals and fallible institutions and Iran is not a monolithic government like China and the Soviet Union, which means that it can easily lose control of the weapons. Sagan makes a good case and I agree with him wholeheartedly.

Since in a world with multiple states possessing nuclear weapons we have to hope deterrence works (Waltz's view), or that the existing nuclear powers go to war to prevent newcomers to the nuclear club (Sagan's implied view), I believe that the only truly sensible and foolproof solution is to ensure that no one has nuclear weapons, for only then will the international community have removed the incentive to acquire nuclear weapons and conferred upon its institutions of non-proliferation the moral authority to ensure that indeed no one acquires

nuclear weapons. Furthermore, since nuclear weapons proliferate because technology is stolen or sold, the total absence of nuclear weapons will be the most effective method for the prevention of nuclear proliferation. This way, there will neither be an incentive nor the means to acquire nuclear weapons.

Let us imagine for a second what the world's reaction would be if the United States were to unilaterally declare that it is dismantling its nuclear arsenal to promote peace and understanding in the world, to rid the world of the curse it has brought upon humanity, to ensure that no other nation but itself stain's its conscience by repeating Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and that no generation will have to ever contemplate the use of such pure evil. America's soft power would be magnified a thousand fold and the goodwill and trust it will engender will pull the entire world in its wake. And since soft power is the only power usable in the multilateral, interdependent, and borderless world we live in, all of humanity will want to become American... and will have good reason to want to become American. Conversely, if China or Russia were to first take this step, then they would instantly become the only power to be reckoned with on earth.

This is what I believe. And I believe it wholeheartedly.

Kevin

(Source: Sagan, S. & K. N. Waltz, 'A Nuclear Iran: Promoting Stability or Courting Disaster?', *Journal of International Affairs*, March 2007.)

Hello everyone

I concur with Nick, he mentioned the "genie of nuclear weapon is very much out of the bottle" ; therefore, I cannot support an idea that there can be "total absence of nuclear weapons". This implies a complete disarmament of all nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons ambitions as a preventative means of nuclear proliferation. Even in the face of soft-power - multilateralism , no country "wears its heart on its sleeves". Regarding arms control, the nuclear black market will be an attractive avenue for states to develop their nuclear arsenal. Certainly, I am not for WMD, but to be realistic, I would not put all of my cards on the table, I would hide one or two under the table in the event the need for deterrence arises. In light of all this, can there really be a perfect way to stop nuclear proliferation? Amongst the numerous treaties attempting curb WMD, there still exist a level of distrust among these nations. Therefore, the best means we have to deal with WMD is through multilateralism. In the case of Pakistan and India, as a case in point, "nuclear risk reduction centres need to be establish on the lines of the ones established between the US and the former Soviet Union.

Sean

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 7:27:15 AM GMT

Last modified date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 7:27:15 AM GMT

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Author: Sean LAWRENCE

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 12:44:42 AM GMT

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

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Sean

Hi Sean,

It's good to see you back.

Your comments are most sensible and I am in full agreement with you. It's great to dream though!

Perhaps it will take a nuclear confrontation (say between India and Pakistan or between Iran and Israel) before humanity realizes that being realistic is more dangerous than being idealistic.

Short of such an event to jolt us into believing in the impossible, your trust in multilateralism as deterrence is all we have.

I would very much like to hear if you believe that the phased plan I have presented in my reply to Nick has a chance of ever occurring. Your observations will surely better my reasoning.

Kevin

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

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Author: [Carla LIUZZO](#)

Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 8:15:40 AM

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Author: Sean LAWRENCE

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 12:44:42 AM GMT

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

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Sean

Hi all,

I'll dive in here and say I concur with Sean (and Nick's point). It is highly unlikely that the US will take the lead in disarmament without guarantees that all other nuclear weapons – that is weapons outside of their control- are destroyed, even then it is likely they will reserve the right to maintain some nuclear capacity. Since the US will never rest assured in a nuclear weapon free world, it is just not plausible that they would abandon the nuclear deterrence mechanism. The United States has not even signed the UN treaty banning the use of Landmines, indicating that while they don't use them right now they won't rule out using them in the future – this says much about the defensive logic of a superpower.

