

EDITOR'S NOTE

A great deal has been written during the six decades of the nuclear age about the underlying factors promoting the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This is not surprising. By understanding the reasons why some states seek the Bomb, other states, international organizations, and civil society can develop alternatives to the temptation to go nuclear and erect barriers to those who desire the world's most destructive and indiscriminate weapons.

On the other hand, relatively little has been written about the processes by which states willingly choose to divest themselves of their nuclear arsenals or forego the nuclear option altogether, along with the factors influencing such decisions. Hence the publication of the special section that forms the core of this issue of the *Nonproliferation Review*, "The Dynamics of Nuclear Disarmament: New Momentum and the Future of the Nonproliferation Regime," which argues that rolling back and eliminating nuclear dangers can no longer be just about preventing new states from acquiring them. Genuine and sustained progress toward a nuclear-weapon-free world will only come when those states already in possession of nuclear weapons decide that disarmament—as opposed to simply reducing existing stockpiles—is the ultimate objective.

Indeed, over the last several years the terms of the national and international debate over the future of nuclear weapons have undergone a dramatic shift. Thanks largely to the high-profile opinion articles and lobbying by former secretaries of state George Shultz and Henry Kissinger, former secretary of defense William Perry, and former senator Sam Nunn, it is now acceptable and even politically popular to talk about disarmament instead of just arms control, to speak of *when* nuclear weapons will be eliminated, rather than *if*. President Barack Obama is the most visible elected proponent of this ideal, but many other current and former political and military officials have subscribed as well. Perhaps most notably, Germany's new coalition government is now openly calling for talks on the removal of the last U.S. nuclear weapons on German soil, still a sensitive subject within Germany and NATO and something that would have been unheard of not too long ago. If the German government gets its way, the denuclearization of NATO may not be far behind.

In their introduction to the special section that they coordinated, Tanya Ogilvie-White (University of Canterbury, New Zealand) and David Santoro (University of British Columbia, Canada) discuss the rapidly changing dynamics of the disarmament debate and note that for the first time the impetus for and interest in nuclear disarmament is being driven not by public pressure or the efforts of the Non-Aligned Movement but rather by policy elites within the nuclear weapon states. As such, they argue, it is both appropriate and necessary to reexamine the dynamics of disarmament, not least because of the upcoming Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in May. By organizing states into five groups—nuclear weapon states, threshold states, advocacy states, holdout states, and defiant states—Ogilvie-White, Santoro, and the other authors compare and contrast global disarmament dynamics and offer new insights into what motivates states within each group and where the current momentum may be heading.

David Santoro leads off with an examination of the disarmament policies and perspectives of the five legally recognized nuclear weapon states. While the United States and the United Kingdom have assumed a strong leadership role, France, Russia, and China

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are more skeptical, questioning the desirability and feasibility of a world without nuclear weapons. These competing views will be on display at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, where the majority of states without nuclear weapons will be looking for concrete signs of cooperation and progress toward the objective enshrined in Article VI of the treaty.

Maria Rost Rublee (University of Auckland, New Zealand) takes a close look at the nuclear threshold states, in particular Brazil and Japan, and how their policies could help or hinder progress on nuclear disarmament. Notwithstanding their advanced capabilities, these states have opted not to develop nuclear weapons, so supporting a drive for disarmament can be seen as a means of validating their decision. But because their significant investment in civilian nuclear energy and the nuclear fuel cycle could be affected by the controls imposed under a disarmament regime, disarmament could come to be seen as a threat to their economic and energy independence. Brazil's interest in developing a nuclear submarine, which would run on uranium fuel capable of being enriched to weapon-grade, could also pose a longer-term challenge to eliminating nuclear weapons. Balancing nonproliferation and disarmament objectives and ensuring they reinforce each other, argues Rublee, will be the key to encouraging threshold states to support rather than undermine progress on nuclear disarmament.

