

## **SA1 Drugs & Crime**

*Attending to the threats of nuclear  
weapon usage during times of conflict*

Naz Arıkan



# RESEARCH REPORT



**Forum:** Drugs & Crime Committee (SA1)

**Issue:** Attending to the threats of nuclear weapon usage during times of conflict

**Student Officer:** Naz Arıkan - President Chair

## Introduction

The use of nuclear weapons during times of conflict is a big threat to global peace and safety. These weapons can cause huge destruction to cities, harm people and the environment, and leave areas unlivable for years. The risk of their use increases tensions between countries and creates fear that can make peaceful solutions harder to implement. Steps to control nuclear weapons, like treaties and agreements, are important but not always followed by every nation which keeps this issue a global concern.

This topic connects to this year's theme of "*Protecting Democracy in an Age of Severe Political Polarization and Extremism by promoting constructive discourse*" because nuclear weapons threaten the stability and trust needed for democracy to succeed. They can cause conflicts, prevent dialogue, and weaken democratic systems by shifting focus to fear and defense. Countries must solve this issue to ensure a safer world.

## Definition of Key Terms

**Nuclear weapon:** A nuclear weapon is a nuclear-powered bomb or missile that may produce massive explosions and destruction.

**Disarmament:** Disarmament means lessening or getting rid of weapons, especially nuclear ones, to make the world a safer place.

**Non-proliferation:** A global effort aiming to prevent the increase in nuclear weapons.

**Infrastructure:** Infrastructure is a nation's basic systems, such as its roads, power, and hospitals.

**Radiation poisoning:** According to the Cleveland Clinic, radiation is a serious illness caused by nuclear radiation that can be deadly.

**No first use policy:** No first use policy is a formal promise made by a country to not use nuclear weapons first, they can only use it when they're attacked.

## General Overview

### History of Nuclear Weapons

The use of nuclear weapons goes back to World War II when the United States of America dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, cities in Japan in 1945. These bombs were the only use of nuclear weapons in war. The direct effect of it was devastating: over 200,000 people were killed and many were affected by radiation poisoning and other injuries. The long-term environmental damage of the bombs also included making the land unlivable for years.



### The Spread of Nuclear Weapons and the NPT

After World War II, many countries started developing nuclear weapons. In 1968, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was signed to stop the spread of nuclear weapons, promote peaceful use of nuclear technology, and encourage disarmament.

However, countries like India and Pakistan decided not to sign the NPT, while North Korea later left it. They stated that the treaty created a divide between nuclear-armed countries and those without, and therefore led to inequality and distrust. This has caused ongoing tensions, especially in areas like South Asia.

### Nuclear Weapons' Global Impact

Nuclear weapons can cause widespread destruction to cities, displace populations, and leave areas uninhabitable due to radiation. The effects of radiation poisoning can lead to cancer, genetic mutations, and death. Additionally, these weapons create fear and mistrust between nations, which affects diplomatic relations poorly.

## Major Parties Involved and Their Views

### United States of America (USA)

The USA has been a leader in controlling nuclear weapons for a long time. Even though it has a lot of nuclear weapons, it has supported international agreements like the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (NPT) that aims to stop the spread of nuclear weapons.

### Russian Federation

Russia has a mixed history with nuclear weapons and like the United States, has an enormous number of

nuclear weapons. Although being an NPT member, it has expressed its fears about Western plots to lessen its nuclear capability. Russia defends keeping its nuclear weapons for national security.

### **Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)**

Despite receiving strong criticism from lots of countries, North Korea has produced and tested nuclear weapons since leaving the NPT. The DPRK sees its nuclear weapons as a necessary defense against outside threats, especially from South Korea and the United States.

### **People's Republic of China (PRC)**

China has fewer nuclear weapons compared to the United States and Russia, and it is a member of the NPT and continues to fight for nuclear disarmament. China believes that an effective plan for nuclear security is absolutely necessary and nuclear sources should be used peacefully. But it has been upgrading its nuclear facilities more and is cautious of any moves by other nations that threaten its security.

