
BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

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NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION | WITH JUNE 2015 ARTICLES

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The network is a way to guard against test ban treaty violations because the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) prohibits nuclear explosions worldwide: in the atmosphere, underwater and underground.

“The CTBTO’s International Monitoring System has found a wider mission than its creators ever foresaw: monitoring an active and evolving Earth,” Dr. Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of CTBTO, told IPS.

He said some compare the system to a combined giant Earth stethoscope and sniffer that looks, listens, feels and sniffs for planetary irregularities.

It’s the only global network which detects atmospheric radioactivity and sound waves which humans cannot hear, said Dr. Zerbo.

The CTBTO’s global monitoring network now comprises 300 stations, some in the most remote and inaccessible areas of the Earth and sea.

The network captures four types of data: seismic (shockwaves in the earth), hydroacoustic (measuring sound through water), infrasound (low frequency sound) and radionuclide (radioactivity). It is about 90 percent complete.

When completed, the system will have 337 stations placed globally to monitor every corner of the planet effectively.

“Even before entering into force, the CTBT is saving lives,” says U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Currently, the network collects some 15 gigabytes of data daily, which it sends in real-time to the CTBTO’s data analysis centre in Vienna, Austria.

From there, a daily analysis report is sent to the CTBTO’s 183 Member States for their own use and analysis.

This universal system of looking, listening and sniffing the Earth is the work of CTBTO, which every two years hosts a scientific and technical conference.

This year’s Science and Technology Conference is scheduled to take place June 22-26 at the Hofburg Palace in the Austrian capital of Vienna.

The CTBTO’s monitoring network has had a superlative track record: on Feb. 12, 2013, 94 of the network’s seismic monitoring stations and two of its infrasound stations detected and alerted Member States to a nuclear detonation more than an hour before North Korea announced it had conducted a test.

Three days later, on Feb. 15, 2013, the CTBTO’s infrasound monitoring stations detected signals made by a meteor that had entered the atmosphere and disintegrated in the skies over Chelyabinsk, Russia.

The CTBTO network – described as the only global one of its kind to detect infrasound – recorded the shock wave caused by the exploding fireball.

That data helped scientists to locate the meteor, measure the energy release, its altitude and size.

And the system’s atmospheric sampling tracked the invisible plume of radioactivity from the March 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant disaster, as it spread around the globe.

It showed that radioactivity outside of Japan was below harmful levels. That knowledge helped public safety officials around the world understand what course of action to take, according to CTBTO.

The monitoring network has also helped tsunami warning centres announce rapid warnings, in real time, after severe earthquakes; improved meteorological models for more accurate weather forecasting; and provided insights into volcanic eruptions. ➔

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Additionally, it has enhanced the alerts that civil aviation authorities use, in real time, to warn pilots about damaging volcanic dust; provide more precise information about climate change; increased understanding of the structure of the Earth's inner core; and followed the migratory habits and the effects of climate change on marine life.

To access the data, the CTBTO has created a [Virtual Data Exploitation Centre](#) which provides scientists and researchers from many different disciplines with data for research and enables them to publish new findings.

Rave reviews have come from several academics.

“The International Monitoring System is a fantastic tool for monitoring the planet's core, atmosphere, oceans, or environment,” says Dr. Raymond Jeanloz, professor of Geophysics and Astronomy at the University of California, Berkeley.

“The CTBTO data give us a glimpse of the Earth's deep interior -what's happening there and how it evolved over Earth's history,” says Professor Miaki Ishii, Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, Harvard University.

And Randy Bell, director of the CTBTO's International Data Centre, says: “The global data are extremely valuable because they span decades, are high quality and highly calibrated. The data can be used to analyse local, regional or global events.”

Bell says that his primary job is to look for nuclear tests, but allowing the data to be used for science gets more experts looking at the data.

“What may be noise to me might be a signal to someone else,” he says.

Meanwhile, on a single day, the CTBTO's International Data Centre analyses over 30,000 seismic signals to identify events that meet stringent criteria.

The CTBTO says that though many countries have their own seismic monitoring systems, the CTBTO monitors are “global, permanent, calibrated and the data are shared equally.”

