Research Report

Leiden Model United Nations 2016
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Forum:	*General Assembly First Committee*
Issue:	*The presence of nuclear weapons in South and East Asia*
Position:	*Deputy Chair*

Introduction

Mandakini Gahlot, an Indian journalist, was 14 years old when India conducted its first nuclear tests in the Rajasthani desert. "It was a blindingly hot summer day in May 1998, and I can still clearly recall the euphoria that gripped the nation", she says. "In Mumbai, the city where I grew up, crowds flooded the streets, dancing, singing and cheering as if celebrating a national festival. In contrast, the international community was horrified, and Pakistan's retaliatory tests less than three weeks later resulted in sanctions on both nations. But it didn't matter to those of us who lived in India."

Around 3000 miles east of this region, on the 9th of September 2016, North Korea conducted its fifth nuclear test, which was estimated to have an explosive power of 10 kilotons (= 10.000 kilos of TNT). South Korean president called this test "fanatically reckless" and "uncontrollable". "The only thing that Kim Jong-Un regime can gain from the nuclear tests is stronger sanctions from the international community and its isolation," she said in a statement. Despite the sanctions that have already been imposed since North Korea's first nuclear test in 2006, Kim Jong-un is not planning to seize the weapon testing just yet.

Both of these activities are great examples of how nuclear weapons that are present in South and East Asia are being used. India, Pakistan and North Korea all possess nuclear weapons, although they are not recognised as nuclear-weapon states. Until now, no severe actions or attacks of any kind have been carried out by these countries, but the situation could escalate quickly, destroying international security and the lives of millions of people.

Definition of Key Terms

Nuclear weapon

A nuclear weapon is a weapon of mass destruction (WMD) that derives its destructive force from nuclear reactions. When a nuclear bomb explodes, radioactivity is usually released during the explosion itself, as well as long after the explosion, leaving the environment heavily affected and uninhabitable. The explosive power of a nuclear bomb is measured in kilotons, one kiloton being equal to 1.000 kilos of TNT.

South and East Asia

The countries that make up South Asia are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India,

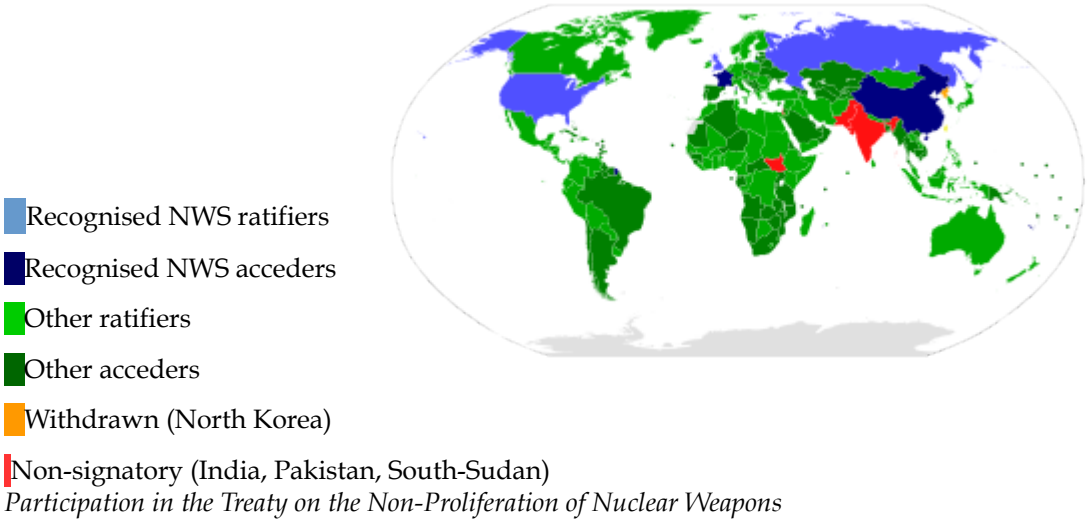
Nepal, Maledives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. For East Asia, these are China, Hong Kong, Japan, Macau, Mongolia, North Korea and South Korea.
The countries in South and East Asia that possess nuclear weapons are China, India, North Korea and Pakistan.

Nuclear-weapon states

These are the five countries that have signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and are known to possess nuclear weapons. In order of acquisition of nuclear weapons these are: the United States, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, Farnce and China (also the five permanent UN Security Council members).