### **Pakistan**

Pakistan developed nuclear weapons following India. It sees its nuclear weapons as a necessary balance to India's nuclear capabilities. Pakistan has not signed the NPT and has stated that it creates an unequal security dynamic in South Asia.

### **India**

India is another nuclear power that has never signed the NPT and views the treaty as discriminatory. India sees its nuclear weapons as significant for national security, particularly due to its negative relations with Pakistan. India has a "no first use" policy for nuclear weapons and calls for a global strategy for nuclear disarmament even though it wants to maintain its nuclear weapons.

### **Timeline of Events**

<b>1945</b>	<i>The USA sent atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.</i>
<b>1962</b>	<i>The Cuban Missile Crisis happened.</i>

<b>1968</b>	<i>The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was signed.</i>
<b>1972</b>	<i>United States and the Soviet Union signed the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I).</i>
<b>1991</b>	<i>The Soviet Union and the United States signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I).</i>

<b>1996</b>	<i>The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was launched and banned all nuclear uses for testing, although it is not fully applied.</i>
<b>2003</b>	<i>North Korea formally withdrew from the NPT and continued to produce nuclear weapons.</i>

## Treaties and Events

### World War II (1945)

The USA sent atomic bombs to Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II. This was the first and only time nuclear weapons were used in war.

### The Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)

The Cuban Missile Crisis was a conflict between the USA and the Soviet Union that nearly led to a nuclear war.

### Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (1968)

The Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty was created to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, promote global disarmament, and encourage peaceful nuclear use.

### Strategic Arms Limitation Talks(1972)

The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks was a meeting between the USA and the Soviet Union that limited the number of nuclear weapons each country could have.

### Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty(1991)

The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty was between the USA and Russia, and it focused on reducing the number of missiles.

### Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (1996)

This treaty banned all nuclear explosions for both testing and military use.

## Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Over the years, there have been many steps to reduce nuclear weapons, especially through agreements like the NPT. While some countries have followed these rules, others have not. Countries like North Korea have left the NPT and developed nuclear weapons anyway.

## Possible Solutions

One solution to the threat of nuclear weapons is to encourage more diplomatic talks between countries. Discussion is important in building trust, reducing tensions, and negotiating agreements that limit the use of nuclear weapons.

Another important solution is to improve monitoring systems that follow nuclear weapons worldwide. Monitoring activities can stop the development of nuclear weapons and help identify banned nuclear activity.

Lastly, decreasing nuclear weapons needs improving existing treaties such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Although the NPT was an important step in stopping the spread of nuclear weapons at first, nations have been withdrawing from the treaty or developing weapons outside of it. Stronger treaties with harsher rules and greater participation are needed to solve this issue.

## **Additional Resources**

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

<https://disarmament.unoda.org/wmd/nuclear/npt/>

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

<https://disarmament.unoda.org/wmd/nuclear/tpnw/>

Cuban Missile Crisis

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Cuban-missile-crisis>

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

<https://www.ctbto.org/our-mission/the-treaty>

START I at a Glance

<https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/start-i-glance>

## **Bibliography**

Aerial image of Hiroshima after the American atomic bombing on Aug. 6, 1945. Penn

Today, <https://penntoday.upenn.edu/news/lessons-hiroshima-75-years-later>.

Accessed 10 Jan. 2025.

“Arms Control Treaties.” *Nuclear Arms Control Treaties*,

[www.atomicarchive.com/resources/treaties/index.html](http://www.atomicarchive.com/resources/treaties/index.html). Accessed 10 Jan. 2025.

“Cambridge Free English Dictionary and Thesaurus.” *Cambridge*,

[dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/). Accessed 10 Jan. 2025.

“Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).” *The Nuclear Threat Initiative*, 18

Sept. 2024,

[www.nti.org/education-center/treaties-and-regimes/comprehensive-nuclear-test-ban-treaty/](https://www.nti.org/education-center/treaties-and-regimes/comprehensive-nuclear-test-ban-treaty/).

