

JoMUN XVI

Forum: Disarmament Commission

Issue: Promote progress in nuclear disarmament

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Nuclear weapons are the most dangerous weapons on our planet. They have the potential to destroy whole cities and kill millions of people and destroy the environment around them. They can threaten future generations with the long-lasting effects they leave behind. Nuclear weapons were first used by the United States of America in 1945 towards the end of World War II. After the first test of the atomic bomb in New Mexico, the world has completely changed.

A nuclear weapon is an explosive device that uses multiple nuclear reactions to create a destructive force. "Nuclear fission produces the atomic bomb, a weapon of mass destruction that uses power released by the splitting of atomic nuclei. When a single free neutron strikes the nucleus of an atom of radioactive material like uranium or plutonium, it knocks two or three more neutrons free." Many of these reactions occur and create a bigger explosion. There are many after effects of a nuclear explosion also. Aside from the immediate death and destruction, the bomb has longer term effects for generations of survivors such as leukemia, breast, lung and thyroid cancer. This is all due to radiation exposure.

They are currently nine states that are armed with nuclear weapons. These are, the USA, China, France, Pakistan, India, Russia, the United Kingdom, North Korea, Germany and Israel. Between these nine countries, it is believed, that in total, there are 16,300 nuclear weapons globally present. The first time a nuclear weapon was intentionally used to cause mass destruction and eliminate people was when the U.S. dropped the first ever atomic bomb on Japan, in the town of Hiroshima. The bomb was known as 'Little Boy.' Even though it was called "Little Boy, and considered a small bomb by today's standards, it was 16 kilotons and had the ability to wipe out a city the size of Hiroshima. 1 megaton (or 1 million tons) of nuclear explosives can create a blast of fire that spreads around 100 square miles.

Nuclear Weapon: an explosive device that derives its destructive force from nuclear reactions

Atomic Bomb: A nuclear weapon

Radioactive: emitting or relating to the emission of ionizing radiation or particles from nuclear weapons

State: a nation or territory considered as an organized political community under one government.

Arsenal: A collection of weapons or military equipment; such as nuclear weapons

Proliferation: Rapid increase of something, in this case nuclear weapons.

Nuclear Fission: The process of the nucleus splitting into smaller parts

The world's first nuclear weapon was tested was on July 16th, 1945 in the state of New Mexico. The United States had finally tested their first atomic bomb. Just three weeks later, the United States decided to use this bomb against the Japanese. It was then World War II. They dropped a nuclear bomb on the small city of Hiroshima in Japan on August 6th, 1945. This resulted in the death or injury of over 130,000 men, women and children. Three days later, the United States dropped another bomb on Nagasaki, another city in Japan. The population of this city was just 286,000 at that time. Of that, 74,000 people were killed from the blast, and 75,000 people were severely injured. This meant almost every single person in the city was affected in some horrible way. This nuclear attack resulted in the Japanese unconditionally surrendering the war; and led to the end of World War II. In the following years to come, multiple countries such as the United States, what was then the Soviet Union and Great Britain tested their own nuclear devices.

Nine years after the end of World War II, the idea of banning nuclear weapons testing came about. The President of India at the time, Jawaharlal Nehru, called for a formal ban of nuclear testing. This was the first real, global initiative to ban nuclear weapons testing. After Nehru's initiative, 10,000 scientists met with the Secretary General of the United Nations, Carl Hammarskjold, in 1958. They all asked for immediate action to be taken and an international agreement issued to stop the testing of all nuclear weapons. This meeting had very little effect as France detonated their first nuclear device just two years later. It was during this period of time that many other countries started gaining access to nuclear technology and China also entered the 'Nuclear Arms Club' by testing their first weapon in 1964. Just 10 years later, in 1974, they were five formally declared nuclear states, the United States, the Soviet Union (Russia), the United Kingdom, France and China.

In the early 90s, there were many nuclear issues on the Korean peninsula as well. American and North Korean delegations were sent to Geneva in 1994 to create an agenda to solve these issues. An agreement was reached where North Korea would sign a "Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons." This is more commonly known as the "Non-Proliferation Treaty" or the "NPT." The plan was for North Korea to sign this treaty and in return, the United States would support the building of 'safe' nuclear energy facilities and formally guarantee against the threat or use of nuclear weapons by the U.S. against North Korea. On December 12th 1995, the United Nations decided to take action and announced a ban on all nuclear weapons and committed to envision a world free of nuclear weapons. This was the beginning of many countries wanting a nuclear weapon-free society. Ten Southeast Asian countries signed what is known as the Bangkok Treaty and created the "Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone." The African continent followed soon after, and 43 African nations signed the Pelindaba Treaty, thus creating the "African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone."

By 2003, North Korea had disregarded this and all other international agreements on the Non-Proliferation Treaty. To this day it has been proven that only the United States has the missiles to reach anywhere on the earth. Other countries do have nuclear weapons; however, their range and power is unknown.

Previously, on May 11th 1998, India shocked the world by testing three nuclear weapons that were approximately three times the power of the ones dropped on Hiroshima. They tested two more that same week. The world was astonished when its neighboring country, Pakistan, then conducted six nuclear weapons tests of its own in response to India. The United States put immediate sanctions on both countries.

The effects of an atomic bomb can be extremely long lasting. The most obvious and immediate effect is death if you are within the proximity of the shock waves of the bomb. People who survive the explosion usually suffer from intense radiation poisoning that has been spread into the atmosphere. One such example is after the nuclear accident at the Chernobyl power plant in Northern Ukraine in 1986. If the radiation level is above a specific amount, it can cause people to lose brain cells and cause immediate heart failure. The instance of leukemia is still evident in the survivors of the Hiroshima bombing. Leukemia is the main form of cancer that survivors suffer from and they are also unable to have children. When an atomic bomb creates a mushroom cloud, the cloud drops little particles on to the surface of the earth and some particles are carried to even further distances by the wind. This results in the contamination of water, soil and therefore, food supply. People will be unable to replant and grow more food due to this contamination.

