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The P5 Process: Ten Years On

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The P5 Process: Ten Years On

Introduction

In 2008, the British Defence Secretary Lord Browne of Ladyton proposed that multilateral deliberations take place amongst all five nuclear-weapon states (China, France, United Kingdom, United States, Russia; 'the P5') recognised by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Hailed by many policy analysts and states parties as 'an important step forward'¹, the inception of this initiative—the so-called P5 Process—came at a critical time. The inability to agree a consensus final document—the standard measure of conference success—at the 2005 Review Conference (RevCon) fuelled dissatisfaction amongst the non-nuclear-weapon states at the perceived lack of progress on nuclear disarmament. These negative atmospherics did not bode well for the 2010 RevCon, fuelling the prospects of a back-to-back failure.

The establishment of the P5 Process signalled the intention of the P5 to avert such a back-to-back failure by creating a platform, for the first time in the treaty's history, for the nuclear-weapon states to consult on their implementation of the NPT's three pillars as a group. The ambition of these intra-P5 deliberations was not only to generate a 'dialogue that could convince non-nuclear-weapon states in the context of the NPT that they were taking their obligations under the treaty seriously'²; but the P5 nuclear talks would, it was hoped, also result in concrete confidence-building measures amongst the P5 that would facilitate actual disarmament steps at a later date.³

The P5 Process now celebrates its tenth anniversary. Except for a pause in 2017-2018, the P5 have met regularly since the first P5 conference in London in 2009.⁴ Although China re-started the P5 Process by convening a P5 conference earlier in 2019, disagreements and strained geopolitical relations have stalled progress on substantive issues. Some non-nuclear-weapon states, especially those supporting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), equate slow progress in the P5 Process to a lack of interest in disarmament from the nuclear-weapon states.⁵ Thus, substantive outcomes from the P5 Process would contribute strongly to creating a conducive environment for a consensus final document at the 2020 RevCon.

Based on interviews with officials and experts from all P5 states and some non-nuclear-weapon states, this study analyses the developments in the P5 Process in this review cycle to propose recommendations for the P5 states on finding areas of substantive convergence and agreement on meaningful deliverables.

1 Andrea Berger and Malcolm Chalmers (2013) 'Great Expectations: The P5 Process and the Non-Proliferation Treaty', Whitehall Report 3-13 (London: Royal United Services Institute), p. 1.

2 Lord Browne of Ladyton (2019) 'Oral evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on International Relations', 16 January, <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/international-relations-committee/the-nuclear-nonproliferation-treaty-and-nuclear-disarmament/oral/95169.html>.

3 Telephone interview with a P5 official, 30 July 2019. All interviews were conducted in confidentiality; the names of interviewees are therefore withheld by mutual agreement.

4 Although no formal P5 conferences took place in 2017 and 2018, the P5 met at least once during this period, having convened for example a P5 Principals Meeting in Geneva on 28 April on the sidelines of the 2018 Preparatory Committee (see Permanent Representation of France to the Conference on Disarmament [2018] 'P5 Meeting: the five Nuclear Weapon States intend to pursue the dialogue on strategic stability', <https://cd-geneve.delegfrance.org/P5-Meeting-the-five-Nuclear-Weapon-States-intend-to-pursue-the-dialogue-on>).

5 Telephone interview with a non-P5 official, 15 July 2019.

Of the several recommendations made, practical measures on risk reduction and on enhancing the procedural transparency of the P5 Process are most important to the success of the 2020 RevCon and the credibility of the NPT review process. Progress on these specific issues could convince the non-nuclear-weapon states that the P5 are engaged in a genuine and meaningful dialogue about substantive measures conducive to the disarmament objective contained in NPT Article VI, thereby countering criticism from some non-nuclear-weapon states and policy analysts that the P5 Process is, as one observer put it, 'nothing but an exercise in public relations management designed to give the non-nuclear-weapon states the impression that substantive progress is taking place when there is in fact no such progress.'⁶

The analysis proceeds as follows. The next section examines the work of the P5 Process to date, singling out heightened geopolitical tensions and substantive disagreements as the stumbling blocks that have stalled progress. This study then offers insights into how the expectations of both nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon states for the P5 Process have lowered. The final section offers recommendations, for the P5 states, on substantive and procedural issues which, if pursued, would likely be conducive to agreeing a consensus final document at the 2020 RevCon.