Kevin, I found your disarmament plan stimulating, I fear however there are too many conditions that would need to fall into place simultaneously for this to work. Not least the 'two state solution' which is now looking less and less feasible by the day. Israel - in my opinion – would be the last State to disarm. I agree Kevin though that this sort of idealist thinking is what's needed to move people in a new direction.

I would also add the fact that NPT maintains State's right to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes means the threat of moving from 'peaceful' to 'weapon' will always hang over our heads while the NPT is upheld. To use Nick's point the genie is well and truly out of the bottle!

So I think the debate moves more towards reductions in arsenals and safety technology. Or the 'clean needle' approach. There have been reductions made to the number of weapons since the height of the Cold War days – something like 23,000 weapons are estimated, with Russia having the largest stockpile (which is of greatest concern because these are likely aging Cold War weapons). Accident or misuse of nuclear weapons poses the largest danger, and while Waltz would argue that the responsibilities bestowed upon those with nuclear weapons urges great caution it is hard to believe there won't be more accidents or worse.

Carla

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

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Author: [N. Wright](#)

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Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:40:09 PM
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Author: Sean LAWRENCE

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 12:44:42 AM GMT

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

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Sean

I tend to agree with much of this, Sean. And reading it, I am reminded of Churchill's aphorism - "Jaw jaw is better than war war".

If the nuclear age has taught us nothing else, it is that the prospect of total annihilation forces even the most implacable foes to take pause and keep talking, however secretly.

The reality is that nuclear non-proliferation will never be about the total removal of nuclear weapons; it will be about maintaining the consensus - however fragile - that using them is beyond the pale. However irrational and difficult a government may be to deal with, it will always present a much less complex challenge than dealing with "non-state actors" who may seek to use them to pursue a cause or belief, whatever that may be. There will always be someone on the other side who will be willing to maintain the dialogue, however fractious.

Bleak as it may be seem, deterrence has worked - in the absence of anything better.

Thoughts, please.

Nick

Subject: RE: the nuclear solution to nuclear weapons

Subject: RE: Week 7 - Quiz

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Author: [Sean LAWRENCE](#)

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Posted date: Tuesday, November 10, 2009 11:00:00 PM

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Author: Anonymous

Date: Tuesday, November 4, 2008 12:12:15 PM GMT

Subject: Week 7

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Pop Quiz

1. Who is AQ Khan and why is he such a controversial figure?

A.Q Khan was a Pakistani national hero; he built Pakistan's uranium enrichment plant. In fact, he positioned Pakistan on par with India's nuclear capability; henceforth, the controversy surrounding him. In pursuit of national interest, under the then Prime minister Benazir Bhutto's directions, Khan began to smuggle nuclear technology: he smuggled stolen blue prints of a nuclear centrifuge from the Netherlands; he was arrested but released, all for national interest sakes. In addition to the above, he began selling nuclear technology to states identified as "rogue states" [Iran, North Korea and Libya] by the West - the US. Khan's nuclear black market, dubbed a "nuclear Wal-Mart" included China as a customer. The latter I would describe as an international relations migraine for the U.S. He is, indeed, a controversial figure.

2. When did India and Pakistan conduct nuclear weapons' tests?

India conducted its first nuclear weapons tests as far back as 18 May 1974 under the "Smiling Buddha" project; and most recently in 13 May 1998 under operation "Shakti". Both tests of course did not come without international condemnation; this includes Canada (Canada India Research U.S.) which supplied India with nuclear reactor though it was for benevolent use.

On the other hand, Pakistan conducted its first nuclear test 5 days after India's on 28 May 1998; in fact, PAEC reported that it conducted 5 nuclear tests. Two days later, 30 May 1998, PAEC conducted another test bringing the total number of tests conducted to six.

