



Forum: Disarmament commission

Topic: Establishing nuclear weapon free zones (NWFZs) in South Asia

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Introduction

In the framework of consolidating global peace and security, the propagation of nuclear weapon free zones (NWFZs) in South Asia is imperative. The efforts in establishing global nuclear non-proliferation, (efforts to prevent the spread of weapons, especially nuclear weapons) and the normalization of disarmament is key to ensuring regional peace and security.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones are areas within countries that committed to collaboratively restricting the development, testing and use of nuclear weapons through various legal and binding agreements. These zones are marked often in volatile regions, which are faced with continues conflicts, moral and religious tensions, and political instability with high risk of violence and war. Such regions pose a major threat towards international peace and security, due to surging conflict escalation, primarily when weapons are involved. These regions are often known to be less developed, lack proper and effective conflict resolution and exhibit weak governance framework.

South Asia is be classified as a volatile region viable and open to the establishment of nuclear-free-weapon zones within its region It includes two nuclear armed states: India and Pakistan, known for encountering numerous conflicts consequently resulting in a fragile security system. Existing nuclear weapons in such environments raise the risk of potential conflict thus posing as a threat to global peace and security.

Along with the Disarmament commission's nuclear weapon-free-zones, there are complementary treaties that follow the same aims as the NWFZ aiming to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons as well as weapon technology, prolonging the joined collaboration in the use of nuclear energy in peaceful manners, and the general nuclear disarmament of regions.

Definition of Key Terms

Nuclear-weapon-free-zone (NWFZ)

A nuclear-free-weapon zone is a region where countries refrain from the development, manufacturing, possessing, acquiring, or controlling nuclear weapons. These zones reduce the chance of nuclear conflict within and promote regional peace and security. Without the possession of nuclear weapons neighboring countries build and foster trust, as well as reduce arms races, and over set an overall example in the advancement of disarmament.

Nuclear weapons

A nuclear weapon is a device that emits explosive energy through nuclear fission or fusion.

Weapons of mass destruction (WMD)

Weapons of mass destruction are weapons that has the ability to kill large numbers of people such as nuclear weapons which emit dangerous radiations, biological weapons which release harmful diseases and viruses, or chemical weapons which use toxic materials for the prepose of killing people. these weapons cause immediate and long-lasting damage to humans and the environments.

Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons treaty (NPT)

The Non-proliferation treaty, established by the United Nations signed in 1968, intended to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and promoting the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes only.

State Parties

State parties are countries which have formally agreed, through legally binding agreements to comply with certain treaties. This happens once a state signs or ratifies a treaty.

Utilizing nuclear material for peaceful purposes only

The utilization of nuclear material for peaceful purposes refers to its use only in non-military operations, such as conducting scientific knowledge, supporting agriculture, and medical isotopes,

and electricity production.

Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

The Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is an organization that oversees the development, regulation, and safe use of nuclear energy, often promoting its peaceful applications and preventing misuse.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations is a regional organization created in 1967 to encourage political, economic, and cultural cooperation among southeast Asian countries, aiming to promote regional stability, economic development, and join efforts on global peace and security.

Permanent 5 (P5)

The P5 refer to the 5 permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC): the United States, United Kingdom, France, China, and Russia. These countries hold special veto power over Security council resolutions giving them significant power over global decisions.

Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ)

An Exclusive Economic Zone is a marine area defined by the international law that stretches up to 200 nautical miles (370 kilometers) off the coastline of a region. Within this area, the coastal state carries the rights to investigate, exploit, preserve and manage natural resources in the water, seabed, and soil. In addition to the conduction of energy activities through the use of wind and water. Other countries may utilize the zone for navigation and overflight however are unable to exploit its resources without permission.

Southeast Asia Nuclear- Weapon-Free Zone (SEANFWZ)

SEANWFZ was created by ASEAN to promote regional peace and security through a treaty complying member states of ASEAN to the prohibition of the development, testing, use or possession of nuclear weapons in Southeast Asia.

