

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the 1990s the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction became a central problem of international security. Yet, despite the unprecedented attention given to proliferation in general and to nuclear proliferation in particular since 1990, the nuclear non-proliferation regime is perhaps as unstable as it has ever been. In 1998, for the first time since the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was signed, a state openly declared itself to be a nuclear weapon state by testing its nuclear arms, to be followed almost immediately by another. The Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has yet to enter into force, and is unlikely to do so while India refuses to sign and the Treaty languishes unratified and only barely still alive in the United States. This report considers the role of various confidence and security building measures (CSBMs) in shoring up the nuclear disarmament regime, and in particular the role Canada can play in advancing the cause of these CSBMs.

The threat to the NPT, and therefore to the broader agenda of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament, stems in large part from the inability of the nuclear weapon states to fulfil their commitment to negotiate nuclear disarmament. In order to address this threat, therefore, the nuclear disarmament process must be revitalised. A crucial step in this revitalisation is the delegitimation of nuclear weapons as instruments of security for those states which still possess them until such time as comprehensive nuclear disarmament is complete. Confidence and security building measures have an important part to play in facilitating this delegitimation.

Over the past several years, a number of authoritative proposals have been made for advancing the nuclear disarmament agenda. The first of these was the "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament", adopted by the NPT Review and Extension Conference in 1995, in parallel with the NPT extension decision. It was followed in 1996 by a ruling of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat and use of nuclear weapons, in 1997 by the Report of the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, and in 1998 by the statement of the New Agenda Coalition. In Canada, these were joined by the SCFAIT Report of 1998. Taken together these various proposals set out a menu of possible confidence and security building measures designed to advance the nuclear disarmament process.

Because it is centrally important to any of these efforts to deligitimise nuclear weapons as instruments of security, NATO's strategy takes on particular importance. In 1999 NATO revised its Strategic Concept, but in doing so it restated the central role nuclear weapons are to play in guaranteeing the security of the Alliance. The report evaluates a further revision of the NATO Strategic Concept, which would move Alliance strategy away from its reliance on nuclear weapons as a final nuclear CSBM.

The report concludes that the two most important CSBMs, judged in terms of the need to delegitimize nuclear weapons as instruments of security, are a list of specified changes to the NATO Strategic Concept and the de-altering/de-mating of the Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NWSs) strategic nuclear arms.