

## **PRAMUN XIII**

### **Disarmament II Committee**

#### **Topic 1: Strengthening nuclear non-proliferation in light of Iran's nuclear program**

##### **I. Background**

The USA began developing the nuclear bomb during the Second World War in order to force Japan into surrender, which they did. Following the end of the Second World War the USSR and UK began developing nuclear weapons after witnessing the destructive power of the bombs used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The USSR was the second country to develop the nuclear bomb in 1949, the UK the third in 1952, France the fourth in 1960, and China the fifth in 1964. They were not the only nations which realized their potential to be used to intimidate and one up rival countries. Many other countries sought to develop nuclear weapons of their own and by 1968 around 20 nations were in the process of developing nuclear weapons. This led to several eyebrows to be raised. The USA, USSR, and UK took the initiative and engineered the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons with the goal to limit the spread of nuclear weapon development worldwide. Initially 59 other nations signed and ratified the treaty. However, by 1995 that number grew to 191 countries. The countries of India, Israel, and Pakistan have refused to sign the treaty and unsurprisingly all these countries developed nuclear weapons after the completion of the NPT in 1968. Furthermore, North Korea signed the treaty but left it in 2003. The five signatories with nuclear weapon arsenals collectively agreed not to assist other countries in developing nuclear weapons. However, these signatories were allowed to retain their arsenal at the same time. Iran, which is a NPT member, has not been necessarily compliant with the treaty and has been the subject of harsh criticism from countries such as the USA as a result. In an attempt to alleviate this point of contention the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which is commonly referred to as the Iran Nuclear Deal, was created. However, after the USA's withdrawal from the treaty Iran has accelerated its nuclear weapons program expeditiously. This worsened relations between the USA and Iran and culminated in the US and Israeli strikes on Iran's supposed nuclear sites.

##### **II. United Nations Involvement**

The United Nations has been vital in both the creation and enforcement of the NPT. The UN Charter, which is basically the "constitution" of the UN, urges the General Assembly to develop resolutions with the goal of arms control. Moreover, the NPT was approved by the General Assembly and extended in 1995 indefinitely as it was initially provisioned that the treaty last for 20 years. The signatories of the treaty also convene every 5 years in order to ensure its implementation and to go over any potential updates to the treaty. Also, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is a UN administered agency that is responsible for inspecting nuclear facilities and monitoring uranium enrichment and reprocessing.

##### **III. Bloc Positions**

There are several arguments surrounding the NPT and to a further extent Iran's nuclear program. Western nations, notably the USA, UK, France, and Israel, have criticised Iran for not adhering to the NPT's provisions and accuse Iran's nuclear program as destabilizing the region. They also believe that Iran is purposefully undermining the NPT by not cooperating with the IAEA and have used sanctions in order to force their will on Iran. Eastern countries, notably China and Russia, take a slightly pro-Iran stance when it comes to this issue. They condemn the US and Israeli strikes on Iran and stress the use of diplomacy to resolve this issue. They urge Iran to stay in the NPT and cooperate with the IAEA at the same time. On the other hand the Non-Aligned Movement has developed a more balanced stance. While arguing that the NPT is unfair because it has not done much to compel members with nuclear arsenals to decommission their nuclear weapons, the NAM also opposes Iran's clandestine nuclear weapons program. While any effort to resolve this issue has not truly materialized, several countries around the world have expressed their support of a potential resolution that would deescalate the conflict with Iran and amend the NPT in order to avoid any similar conflict in the future.

#### **IV. Sources**

- <https://www.britannica.com/event/Treaty-on-the-Non-proliferation-of-Nuclear-Weapons>
- <https://www.iaea.org/topics/non-proliferation-treaty>
- <https://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2005/npttreaty.html>