# GA5 Political Committee

*Assuring the protection of non-nuclear states from states armed with nuclear weapons.*

BY: SELİN KIZILTAN

**Forum:** GA5 Political

**Issue:** Assuring the protection of non-nuclear states from states armed with nuclear weapons

**Student Officer:** Selin Kızıltan - Deputy Chair

## Introduction

In the age where nuclear weapons cast their shadows upon international relations, the safety of non-nuclear states grows to be a pressing global concern. The presence of nuclear weapons in the hands of select nations causes a great power imbalance between nuclear and non-nuclear states resulting in great political polarization and heightened tensions that threaten the stability of international peace and security. With nuclear countries possessing Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD's), non-nuclear states are left in jeopardy to these threats, as they lack the means to counter such overwhelming destructive power. Non-nuclear states, particularly ones in vulnerable geopolitical regions, often face pressures from nuclear states, raising questions about security, justice and the effectiveness of existing international frameworks. This issue becomes even more critical when considering the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (NPT), which aims to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, promote disarmament, and ensure the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Despite these efforts, the assurance mechanisms to protect non-nuclear states from nuclear threats remain fragile. It is extremely important to establish strong and enforceable frameworks that provide broad security guarantees for non-nuclear states, ensuring their safety and decreasing the polarization between nuclear and non-nuclear states.

## Definition of Key Terms

**Nuclear weapons:** A bomb/missile that releases energy in an explosive manner as a result of nuclear fission, nuclear fusion or a combination of both

**Nuclear Weapon State:** Countries that have manufactured and exploded any kind of nuclear weapon before January 1st 1967

**Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS):** Countries that do not manufacture or otherwise obtain nuclear weapons of any sorts

**Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD):** A chemical, biological, nuclear, radiological, or any other kind of weapon that has the power to cause harm to a lot of people

**Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (NPT):** A treaty that prevents the spread of nuclear weapons to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy and further the goal of nuclear disarmament

**Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZ):** A specific region that does not manufacture, test, use or acquire any nuclear weapons

**Negative Security Assurances:** A guarantee by nuclear armed states that they won't threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states

## General Overview

Nuclear weapons have been a central issue in international relations since their creation during World War II. These powerful weapons have immense destructive capacity, posing a significant threat to global peace and security. The topic of protecting non-nuclear states from the potential dangers posed by nuclear-armed states involves historical, legal, and political dimensions that are crucial to understanding the broader picture. With the power imbalance between non-nuclear and nuclear states, it is extremely important to have effective frameworks and treaties that ensure the safety and protection of those non-nuclear states from those that possess nuclear weapons. The protection of NNWS are vital for maintaining international peace and stability. When nuclear-armed states use their weapons as tools of intimidation, it undermines the security of NNWS posing great threats to them and their citizens. This not only violates the sovereignty of NNWS, but also increases the likelihood of conflict escalation, potentially leading to catastrophic consequences. In this regard, international bodies such as the United Nations have proposed a set of measures that include legally binding security guarantees, nuclear-free zones (such as in Latin America and Africa), and the advancement of treaties such as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which seeks to ban nuclear weapons altogether. Ultimately, through international cooperation and legislation, the use of nuclear weapons can be prohibited globally, ensuring a safer and more equitable world for everyone.

## Major Parties Involved and Their Views

**United States:** One of the greatest nuclear powers of the world, who is also one of the first signatories of the NPT and offers negative security assurances

**Russia:** A nuclear armed country, Russia supports the NPT and provides negative security assurances but ties these assurances to compliance with the NPT and the absence of aggression by non-nuclear states

**China:** China is the only NPT-recognized nuclear-armed state with a declared "no-first-use" policy and offers unconditional negative security assurances to non-nuclear NPT signatories

**France:** As one of the nuclear-armed states of the world, France supports the NPT and provides conditional negative security assurances

**United Kingdom:** As one of the five recognized nuclear-armed states under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) alongside China, Russia, France and the United States, the U.K. provides negative security assurances to non-nuclear states under the NPT, pledging not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against them, provided they comply with the treaty and are allies with nuclear-armed states in conflict

## Timeline of Events

| | |
|---|---|
| **1945** | *The first and only use of nuclear weapons during war* |
| **1963** | *The Partial Test Ban Treaty(PTBT)  bans nuclear weapon testing in specific areas* |
| **1968** | *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of  Nuclear Weapons(NPT) is signed* |
| **1978** | *First UN session on disarmament* |
| **1996** | *Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is signed* |
| **2017** | *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons(TPNW) is signed* |

## Treaties and Events

*1945 - **First use of Nuclear Weapons:*** In 1945, the U.S. dropped nuclear bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II, marking the first and only use of nuclear weapons in warfare.