Both India and Pakistan are non-signatories of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty established in 1996 by the UN General Assembly.

3. What do we mean by a 'black market' in nuclear weapons technology?

The "black market" within the context of nuclear weapons technology refers to the illegal commerce of nuclear technology for the purpose of constructing nuclear weapons; all laws/regulations governing the commerce of nuclear weapons technology are disregarded. A prime example would be A.Q khan's operations discussed in answer 1 above.

Sean

Subject: RE: Week 7 - Quiz

Subject: RE: Week 7

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Author: [Sheldon RICHARDSON](#)

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Posted date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 8:53:37 PM
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Last modified date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 8:53:37
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Author: Anonymous

Date: Tuesday, November 4, 2008 12:12:15 PM GMT

Subject: Week 7

Please hit the 'Reply' button to respond to this thread.

Chestnut, Sheena. "Illicit Activity and Proliferation: North Korean Smuggling Networks". [International Security](#). Vol 32, No1, 2007.

Chestnut's article was an attempt to demonstrate how North Korea being a potential proliferator is a real possibility. She indicated that the US has fears of North Korean nuclear transfer to threaten the international security. The basis she used to argue her point was that North Korea has developed extensive non-nuclear covert smuggling capabilities. These smuggling links have included terrorist groups. They have had official involvement in the drug trade, produced the world's best counterfeit currency, endangered species products, cigarettes and pharmaceuticals in conjunction with Asian criminal syndicates. Her arguments have shown therefore that extensive smuggling capabilities coupled with economic need and nuclear "know-how", North Korea can be considered a potential nuclear proliferator.

Chestnut was also able to identify other factors that would indicate potential nuclear export of North Korea. The first is *Declaratory Policy*. North Korea indicated that it is entitled to sell missiles to earn foreign exchange, but won't sell to terrorists. In June 2005 however, North Korea threatened the US saying that they have the capability to transfer to terror groups. In 2003 North Korea withdrawal from Nonproliferation treaty (NPT) suggests that nuclear material and components are justifiable export commodities. *Proliferation History* is another example of North Korea's record of proliferation sales. Reports have indicated North Korea

assistance to Iran as well as chemical and biological weapons (CBW) to Iran and Syria. Even though International consensus hold that North Korea possess CBWs , there is no evidence that it has sold them internationally. It must be noted however that it is not safe to assume that North Korea would not transfer.

Availability of fissile material and nuclear components is another factor to consider in North Korea being a potential nuclear proliferator. Prior to North Korea's 2006 nuclear test, it has been noted that it possessed enough plutonium for 8-12 nuclear weapons. This figure is debateable but the fact remains, North Korea is willing to sell nuclear material as it produces more. North Korea uranium based program has also raised questions, as this can mean that North Korea's ability to produce an operational HEU program could mean that it is able to weaponise and be more attractive to non-state groups.

Nuclear doctrine and safety is also identified as a characteristic of North Korea to be a potential proliferator. This was suggested by Hecker that there was little indication of a nuclear doctrine or war fighting strategy. The lack of public information makes it difficult to assess North Korea's willingness to export. Safety is also an issue in that North Korea's nuclear materials and technologies are poorly safeguarded which can increase vulnerability to exploitation by military and security service actors, who may have connections to terrorist organisations. *Buyer identity* is yet another factor to consider as to whether or not North Korea could become a nuclear proliferator. Arrangements made with another state could mean more long term benefits such as aid. Transfers to Iran could be serious in that North Korea can benefit from a trade relationship for energy benefits. Whether or not ill-intentioned groups may gain access to materials or components are a possibility. That being said , North Korea would have to consider its economic woes a significant threat to survival to justify transfer to terrorists. If North Korea's nuclear security protocols are lax, substate organisations and individuals may decide to conduct transfers for self gain and bureaucratic enrichment.