The P5 Process: work to date

The P5 Process consists of several working-group meetings and formal conferences. The last formal P5 conference took place in Beijing on 30 and 31 January 2019. Following a two-year pause, the P5 agreed on the following work plan in the run-up to the 2020 RevCon:

The P5 reached 5-points consensus on the next steps of cooperation: First, to conduct experts-level consultations to explore the possibility of explaining respective nuclear policy and doctrine through jointly holding a side event

during the 2020 Review Conference. Second, to renew engagement with the ASEAN countries on the Protocol to the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty under China's coordination. Third, to support China's leadership on the Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms with a view to achieving new tangible results to be submitted to the 2020 NPT Review Conference. Fourth, to explore the way to strengthen cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, nuclear security and nuclear safety, through the Friends of the Nuclear Energy based in Vienna. Fifth, to push for substantive discussions on FMCT-related technical issues in the CD (Conference on Disarmament).⁷

There is little novelty in these issue areas as Table 1 (Appendix) shows. Since their inaugural London conference in 2009, the P5 have frequently consulted on 1) their nuclear doctrines; 2) the Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms; 3) the peaceful uses pillar; 4) the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT); and 5) the deadlock in the CD that impedes the negotiations of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT). The issue of signing the protocol to Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty) has also been a regular feature of the P5 agenda since 2013.

Before considering each of these work areas in detail in the following paragraphs, readers should note that the discussions on nuclear accident response and disarmament verification have failed to gain momentum due to substantive disagreements. China and Russia in particular are adamant that discussing accident response is a futile exercise because their procedures and technology related to their nuclear arsenals are safe.⁸

The P5 could, however, return to the issue

⁷ Fu Cong (2019) 'Statement by H.E. Mr Fu Cong, on Behalf of the P5 States', New York, 1 May, <http://statements.unmeetings.org/media/21491982/china-behalfofthep5states-general-debate.pdf>.

⁸ Telephone interview with an expert from a P5 state, 29 July; Andrea Berger and Malcolm Chalmers (2013) 'Great Expectations: The P5 Process and the Non-Proliferation Treaty', Whitehall Report 3-13 (London: Royal United Services Institute), p. 27.

⁶ Telephone interview with an expert from a P5 state, 9 September 2019.

from an accident prevention angle, linking this issue to the on-going discussions about nuclear doctrines. Here, the P5 could exchange views and best practices of their doctrinal procedures in place to minimise the risk of accidental launch. Such an angle would demonstrate to the NPT community that the P5 are willing to make progress on thorny issues, using creative approaches to find consensus.

Russia regards cooperation with non-nuclear-weapon states on disarmament verification as a potential violation of NPT Articles I and II, which prohibit the transfer of nuclear weapons technology.

Although the P5 consulted on nuclear disarmament verification regularly during the 2011-2015 review cycle, the issue has not returned to the agenda in 2019. Officials and experts interviewed for this study pointed out that the P5 deliberations on this issue made little progress in the last review cycle. The discussions mostly consisted of presentations of bilateral work. For example, in 2012, the United Kingdom briefed the other P5 states on its experience from the UK-Norway Initiative. Similar briefings took place on verification experiences from bilateral US-UK work, as well as from the New START Treaty.

But the P5 could not agree on a bespoke P5 outcome in this field because Russia does not regard disarmament verification as a priority in the current geopolitical climate and has reservations about discussing said issue with non-nuclear-weapon states for fears of revealing sensitive technological information.⁹ In fact, Russia regards cooperation with non-nuclear-weapon states on disarmament verification as a potential violation of NPT Articles I and II, which prohibit the transfer of nuclear weapons

technology.¹⁰ As one Russian official put it: 'It is impossible to cooperate on nuclear disarmament verification without revealing some sensitive technological information about nuclear weapons.'¹¹ There has been no joint P5 decision, for example, to support the disarmament verification work of the UN Group of Governmental Experts on Nuclear Disarmament Verification or the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, with China and Russia having withdrawn from the latter on political grounds. This is very unfortunate since the vast majority of NPT states regard disarmament verification work as a priority area for progress on NPT Article VI in the absence of actual cuts to nuclear arsenals.¹² Though there is agreement amongst the P5 and the non-nuclear-weapon states that disarmament verification work is sensitive, most states, including some of the P5, believe that joint disarmament verification work is possible without transferring information on designs to non-nuclear-weapon states.¹³

The Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms

Although the P5 formally agreed at the 2009 London meeting to 'increase the efficiency of nuclear consultation'¹⁴ through a Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms that could facilitate agreement on substantive disarmament measures, disagreements on definitions stalled progress. Whilst a dedicated working group was set up at the 2012 P5 conference, which agreed on some 200 terms for inclusion in the glossary, the P5 did not manage to resolve their differences on some of these definitions ahead of the 2015 RevCon. The glossary presented at the 2015 RevCon disappointed many in the NPT community because a number of definitions were simply 'borrowed' from existing glossaries, such as

⁹ Interviews with P5 experts and officials, 19 and 24 July, 29 and 30 August 2019.

