

BACKGROUND GUIDE— Seniors Advanced



GIISMUN
TOKYO 2025
CHAPTER 5

Committee:

UNSC

United Nations Security Council

Agenda:

Reinforcing the Global Non-Proliferation Regime: Bridging Gaps in Existing Treaties and Addressing Emerging Nuclear Threats

Hosted by Global Indian International School Tokyo
18th July ~ 23rd July 2025

Committee Overview

As nuclear proliferation risks continue to evolve, the committee will focus on strengthening international treaties such as the NPT, while also considering new challenges posed by technological advancements and the actions of non-state actors.

Delegates are tasked with identifying weaknesses in the current non-proliferation framework and proposing actionable solutions to close these gaps. The goal is to enhance global cooperation, ensure robust verification mechanisms, and promote disarmament, thereby safeguarding international peace and security against both traditional and emerging nuclear threats.

History of the committee

- Founded in 1945 as one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, following the end of World War II and the signing of the UN Charter.
- First session held in January 1946 in London, with 11 original members: five permanent (US, UK, USSR, China, France) and six non-permanent.
- Expanded to 15 members in 1965 (five permanent, ten non-permanent) to better represent global regions.
- Permanent members (P5) hold veto power, a contentious issue settled at the Yalta Conference in 1945.
- Notable changes: The People's Republic of China replaced Taiwan in 1971; Russia succeeded the USSR in 1991.
- Continues to play a central role in addressing global conflicts and security challenges.

Background Information

Since the dawn of the nuclear age in 1945, the international community has wrestled with the catastrophic potential of nuclear weapons. While the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has stood as the cornerstone of global nuclear governance for over half a century, its limitations are becoming increasingly apparent in an evolving security landscape. Rising geopolitical tensions, modernization of nuclear arsenals, and the emergence of unregulated technologies—such as tactical nuclear weapons and hypersonic delivery systems—have exposed critical gaps in the existing non-proliferation framework. Furthermore, the withdrawal or defiance of states from treaties, alongside the risk of non-state actors acquiring fissile materials, has underscored the urgent need for a reinvigorated, adaptive, and inclusive global regime. The UNSC, tasked with maintaining international peace and security, must now navigate a minefield of political sensitivities, legal ambiguities, and emerging threats to reinforce collective safeguards against nuclear escalation.

Key definitions

- **Nuclear Non-Proliferation:** The prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons, materials, and technology to states or non-state actors that do not currently possess them. This includes both preventing new states from developing nuclear weapons and limiting advancements by existing nuclear-armed states.
- **Nuclear Weapon States (NWS):** Under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), these are the five countries recognized as possessing nuclear weapons before 1967: the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China.
- **Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS):** Countries that are parties to the NPT and have committed not to develop or acquire nuclear weapons, in exchange for access to peaceful nuclear technology and the promise of disarmament from NWS.
- **Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT):** A multilateral treaty established in 1968 to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, promote disarmament, and support the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It is considered the foundation of the global non-proliferation regime.
- **Nuclear Deterrence:** A military strategy in which the possession of nuclear weapons is intended to deter adversaries from attacking, under the threat of devastating retaliation.
- **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT):** A treaty adopted in 1996 that prohibits all nuclear explosions for both civilian and military purposes. While signed by many states, it has not yet entered into force due to the non-ratification by key nuclear-capable countries.
- **Nuclear Security:** The measures taken to prevent nuclear materials, technology, and weapons from falling into the hands of unauthorized actors, including terrorists or rogue states.
- **Emerging Nuclear Threats:** New and evolving challenges to global nuclear security, including the development of advanced delivery systems (e.g., hypersonic missiles), cyber threats to nuclear command structures, and the potential use of nuclear technology by non-state actors.
- **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA):** An independent international organization within the UN system that promotes the peaceful use of nuclear energy and monitors nuclear programs to verify compliance with non-proliferation commitments.

- **Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZs):** Geographical regions in which countries have collectively agreed, through treaties, to prohibit the development, possession, and deployment of nuclear weapons. Examples include Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia.
- **Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties (START):** A series of bilateral agreements between the United States and Russia (formerly the Soviet Union) aimed at reducing and limiting long-range nuclear weapons. These treaties have played a significant role in shaping nuclear disarmament efforts between the two largest nuclear powers.
- **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW):** A legally binding international agreement adopted in 2017 that prohibits the development, testing, production, stockpiling, and use of nuclear weapons. It entered into force in 2021, though none of the nuclear-armed states are currently party to it.

