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GAI

Effective actions towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons



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Fabianna Flores Sanchez

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Student Officer:	Fabianna Flores Sanchez
Position:	Deputy Chair

Introduction

The world has never been so exposed to danger after the discovery and usage of nuclear weapons. If dropped, one nuclear warhead can kill millions of people at once and those lucky enough to survive will suffer the consequences for generations to come. Due to the long-term catastrophic impacts of a nuclear bombing, the total elimination of nuclear weapons is needed. The United Nations has tried to enforce the total disarmament of nuclear weapons for many years, but alas there are still over 15,000 nuclear warheads in total spread out across the world. In 1946, the General Assembly’s first resolution was about the issue of nuclear disarmament. Even though this has been a priority goal that has been supported by all United Nations Secretary General, over half of Earth’s population lives in countries that possess nuclear weapons or countries that are members of the nuclear alliances.

Nuclear weapons have only been used twice in warfare. This was during the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 during the final stages of World War II. It was during World War II that nuclear weapons were first introduced. Then, during Cold War lasting from 1945 to around 1990, the United States of America and the Soviet Union began developing more nuclear weapons such as the atomic bomb. This causes nuclear proliferation since more and more nuclear weapons were being deployed in for military use during this time period. This was the time period known as the ‘Atomic Age’ as it was when nuclear weapons were first discovered and used.

After the nuclear bombings in Japan, a treaty was established to help promote cooperation when using nuclear energy and avoiding the proliferation of such weapons. This treaty is known as the Nuclear-Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and was set up in 1970. It recognizes the United States, the United Kingdom, China, France and the Russian Federation as nuclear weapon states, which had already built and exploded a nuclear weapon before the NPT was established. The NPT has worked so far to allow states to

develop nuclear power technology for only peaceful purposes. However, India, Israel, Pakistan and South Sudan have never joined the NPT. This could lead to future problems seeing as these nations still possess nuclear weapons and are continuing with nuclear weapon programmes. As long as these nations avoid joining the international treaty, it will be difficult to totally eliminate nuclear weapons therefore certain measures must be taken to ensure the safety of the world's population.

Definition of Key Terms

Nuclear weapon

A nuclear weapon refers to a missile or bomb that has been created using nuclear energy such as fission or a combination of fission and fusion so that when it explodes, the power comes from a nuclear reaction.

Nuclear disarmament

Nuclear disarmament means to either reduce or completely eliminate the states possession of any nuclear weapons in order to have a nuclear-weapon free world. The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT) has established a treaty to reduce the number of nuclear weapons in the world with a final goal of reaching full disarmament, as the proliferation of these weapons would be a great danger as there would be a likely possibility of a nuclear war.

Nuclear arsenal

This term means a weapon, such as hydrogen or an atomic bomb, where all of its destructive energy comes from a nuclear reaction.

Nuclear warhead

A nuclear warhead is a more specific type of nuclear arsenal as it is a B61 nuclear bomb that delivers an explosion in the form of a rocket or missile. Currently, there are over 15,000 warheads around the world.

Non-proliferation



In this case, non-proliferation means the prevention of increasing the amount of nuclear weapons a nation has. This will avoid the spread of nuclear weapons and allows there to be more control over the weapons to ensure safety.

Nuclear weapons states (NWS)

There are 9 nations that possess nuclear weapons in the world. These include the Russian Federation, the United States, France, China, the United Kingdom, Pakistan, India, Israel and North Korea. The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) has appointed only 5 out of these 9 countries as Nuclear Weapons States. These are the Russian federation, the United States, the United Kingdom, France and China. The reason these have been set as the Nuclear Weapons States is because they have agreed to the treaty and had already built and tested a nuclear bomb by the time the treaty was established. The other nations are still in possession of nuclear weapons but have not joined the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty and do not follow the agreements of this international agreement.

Uranium enrichment

This is a type of Uranium that is purified in order to contain more Uranium-235. What occurs is that the enriched Uranium consists of more nuclei that can be hit by neutrons in order to create a more powerful chemical reaction so that more energy is released.