Avoiding detection is no feat for North Korea as a potential proliferator. Hecker and Liou asserts that North Korea posses the capability to produce plutonium metal and plutonium oxide powder that can evade sensors in specific quantities. This can be smuggled with almost no detection. Although North Korea's maritime traffic is under strict watch, North Korea developed land smuggling routes. North Korea may resort to criminal networks to smuggle, seeing that doing this openly can threaten its financial viability and regime stability.

Chestnut was able very proficiently to show how North Korea can be a potential proliferator. She was able to demonstrate that they possess the capability as well as the need to export nuclear technologies. The article however failed to account for the "why". Why would North Korea or any other country for that matter, feel the need to proliferate? It is my opinion that North Korea, considering itself ideologically and economically isolated in the western dominated world, sees nuclear stockpiling as a way to be globally "relevant". Chestnut prescribes "synthesizing counter smuggling and counter proliferation efforts and integrating these with traditional non-proliferation tools, will give policyholders a wide array of approaches to address threats". It is my opinion in order to stop proliferation is if the West disbands stockpiling themselves. This means that the west would be the example to emulate. This would re-enforce western "validity" and moral authority. The west cannot expect North Korea to abandon nuclear capability without they themselves doing the same. This is where Chestnut fails in her prescription. The global community is asymmetrical and access to full participation in global organisations are western dominated. That being said nations that consider themselves "irrelevant" will seek means to make themselves heard. Chestnut's views were excellent but she did not account for the "why", its only when the "whys" are accounted for then a realistic non proliferation can become a reality.

..sorry for the long post.....

Subject: RE: Week 7

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Author: [N. Wright](#)

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Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:46:31 PM

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Author: Sheldon RICHARDSON

Date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 8:53:37 PM GMT

Subject: RE: Week 7

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Hi Sheldon

Thanks for the great post - a very interesting analysis and your last paragraph seemed particularly pertinent. The posing of "why" is often the most important (and difficult) question...followed, usually, by how!

North Korea is a fascinating case. I have heard a number of Chinese students here talk about it in very down-to-earth and frank terms: it is like a "younger sibling" desperate for attention was the most frequent analogy.

How then do we deal with it? Is it practicing nuclear blackmail, or is this really, ultimately a huge cry for help?

Nick

Subject: RE: Week 7

Subject: Nuclear non-proliferation

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Author: [N. Wright](#)

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Posted date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:53:27 PM

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Author: Anonymous

Date: Tuesday, November 4, 2008 12:12:15 PM GMT

Subject: Week 7

Please hit the 'Reply' button to respond to this thread.

Dear All,

This has turned into a great discussion with some challenging ideas presented, and some robust exchanges.

Kevin very eloquently outlined the "idealist" perspective, if we can call it that: a world without nuclear weapons bringing all states closer to some semblance of equality. He also offered a plan worthy of Richard Holbrooke to achieve it (and it would require a legion of such negotiators to do so, I suspect!).

Interestingly, a lot of the responses suggested that the idealist approach to total nuclear disarmament was both unrealistic *and* perhaps undesirable.

The question that comes to mind, therefore, is that when all is said and done, and all the IR theories discussed and debated, aren't we left with the following very simple proposition: nuclear weapons are the ultimate expression of power, with the capacity to destroy everything in totality. The fact that they have **not** been used since 1945 represents perfectly the notion of the balance-of-power of which nuclear deterrence is simply the best expression. Does this therefore not render idealist and other theories of IR redundant - that nuclear weapons ultimately prove that **Realism** (with all that it entails) is the only theory of IR that works?

Nick

Subject: Nuclear non-proliferation

Subject: RE: Nuclear non-proliferation

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Author: [Carla LIUZZO](#)

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Posted date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 6:42:49 AM

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Last modified date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 6:42:49

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Total views: 7 **Your views:** 2

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Author: N. Wright

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:54:11 PM GMT

Subject: Nuclear non-proliferation

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The question that comes to mind, therefore, is that when all is said and done, and all the IR theories discussed and debated, aren't we left with the following very simple proposition: nuclear weapons are the ultimate expression of power, with the capacity to destroy everything in totality. The fact that they have **not** been used since 1945 represents perfectly the notion of the balance-of-power of which nuclear deterrence is simply the best expression. Does this therefore not render idealist and other theories of IR redundant - that nuclear weapons ultimately prove that **Realism** (with all that it entails) is the only theory of IR that works?

