

# GALMUN 2017



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## SECURITY COUNCIL

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**Research Report**

February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017

## **Background:**

More than twenty years have passed since the end of the cold war, but the continued existence of thousands of nuclear weapons in the hands of different states still poses a serious threat to the security of our countries and the whole world at large.

Nuclear weapons pose a particularly destructive threat. Prevention of the proliferation and use of nuclear weapons is of urgent importance to public health.

Today, 8 countries - China, India, France, North Korea, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States - hold nearly 16,000 nuclear weapons. Even though there are allegations that Israel is the 9<sup>th</sup> country to have nuclear weapons in its arsenal, Israel has continuously denied these claims.

Nuclear war is the exchange of nuclear weapons between two or more states in open conflict. Many people are of the opinion that it is unlikely to occur. It is true that this is an unlikely scenario, but it is not impossible; a nuclear war could take place in more ways than one might think, sparked by any number of occurrences from a pure accident to an intentional strike.

Lately, the odds of a nuclear war occurring between the U.S. and Russia have decreased, but there is a risk of an unplanned or unlawful use of nuclear weapons caused by the non-stop proliferation and presence of large stockpiles.

Not only that, but there is also the possibility of nuclear war caused by countries with smaller nuclear arsenals, such as India and Pakistan, which are actively engaged in regional conflicts, making the possibility of regional nuclear war a concern.

North Korea, which has illicitly acquired nuclear weapons, has violated its nuclear-safeguards commitment and is suspected of covertly pursuing nuclear-weapon capabilities.

Another aspect worth mentioning is nuclear testing which is conducted by countries possessing nuclear-weapons for different purposes. In the five decades between 1945 and 1996, over 2,000 nuclear tests were carried out all over the world; imagine how much harm has been caused to the environment as a result of these tests. In 1996, The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was

adopted by The General Assembly but has not entered into force due to the refusal of eight states to ratify the treaty.

The United Nations isn't underestimating the issue of the increasing nuclear weapons stockpiles and the possibility of a nuclear war between states and has sought to eliminate such weapons ever since its establishment. The first resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1946 established a Commission to deal with problems related to the discovery of atomic energy among others.

An important treaty regarding this issue is the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty), whose goal is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons (which will increase the risk of a nuclear war occurring), and to promote the peaceful use of nuclear weapons and cooperation between nations. A total of 190 parties have signed the treaty, including the five nuclear-weapon states. More countries have ratified the NPT than any other arms limitation and disarmament agreement, a testament to the treaty's significance. The NPT non-nuclear-weapon states agree never to acquire nuclear weapons and the NPT nuclear-weapon states in exchange agree to share the benefits of peaceful nuclear technology and to pursue nuclear disarmament aimed at the ultimate elimination of their nuclear arsenals. The USA, China, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, and France were identified by the NPT to possess nuclear weapons. Despite the fact that the NPT legitimizes their nuclear arsenals, it does not provide them with the privilege of using and developing their weapons unreservedly. The NPT has not been signed by three countries: Israel, India and Pakistan. Many international efforts have been taken to push them to sign it, including The Nuclear Summit and other negotiations conducted between the UN and other major countries.

The latest action by the UN was to adopt a landmark resolution to launch negotiations in 2017 on a treaty outlawing nuclear weapons. The resolution is a recommendation to hold a conference in the UN's general assembly in New York with the agenda of discussing the total elimination of nuclear weapons. 123 countries voted for the resolution.

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### **Questions to consider in your position paper:**

- How do nuclear weapons affect security and peace around the world?
  - How can the international community push countries to sign and ratify the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons?
  - How can countries who have nuclear weapons reach a settlement pledging never to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons?
  - What actions should be taken against countries which refuse to stop producing nuclear weapons?
  - How can the international community completely eliminate nuclear weapons?
  - How can we prevent nuclear tests from happening?
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### **Useful links:**

- <http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2005/npttreaty.html>
  - <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt/>
  - <https://www.iaea.org/publications/documents/treaties/npt>
  - <http://unausa.org/global-classrooms-model-un/how-to-participate/model-un-preparation>[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comprehensive\\_Nuclear-Test-Ban\\_Treaty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comprehensive_Nuclear-Test-Ban_Treaty)
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