Karachi Nuclear Power Plant (KANUPP)

The Karachi nuclear power plant is Pakistan's first nuclear power plant, launched in 1972. Located near Karachi, it now includes modern Hualong One reactor from China and plays a key

role in the country's energy production.

Comprehensive Safeguard Agreements (CSA)

The Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements (CSA) are agreements established between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and certain countries in accordance with the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). Through these agreements the IAEA is allowed to monitor and verify that all nuclear material and facilities are used solely for peaceful purposes, ensuring complete adherence to the non-proliferation commitments.

Dangers of diversion for military purposes

The dangers of diversion for military purposes in nuclear energy refer to the risk that nuclear materials or technology meant for peaceful use could be used to develop nuclear weapons, threatening global security.

Ecological conservation

Ecological conservation is the protection and preservation of natural ecosystems, biodiversity, and wildlife to maintain environmental balance and health.

General Overview

Nuclear weapons have been used as war machines after gaining notoriety since their discovery in 1945, which led to the detriment of countries and civilians over decades with lasting impacts that are still in effect today. Since then, many regions have signed treaties declaring the disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT) and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and establishing NFWZ's. With South Asia's uniform past with many disputes involving colonization and territorial distress notably involving nuclear armed regions such as India and Pakistan. This ridged and unstable history has led to an ongoing relationship of mistrust between nations and international relations thus making South Asia one of the most volatile regions in the world. The existence of nuclear armed states amplifies the high risks, presenting a constant threat towards regional peace and security showing why the disarmament of South Asia is imperative. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones would reduce the opportunity for the uprising of a nuclear war through certain agreements prohibiting the possession and development of nuclear weapons. With a focus on disarmament

countries can redirect their nuclear power towards other security measures such as military advancements.

State parties advancing towards their own establishment of a nuclear weapon free zones, must abide by certain regulations outlined by legally binding agreements. They must refrain from the development, manufacturing, possessing, acquiring, or controlling nuclear weapons, as well as not stationing, transporting, testing, or using nuclear weapons. In addition, State parties must commit to not discharge wastes or radioactive material into the atmosphere, sea or land within its zone, and the restriction of other states in doing such acts.

Specific agreements include the P5 members of the U.N Security Council, committing them to refraining from threatening or using nuclear power against established NFWZ's

Regional nuclear security calls for the collaboration between ASEAN and P-5 members. SEANFWZ extends over the maritime Exclusive economic zones (EEZ) of the members of the ASEAN states which is a cause of concern for the US and other P-5 members as it limits the deployment of their forces in the Southeast Asian region.

In September 1972, Pakistan put forward a proposal in favor of denuclearizing South Asia during the 16th annual session of the UN Atomic Energy Conference held in Mexico, calling for a treaty similar to the one of Latin America, the Tlatelolco treaty. However, at the time the proposal was yet to be moved formally to the United Nations. While this proposal was being presented, the Pakistani prime minister at the time, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, inaugurated the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant (KANUPP) soon after in November 1972. On the morning of May 18th, 1974, India conducted its first nuclear test labeled Smiling Buddha in Rajasthan desert which further highlighted the importance of Pakistan's proposal for that reason the proposal was formally moved to the United Nations General assembly on October 28th, 1974. This resolution acknowledged the right of the countries to harness and utilize nuclear energy for peaceful reasons only and highlighted the "dangers of diversion for military purposes, inherent in the development of nuclear energy" and establishment of "equitable and non-discriminatory system of verification and inspection", in accordance with Pakistan's second preambular paragraph.

During Pakistan's argument it repeatedly stated that all states in the region were in

favor of establishing a NFWZ and declared its stance on possessing nuclear weapons. However, India also put forward a resolution asserting the importance of first consulting the concept beforehand, regarding its implications, accessibility, and appropriateness with the countries within the region. India also viewed that such regional arrangements must not be enforced by outer entities, instead, they should be developed and grown locally and within the regions concerned.