General Overview

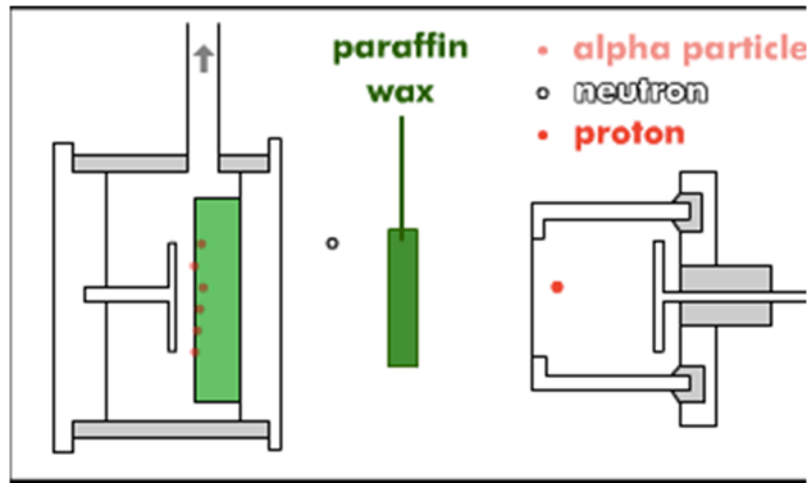
Actions are urgently needed in order to completely eliminate nuclear weapons around the world. Over the years, the proliferation of nuclear weapons has lowered due to international agreements, however the total elimination has not yet occurred since not all nuclear warheads have been physically destroyed. Also, due to the fact that there are still four nations that have not agreed to follow the NPT, there are still nuclear weapons in the hands of these states and that could be used and lead to negative consequences such as those seen during the bombings in Japan.

Discovery of nuclear fission

In 1919, Ernest Rutherford found that inside the nucleus of an atom, was also a positively charged particle known as a proton. As a result, in 1930, scientists were able to discover that when alpha particles, made up of 2 protons and 2 neutrons, were fired towards



Beryllium, the rays produced were similar to gamma rays, which have a high penetration power, as they did not deflect when they passed through the magnetic field. What occurred in this experiment was that when the alpha particles hit the beryllium, one free neutron was knocked out of the nucleus, which then turned into a proton after passing through a paraffin wax layer.



Cambridge Physics - Discovery of the Neutron. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 June 2016. <http://www-outreach.phy.cam.ac.uk/camphy/neutron/neutron4_1.htm>.

In 1932, James Chadwick further researched this experiment to discover the neutron, which is a particle with a neutral charge and the same mass as a proton. Chadwick then determined that the mass of the neutral radiation that penetrated through the Beryllium was the same as the mass of a proton that was released after hitting the paraffin wax. He also found out that the free neutron was unstable, as it has no charge and transformed into a proton after hitting the paraffin wax rich in protons. This then accelerated the findings in atomic physics as more discoveries were made about nuclear power and most importantly, nuclear weapons. The reason that neutrons became the basis of the nuclear bomb was because a neutron can be fired at the nucleus without getting repelled since it has a neutral charge.

Nuclear fission

Nuclear fission is the splitting of a nucleus in order to release a lot of energy. Firstly, a neutron hits the nucleus of uranium-235 or plutonium-239. This then causes the uranium-235 or plutonium-239 nucleus to split into smaller nuclei and also release free neutrons. These



two nuclei are radioactive meaning energy is already released. Then, since this is a chain reaction, more neutrons keep getting released from the radioactive nuclei and hitting more nuclei in order to produce more energy. When making nuclear energy, this chain reaction can be controlled in order to avoid it going too fast. However, fission is used in nuclear bombs and it is impossible to stop the chain reaction therefore causing one nuclear bomb to release an uncontrollable amount of energy that can destroy a whole city.