Andrea Berger and Malcolm Chalmers (2013) 'Great Expectations: The P5 Process and the Non-Proliferation Treaty', Whitehall Report 3-13 (London: Royal United Services Institute), p. 16.

¹⁰ Interview with P5 officials, 24 July and 30 August 2019.

¹¹ Interview with P5 officials, 30 August 2019.

¹² Telephone interview with a non-P5 official, 15 July 2019.

¹³ Interviews with P5 experts and officials, 24 July and 8 August 2019.

¹⁴ French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (2011) 'P5 Statement: First P5 Follow-up Meeting to the NPT Review Conference', Paris, 1 July.

the IAEA glossaries and bilateral glossaries.¹⁵

The challenge for the P5, then, is to find a balance between reproducing existing definitions to satisfy their ambition of a long document and actually resolving disagreements on challenging term.

To be sure, the P5 signalled at a 2013 Wilton Park conference and at the 2014 Beijing meeting that they planned to finish ‘phase one’ of the glossary ahead of the 2015 RevCon.¹⁶ This announcement surprised many non-nuclear-weapon states.¹⁷ With the P5 having previously not spoken of various phases of glossary work, it seemed that disagreements were simply too many to resolve or, as some of the more critical non-nuclear-weapon states saw it, there was little willingness to make progress.¹⁸ As one report noted in 2013, ‘The glossary’s

15 (2015) ‘P5 Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms’, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/243293.pdf>; see also Andrea Berger (2014) ‘The P5 Nuclear Dialogue: Five Years On’ (London: RUSI), p. 5, https://rusi.org/sites/default/files/201407_op_the_p5_nuclear_dialogue.pdf 2). As one P5 official noted,

Many sources were used including those from the IAEA, CTBT, physics textbooks and others depending on the section of the glossary. Unsure of a US-Russia glossary, possibly from existing Treaty definitions, some terms were certainly discussed from the existing US-China dictionary of terms (https://sites.nationalacademies.org/PGA/cisac/PGA_085531), though I cannot say if these were included unchanged or at all. So there were certainly debates around which sources all could agree on as well as agreement on the terms themselves, the IAEA being the easiest to agree. Though of course selection of one term from a source did not necessarily mean the group would accept other terms from the same source particularly for non-IAEA sources. (Email correspondence with a P5 official, 5 September 2019)

16 ‘Joint Statement on Fifth P5 Conference’, Beijing, 15 April 2014. Previous P5 statements made no mention of various editions or phases of glossary work.

17 Telephone interview with a non-P5 official, 15 July 2019.

18 Interview with a non-P5 official, Vienna, 26 June 2019.

greatest danger...is that it will simply be seen as lightweight, or as distraction from the task of “real” disarmament.¹⁹ Work on ‘phase two’ of the glossary project properly commenced with the re-initiation of the P5 Process at the Beijing conference in 2019 following the lack of a formal P5 conference in 2017 and 2018.²⁰

It is certainly the ambition of some P5 states to find common definitions of the challenging terms that could not be agreed on in the last review cycle.²¹ China, in particular, appears keen on producing a long document to demonstrate the progress that the P5 have made since 2015. Interviews with officials and experts suggest that Beijing deserves credit for advancing the glossary agenda amongst the P5, and for re-convening a formal P5 conference following a two-year-long pause.²² As one expert it,

China appears to regard its leadership on the glossary work as evidence that China is a responsible nuclear-weapon state given that there is little appetite within China right now to engage in substantive arms control. The geopolitical situation—force modernisations in the United States and elsewhere as well as a general decline in trust amongst the great powers—is simply not ripe for further disarmament.²³

But despite China’s ambitions, it is doubtful that much progress can be made in the remaining months between now and the next RevCon. Several P5 officials indicated in interviews that reaching agreement on the more challenging terms is likely to take much longer. As one diplomat put it,

It is difficult to see how we can get through the list we’d like to get through in the limited time we have left. The

19 Wilton Park (2013) ‘Conference Report: Towards the 2015 NPT Review Conference’, WP1265, p. 5, <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/WP1265-Report.pdf>.