United States of America

The United States of America was the first country to create and test nuclear weapons. In 1945 the United States tested their first bomb and then exploded the first bomb intending to kill people in Hiroshima, Japan, just a few days after the test.

Russian Federation

The Russian Federation was the second nation to acquire nuclear arms and has a total of 8000 nuclear weapons. The longest ranging missile that the Russian Federation holds is intercontinental and can go as far as 16,000 kilometers.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)

North Korea has an array of military grade nuclear weapons and has a military nuclear weapons program. Since 2003 North Korea is no longer a part of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. They have had a total of 6 tests.

People's Republic of China

China's nuclear weapons are under the control of their military. Its first nuclear weapon test was in 1964. Their maximum missile range is 14,000 kilometers and they carry 260 nuclear weapons.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

The International Atomic Energy Agency is a international company that promotes the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It seeks to prevent nuclear use for any military purposes. The IAEA is a very important agency in the disarmament of Nuclear weapons

July 16th 1945	The 16th of July 1945 is when the world's first nuclear weapons explosion took place in New Mexico, USA. It was conducted by the United States of America
August 6th 1945	August 6th, 1945 is when the United States of America dropped an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima, killing and injuring 130,000 people
August 9th, 1945	Three days after the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, the United States of America dropped a second atomic bomb on the city of Nagasaki
1954	The President of India at that time, Jawaharlal Nehru, proposed to ban all nuclear weapons testing
1960	France exploded its first nuclear device
October 1964	China operated its first nuclear test and officially joined the "Nuclear Arms Club"
July 1st 1968	60 countries including the Soviet Union and the United States of America signed a treaty to find an end to the nuclear arms race and to achieve disarmament.
1974	India conducted its first nuclear device test and showed the world it had the technology to build these weapons
December 1986	The South Pacific Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone was put into use
1994	American and North Korean delegations met in Geneva to discuss the nuclear issue in the Korean peninsula. North Korea signed the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons
December 12th, 1995	The United Nations announced an immediate ban on all nuclear testing
May 1998	India stunned the world by testing 5 of their own nuclear weapons. The world was even more in shock when Pakistan conducted 6 nuclear tests from their arsenal
2002	George W. Bush named Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as the Axis of Evil, because of suspicions that they had weapons of mass destruction

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

The Non-Proliferation Treaty's objective is to prevent the spreading of nuclear weapons to states that don't already have them. The Treaty also promotes the use of nuclear energy in a safe and peaceful way, such as creating energy power plants. It is the only treaty that promotes disarmament and all nuclear-states are a part of it. 191 countries signed this Treaty.

Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

This Treaty was written in 1963 and it banned nuclear tests in water, in the atmosphere and in space. However, this didn't stop the testing of nuclear weapons underground. It had 126 signatories.

Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

This Treaty is not effective in present day. It bans all nuclear explosions for military and civilian purposes, in any environment. It was created in 1996 and has 183 signatories.

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

North Korea signed the non-proliferation treaty to ensure that they will only build safe nuclear energy facilities. In return for that the United States would not threaten them or use nuclear weapons against them in any way.

United Nations Ban

The United Nations called for an immediate ban on all nuclear weapons testing and advised disarmament. In the coming months, 10 Asian countries and 43 African states signed treaties for their own nuclear weapon-free zones.

Treaty of 1968

The Soviet Union, the United States of America and 60 other countries signed a treaty to promote disarmament and end the nuclear arms race. This treaty included banning countries from giving nuclear technology and weapons to other states and prohibiting countries without nuclear weapons from creating them.

Resolution for simultaneous disarmament of nuclear weapons

All nuclear states should come to a joint agreement to disarm their nuclear stockpile under the supervision of the IAEA. The IAEA will be responsible to ensure that these countries fully comply with this agreement and that their respective nuclear stockpiles and any unused fissile materials are disposed of as per the outline of this agreement in a responsible and environmentally sensitive way. UN Special Observers can also be part of this process.

Banning the production of fissile material

It is not enough to disarm nuclear stockpiles and agree to non proliferation treaties, which, as we have seen in the past, have often not worked. There should be a unilateral ban on the production of fissile materials. Nuclear missile component research and design for military purposes should also be stopped. A cessation in the production of new fissile material will ensure that no new nuclear weapons can be produced to add to the existing stock of nuclear weapons causing an arms race between nuclear countries.

Dismantling nuclear launch capabilities

The inability to launch a nuclear weapon as an offensive measure against another country can significantly reduce the threat of a nuclear war and, therefore, can help in the nuclear disarmament process. Launch capabilities are sea, land and airborne such as on frigates or strike aircraft. These capabilities can be dismantled by the countries themselves under the supervision of the IAEA and the UN.

Open inspections of all nuclear power plants and facilities

All nuclear states should accept all necessary inspections of facilities and plants and

All nuclear states should agree to allow open inspections of nuclear power plants and facilities to assess capabilities in a transparent process and as part of their commitment to a nuclear free world. An independent inspection process will provide for credibility amongst other nuclear states and will also allow for sharing of information between them on their respective stockpiles.

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Detailed overview on the issue of nuclear weapons from when they were first created in 1945.

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Insight on the Treaty of Non-Proliferation. Also detailed explanations on disarmament.