Subtopic 1: Evaluating the effectiveness of verification mechanisms in ensuring compliance in (NFWZ):

For the success of NFWZ's certain verification systems must be established, these mechanisms ensure that member states within the region abide by the set rules and regulations of nuclear-free-weapon zones. This includes complying to the joint agreement of prohibiting the use, possession, testing and development of nuclear weapons. Trust and transparency are crucial for the verification of those mechanisms. With effective verification systems, international peace, and security can be reinforced and promoted. Mechanisms could include regular inspections, satellite monitoring systems, requirements for reporting, and the assembly of different frameworks for further verification.

Volatile regions are prone to uprising of conflicts due to the weak governance system and political strife (tensions). Southeast Asia consists of many volatile regions in particular India and Pakistan renowned for their high tensions thus requiring effective verification mechanisms in order to ensure cessation of nuclear weapons during conflicts.

Several agreements between State parties and the IAEA govern show the implementation of IAEA's verification mechanisms. Comprehensive safeguard agreements (CSA) are being mandatorily implemented by the IAEA, onto all non-nuclear-weapon states which have signed and are integrated with the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT) treaty. These safeguards ensure that member State Parties only source nuclear materials or equipment under high security monitoring for peaceful reasons only.

Subtopic 2: Social benefits of NFWZs in South Asia:

Volatile regions in South Asia prone to the escalation of conflicts (involving nuclear

weapons) with other countries have a higher chance of facing instability and long-term tensions. With the establishment of nuclear weapon-free-zones, countries are no longer equipped with nuclear weapons therefore reducing these risks and offering social benefits and alleviate weapon integration in conflicts.

Direct social benefits associated with non-proliferation of nuclear weapons include the reduction of conflicts, accidental launches, radiation exposure and errors involving calculations. These benefits allow regions to foster peace and trust among nearby countries and increase the overall safety, minimizing health and other risks involving dangerous materials. Decreasing the risk of nuclear accidents promotes stronger cooperation between states, therefore encouraging communication and mutual agreements and conclusions between countries. This shift allows regions to focus on other social aspects, such as education, healthcare, and other services. This will have an overall impact on the lifestyle of the citizens and the future generations to come.

Subtopic 3: Environmental benefits of NWFZ in South Asia:

In South Asia nuclear weapons have had several negative impacts on the environment since India and Pakistan's nuclear testing in 1998, whether it be from use and activation or from nuclear testing. However, with the implementation of nuclear-free-weapon zones in South Asia, there has been an acknowledgeable amount of positive change on the environment. For example, in 1945, the nuclear bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki posed major threats to the environment. Not only did the immediate explosions cause destruction, but the radiation left a long-term impact on the ecological state of the country. It contaminated the soil and water which led to the deterioration of plants and the harm of animals, dismantling food chains and habitats. In addition, the nuclear testing in India caused radiation issues and great impacts on the environment. Moreover, a zone free of nuclear weapons would reduce the number of nuclear tests conducted, which would therefore deduct radiation emissions, and pollution of the land, wind, water, and all essential resources for life. With the advancements of technology, the nuclear weapon-free-zones would urge member states in South Asia to reroute their investments to more sustainable activities, such as ecological conservation, renewable energy installations, and environmental projects. Furthermore, their efforts could encourage other regions to refocus their attention to sustainable initiatives. This will not only benefit the regional ecosystems but also contribute to the health of the global environment.

Major Parties Involved

Nations of Southeast Asia

All countries within South Asia are considered nations that require the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones in the region. With the understanding of the volatile nature of South Asia, all countries within are liable to having a significant impact on the treaty's outcome. A Thorough and focused analysis of the nations in Southeast Asia is essential to the successful establishment of those nuclear weapon free zones.