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was opened for signature in 1968 and entered into force in 1970, with 191 countries having joined so far. The treaty's main objectives are to "prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament."
There are five countries that possess nuclear weapons and have joined the Treaty, these are the nuclear-weapon states. Four other countries have not joined the Treaty, yet do possess nuclear weapons, these are India, Pakistan and North Korea. The NPT has not designated these countries as nuclear-weapon states.



Participation in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

General Overview

The competition between India and Pakistan

On the 18th of May 1974, India conducted its first ever nuclear test, code named 'Smiling Buddha' (or Pokhran-I). This test was conducted in the Thar Desert, in

Pokhran, which is adjacent to the Pakistani border. Although Indian officials said the test was a "peaceful nuclear explosion", Pakistan saw it as an act of aggression and started to develop their own nuclear weapons. This idea was nothing new; in 1965, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, architect of the country's atomic programme, said in an interview that if India built a nuclear bomb, "we will eat grass or leaves, or even go hungry, but we will get one of our own."

From 1983 until 1990, Pakistan conducted 24 subcritical 'cold' tests, meaning there is no energy blast yield, code named Kirana-I. These tests were conducted in extreme secrecy, with only few people having knowledge of its existence, although the tests proved to be crucial for the success of Pakistan's atomic bomb programme, which continued in 1998.

In May 1998, 24 years after the first nuclear test, India conducted a second nuclear test, called 'Operation Shakti' (or Pokhran-II). These five explosions were held again in Pokhran, near the Pakistani border. This time, Pakistan gave a quick and similar response, namely another test with six nuclear bombs in the Ras Koh hills, on the 28th of May 1998 (Chagai-I). Pakistan conducted a second test in the Ras Koh hills two days later (Chagai-II). This resulted in wide condemnation from around the world, and sanctions on both India and Pakistan.

Both countries have not conducted any nuclear tests after 1998. However, India has continued developing nuclear weapons and now possesses several nuclear-armed missiles, land-based and sea-based. Pakistan is known to possess both air-based and land-based nuclear-armed missiles. In February 2012, the Pakistani Navy announced it would start work on the construction of a nuclear submarine, to meet India's nuclear threat.

The issue of nuclear weapons on the subcontinent has been widely discussed during the Nuclear Security Summit 2016, where President Barack Obama of the USA said that India and Pakistan need to make progress in reducing their nuclear arsenal and ensure they're not continually moving in the wrong direction.

Nuclear tests and possible escalation in North Korea

North Korea conducted its first nuclear test in October 2006, after which the United Nations Security Council soon passed a resolution which condemned the test, imposed sanctions on North Korea and created the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) (or 'The Committee'). The sanctions committee's main objective is to take appropriate action regarding violations of sanctions imposed on North Korea.

Despite a number of sanctions that has been imposed on North Korea, the country conducted four other tests, of which one in 2009, one in 2013 and two in 2016 (January and September). The Security Council, as well as numerous countries, has condemned every launch and North Korea has been imposed with more sanctions after every nuclear test. Even China, the country that is being viewed as North Korea's only ally,

has agreed upon imposing heavy sanctions and strongly condemns the actions.

Although in practice the whole world condemns the tests and North Korea is being pushed to seize the nuclear activities, there are no clear indications that the country will do so. Experts think North Korea might have developed minituarised nuclear warheads, which can be placed on missiles. The yield of the bombs North Korea tested has also increased over the years: the first bomb that was detonated in 2006 had a yield of less than 1 kiloton, while the past one from September 2016 has been estimated between 15 and 30 kilotons.

Nuclear weapons in China

China is one of the nuclear-weapon states recognised by the NPT, thus possesses nuclear weapons in accordance with the United Nations and the countries of the treaty.

The country follows a 'no first use (NFU) policy', which means that it will never attack or threaten to attack another country with nuclear weapons, if China has not been attacked or threatened to be attacked with nuclear weapons by the country in question first. Secondly, China has given an unqualified security assurance to non-nuclear-weapon states, "undertaking not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states or nuclear-weapon-free zones at any time or under any circumstances."

China usually keeps its nuclear warheads stored separately from its missiles, unless there is a heightened threat level.

Major Parties Involved

India
India has been the first NPT non-nuclear-weapon state ever to acquire nuclear weapons, and it has conducted two nuclear tests ever since. It has not conducted any test since 1998, but the country is still developing nuclear weapons for possible use.