Its seismic network has been monitoring infrasound extending all the way to sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, Indonesia and Antarctica.

The CTBTO also has a network of underground listening posts located in some of the world's most remote waters listening to earthquakes in the Andes Mountains and around the northern Pacific.

The data has been used to track the migratory habits of a particular species of Blue Whale in the Indian Ocean.

“The nations of the world have invested about one billion dollars to create The Global Ear,” says Dr. Zerbo.

“Every year they continue their investment, hoping it will never have to be used for its intended purpose of detecting a violation of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Civil and scientific spinoffs show the world immediate payback and in turn increase support for the Treaty.

“As more scientists and organisations make use of the data, the value has become ever more apparent,” says Dr. Zerbo. (IPS |17 June 2015) ◆

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World's Nuke Arsenal Declines Haltingly While Modernisation Rises Rapidly

By THALIF DEEN



Every nuclear power is spending millions to upgrade their arsenals, experts say. Credit: National Nuclear Security Administration/CC-BY-ND-2.0

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) - The world's stockpile of nuclear weapons, held by nine states, just got a little smaller. But modernisation continues to rise rapidly, warns the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in its annual 2015 Yearbook released June 15.

The study said the total number of nuclear warheads in the world is declining, primarily due to the United States and Russia continuing to reduce their nuclear arsenals. "But this is at a slower pace compared with a decade ago," the Yearbook said. At the same time, both countries have "extensive and expensive" long-term modernisation programmes under way for their remaining nuclear delivery systems, warheads and production.

Currently, there are nine states—the United States, Russia, UK, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea – armed with approximately 15,850 nuclear weapons, of which 4,300 were deployed with operational forces.



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Roughly 1,800 of these weapons are being kept in a state of high operational alert.

“Despite renewed international interest in prioritizing nuclear disarmament, the modernisation programmes under way in the nuclear weapon-possessing states suggests that none of them will give up their nuclear arsenals in the foreseeable future,” says SIPRI Senior Researcher Shannon Kile.

Asked for her response, Alice Slater, New York director of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and who serves on the Coordinating Committee of Abolition 2000, told IPS the disheartening news from SIPRI’s report is that all nine nuclear weapons states are modernising their nuclear arsenals – and particularly the five major nuclear weapons states: the United States, Russia, UK, France and China.

All five countries, she pointed out, actually pledged, in the 1970 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which was extended indefinitely in 1995, “to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament”.

Nevertheless, this disregard of promises given and repeated at successive five-year NPT review conferences – with the U.S., for example, projecting expenditures of one trillion dollars over the next 30 years for two new bomb factories, missiles, planes and submarines to deliver newly designed nuclear weapons – has given fresh impetus to an international campaign by non-nuclear weapons states to negotiate a treaty to ban the bomb, declaring nuclear weapons illegal and prohibited – just as the world has done for chemical and biological weapons, said Slater.

Besides the United States and Russia, SIPRI said the nuclear arsenals of the other nuclear-armed states are considerably smaller, but all are either developing or deploying new nuclear weapon systems or have announced their intention to do so.

In the case of China, this may involve a modest increase in the size of its nuclear arsenal, said SIPRI.

India and Pakistan are both expanding their nuclear weapon production capabilities and developing new missile delivery systems.

North Korea appears to be advancing its military nuclear programme, but its technical progress is difficult to assess based on open sources, according to the Yearbook.

The latest SIPRI report follows the failure of an NPT review conference in New York last month.

Tariq Rauf, SIPRI’s director of the Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Programme, expressed disappointment over the failure of the review conference in which 161 states participated “with little to show for their effort.”

He said agreement on a final document was blocked by the United States, with the support of Britain and Canada – “their reason being that they were adamantly opposed to putting pressure on Israel to attend an international conference in March 2016 to ban nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and ballistic missiles in the region of the Middle East”.

Israel is the only country in the Middle East that has never joined the NPT and is reported to have nuclear weapons, he pointed out.