The United States of America (USA)

The United States of America play's a crucial role in this topic. As a P5 member, USA must support the establishment of Nuclear-Free-Weapon Zones by agreeing not to threaten or use nuclear weapons within the region. In addition, the SEANWFZ treaty over sees the maritime Exclusive economic zones, Inhibiting the deployment of the US and other P5 forces in Southeast Asia. USA has previously supported many initiatives involving arms control, furthermore, certain diplomatic leverage, and security assurances allows the USA to highly influence regional policies, including nuclear one, thus emphasizing the control carried by the US on regional decisions effecting nuclear policies.

India

India, known to be an unstable and volatile region with high tensions amidst neighboring countries, holding significant nuclear power and leading nuclear capabilities in the region of Southeast Asia, thus its participation is critical for the establishment of NFWZ.

Pakistan

Bearing similar nuclear potential as India, Pakistan participation holds equal importance to establishing a nuclear free region. Known for upholding tensions with India over the years, disarmament of its nuclear power is crucial for securing peace, stability, and trust within the region.

China

Although China is not part of the South Asia, its Geographical vicinity and status as not only being

a nuclear power state, but also a member of the permanent 5, makes its position vital to support the need to prohibit the possession and use of nuclear power, in addition to not use or threaten the countries signed. With close proximity to volatile regions such as India and Pakistan, China's high advocacy towards disarmament, and the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones allows it to mediate and spread the need for NFWZ's.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

The IAEA, Part of the United Nations, is an inter-Governmental organization which seeks to encourage the peaceful and secure use of nuclear power, thus promoting peace and security. With the IAEA's skill and expertise in establishing strong verification and monitoring mechanisms, the initiation of nuclear weapon free zones comes upon in a simpler manner.

The UN General assembly

The general assembly plays a fundamental role in the process of decision-making regarding treaties that involve establishing nuclear free weapon zones thus it carries a high significance during the process of the establishment of the NFWZ's, whether supporting or opposing certain decisions.

Timeline of Events

Date	Event
1942.08	The Manhattan project was set up for the development of the first nuclear weapon.
1945.08.06	The United States, the first nation to use nuclear weapons by dropping a uranium atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. This event resulted in the death of over 140,000 people within months, showing the massive detrimental capabilities of nuclear powers.
1945.10. 24	The United Nations began officially on October 24 th , 1945. It was stated to be the best international organization bringing peace and security to the nations of the world.
1968.07. 01	The Non-proliferation test ban treaty opens up for

	signature, all non-nuclear weapon states agree to never acquire nuclear bombs through legally binding agreements.
1974.12.18	India conducts its first ever nuclear test underground in the Rajasthan desert named as the smiling buddha.
1995.12.15	Southeast Asia joins the Bangkok treaty and becomes a nuclear free zone.
1995.9.24	at the United Nations the comprehensive test ban treaty was open to be signed, China, United Kingdom, Russia, France and the United States all agree to sign, but not all ratified, however India acted otherwise and did not sign the treaty.
1998.05	India conducts its first nuclear test in 24 years by 3 underground tests, later on in May, Pakistan, in response to India conducted 6 nuclear tests. This raised tensions between the countries in South Asia.

Attempts to solve the issue

Establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia (9/12/1974) (Resolution 3265)

Resolution 3265 highlights the importance of establishing nuclear free weapon zones in South Asia, reiterating their support as part of a global disarmament initiative. Through international consultations and guided steps, South Asian nations are led to the ultimate goal of complete nuclear disarmament. The Secretary General preforms timely checks and assists on the progress. The development and manufacturing of new nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction is prohibited through continuous communication. The Non-proliferation treaty is implemented through emphasizing the destructive capabilities nuclear warfare, thus eliminating the arms race between nations.

Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons (11/12/1975) (Resolution

3479)

Resolution 3479 was created in efforts of preventing the development of new types of weapons, and systems of weapons of mass destruction by halting arms races. In addition to urging the use of scientific technology for peaceful reasons only and prevent the production of weapons of mass destruction. Other Disarmament efforts were put into place by the UN such as discussions in the Disarmament committee about new WMDs and radiological methods.

Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace (16/12/1971) (Resolution 2832)

Resolution 2832 declares the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace rid from authoritarian military bases and nuclear weapons, through the removal of all military bases and installations. For secure compliance to this declaration, littoral states (states with a coastline), maritime users and Security General Members are encouraged to preform consultations. Prohibiting the use of the Indian Ocean for actions or threats against its littoral states, thus, allowing for continuous peace and security by maintaining free and lawful uses of the Indian ocean, thus supporting regional and international cooperation. The implementation of the deceleration is monitored through progress reports requested form the security general.

No Name (6/5/1998) (Resolution 1172)

Resolution 1172 was created in response to the nuclear tests conducted in May 1988 by India and Pakistan. These actions posed as a threat towards international non-proliferation and disarmament efforts, as the tests conducted greatly increased tensions and arms race in South Asia. This resolution demands cessation of any further nuclear tests and weapon development. In addition to enforcing both parties to deescalate military tensions, as well as reassuring the importance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons treaty (NPT), advising India and Pakistan to join the forementioned treaties. In conclusion, supporting the Secretary Generals efforts to encourage communication between both nations, calling for a report on the following actions taken by India and Pakistan.

Possible Solutions

Subtopic 1: Evaluating the effectiveness of verification mechanisms in ensuring compliance in (NWFZ):

One possible approach to ensure the effectiveness of verification mechanisms in ensuring compliance of the NWFZ that have signed the treaty is through creating reprimands such as sanction on countries that fail comply. A sanction is a restrictive measure taken to impose international law, mostly economic and political. Placing sanctions on countries that fail to comply will put pressure on the region to become nuclear free. Another vital approach is establishing verification and monitoring mechanisms including inspections and monitoring by the IAEA to ensure the treaties sustainability.

Subtopic 2: Social benefits of NWFZs in South Asia:

One solution that will socially benefit the nuclear free weapon zones in South Asia is the establishment of health care initiatives and hubs to reduce injuries and improve overall public wellbeing in order to support citizens during times of conflict and instability. This will shift focus from military buildup to human development. These initiatives would redirect the resources traditionally used for nuclear programs towards healthcare initiatives. Health care initiatives include infrastructure such as clinics of hospitals, and the use of technology to develop new operating tools or advanced medical equipment.

Subtopic 3: Environmental benefits of NWFZ in South Asia:

Implementing advanced satellite monitoring systems would ensure environmental and regional stability. These satellite monitoring systems will be overseen by the UN and other important bodies to ensure safety and security. By utilizing this technology countries will be able to detect any unauthorized transport, enrichment and development of nuclear war arms, thus safeguarding the environment from potential radiation and radioactive contamination. This use of technology will also limit the need for military surveillance and physical inspections diminishing the carbon footprint that comes with those excessive security measures. Consequently, the region will be able to reduce their carbon footprint, promote environment safety, and showcase their nuclear free development.

Guiding Questions

1. How has the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones effected countries such as Pakistan and India?
2. Which countries have successfully established nuclear-weapon-free zones and how has that effected the environment in that country?
3. How has fostering nuclear weapons free zones in other regions been supported by the United Nations?
4. What are the negative effects of establishing NWFZs in the South Asia region?
5. What are the positive effects of establishing NWFZs in the South Asia region?
6. How would instituting the nuclear weapon free zone in the South Asia region effect the public safety, health, and quality of life in South Asia?
7. How can funds previously assigned to nuclear weapon development and maintenance be effectively redirected toward different social issues?
8. What is the position of your country now and historically on the establishment of NWFZs?
9. Is your country open to the support of international agencies such as the IAEA in the creation of these zones?
10. What benefits would your country gain by the establishment of the NWFZs in South Asia?

Appendix

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