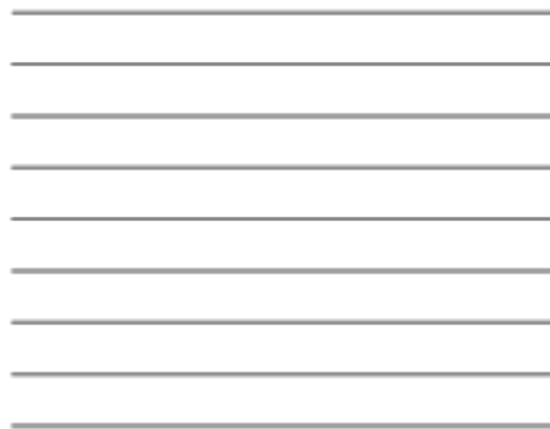
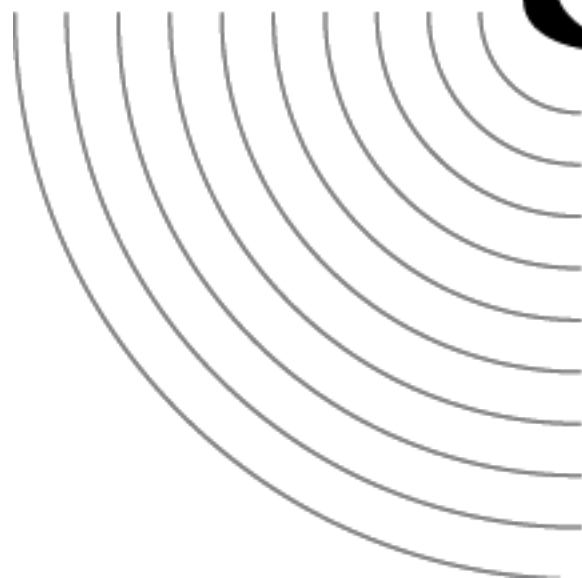


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## Disarmament: The Forgotten Premises Of Non-Proliferation

DECEMBER 4, 2018 ([HTTPS://LOBELOG.COM/DISARMAMENT-THE-FORGOTTEN-PREMISES-OF-NON-PROLIFERATION/](https://lobelog.com/disarmament-the-forgotten-premises-of-non-proliferation/)) GUEST ([HTTPS://LOBELOG.COM/AUTHOR/GUEST/](https://lobelog.com/author/guest/)) / 3 COMMENTS ([HTTPS://LOBELOG.COM/DISARMAMENT-THE-FORGOTTEN-PREMISES-OF-NON-PROLIFERATION/#COMMENTS](https://lobelog.com/disarmament-the-forgotten-premises-of-non-proliferation/#comments))

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**by Seyed Hossein Mousavian**

In an interview with the daily *Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung*, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas announced a German-led initiative on global disarmament, warning that technologically advanced weapons can soon transform science fiction into “deadly reality.” (<https://www.dw.com/en/germany-announces-new-global-arms-control-project/a->

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46533071) This announcement came a few weeks after President Trump declared that the United States plans to withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) (<https://www.state.gov/t/avc/trty/102360.htm>), which was ratified in 1988. State managers in the European Union recognize the crucial need to embark on universal disarmament even if the current U.S. government remains oblivious.

For about five decades during the Cold War, a nuclear arms race between the Soviet Union and the United States constantly threatened the peace and security of the world. However, advances in the destructive capacities of military technologies, which drastically raised the cost of nuclear wars in economic and human terms, produced a mutual deterrence between the two leading superpowers. This political reality of mutually assured destruction meant that the line of demarcation between victory and self-annihilation is extremely thin.

Hence, observing the magnitude of the destructive capacity of nuclear weapons, both superpowers became increasingly aware of the importance of mutual reduction of their nuclear stockpiles.

