

FACT SHEET

TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is a landmark international treaty that seeks to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.

“The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty is one of the most important multilateral accords in history. Though not perfect, it is the cornerstone of the world's nuclear non-proliferation regime.”

BAN Ki-moon, Address to the 2010 NPT Review Conference, 3 May 2010

The Treaty entered into force in 1970 for an initial duration of 25 years and is reviewed every five years. In 1995, at the NPT Review and Extension Conference, States parties adopted a set of decisions, including on the indefinite extension of the Treaty, further strengthening the review process, and principles and objectives for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as a Resolution on the Middle East. The 2000 NPT Review Conference followed up with the successful adoption of a substantive final document which notably included practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.



After a failure by States parties to reach any agreement in 2005, the 2010 NPT Review Conference adopted a 64-point action plan across the three pillars of the Treaty – disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy – as well as practical steps to implement the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East. Despite intensive consultations, the 2015 Review Conference was not able to reach agreement on the substantive part of the draft Final Document.

The first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference took place from 2 to 12 May 2017 in Vienna. The session was chaired by Ambassador Henk Cor van der Kwast (Netherlands).

“Global nuclear non-proliferation stands at a critical juncture. Despite some progress, much remains to be done to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.”

BAN Ki-moon, Security Council Summit on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament, 24 September 2009

years, States parties have also expressed growing concern regarding the humanitarian consequences that would result from any use of nuclear weapons, giving rise to new efforts to advance multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.

Current Status of the NPT

The NPT is one of the world’s most widely adhered-to treaties. A total of 191 States have joined the Treaty. Continuing challenges facing the Treaty include concerns over its lack of universality, the pace of nuclear disarmament, compliance concerns and progress implementing the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East aimed at establishing a Middle East zone free from nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction. In recent

The Role of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs

The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs functions as the *de-facto* secretariat for the NPT in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and, as directed by the United Nations General Assembly, provides all necessary support – administrative and substantive – for the meetings of States parties, including the Review Conferences and their respective Preparatory Committee. UNODA therefore serves as a central source of institutional knowledge regarding the operation and implementation of the Treaty.

Basic provisions of the Treaty

Under the Treaty, the nuclear-weapon States agree not to transfer a nuclear weapon or nuclear explosive device to any non-nuclear-weapon State nor to assist any non-nuclear-weapon State in manufacturing or acquiring such weapons or devices.

The non-nuclear-weapon States agree not to receive the transfer of a nuclear weapon or nuclear explosive device, not to manufacture or otherwise acquire such weapons or devices, and not to seek or receive any assistance in the manufacture of such weapons or devices. Towards the verification of their non-proliferation obligations, each non-nuclear-weapon State agrees to accept safeguards, to be administered by the IAEA, on all source or special fissionable material in all peaceful nuclear activities within the territory of the State, under its jurisdiction, or carried out under its control.

As a fundamental element of the bargain, all States parties undertake to pursue good faith negotiations on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament. Further, the parties agree that nothing in the Treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all the parties to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with their basic non-proliferation undertakings.

NPT Facts

- The NPT contains the only legally-binding obligation for States to achieve nuclear disarmament.
- The nuclear-weapon States, as defined by the Treaty, are: China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- As of October 2016, 129 States parties have brought into force additional protocols granting the IAEA greater verification access.
- As of October 2016, 12 non-nuclear-weapon States parties have not yet brought into force a comprehensive safeguards agreement.
- As of early-2016, an estimated 15,400 nuclear weapons remained in global stockpiles.