Pakistan
Pakistan is also one of the NPT non-nuclear-weapon states that possesses nuclear weapons. As India, it has not conducted nuclear tests since 1998, but the country is still increasing its number of nuclear weapons and improving the quality of the weapons.

North Korea
North Korea has been conducting nuclear tests since 2006. Despite various sanctions, the country has improved their nuclear weapons ever since. Mostly because North Korea is not willing to participate in any forum or summit on the topic of international security, the future of their nuclear weapons is uncertain.

China

China is one of the NPT nuclear-weapon states and acts peacefully with their nuclear weapons. The country has stored the weapons separately from their missiles, and it follows a secure policy towards non-nuclear-weapon states.

North Korea Sanctions Committee
The Sanctions Committee's main mandate is to take appropriate action regarding any violation of sanctions imposed on North Korea. It works closely with other countries regarding information on the actions taken and reports every 90 days to the Security Council to discuss their work.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
The IAEA is a UN-organisation that seeks to improve nuclear security and the contribution of nuclear energy to worldwide peace and wealth. It does so by providing an intergovernmental forum for scientific and technical cooperation.

World Institute for Nuclear Security (WINS)
The WINS is a non-governmental organisation that brings together nuclear experts, the nuclear industry, governments, academia and international organisations. Its main objective is to provide a forum to share best practices in strengthening the security of nuclear and radioactive materials worldwide, and to be the leader in professional development and certification for nuclear security management.

Timeline of Events

18 May 1974	Smiling Buddha, India's first nuclear test
1983-1990	Kirana-I, several nuclear tests conducted by Pakistan
11 May 1998	Pokhran-II, the second nuclear test conducted by India
28 and 30 May 1998	Chagai-I and -II, conducted by Pakistan as reaction to the tests conducted by India
9 October 2006	First nuclear test conducted by North Korea, following the creation of the North Korea Sanctions Committee and heavy sanctions imposed on the country
25 May 2009	Second nuclear test conducted by North Korea
12 February 2013	Third nuclear test conducted by North Korea
6 January 2016	Fourth nuclear test conducted by North Korea
9 September 2016	Fifth nuclear test conducted by North Korea

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31 March and 1 April 2016	Nuclear Security Summit hosted in Washington DC, at which nuclear weapons in South and East Asia have been widely discussed and condemned

Previous Attemps to solve the issue

On the 1st of July 1968, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was opened for signature. As of 2016, 191 countries have signed the treaty (see Definition of Key Terms for more information regarding which countries have ratified or signed). To reach the Treaty's main objective – peaceful cooperation regarding nuclear weapons and ultimate global disarmament - the NPT non-nuclear-weapon states have agreed never to acquire nuclear weapons, while the NPT nuclear-weapon states have agreed to share the benefits of peaceful nuclear technology and to pursue nuclear disarmament aimed at the ultimate elimination of nuclear arsenals.

A second attempt to solve the issue is the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS). The aim of the NSS is to prevent nuclear terrorism around the world, and so far it has done so through four summits, held in 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016. Over the four meetings, political agreements have been made, the progress of implementing those agreements have been discussed, as well as the goals that have been achieved and the future of nuclear security. Although most major parties have attended the summit in the past, North Korea has never joined, leaving the nuclear security in and around North Korea uncertain.

The attempt to this solution that has likely had the most effect, are the sanctions that have been imposed on India and Pakistan in 1998, and North Korea from 2006 until now. After India and Pakistan both conducted nuclear tests in May 1998, the world reacted with strong condemnation and countries such as the USA imposed several economic sanctions, for example cutting off funds and lending to the government.
The sanctions imposed on North Korea are much broader than the sanctions mentioned above. After its first nuclear test, North Korea was imposed with economic sanctions, which have been broadened after every nuclear test, cutting off any international supply, in particular military and luxury goods.

Possible Solutions

The measures that have already been taken have proven to already be quite effective, although this differs between both issues. For example, the sanctions that have been imposed have stopped both India and Pakistan from conducting any more nuclear tests since 1998, but this effect is not present in the question of North Korea. Continuing sanctions would still be rather effective, but it is definitely not the only solution.

Starting negotiations with the countries in question could be a very effective solution. Negotiations will provide all countries a chance to state what they want or need, and

discuss the possibilities. This solution will most likely solve a lot, especially as this issue involves highly dangerous situations that could escalate at any time.

Useful documents

Security Council Resolution 1718 regarding North Korea's first nuclear test: http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/NKorea%20SRES%201718.pdf

Appendix/Appendices

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