The Manhattan Project

During World War II, large developments of nuclear weapons were being made especially within the United States of America. In 1941, Franklin D. Roosevelt agreed to start a secret project to build an atomic bomb after Albert Einstein urged the president to do so due to the fact that the Nazi scientists were using nuclear power to also find a way to construct a nuclear bomb. On July 16th, 1945, at a site in Alamogordo, New Mexico, the world's first nuclear bomb was detonated. After this, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) took over the project. During the Manhattan Project, four bombs were built, two of which would be later used in warfare. The period after this project is known as the nuclear age.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki

On the 6th of August 1945, the United States detonated a uranium-235 bomb on the city of Hiroshima, Japan. Instantly, around 80,000 people were killed by the impact of the bomb. Three days later, a plutonium bomb is dropped over the city of Nagasaki, Japan this time killing about 74,000 people. Before, the bombing, the Japanese government refused unconditional surrender and therefore this caused Harry S. Truman to stick to his word of destroying Japan if they did not surrender. It was only on the 14th of August 1945 that Japan finally surrendered and World War II ended but this only led to the start of the Cold War.

Nuclear arms race during the Cold War

The United States of America and the Soviet Union began a race for nuclear power. At this point, the United States already had the possession of nuclear weapons meaning they also controlled foreign policy when dealing with nuclear technology. The United States then made an official policy named containment doctrine. This was established in order to avoid the further spread of communism around the world. To ensure this, the U.S gave military and financial aid to countries in danger of falling into communism.



The nuclear arms race officially started off the Cold War once the Soviet Union was able to get the Manhattan Project design and detonate their first atomic bomb on August 29th, 1949. During the nuclear arms race, the United States and the Soviet Union increased their nuclear weapon inventories to ensure they could have the largest amount of warheads in order to win supremacy. By 1952, the United States had created and tested the hydrogen bomb; 2500 times more powerful than the Hiroshima bomb. Once again, the Soviet Union reached the same level as the United States in 1953 when they also tested a hydrogen bomb. During the 1950s, both nations began developing Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) in order to be able to deliver weapons across continents very quickly. By the 1960s, the United States had around 8,000 ICBMs and the Soviet Union had 1000 less.

Since both nations had around the same number of warheads, this led to the term Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD). What this meant was that if the United States decided to drop a bomb on the Soviet Union, they would retaliate immediately causing it to be too costly and dangerous to use their nuclear weapons. Also, as the Cold War went by, countries such as France, China and the United Kingdom also began building nuclear weapons. By 1986, it was estimated that there were a total of 40,000 nuclear weapons around the world. In 1991, the arms race ended when the Cold War came to an end and the Soviet Union fell.

NATO and Warsaw pact

Many Western countries including the United States of America and Canada formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949. It was created in order to ensure the security of the Western hemisphere against the Soviet Union and their Warsaw allies. Since the Western countries had formed this organization, the Eastern countries created the Warsaw Pact. This served as a mutual defense between nations including the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Germany. The Warsaw pact ended on July 1991 but the NATO stays in tact.

The nuclear non-proliferation treaty

The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) was set up in 1970. It aims to spread nuclear weapons across nations in order to promote cooperation in the use of nuclear energy. There are five nuclear weapon states, which



include China, France, the United Kingdom, Russia and the USA who aim to reach complete disarmament. There are also the non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS) that help develop and host nuclear weapons as well as nations in nuclear alliances. These can be seen in the image below.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty has been successful in some ways such as the fact that the world's total stockpile of nuclear weapons has lowered by two thirds. Unfortunately, there are four member states that have not joined the treaty meaning they have not placed their nuclear materials and weapons in the international safeguards of the nuclear weapon states. These nations include South Sudan, India, Israel and Pakistan. Currently, there are still around 15,000 nuclear warheads that need to be completely disarmed in order to reach the total elimination of nuclear weapons. However, the 5 nuclear weapons states are still holding on to 15,000 nuclear weapons, many of which are ready to be rapidly launched. Rather than dismantling them, countries like the United States, Russian Federation and the United Kingdom are planning on modernizing their nuclear weapons.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

United States of America

The United States was the first nation to develop and test nuclear weapons during the Manhattan project. It is recognized as one of the 5 Nuclear Weapons States seeing as it has over 6,500 warheads. Currently, the United States has no plans to dismantle their nuclear weapons as they predict on spending around \$1 trillion to modernize their nuclear arsenal in the next 30 years and has already been modernizing their delivery systems for the past 20 years. The United States believes that it is essential to keep modernizing their nuclear weapons as long as they have them to ensure they are secure and safe.