### Gloomy Prospects for Nuclear Disarmament

Prior to the implementation of the INF Treaty, another crucial international instrument—the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (NPT)—has served as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. The NPT provides legal and technical mechanisms to facilitate the pursuit of nuclear disarmament by the nuclear-weapon states. More importantly, Article VI (<http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2005/npttreaty.html>) of the treaty legally obligates five nuclear states namely, United States, Russia, China, France, and the UK to “complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

Over the past five decades, none of the NPT-designated nuclear weapon states has meaningfully engaged in negotiations to complete disarmament of their nuclear weapons. Worse, they have set agendas to enhance and modernize their nuclear capabilities at enormously high costs. For instance, modernizing the U.S. nuclear arsenal will cost an estimated \$1.7 trillion (<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-nuclear-arsenal/u-s-nuclear-arsenal-to-cost-1-2-trillion-over-next-30-years-cbo-idUSKBN1D030E>) over the next 30 years, which is equivalent to the GDP of Canada! Hence, the biggest violators of the core tenets of the NPT are the five designated states who possess nuclear weapons.

The NPT-designated countries are not the only ones who continue to violate the treaty. Those who have failed to join the treaty in the first place have, with the exception of North Korea, have escaped the repercussions of failing to join such an important international treaty. India, Pakistan, and Israel are non-signatories of the NPT that possess nuclear weapons, but international efforts at disarming them have been largely in vain.

In July 2017, over 120 nations adopted (<https://www.theatlantic.com/news/archive/2017/07/122-nations-approve-historic-treaty-to-ban-nuclear-weapons/533046/>) the international treaty banning possession of nuclear weapons by the nine nuclear weapon states. This attempt at getting such a historic resolution approved in order to universally ban possession of nuclear weapons by all UN member states was scuttled by the nuclear-weapon states themselves.

### Impediments to Denuclearization of the Middle East

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In 1974, Iran formally presented (<http://www.pacificecologist.org/archive/22/pe22-iran-and-middle-east-zone.pdf>) the proposal for establishing the Middle East nuclear-weapons-free-zone in a resolution submitted to the United Nations General Assembly with Egypt as a co-sponsor. Since then, despite numerous UN resolutions to create a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction (including nuclear warheads), Israel remains the single state in the region to have gone nuclear.

The Iran nuclear deal was a step forward in terms of nuclear non-proliferation. As President Barack Obama said (<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/04/02/statement-president-framework-prevent-iran-obtaining-nuclear-weapon>), “the Iran deal is the most robust and intrusive inspections and transparency regime ever negotiated for any nuclear program in history.” The regionalization of the Iran deal could have been a great step toward nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East.

Instead, the U.S. withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal limited the possibilities of creating a Middle East free from nuclear weapons. The “withdrawal doctrine” of President Trump’s administration, which has led to pulling back from effective arms control agreements along with his administration’s plans to modernize U.S. nuclear arsenal, is inimical to the premise of both regional and universal disarmament. For the first time since President Truman, a U.S. president has so blatantly dismissed the premise of reducing nuclear arsenals.

In today’s world, sober political analysts now agree that possession of nuclear weapons—once an assurance of security—barely does anything to protect countries from threats and insecurities. Hence, further modernization of nuclear armaments will only serve to undermine the peace and stability of this planet. It will also push the world toward a cataclysmic great powers conflict that is so reminiscent of the outdated Cold War mentality.

The difference, however, is that in the context of the Cold War, the polarized international politics and the constant threats of nuclear annihilation focused peace efforts increasingly on law and adjudication. The NPT was one such conspicuous result. In contrast, the “withdrawal doctrine” of the Trump administration is pushing the world to the brink of a new nuclear arms race. Nothing endangers (<https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2018-12/features/nothing-endangers-planet-more-nuclear-weapons>) the planet more than nuclear weapons. Only a renewed effort to negotiate nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agreements can reduce this urgent threat.

*Seyed Hossein Mousavian (<http://hosseinmousavian.com/>) is Middle East Security and Nuclear Policy Specialist at Princeton University and a former spokesman for Iran’s nuclear negotiators. His book, The Iranian Nuclear Crisis: A Memoir, was published in 2012 by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. His latest book, Iran and the United States: An Insider’s view on the Failed Past and the Road to Peace was released in May 2014.*

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