

# Isodarco 2015

Nuclear Disarmament & Nuclear Deterrence

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# Nuclear disarmament

– fundamentally different views of  
what it means

- Distant objective or urgent priority ?
- Obligations or commitments ?
- What constitutes credible progress ?

# Distant Objective or Urgent Priority

- Nuclear Weapons States
  - long-term aspirational objective
  - gradual progress while maintaining nuclear deterrence and strategic stability
  - focus on non-proliferation
- Non-Nuclear Weapons States
  - should be pursued with urgency
  - nuclear weapons possession dangerous per se
  - direct relation between nuclear weapons possession and proliferation

# Legal Obligation or Political Commitment

- Nuclear Weapons States
  - primarily national security prerogative
  - NPT obligation qualified by Art. 6 (*good faith, general and complete disarmament as well as undiminished security for all*)
  - non-binding political commitments
- Non-Nuclear Weapons States
  - Art. 6 further operationalized by 1995, 2000 and 2010 NPT Conferences and Documents
  - Conceptual connection between compliance with non-proliferation obligations with implementation of Art. 6
  - Quasi-legal obligations of a deal that has not been honored.

# What Constitutes Credible Progress?

- Nuclear Weapons States
  - gradual steps – reductions – moratoria – technical cooperation (glossary)
  - multilateral (CTBT followed by FMCT – step by step approach)
  - continued reliance on nuclear weapons and long term modernization programs are compatible with Art. 6
- Non-Nuclear Weapons States
  - Art. 6 requires discernible steps away from reliance on nuclear weapons (doctrines, dealerting, no long-term investments etc.)
  - multilateral progress virtually non-existent (CD, CTBT, FMCT)
  - disarmament is not pursued with a sense of urgency. Procrastination and intent to preserve the status quo.

# Critical Juncture

- Inconsistencies and differences of views difficult (impossible?) to bridge.
- threatens fabric of the NPT
- lack of disarmament progress has direct link to proliferation – proliferation of the concept of nuclear weapons
- undermines the very legitimacy of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime

# Nuclear Deterrence

- Nuclear deterrence and nuclear disarmament are mutually exclusive
- Concept of nuclear strategic stability and nuclear deterrence necessary to even out perceived or real military imbalances
- inherent contradiction between the wish or perceived necessity to maintain nuclear deterrence and nuclear disarmament
- Catch 22: as long as nuclear weapons exist, we will maintain a credible deterrent (Obama 2009) - as long as you maintain a nuclear deterrent – I must maintain it too.
- basic assumptions from the Cold war have not been changed – discourse still takes place in the same strategic stability and military security parameters that have resulted in the nuclear arms race and the proliferation of nuclear weapons
- **as long as this conceptual framework is maintained, nuclear disarmament will not happen.**

# Nuclear Deterrence and Nuclear Disarmament

– key questions for nuclear disarmament:

- Is the assertion that nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence indeed provide security correct?
- Is the equation that nuclear weapons are essential for security correct? Was it ever correct and if so is it still correct?
- The Humanitarian Initiative looks at nuclear weapons from a different perspective and provides some key answers to these questions.
- Copernican Moment for the Nuclear Weapons Debate?