Other important issues discussed at the conference included the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons (HINW), an initiative supported by 159 non-nuclear-weapon States drawing on the results of international conferences held in Oslo (2013), Nayarit (2014) and Vienna (2014) – where it was made clear that no State, no international relief organisation nor any other entity has the capacity to deal with the humanitarian, environmental, food and socio-economic consequences of a nuclear weapon detonation. ➡

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These States called for a legally-binding prohibition on nuclear weapons, such as the prohibitions on biological and chemical weapons.

The five declared nuclear-weapon States – China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States, also the veto-wielding members of the Security Council – rejected all such demands and firmly insisted that their nuclear weapons were not at any risk of accidental or deliberate detonation.

“Thus, an opportunity has been lost to push for a safer Middle East without weapons of mass destruction, and for steps leading to the global elimination of nuclear weapons – at least until the next five-yearly NPT Review Conference in held in 2020,” Rauf added.

No one should take any comfort in this, neither the 192 parties to the NPT nor the non-parties, India, Israel and Pakistan, because the dangers of nuclear weapons affect everyone on this planet, said Rauf, a former senior official at the International Atomic Energy Agency (2002-2012) dealing with nuclear verification, non-proliferation and disarmament.

Slater told IPS there has been a successful series of conferences with civil society and governments over the past two years – in Norway, Mexico and Austria – to address the catastrophic humanitarian consequence of nuclear war.

At the recent NPT, which broke up in failure without a consensus document, 107 nations signed on to a humanitarian pledge, offered by Austria, to “fill the legal gap” for nuclear disarmament.

Unwilling to be held hostage to the “security” concerns of the nuclear weapons states, the non-nuclear weapons states have pledged to press forward to outlaw nuclear weapons without them.

She said South Africa was particularly eloquent, comparing the current regime of nuclear haves and have-nots to a form of “nuclear apartheid”.

After the 70th anniversary of the tragic destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it is expected that negotiations will begin, she said.

While some argue that this would be ineffective without the participation of the nuclear weapons states, great pressure will be brought to bear on the “weasel” states, who mouth their fealty to nuclear disarmament, while sheltering in military alliances under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, said Slater.

Last week, the Dutch parliament, a NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) state, dependent on U.S. nuclear protection, voted to support the Humanitarian Pledge to fill the legal gap.

“One should expect more weakening of the nuclear phalanx, striding the world and holding us all hostage, as NATO states and Asian allies relying on U.S. nuclear deterrence feel the approbation of a vibrant grassroots campaign, around the world, working for a ban treaty,” said Slater. (IPS | 15 June 2015) ◆

[JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#)

世界の核兵器—量的削減は停滞の一方、近代化は加速

【国連IPS = タリフ・ディーン】

「9か国が保有する世界の核兵器備蓄は、このところわずかしか減っていない。他方で核戦力の近代化は急速に進んでいる。」とストックホルム国際平和研究所 (SIPRI) が15日に発表した最新の年鑑で警告している。

同年鑑によれば、米国とロシアが継続的に核戦力を削減し続けているため、世界の核弾頭の総数自体は減少しているという。◆

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What Others Say

Where Is the UK Government's Nuclear Weapons Policy Heading?

By VARINDER SINGH BOLA | WESTMINSTER BASED THINK-TANKER

Whichever way you look at it, it seems that the fiscal hawks and disarmament doves have been blown out of the sky and have sunk into a deep blue ocean where the Trident Successor programme stares them head-on.

Since returning to power with an outright majority, the UK's new Conservative government is now full steam ahead to replace the Vanguard-class submarines with a new fleet of four Successor submarines, each armed with Trident II D-5 fleet ballistic missiles. Each submarine will have 12 launch tubes of which 8 will be operational and capable of reaching targets and delivering within a range of 11,300 km, perhaps further and even more accurate with the next generation of nuclear-tipped Trident ballistic missiles due to be in service in the early 2030s.

Building a political mandate

In what has been a complicated and long-running affair, there seems to have been little overall deviation in policy amongst the main parliamentary parties regarding the Successor programme since the process began.