*1963 - The Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT):* This treaty signed in 1963 bans the testing of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, outer space and underwater. While not directly addressing non-nuclear states' protection, it is an early step toward regulating nuclear weapons.

*1968 - The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT):* Under this treaty, the five recognized nuclear states, those being Russia, China, the U.S., the U.K. and France, agreed not to transfer any nuclear weapons to non-nuclear weapon states, not to encourage non-nuclear states to obtain nuclear weapons and promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy. This treaty with 191 parties involved, aims to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, promote peaceful nuclear technology, and work toward complete nuclear disarmament.

*1978 - First UN Session on Disarmament:* The United Nations adopts a resolution emphasizing the importance of negative security assurances for non-nuclear states as part of broader disarmament efforts.

*1996 - The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty:* This treaty bans all nuclear explosions for any purpose. Though not yet in force, it aims to prevent further nuclear weapon development, indirectly protecting non-nuclear states.

*2017 - Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW):* This treaty bans the use, possession, testing, and transfer of nuclear weapons under international law, aiming for the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons. The treaty strengthens protections for non-nuclear states but is not supported by nuclear-armed states, limiting its global impact

## Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Efforts at guaranteeing the protection of NNWS from NWS have taken several decades with various treaties, agreements, and diplomatic conferences. However, despite some progress, such attempts have met with considerable problems and thus experienced mixed or limited success. Below follows an assessment of key initiatives and why they have struggled in attempting to find a complete solution:

1) **Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT):** This treaty, aiming for complete nuclear disarmament, has fallen short due to security assurances by NWS not being legally binding, causing NNWS to feel that they lack strong guarantees regarding their safety. Furthermore, NWS are criticized for not meeting obligations under the treaty, which raises concerns about the double standards in nuclear policies.

2) **Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZ):** Although the establishment of these zones are a great step for nuclear disarmament, they fall short since they cannot prevent nuclear-armed states from

threatening NNWS outside the zones and violations of NWFZ mostly go unpunished, reducing their effectiveness.

3) **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT):** Despite this treaty being a good step to reduce nuclear threats, it has fallen short due to NWS such as China and the U.S. not validating it. Without the validation of such key states, the treaty's potential remains unfulfilled, leaving gaps in the global non-proliferation framework.

4) **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW):** This treaty aims to completely ban the use, creation and possession of nuclear weapons, but despite its efforts have fallen short since both NWS and NNWS have refrained from signing it, making its implementation and influence highly challenging.

## Possible Solutions

1) **Strengthening Legally Binding Security Assurances:** Developing legally binding agreements on the security assurances NWS have to NNWS and establishing strict penalties for violations of these agreements will ensure the safety and security of NNWS from the nuclear threats that NWS can pose.

2) **Expanding and Enforcing NWFZ's:** Broadening the geographical coverage of NWFZs and strengthening their enforcement especially in NNWS will give defense guarantees to NNWS since it limits the geographical spread of nuclear weapons and reduces tensions in volatile regions.

This is the section where you should introduce possible solutions to the issue. We recommend that you provide at least two possible solutions to stimulate productive debate and to serve as a starting point for two resolutions to be produced.

## Additional Resources

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (UNODA):
https://disarmament.unoda.org/wmd/nuclear/npt/

Treaty on The Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (UN): https://legal.un.org/avl/ha/tnpt/tnpt.html

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT): https://www.ctbto.org/

UN Security Council Resolutions on Nuclear Security: https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN): https://www.icanw.org/

## Bibliography

- ("Nuclear Weapon." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., 26 Dec. 2024, www.britannica.com/technology/nuclear-weapon.)
- "The IAEA and the Non-Proliferation Treaty." *IAEA*, IAEA, 8 June 2016, www.iaea.org/topics/non-proliferation-treaty#:~:text=Nuclear%2Dweapon%20States%20parties%20under,States%20parties%20to%20the%20Treaty.
- "The IAEA and the Non-Proliferation Treaty." *IAEA*, IAEA, 8 June 2016, www.iaea.org/topics/non-proliferation-treaty#:~:text=Under%20the%20NPT%2C%20non%2Dnuclear,State%20party%20to%20manufacture%20or.
- "Weapons of Mass Destruction: Homeland Security." *U.S. Department of Homeland Security*, www.dhs.gov/topics/weapons-mass-destruction. Accessed 16 Jan. 2025.
- "The IAEA and the Non-Proliferation Treaty." *IAEA*, IAEA, 8 June 2016, www.iaea.org/topics/non-proliferation-treaty#:~:text=The%20Treaty%20on%20the%20Non,and%20general%20and%20complete%20disarmament.
- "Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZ) at a Glance." *Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZ) At a Glance | Arms Control Association*, www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/nuclear-weapon-free-zones-nwfz-glance. Accessed 17 Jan. 2025.