20 Interview with a P5 official, 24 July 2019.

21 Ibid.

22 As per footnote 4, the P5 meet at least once despite the lack of a formal P5 conference.

23 Telephone interview with an expert from a P5 state, 19 July 2019.

product needs to be out by RevCon, but it is unrealistic to think that we can produce in a matter of months what we said in 2015 would take several years.²⁴

The challenge for the P5, then, is to find a balance between reproducing existing definitions to satisfy their ambition of a long document and actually resolving disagreements on challenging terms.

Although this means that the second edition of the P5 glossary presented at the 2020 RevCon will either be significantly shorter than the first edition or reproduce, again, definitions from existing glossaries, there is 'hidden' value in these deliberations, or so the P5 affirm. As several P5 officials noted, 'The most interesting part of the glossary work is not the document per se. It is what is not in it. The terms we cannot agree on. This helps a lot in better understanding each other's perspective and has spin-off benefits for other work areas.'²⁵ Though this may well be true when the meetings happen regularly, none of the officials interviewed could provide concrete examples of what the particular national positions were on any of the disputed terms when pressed: 'it has simply been too long since the last meeting'²⁶, as one P5 official noted given the lack of a P5 conference in 2017 and 2018. As such, the P5 should do their utmost to preserve the intrinsic procedural value of these glossary discussions by continuing meetings at the working-group level even when there is no formal P5 conference, such as in 2017 and 2018.

Nuclear Doctrines

Similarly, the P5 consulted on issues of nuclear doctrines in the last review cycle as well as at the last P5 conference in 2016 before the two-year break. Although tangible outcomes of the previous discussions on this issue are difficult to quantify, and the meetings planned before the 2020 RevCon have yet to happen, most officials and experts interviewed agreed that the P5 discussions on nuclear policy and

doctrines bear considerable potential for progress because all of them are interested in improving strategic stability.²⁷

Three meetings are scheduled as of now. The discussions are likely to involve two to three officials from each P5 state, including the heads of department of Ministries of Foreign Affairs as well as the respective ambassadors to the CD in Geneva. As each P5 state can designate appropriate experts, states may possibly also include directors and/or military equivalents in their respective delegations.²⁸ The short-term aim is to brief the non-nuclear-weapon states at a dedicated side event at the 2020 RevCon on the nuclear doctrines of the P5.²⁹

This doctrines discussion is, according to P5 officials, getting to the heart of what the P5 should be discussing to increase trust and transparency between themselves and with the non-nuclear-weapon states. There is a clear expectation that the three meetings between now and RevCon would likely be consumed by the P5 questioning each other on their respective nuclear doctrines. As one official put it,

The doctrines discussion is the modern equivalent at the P5 level of bilateral US-Russia talks during the Cold War. We will ask serious questions about each other's posture and doctrine to make sure that we understand exactly what each of us means. P5 agreement is a rarity and so these discussions are invaluable for us.³⁰

Against the backdrop of a deteriorating geopolitical climate, the nuclear doctrines discussion is promising. There has been a clear move away from arms control measures as major agreements have either been undermined (e.g. the US withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action [JCPOA] and US allegations against Russia for violating the CTBT or terminated

24 Interview with a P5 official, 24 July 2019.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

27 Interviews with P5 experts and officials, 15, 19, 24 July, 29 and 30 August 2019.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.

30 Interview with a P5 official, 24 July 2019.

(the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces [INF] Treaty).³¹ Similarly, all P5 states are modernising their nuclear arsenals, which has at least in China's case led some observers to question the continued applicability of the country's no-first-use policy.³²

In addition, the United States has announced changes to its nuclear doctrine as geopolitical relations have worsened, with the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the alleged Russian-orchestrated use of chemical weapons in Salisbury, UK, marking a new post-Cold-War low in relations between the P5.³³ In this context, the nuclear doctrines discussion allows the P5 to better understand each other's position, for example with regards to the precise circumstances in which nuclear weapons might be used. Russia harbours deep concerns about the Trump administration's Nuclear Posture Review, which Moscow perceives to be 'lowering the threshold for nuclear weapons use, announcing the development of new low-yield nuclear weapons and weakening the CTBT by unequivocally stating that the Trump administration will not even on paper seek to ratify the crucial test ban treaty.'³⁴ Likewise, the United States believes that Russia has adopted an 'escalate to de-escalate' posture.³⁵

31 Maximilian Hoell (2019) 'The CTBT is in danger: Here's how to save it', ELN Policy Brief (London: European Leadership Network), <https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/190829-The-Comprehensive-Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty-is-in-danger.pdf>.