Russian Federation

During the cold war, the Soviet Union was able to obtain the prints that the U.S used to build their atomic bomb. In 2014, the Russian Federation adopted a new doctrine, which states that they '*have the right to use nuclear weapons if a nuclear weapon is used against Russia or its allies, and also if there the nation feels threatened when there is an act of aggression from another party*'. This means that the Russian Federation is willing to use their nuclear weapons for military purposes if it needs to protect its people.



China

According to China's 2013 Defense White Paper, they state that 'under no circumstances will they use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states'. China also signed the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the No first Use (NFU) meaning it will not use its nuclear weapons against other nations first but still leaves the possibility of China using their weapons to retaliate.

France

France, being a Nuclear Weapons State, began dismantling one of its uranium enrichment plants and a reprocessing plant in 1998. Now, France has begun exporting nuclear facilities as well as expert advice as they have a total of 58 nuclear power plants for the country's energy source. This helps with to stop the proliferation of weapons, as they are part of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) meaning they can only supply these facilities for peaceful use and to countries that follow non-proliferation rules.

United Kingdom

Over the years, the United Kingdom, a Nuclear Weapons State, has been lowering its total stockpile. Like France, it has also joined the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) in order to control the hands in which nuclear technology falls into. The United Kingdom's nuclear weapons are not to be used to start a war but rather ensure their own safety against acts of aggression. The UK is closer to eliminating all of its nuclear weapons as it only keeps a minimum amount of weapons to prevent attack.

India

India has around 100 warheads but still has not joined the NPT. India mainly focuses on using its nuclear fuel cycles to produce plutonium-239 to build their weapons, unlike Pakistan who rely on enriched uranium as their main fissile material. Its nuclear stockpile is still evolving as its only deterrence are China and Pakistan.

Pakistan

Pakistan is one of the 4 nations that is in possession of nuclear weapons but is not considered a Nuclear Weapons State, as it has never joined the NPT. In the 1970s, Pakistan began using enriched uranium to build its nuclear weapons. During this time, it received help from China who gave Pakistan equipment, designs for warheads and other missile related



help. Then in the 1980s, Pakistan helped other countries such as Iran, North Korea and Libya by illicitly transferring technology to aid in the development of nuclear weapons. In 1998, nuclear weapon tests were conducted and currently, its nuclear stockpile continues to grow. Pakistan has around 100 nuclear warheads but according to the International Panel on Fissile Materials, they have enough fissile material to build 200 more weapons.

Israel

Israel possesses nuclear weapons has never joined the NPT meaning it is not seen as a Nuclear Weapons State. It has not conducted any nuclear tests and has also not stated that it has any nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, it is suspected that Israel has around 80 nuclear warheads and is also in possession of fissile material for 200 more.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)

On the 10th of January 2003, Democratic People's Republic of Korea withdrew from the NPT. As stated under article X of the NPT, any party has the right to withdraw if *"an event related to the treaty jeopardizes the interests that the country has"*. DPRK withdrew after the US had found out that Pyongyang had been using enriched uranium for use to build nuclear weapons therefore going against the treaty. DPRK has conducted 4 nuclear tests one of which was in January 2016. It is said that this test was of a bomb more powerful than the usual hydrogen bomb meaning it is unclear which material was used to build this bomb. The United States has said that DPRK will soon have enough plutonium to create more nuclear weapons since they reopened a facility that can produce enriched uranium. So, it was estimated that by 2015, they had 8 plutonium warheads.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