In December 2006, the then Labour Government led by Prime Minister Tony Blair published a White Paper outlining its intentions to build a new class of submarines. Following the publication of the White Paper there was a vote on Trident renewal in March 2007 ("this House supports the Government's decision as set out in the white paper The Future of the United Kingdom's Nuclear Deterrent (CM6994) to take the steps necessary to maintain the UK minimum strategic nuclear deterrent beyond the life of the existing system and to take further steps towards meeting the UK's disarmament responsibilities under Article VI of the Non-proliferation treaty"). Note the attempt to balance out renewal with a commitment to re-energise the diplomatic track to multilateral disarmament. This was followed by studies on both the steps towards a world free of nuclear weapons, and concrete disarmament verification procedures, and by setting up the P5 process.

The Trident Alternatives Review (TAR) was commissioned in 2010 by the last Liberal Democrat and Conservative Party Coalition Government soon after it

came to power, at the same time as a decision to delay the Main Gate to 2016 for an in-service date for the first Successor submarine in 2028. The review highlighted a number of drawbacks inherent in nuclear alternatives to the Trident ballistic missile submarine system and claimed that they were all more expensive when judged against a set of criteria. It received heavy criticism from civil society for being flawed on its assumptions and conclusions. In its most recent vote on the issue in January 2015, Parliament voted against the motion 'this House believes that Trident should not be renewed'. A further parliamentary debate is expected ahead of the 'Main Gate' decision next year.

This positioning on Trident reflects the wish of much of the Westminster political leadership to be seen as being 'strong on defence' and upholding UK influence on the global stage. Whilst the Scottish National Party now fields a strong and noticeable representation in the Westminster Parliament, they will be unable to turn the political tide against the renewal of another generation of ballistic missile submarines.

The lack of appetite of the Conservative and Labour parties to contemplate a move away from a 'minimum, credible, independent nuclear capability, delivered through a Continuous At-Sea Deterrent' translates to an effective certainty of Parliamentary support for the Main Gate decision due in 2016.

The government has not been shy of reminding fellow parliamentarians of the 2015 Conservative Party manifesto, and therefore electoral mandate, which in the section 'Keeping Britain safe' on nuclear weapons policy specifically states: 'We will retain the Trident continuous at sea nuclear deterrent to provide the ultimate guarantee of our safety and build the new fleet of four Successor Ballistic Missile Submarines - securing thousands of highly-skilled engineering jobs in the UK.' ↻

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Whilst the 2006 White Paper envisioned the final 'Main Gate' decision on whether three or four boats are needed to maintain Contentious At-Sea Deterrence (CASD) to be taken when more is known about the design including when further information on the reliability and maintenance requirements of the new submarine design becomes available, the government has made it clear that it does not intend to conduct a review on a change of operational posture in the foreseeable future. It has been the policy of previous governments that the UK would consider such a move in an improved security environment as part of a multilateral package. This current government clearly is not considering such a possibility.

The document also states: 'Later this year, we will hold a National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review to plan for the future.' Whilst some had pinned their hopes of Trident being included in the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR), it has been confirmed that it will not be revisited in the forthcoming Strategic Defence and Security Review.

The Successor submarines will be solely funded out of the defence budget. The projected expenditure on Trident is expected to account for one third of the defence procurement budget over well over a decade. An update to parliament in November 2014 stated that £2,068 million had been spent on the replacement for the Vanguard Class submarine up to 31 March 2014, broadly within the expected spend. Updated figures will be published in the Ministry of Defence's Annual Reports and Accounts.

What next?

Whilst the UK has reduced the number of warheads in its nuclear arsenal and its readiness, successive governments have failed to develop a stronger narrative on the UK's commitment to non-proliferation and achieving 'Global Zero'. The P5 process appears stuck in the early stages of dialogue with little tangible to show, and recent setbacks in terms of shared understanding around what it means to be a responsible nuclear armed state in the 21st century.

It is deeply unfortunate that the Trident renewal process is passing through its most controversial stage just as

the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is at its weakest point for a decade. When faced with the choice of either joining the rest of the international community in putting pressure on Israel to engage more seriously in the process to set up a WMD Free Zone in the Middle East, or blocking consensus on a final agreement for the NPT Review Conference, the UK sided with the US and Canada to block agreement. Having done this it is essential that the UK lead in proposing realistic and attractive initiatives to get both the WMD Free Zone process and the broader NPT agenda back on track.