Marianne Hanson (University of Queensland, Australia) explores the motivations and norm-building role of the advocacy states, including those organized under the New Agenda Coalition and the Seven-Nation Initiative. These states actively promote the cause of nuclear disarmament and have taken the lead in sponsoring reports investigating the utility and dangers of nuclear weapons, as well as organizing and hosting diplomatic forums and sponsoring research, providing expertise, and offering technical assistance related to the practical steps associated with eliminating nuclear weapons. As Hanson points out, the work of these states, going back to the mid-1990s, kept the disarmament ideal both visible and alive, enabling Shultz, Kissinger, Perry, and Nunn to emerge as the unlikely messengers for a nuclear-weapon-free world. Going forward, they will be crucial to the success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and the Obama administration's efforts to advance the cause of nuclear disarmament.

Natasha Barnes (University of Canterbury, New Zealand), Tanya Ogilvie-White, and Rodrigo Álvarez Valdés (Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences, Chile) review the role of the three nuclear-capable states not party to the NPT—India, Israel, and Pakistan—and ask whether the current momentum on disarmament will one day lead these states to join the NPT and make it universal. They conclude that reductions alone will not be sufficient to achieve this goal, but that a more comprehensive approach involving significantly greater transparency, the resolution of regional security concerns, and full NPT compliance by Iran, may one day yield results.

Tanya Ogilvie-White assesses the potential impact of the Obama administration's nuclear disarmament leadership on the policies of North Korea and Iran, the two states actively defying the nuclear nonproliferation regime. Using the theoretical concept of "interaction capacity," Ogilvie-White explores how U.S. disarmament diplomacy could inadvertently make it more difficult to constrain both countries' nuclear programs and perhaps even escalate tensions. She also discusses what leads states to defy existing nuclear norms, why other states tolerate (and sometimes even support) such behavior,

and what conditions are necessary for norms to have influence over states that choose to defy the nonproliferation regime. A clear condemnation of North Korea and Iran by the 2010 NPT Review Conference, she concludes, coupled with unequivocal steps by the nuclear weapon states to move toward a nuclear-weapon-free world, will be essential in charting a new course for dealing with defiant states.

Finally, Wade L. Huntley (U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California), draws some broad conclusions about all five groups of states discussed in the special section, looks ahead to the implications of this research for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and offers some thoughts on whether the present momentum for nuclear disarmament will be sustained and how to ensure continued progress toward a goal that will take many years to reach. Huntley also explains that even if the complete elimination of nuclear weapons is a distant objective, a world free from the threat of nuclear weapons is perhaps much closer at hand.

In a separate article, Jacques E.C. Hymans (University of Southern California) tackles a question with important implications for proliferation policy and national security: when does a state become a “nuclear weapon state”? As Hymans explains, the traditional measure of when a state joined the nuclear “club” was its first nuclear explosive test. But in recent years—beginning with North Korea in the 1990s—intelligence analysts and others have shifted to accumulation (estimated or actual) of a significant quantity of fissile material, as defined by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Although Hymans finds that the test/no-test indicator is problematic, using the acquisition of fissile material as the metric is actually counterproductive, because states that have mastered the ability to manufacture nuclear weapons materials do not necessarily know how to turn them into usable weapons. Instead, he proposes augmenting the traditional test/no-test indicator with a theory-driven approach that examines different states’ incentives and disincentives to deploy nuclear weapons without testing.

We end this issue with three book reviews. Daniel Wirls (University of California at Santa Cruz), critiques two new books exploring President Ronald Reagan’s views on the abolition of nuclear weapons and his role in ending the Cold War. Benoît Pélopidas (James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies) compares two recent books exploring the myths, realities, and concerns about nuclear weapons and nuclear war. And Arjun Makhijani (Institute for Energy and Environmental Research) considers a book looking at the devastating health, economic, and cultural impacts of U.S. atmospheric nuclear weapon tests on the people of Rongelap Atoll in the Marshall Islands.

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