Nick

Hi Nick,

Yes I agree. Realism proves the winning theory and the nuclear deterrence mechanism does work (based on history). BUT I would put money on the world never stopping the non-proliferation regime, peppered with idealist rhetoric of a world without nuclear weapons. The risks are so high in the nuclear stakes and while major powers will never give up their weapons, they will never want to appear as nuclear zealots. And so the international system will walk this tightrope of trying to manage who has weapons, how many, are they safe and most importantly how to avoid them being used.

Carla

Subject: RE: Nuclear non-proliferation

Subject: RE: Nuclear non-proliferation

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

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Posted date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 3:25:12 PM GMT

Last modified date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 3:25:12 PM GMT

Total views: 9 **Your views:** 4

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Author: Carla LIUZZO

Date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 6:42:49 AM GMT

Subject: RE: Nuclear non-proliferation

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Carla

Hi Carla and Nick,

Just one observation; 50 years is but a moment in historical terms. To draw conclusions from 50 years of modern history is not very reassuring.

Kevin

Subject: RE: Nuclear non-proliferation

Subject: RE: Nuclear non-proliferation

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Author: [P. WOJTAS](#)

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Posted date: Sunday, November 15, 2009 5:32:06 PM GMT

Last modified date: Sunday, November 15, 2009 5:32:06 PM GMT

Total views: 11 **Your views:** 2

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Author: N. Wright

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2009 9:54:11 PM GMT

Subject: Nuclear non-proliferation

Dear All,

This has turned into a great discussion with some challenging ideas presented, and some robust exchanges.

Kevin very eloquently outlined the "idealist" perspective, if we can call it that: a world without nuclear weapons bringing all

states closer to some semblance of equality. He also offered a plan worthy of Richard Holbrooke to achieve it (and it would require a legion of such negotiators to do so, I suspect!).

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Nick

I must say that I would not consider myself an expert on IR theories and schemes therefore my observation whether realism is most beneficial or not will be based upon my personal experience and common sense. I suppose nuclear proliferation is too complicated an issue to be resolved promptly and resourcefully. There is too much at stake and all players are well aware of that. There is too much mistrust and too much disbelief involved. In addition to that, there will always be the desire to lead, which is entirely instinctive. Consequently, I am of opinion that pragmatism and recognition of all the factors involved will play a key part in the nuclear game. I think IR must not be devoid of context and must not base upon idealistic approach when the world is preoccupied with SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time) objectives. IR must be set in context and the context, in that case, is that there is no straightforward answer to the issue in question. Perpetual deterrence seemed to have worked as yet. Nevertheless, I agree with Kevin in saying that 50 years is but a fraction of history so assuming that such equilibrium will survive on permanent basis might be treacherous. On the other hand, is there any other solution? In my opinion realism seems to provide us with the most effective and secure approach to this dilemma.

Pawel

Subject: RE: Nuclear non-proliferation

Subject: Response to Pawel

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Author: [N. Wright](#)

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Posted date: Sunday, November 15, 2009 8:58:46 PM GMT

Last modified date: Sunday, November 15, 2009 8:59:08 PM GMT

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Author: P. WOJTAS

Date: Sunday, November 15, 2009 5:32:06 PM GMT

Subject: RE: Nuclear non-proliferation

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Pawel

Hi Pawel,

I think you capture very eloquently the challenge facing all of us who study IR: the possibilities of what can and should be versus the all-too-often disappointing reality of what is. I suppose it comes down to whether or not you have a pessimistic or optimistic view of humanity and human progress.