When renewing Trident it is essential the government acknowledge its international responsibilities to go beyond talking of its desire to see progress on multilateral disarmament and propose concrete measures. The government must start to develop a globally cooperative approach that undercuts the drivers of proliferation and reduces the salience nuclear weapons have to all states. This consideration needs to be expedited to the top of the foreign policy agenda.

Parliamentarians and security strategists should also comprehensively test currently held assumptions including the assumption that submarines will be able to remain undetectable in the future. The technical game of cat and mouse in the oceans is rapidly changing with the investment and deployment of ever more sophisticated anti-submarine warfare (ASW) detection technologies (hunter-killer, aircraft, satellites, underwater-drones and sensors networks). Recently, during NATO's annual anti-submarine warfare exercise codenamed Dynamic Mongoose, a NATO scientist went on record to say:

"...I think now miniaturising the technology that the submarine is deploying, miniaturising the sensors and having large numbers of sensors, we can start to own the underwater battle space in a way that makes it less attractive and takes away the tactical strategic advantage of the submarine."

Factor in the advancement of Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (UUVs) with the messages coming from research laboratories and we might be on the cusp of a game changer. (Huffpost Blog | 30 June 2015) ◆

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What Others Say

The Ultimate Nightmare: North Korea Could Sell Saudi Arabia Nuclear Weapons

By ZACHARY KECK

One of the gravest concerns about Iran acquiring a nuclear weapon is that it will set off a nuclear arms race in the region, whereas Iran's acquisition of the bomb prompts its neighbors to follow suit. As President Obama [warned in 2012](#), if Iran gets nuclear weapons, "It is almost certain that other players in the region would feel it necessary to get their own nuclear weapons."

No country is seen as more likely to go nuclear in response to Iran doing so as Saudi Arabia, Iran's long-standing rival in the region. Saudi officials have done little to tamp down such fears, instead indulging them repeatedly. Just last month, Prince Turki bin Faisal, Saudi Arabia's former intelligence chief, [told a South Korean conference](#): "Whatever the Iranians have, we will have, too."

With [a few exceptions](#), nearly everyone who fears that Saudi Arabia will acquire a nuclear weapon nonetheless concedes Riyadh wouldn't build a bomb itself. Instead, the general consensus has long held that Saudi Arabia would purchase off-the-shelf nuclear weapons from Pakistan. Indeed, concerns about a secret Saudi-Pakistani nuclear pact date back to the 1970s and 1980s, and have become especially prevalent over the past decade and a half.

[As I](#) and [others have](#) long argued, [this notion](#) is [far-fetched](#). While Saudi Arabia would want to buy a nuclear arsenal from Pakistan, Islamabad has no reason to sell nuclear weapons to Riyadh.

To begin with, Pakistan already worries that its arsenal is too small to survive an Indian or American counterforce strike. Moreover, selling Saudi Arabia nuclear weapons would result in unprecedented backlash from most of the international community, including both the United States and China, Pakistan's major patrons. It would also enrage Iran, who is well positioned to retaliate against Pakistan in numerous ways, from supporting separatists in Balochistan to further cozying up to India.

Any remaining concerns about whether Pakistan would sell Saudi Arabia nuclear weapons were seeming put to rest back in April, [when Islamabad refused](#) to participate in the Saudi-led military campaign in Yemen. If Pakistan refused to send in even a symbolic contingent of troops to participate in the Saudi-led mission, it certainly wouldn't give Riyadh its most valuable military assets.

But while Saudi Arabia couldn't purchase a nuclear weapon from Pakistan, it might have more luck with North Korea. In fact, there are a number of compelling reasons to believe North Korea might be amenable to such a request.