Agenda Overview

The agenda and the committee's aim/targets

Agenda: Reinforcing the Global Non-Proliferation Regime: Bridging Gaps in Existing Treaties and Addressing Emerging Nuclear Threats

The global nuclear non-proliferation regime, anchored by treaties such as the NPT and supported by mechanisms like the IAEA, has long aimed to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and promote disarmament. However, growing geopolitical rivalries, the modernization of arsenals, non-compliance with treaty obligations, and the emergence of new technologies have challenged the effectiveness of existing frameworks.

The agenda invites the Security Council to evaluate and reinforce the current non-proliferation system by identifying its legal, political, and strategic gaps, and proposing concrete solutions to address rising threats from both state and non-state actors.

Discussion Points

- Gaps and limitations in current non-proliferation treaties (e.g., NPT, CTBT, TPNW)
- Emerging threats from technological advancements (e.g., hypersonic missiles, AI in command systems)
- The role of nuclear deterrence and disarmament in contemporary security doctrines
- Preventing proliferation among non-signatory or withdrawn states (e.g., DPRK, Iran)
- Strengthening safeguards to prevent nuclear terrorism and illicit trafficking
- Improving enforcement, verification, and compliance mechanisms within the regime
- Promoting equitable access to peaceful nuclear technology under IAEA guidance

Issues Faced by the Committee

- Veto power and geopolitical rivalry among permanent members often lead to deadlock, preventing decisive action on major international crises.
- Calls for reform and outdated structure face strong resistance, making it difficult to adapt the Council to current global realities and improve representation.
- Declining legitimacy and trust as the Council's inability to address conflicts like Gaza, Ukraine, and Syria undermines its authority and effectiveness.
- Resource shortages and operational challenges hamper peacekeeping missions, leading to inadequate responses in complex conflict zones.

UN Response (Actions taken)

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

Entered into force in 1970; cornerstone of global efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, promote disarmament, and facilitate peaceful nuclear energy use.

Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004)

Legally binds all UN Member States to prevent non-state actors from acquiring nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons, with emphasis on domestic legislation and border controls.

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)

Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1996; bans all nuclear explosions, although it has not yet entered into force due to pending ratifications by key states.
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safeguards and Inspections – Operational arm of the UN system for verifying that nuclear programs remain peaceful, including through the Additional Protocol.

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)

Adopted by the UN in 2017 and entered into force in 2021, it is the first legally binding international agreement to comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons (not yet supported by nuclear-armed states).

Security Council Resolutions on DPRK (North Korea)

Multiple sanctions regimes (e.g., Resolutions 1718, 1874, 2375) passed in response to nuclear tests and missile launches, aiming to curb the country's nuclear ambitions.
UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) & Conference on Disarmament (CD) – Ongoing platforms for multilateral dialogue and policy recommendations on nuclear arms control and disarmament, though often limited by political deadlock.

Scope of Debate

Possible Caucus Questions:

- What specific loopholes or enforcement weaknesses in the NPT framework need urgent reform?
- How can the UNSC ensure compliance among states that have withdrawn from or never joined non-proliferation treaties?
- Should deterrence doctrine be reconsidered in light of emerging technologies and regional tensions?
- How can verification mechanisms (e.g., IAEA inspections) be strengthened without infringing on national sovereignty?
- To what extent should the UN address the modernization of nuclear arsenals by recognized Nuclear Weapon States?
- How can the UN prevent nuclear weapons from falling into the hands of non-state actors or terrorist groups?

- Should the UNSC push for the universal ratification and enforcement of the CTBT and/or TPNW? Why or why not?
- How can international cooperation be improved to monitor and regulate dual-use nuclear technologies?
- Is it possible to create a new, binding global framework that includes both nuclear and non-nuclear states equitably?
- What role should regional nuclear-weapon-free zones play in strengthening the global non-proliferation regime?

Sources / Useful websites

UN Security Council Official Website:

Provides comprehensive information on the Security Council's structure, functions, resolutions, and subsidiary bodies, including committees addressing emerging threats.
<https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/>

UN Office for Disarmament Affairs – Nuclear Weapons:

Offers detailed insights into UN frameworks addressing nuclear disarmament, arms control treaties, and global non-proliferation efforts.
<https://disarmament.unoda.org/wmd/nuclear/>

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA):

Official website of the IAEA, which monitors nuclear programs and supports peaceful nuclear energy while promoting global nuclear security and safeguards.
<https://www.iaea.org/>

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO):

Contains data and updates on the CTBT, verification regimes, and the global effort to ban nuclear testing.
<https://www.ctbto.org/>

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons – United Nations:

UN portal for the TPNW, offering legal texts, state party updates, and disarmament developments.
<https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/tpnw/>

Council on Foreign Relations – Nuclear Weapons Tracker:

Provides analysis of nuclear arsenals worldwide and explains key developments in nuclear strategy and diplomacy.
<https://www.cfr.org/nuclear-weapons>