

FOREIGN AFFAIRS CANADA
Policy Position Paper
Topic: NON PROLIFERATION, ARMS CONTROL, AND DISARMAMENT

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Name of Course: PAPM 4000
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Issues Identified:

Since the disasters of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as the finale of the second World War, nuclear arms have never again been employed in warfare. Yet nuclear proliferation continues to be a concern, despite the existence of conventions such as the NPT calling for non-proliferation and disarmament. Nonetheless, there remain 5 recognized nuclear weapons states, with about another 5 known to or suspected to have nuclear weapons capacity.

Areas of Consensus/Disagreement:

While the NPT entered into force in 1970, much remains to be done to ensure complete disarmament and eradication of nuclear weapons, and as long as nuclear arms remain in existence, the threat to states around the globe remains equally imminent in light of the mass destruction capabilities of such weapons.

While it is clear that warmongering and arms races are not desirable or pleasant, many advocate nuclear capacity as desirable in the sense that it ultimately eliminates the incentive to resort to war: given the dire consequences that are essentially equalized through proliferation. Nonetheless, with a number of 187 countries as signatories to the treaty, 5 of which being current nuclear weapons states, it is clear that the international community agrees on the importance of eradicating these and other weapons of mass destruction.

Yet Canada faces an interesting dilemma when approaching issues regarding disarmament and non-proliferation: while Canada is a signatory to the Nuclear Non Proliferation treaty, Canada's membership in NATO renders it as a nation which consider nuclear arms as necessary to national defence.

Your Response to one of the eDiscussion Questions: *What is the main nuclear threat facing Canada today?*

As a middle power in the international community today, Canada plays a key role in promoting non-proliferation and disarmament. Though not retaining nuclear capacity on its own, Canada, just like any other nation, still faces a recognizable threat from the mere existence of nuclear arms across the globe. This threat is made acute as a neighbour and major ally of the United States particularly given the various strategic conflicts which the US is frequently engaged in, more recently having both North Korea and Iran as a focus, and centered mainly on nuclear weapons capacity.

It is estimated that there are 27000 nuclear arms in 9 countries today. With numerous American nuclear reservoirs located close to the Canadian border, the risk of nuclear fallout is intensified. Likewise, the current discussion on Ballistic Missile Defence scheme will likely prove to be detrimental in the way of shielding Canada from such risks, as well as placing significant economic drain on Canada in the way of maintaining a national commitment to such a scheme with little direct benefit.

Your Policy Recommendations concerning this question:

- Canada should refrain from a commitment to the proposed scheme on Ballistic Missile Defence
- Canada should continue to be an active proponent of nuclear-nonproliferation and nuclear disarmament treaties and should in fact enhance its advocacy of treaties and proposals that are in favour of such aims
- Canada, as a member of NATO, projects conflicting aims regarding nuclear weapons capacity: Canada should push to eradicate the contention as implicit through membership in NATO that nuclear weapons are by any means essential for defence. Canada should instead propose for the elimination of nuclear arms and strive for the disarmament of current nuclear weapons states, including that of its immediate neighbour and other close allies.
- As a nation recognized for its multilateral approach to conflict resolution, Canada should pursue and promote bilateral and multilateral talks amongst nations such as Pakistan and India, the United States and Iran, with Canada participating as the arbitrating party, to help resolve differences that may otherwise lead to or escalate a nuclear arms race situation.
- Canada should encourage routine reporting and reviews on disarmament processes in current nuclear weapons state that are signatory to the treaty, as well as encouraging strict watch on matters concerning non-proliferation, both vertical and horizontal