Most obviously, North Korea has a troubling history of proliferating nuclear technology, including to the Middle East. There have long been persistent (albeit largely unconfirmed) rumors that North Korea has provided Iran with nuclear technology, and Pyongyang also helped Syria build a nuclear reactor (which Israel destroyed in airstrikes in 2011). More generally, North Korea has a long track record of selling advanced military technology like ballistic missiles to numerous pariah nations.

Moreover, Saudi Arabia would be an extremely valuable patron for North Korea. Currently, Kim Jong-un is trying to improve the economy especially for North Korean elites in order to shore up support for his rule. This effort has been made extremely difficult by the more hardline stance China has taken against North Korea ever since Xi Jinping came to power in 2012.

Pyongyang has been scrambling to find suitable replacements for China, but so far it has had little luck. Russia appears to want to improve ties with North Korea, but its growing financial woes will limit its ability to provide North Korea with enough economic assistance to offset the loss of Chinese aid. ☞

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Meanwhile, South Korea appears intent on limiting its economic relationship with North Korea absent significant concessions from Pyongyang on the latter's nuclear program.

Saudi Arabia would face none of these constraints. Unlike South Korea, Saudi Arabia is not overtly threatened by North Korea's nuclear program. And unlike Russia, it does not face enormous financial difficulties.

In fact, Saudi Arabia is awash in petrodollars, [boasting the](#) third largest foreign currency reserves in the world after only China and Japan. Although it has been [using these](#) to soften the impact of lower oil prices, it still has \$708 billion in FX reserves, more than enough to provide significant support for North Korea.

Saudi Arabia could also provide North Korea with other kinds of valuable assistance. For instance, foreign workers [make up over half](#) of Saudi Arabia's labor force, and North Koreans working in Saudi Arabia could provide the Hermit Kingdom with another significant source of hard currency. Indeed, this is one of the Kim regime's favorite tactics for skirting international sanctions. As the Asan Institute of Policy Studies [has explained](#): "Earnings are not sent back as remittances, but appropriated by the state and transferred back to the country in the form of bulk cash, in clear violation on UN sanctions."

Some [estimate that as](#) many as 65,000 North Koreans are working abroad in 40 different countries, and that this number has doubled or even tripled since Kim Jong-un took power. Yet, according to Asan, Saudi Arabia doesn't even rank in the top ten nations in terms of North Korean laborers. Changing that would be a huge boon to the Kim regime.

Finally, besides hard cash, North Korea faces a chronic energy shortage, with China [accounting for nearly](#) 90 percent of North Korea's energy imports in recent years. Saudi oil and natural gas could significantly reduce North Korea's reliance on China for its energy needs, while also helping to stimulate the North Korean economy.

All of this suggests that if Saudi Arabia purchases off-the-shelf nuclear weapons, they are more likely to come from North Korea than Pakistan.

Zachary Keck is the managing editor of The National Interest. You can find him on Twitter: [@ZacharyKeck](#). (The National Interest | 22 June 2015) ◆



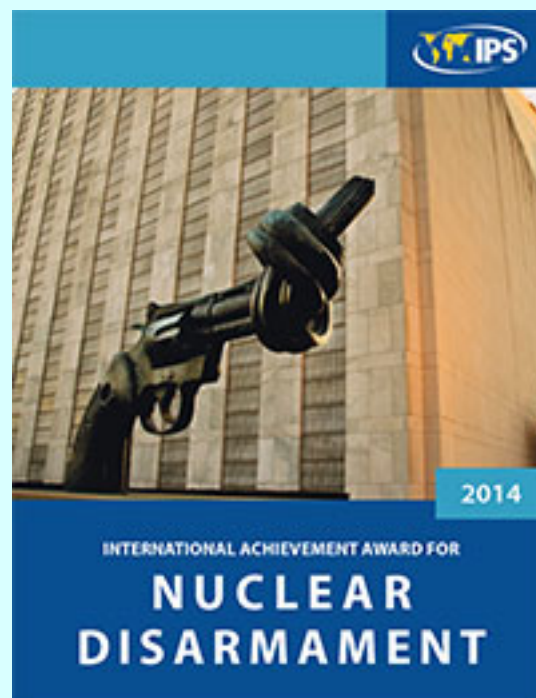
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