The IAEA is an intergovernmental organization that works alongside the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and has held events to enforce nuclear security. Its main roles and responsibilities are firstly as states under the NPT Article III *'to ensure that the non-nuclear weapon states do not use nuclear power and technology to build weapons or other nuclear devices'*. Also, the organization aims to develop the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes mostly non-nuclear weapon states as well as checking up on the ex-nuclear weapons of nuclear weapon states.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands



The Republic of the Marshall Islands has been exposed to 23 nuclear bomb tests between 1946 and 1958, after the United States set up a military base. For example, in the year 1954, the United States decided to conduct a hydrogen bomb test at Bikini Atoll, part of the Marshall Islands. The bomb, at 15 megatons, was larger than both the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs dropped during World War II. As a result, the nuclear bomb vaporized 3 islands and left the inhabitants exposed to radioactive fallout. On the 25th of April 2014, the Marshall Islands decided to file a case in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) against all the Nuclear Weapon States for their lack in fulfilling the obligations enforced by the Non-proliferation Treaty. This case also includes parties such as Israel, Pakistan and North Korea who have not signed the NPT but the Marshall Islands believe that the NPT should be followed by all nations that are in possession of nuclear weapons in order to ensure that all non-nuclear weapon states are not at risk of attack and do not go through a similar ecological catastrophe as the Marshall Islands.

Timeline of Events

As seen below, this timeline displays the events that began the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons, which led to the 'Atomic Age'. Then an international treaty was set up and joined by almost all nuclear states and non-nuclear states. Still to this day, four nations have declared they are in possession of nuclear weapons and have not joined this treaty therefore causing it to be impossible to fully eliminate nuclear weapons.

Date	Description of event
May, 1932	James Chadwick discovers the neutron.
December 17 th , 1938	German Otto Hahn discovers nuclear fission
March, 1942	The Manhattan Project starts.
July 16 th , 1945	First atomic bomb tested during the Manhattan Project in a site near Alamogordo, New Mexico. This marks the start of the 'Atomic Age'.
August 6 th , 1945	The U.S. drops an atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima during the final stage of World War 2 wiping out 90% of the city and killing 80,000 people.
August 9 th , 1945	The U.S drops a plutonium bomb over the city of Nagasaki, Japan, killing about 40,000 people.
August 14 th , 1945	Japan finally surrenders and World War II ended. The start of the Cold War.



August 29 th , 1949	Soviet Union detonates their first atomic bomb.
April 4 th , 1949	North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is created.
November 1 st , 1952	The United States creates and tests the first hydrogen bomb.
May 14 th , 1955	Warsaw Pact created.
July 1 st , 1968	NPT established, setting international cooperation between the nations that possess nuclear weapons and those who do not in order to avoid proliferation.
January 10 th , 2003	DPRK withdraws from the NPT
May, 2010	Review conference of the NPT
September 26 th , 2013	UN General Assembly designates today as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
May 22 nd , 2015	Most recent conference of the NPT
September 26 th , 2015	Follow up meeting of on Nuclear Disarmament and second International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

UN involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

Over the years, the UN has been greatly involved in avoiding proliferation of nuclear weapons in hopes of reaching total elimination of nuclear weapons around the world. With the help of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty, many of the nuclear warheads on Earth have been dismantled. Even one of the first resolutions passed by the General Assembly was on the topic of prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons therefore signifying the importance and need to take effective actions towards eliminating these weapons.

1. Declaration on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear and Thermonuclear Weapons, 24 November 1961 (**A/RES/1653(XVI)**)
2. The Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty, 12 June 1984 (**A/RES/2373(XXII)**)



3. Agreement to Regulate the Relationship between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, 15 June 2000 (**A/RES/54/280**)
4. High-Level meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear disarmament, 26 September 2013 (**A/RES/68/32**)

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

The most effective attempt to resolving the issue of nuclear weapon proliferation was by the creation of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty. Unfortunately, during the most recent Review Conference of the NPT in 2015, no final agreements were made that can help the world eliminate all nuclear warheads, as many of the parties believe that banning all nuclear weapons is not a priority. Even though countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation have lowered their inventories after joining the NPT, their pace has slowed down rapidly as less and less nuclear weapons are being dismantled. Since 2015, no nuclear weapons have been dismantled.