I suppose the best that can be said about the nuclear question is that to date we have managed not to blow ourselves all to kingdom come - but as you point out, it's only been 50 years...

The nuclear question seems to me one of those where realist approaches including notions of the balance of power offer the most convincing explanation.

Nick

Subject: Response to Pawel

Subject: RE: Nuclear non-proliferation

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Monday, November 16, 2009 1:38:23 AM GMT

Last modified date: Monday, November 16, 2009 1:38:23 AM GMT

Total views: 8 **Your views:** 3

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Date: Sunday, November 15, 2009 5:32:06 PM GMT

Subject: RE: Nuclear non-proliferation

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Pawel

A wise and diplomatic conclusion to the week's discussion, Pawel. That is why I always look forward to hear what you have to say.

Kevin

Subject: RE: Nuclear non-proliferation

Subject: RE: 1. Have the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests stabilized or destabilized the ongoing conflict between the two countries?

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Posted date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 4:43:07 AM GMT

Last modified date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 4:43:07 AM GMT

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Author: Anonymous

Date: Tuesday, November 4, 2008 12:12:15 PM GMT

Subject: Week 7

Please hit the 'Reply' button to respond to this thread.

Hi Nick and all,

I thought it wise to change the subject so here is my attempt to contribute to this week's first lead question:
Have the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests stabilized or destabilized the ongoing conflict between the two countries?

The acquired nuclear capabilities of Pakistan and India have not stabilized their conflict. I believe the recent Mumbai attacks (26th to the 29th of November, 2008) show that Pakistan has driven the conflict underground, by sponsoring terrorists to attack under the veil of non-state actors and thus deny India the possibility of conventional retaliation.

While their nuclear bombs have reduced the grandstanding at their border and their constant skirmishes in Kashmir, it has done nothing to heal the wounds and to promote peace on the subcontinent.

Kevin

Subject: RE: 1. Have the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests stabilized or destabilized the ongoing conflict between the two countries?

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Author: [N. Wright](#)

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Posted date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 12:46:14 PM GMT

Last modified date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 12:46:14 PM GMT

Total views: 9 **Your views:** 4

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

Date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 4:43:07 AM GMT

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Kevin

Dear Kevin - and indeed everyone,

I think there is quite a lot to this argument of having conflict "driven underground" so to speak. It is a pattern that is repeated - look for example at the proxy war between Israel and Iran in Lebanon over the last few decades, not to mention the numerous "small" conflicts that ravaged Africa and Latin America during the Cold War as the superpowers sought ways to fight without fighting, so to speak.

Nick

Subject: RE: 1. Have the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests stabilized or destabilized the ongoing conflict between the two countries?

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Author: Kevin GALALAE

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Posted date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 10:31:01 PM GMT

Last modified date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 10:31:01 PM GMT
Total views: 8 **Your views:** 4

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Author: N. Wright

Date: Saturday, November 14, 2009 12:46:14 PM GMT

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Nick

Hi Nick,

I believe the transformation of conflict from overt to covert means is a consequence of asymmetrical strength between the combatants and the effectiveness of international constraints on state aggression. Pakistan has no chance of ever winning a war with India and is not allowed to contemplate such a war by the international community, just as Palestine (Hezbollah included) is powerless against Israel and has been so effectively isolated that no weapons to wage war are available to it (which is why they are shooting "fireworks" into Israeli settlements).

Faced with such odds, the weaker parties have resorted to methods of concealed harassment to send the message that if they cannot win they are intent to insure that the stronger party cannot enjoy its position of superiority and will live in fear. Suicide attacks are the ultimate manifestation of asymmetrical weakness.

This, I believe, is the future of conflict unless injustice, be it political or economic, is not addressed and is instead allowed to fester and evolve, under the tutelage of ignorance and want, into fanaticism or desperation.

Kevin

Subject: RE: 1. Have the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests stabilized or destabilized the ongoing conflict between the two countries?