

Number 4

March 1986

# REVIEWING THE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

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SEP 12 1986

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The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, commonly called the Non-Proliferation Treaty or NPT, was signed on July 1, 1968. The treaty is generally regarded as one of the most important treaties in the field of nuclear arms control and as the main pillar of the international structure to prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons. It is also generally agreed that the treaty has played an indispensable role in the success of the efforts to prevent the "horizontal proliferation" of nuclear weapons; that is, the spread of such weapons to non-nuclear states, but that it has failed to prevent the "vertical proliferation" of such weapons; that is, their further development, production and deployment by the nuclear powers.

The treaty, in essence, codifies a bargain between those nuclear weapons states (NWS) which became parties to the treaty (the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom) and the non-nuclear weapons states (NNWS), whereby the latter agreed that they would not manufacture or acquire nuclear weapons, in exchange for a promise from the nuclear powers to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race. When the treaty was signed the United States and Soviet Union announced their intention to enter into the strategic arms limitation talks known as SALT.

In addition, the treaty reconfirmed and strengthened the previous promise made by the nuclear powers in establishing the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1957. The nuclear powers had undertaken to provide assistance and information on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy to the non-nuclear countries. In exchange the latter had agreed to accept international safeguards over the nuclear materials and equipment provided to them in order to ensure that they were used solely for peaceful purposes. The NPT provided for more far-reaching "full-scope" safeguards; the non-nuclear countries agreed to accept IAEA safeguards not only over the nuclear material and equipment

supplied to them but over all their nuclear materials and facilities whatever their source or origin.

At the insistence of the non-nuclear states who wanted to ensure that the nuclear states would live up to their obligations, the NPT contains a provision that a conference of the parties could be held every five years "to review the operation of this treaty with a view to assuring that the purposes of the preamble and the provisions of the treaty are being realized."

The NPT entered into force in 1970. By mid-1985 it had 130 parties, more than any other arms control treaty. The two other nuclear weapon states, China and France, are not parties to the treaty, nor are some 35 other countries including several near-nuclear states such as Argentina, Brazil, India, Israel, Pakistan, South Africa and Spain.

## THE REVIEW OF THE TREATY IN 1975 AND 1980

The first two conferences of the parties held to review the operation of the NPT, in 1975 and in 1980, witnessed some interesting and unusual developments. Unlike most conferences dealing with arms control, there were few differences between East and West; there was an evident commonality of interest among the three nuclear powers and they displayed a sense of co-operative solidarity in resisting the demands of the non-nuclear countries and in particular those of the non-aligned and neutral countries, mainly those of the Third World.

The First Review Conference in 1975 was attended by 57 of the then 96 parties to the treaty. All non-nuclear parties claimed that they had lived up fully to their commitments under the NPT, and the non-aligned ones claimed that the nuclear powers had not done so. The non-aligned stressed the failure of the nuclear powers to implement the provisions of the treaty concerning the cessation of the nuclear arms race and co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Among their main

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