Moreover, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has organized events on the topic of nuclear security alongside the NPT. The International Atomic Energy Agency also has the task of ensuring that all non-nuclear weapons states follow the commitments set by the NPT such as only using nuclear power for peaceful purposes and not using it to build weapons. This helps the situation of eliminating nuclear weapons as it stops the proliferation of these weapons in other countries that are not already recognized as nuclear weapons States. However, there are still nations that have not joined the NPT therefore these measures are not applicable to them therefore controlling and eliminating all nuclear weapons in the world is much harder as there are still 15,000 weapons, many of which are not under the knowledge or surveillance of the NPT and IAEA.

Possible Solutions

In order to fully eliminate nuclear weapons, certain actions must be taken by nuclear weapon states as well as non-nuclear weapon states. The reason that many of the nuclear weapon states have not completely abandoned their nuclear weapons is because they



believe that if they do so, they will be more threatened by nations who remain with the possession of nuclear weapons. For example, if one Nuclear Member State were to dismantle all of its nuclear weapons, other Nuclear Weapons States would see this nation as an easy target due to the fact that it would no longer be able to attack with nuclear weapons.

Firstly, a solution to this issue would be to ensure that all nuclear weapon states join the NPT in order to ensure the safety of all nations including the non-nuclear weapon states. In order to do this, the NPT and IAEA must enforce more regulations such as prohibiting the withdrawal from the treaty as this would mean that a nation with nuclear weapons is no longer committing to non-proliferation.

Additionally, biological and chemical weapons have already been prohibited through several treaties such as the OPCW that works with the prohibition of chemical weapons. However, no such treaty has been formed that effectively calls and deals with the banning of nuclear weapons. Therefore, the formation of new treaties could be made that ensure nuclear disarmament occurs internationally including in those nuclear states that have not joined the NPT. These treaties should aim to make real negotiations between member states such as providing a series of steps that all nuclear weapon states as well as countries in possession of nuclear weapons must take until they totally eliminate all weapons.

For example, the first step and commitment that would need to be followed in a new treaty would be to dismantle all nuclear weapons that are in high alert status as this would lower the likelihood of sudden use of nuclear bombs on other nations. Also, a monitoring system that can work internationally should be set up to make the surveillance of nuclear weapons and stockpiles more effective. Having biannual conventions to discuss the stage that each nuclear weapon state is at with their journey to total elimination can help with multilateral agreements to ban all nuclear weapons.

Furthermore, in order to avoid nuclear weapon proliferation, the further production of fissile materials such as enriched uranium should be banned if it will be used for the making of nuclear weapons. All fissile material should be placed in the safety of the IAEA and the NPT. By doing so, the distribution of fissile material will only be given to countries that will be using it for peaceful purposes such as for nuclear power plants for nations who rely on nuclear power as an energy source.



Finally, raising awareness on this issue as a whole would lead to the total elimination of nuclear weapons, as more people would know more about the dangers and current situation of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons around the world. For example, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) aims to raise awareness of this issue with a goal of getting more nations to support a treaty to completely ban nuclear weapons. As a result, the community can help encourage their governments to dismantle all their nuclear weapons or refrain from using nuclear technology for building weapons.

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Appendices

Appendix I

List of countries that support the ban of nuclear weapons

<https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/infcircs/1970/infcirc140.pdf>

Appendix II

General Assembly passed resolutions including the ones mentioned under 'relevant resolutions'.

<http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/resins.htm>

Appendix III

2013 China Defence White Paper document



http://www.nti.org/media/pdfs/China_Defense_White_Paper_2013.pdf?_=1368485511