“The Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962.” *U.S. Department of State*, U.S. Department of

State, [history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/cuban-missile-crisis](https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/cuban-missile-crisis). Accessed 10

Jan. 2025.

“First Use Policies and the Risk of Escalation.” *Center for Arms Control and*

*Non-Proliferation*, 28 Mar. 2022,

[armscontrolcenter.org/issues/no-first-use/the-united-states-should-not-start-a-nuclear-war](https://armscontrolcenter.org/issues/no-first-use/the-united-states-should-not-start-a-nuclear-war).

“Hiroshima and Nagasaki Bombings.” *ICAN (The International Campaign to Abolish*

*Nuclear Weapons)*. Accessed 10 Jan. 2025.

Jeffrey Feltman, Samantha Gross, et al. “Managing Risk: Nuclear Weapons in the New

Geopolitics.” *Brookings*, 9 Mar. 2022,

[www.brookings.edu/articles/managing-risk-nuclear-weapons-in-the-new-geopolitics/](https://www.brookings.edu/articles/managing-risk-nuclear-weapons-in-the-new-geopolitics/).

Jones, Sara Medi. “Countries That Have Signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear

Weapons.” *CND*, 26 Sept. 2024,

[cnduk.org/list-of-countries-that-have-signed-un-global-nuclear-weapons-ban-treaty/](https://cnduk.org/list-of-countries-that-have-signed-un-global-nuclear-weapons-ban-treaty/).

“Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons.” *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*, [www.icj-cij.org/case/95](http://www.icj-cij.org/case/95). Accessed 10 Jan. 2025. “Nuclear Warfare.” *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 9 Jan. 2025, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear\\_warfare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_warfare).

“Nuclear Weapons As A Threat To Global Peace.” *Nuclear Weapons as a Threat to Global Peace*, [www.gevans.org/speeches/speech430.html](http://www.gevans.org/speeches/speech430.html). Accessed 10 Jan. 2025.

“Nuclear Weapons.” *United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs*, [disarmament.unoda.org/wmd/nuclear](http://disarmament.unoda.org/wmd/nuclear). Accessed 10 Jan. 2025.

“Oxford Languages and Google - English.” Oxford Languages, [languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/](https://languages.oup.com/google-dictionary-en/). Accessed 10 Jan. 2025.

“Treaties & Agreements.” *Treaties & Agreements | Arms Control Association*, [www.armscontrol.org/treaties](http://www.armscontrol.org/treaties). Accessed 10 Jan. 2025.

“Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).” *United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs*, [disarmament.unoda.org/wmd/nuclear/npt/](http://disarmament.unoda.org/wmd/nuclear/npt/). Accessed 10 Jan. 2025.

“Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).” *The Nuclear Threat Initiative*, 8 July 2024,

[www.nti.org/education-center/treaties-and-regimes/treaty-on-the-prohibition-of-nuclear-weapons/](http://www.nti.org/education-center/treaties-and-regimes/treaty-on-the-prohibition-of-nuclear-weapons/).



“Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.” *United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs*, [disarmament.unoda.org/wmd/nuclear/tpnw/](https://disarmament.unoda.org/wmd/nuclear/tpnw/). Accessed 10 Jan. 2025.

“What Is Radiation Sickness?” Cleveland Clinic, 6 Dec. 2024,  
[my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/24328-radiation-sickness](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/24328-radiation-sickness).

“Which Countries Have Nuclear Weapons?” *ICAN (The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons)*, [www.icanw.org/nuclear\\_arsenals](https://www.icanw.org/nuclear_arsenals). Accessed 10 Jan. 2025.

“Why Condemn Threats to Use Nuclear Weapons? - ICAN.” *ICAN (The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons)*,  
[www.icanw.org/why\\_condemn\\_threats\\_to\\_use\\_nuclear\\_weapons](https://www.icanw.org/why_condemn_threats_to_use_nuclear_weapons). Accessed 10 Jan. 2025.