32 Lorenzo Termine (2019) 'Paving the Way for a Shift? Evidences from China's Nuclear Documents', International Policy Digest (online), 9 August, <https://intpolicydigest.org/2019/08/09/paving-the-way-for-a-shift-evidences-from-china-s-nuclear-documents/>; Ben Lowsen (2018) 'Is China Abandoning Its "No First Use" Nuclear Policy?', The Diplomat (online), 21 March, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/03/is-china-abandoning-its-no-first-use-nuclear-policy/>.

33 Interviews with P5 experts and officials, 15, 19, 24 July, 29 and 30 August 2019.

34 Interview with a P5 official, 30 August 2019; see also Vladimir Putin (2018) 'Address to the Federal Assembly', 1 March, quoted in John Simpson and Hassan Elbahimy (eds) (2019) NPT Briefing Book (London: King's College London), p. F-5.

35 'Nuclear Posture Review Report' (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, February 2018), p. 8, <https://media.defense.gov/2018/Feb/02/2001872886/>

The June 2019 US Joint Chiefs of Staff Nuclear Operations manual suggests that the United States has reciprocated, stating that 'Using nuclear weapons could create conditions for decisive results and the restoration of strategic stability.'³⁶ Understanding each other's posture can therefore help to avoid escalation due to misperception.

The doctrines discussion thus clearly bears considerable potential for progress in improving strategic stability amongst two key P5 states, whose bilateral relations can be a deal-maker or deal-breaker in nuclear arms control.

Moreover, deteriorating geopolitical relations between the United States and Russia have resulted in the adoption of more hawkish positions vis-à-vis Russia in the United States foreign policy establishment, especially amongst Democrats.³⁷ Although there appears to be little appetite at present for substantive cooperation with Russia in the United States across the spectrum of foreign policy issues, the United States remains interested in improving strategic stability, which US colleagues also refer to as 'strategic security.'³⁸

The doctrines discussion thus clearly bears considerable potential for progress in improving strategic stability amongst two key P5 states, whose bilateral relations can be a deal-maker or deal-breaker in nuclear arms control. As experts and officials interviewed for this study put it, 'The bilateral US-Russia relationship impacts the state of international arms control and the NPT like no other. It is quite simply the key driver of progress or the

1/-1/1/2018-NUCLEAR-POSTURE-REVIEW-FINAL-REPORT.PDF.

36 Joint Chiefs of Staff (2019) 'Nuclear Operations', Joint Publication 3-72, p. III-3, https://fas.org/irp/dod-dir/dod/jp3_72.pdf.

37 Conversation with US officials, 6 September 2019.

38 Ibid.

principal stumbling block.³⁹

Beyond the immediate enhancement of strategic stability, and better understanding each other's doctrines, the P5 could eventually agree on a series of measures to lower the risk of miscalculation and misinterpretation. Once the P5 have clarified their nuclear doctrines—the talks are in essence an exercise in transparency and confidence-building—the doctrines framework could result in efforts to find common ground on specific risk reduction measures in the sphere of crisis communication in the next review cycle.

Although no formal announcement to this end has been made, crisis communication could be a promising area to look into because, first, existing arrangements are minimal since the suspension of the NATO-Russia Council and it is not clear to what extent the US-USSR (now Russia) Agreement on Preventing Dangerous Military Activities of 1989 remains functional. In any case, there has been no dedicated arrangement for crisis communication amongst all P5 states. Second, crisis communication enhances strategic stability and confidence, and is relatively easy to set up. Third, the non-nuclear-weapon states will, given momentum for risk reduction efforts at the 2018 and 2019 PrepComs, welcome crisis communication measures from the P5.

Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone

The P5 have consulted since the last review cycle on engaging the member states of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty) with the aim of signing and ratifying the protocol to the treaty. The parties to the Bangkok Treaty have asked the P5, as legal possessors of nuclear weapons under the NPT, to sign and ratify a protocol acknowledging the nuclear-weapon-free status of the zone and committing to not use, or threaten to use, nuclear weapons against the states parties to the Bangkok Treaty.

³⁹ Interviews with P5 experts and officials, 15, 19, 24 July, 29 and 30 August 2019.

China and the United States have the greatest reservations about signing the protocol.⁴⁰ The United States appears to harbour concerns that its ships passing through the territorial waters of the zone would need to declare whether or not nuclear weapons are present.

China has worried that signing and ratifying the protocol to the Bangkok Treaty would impact its submarine patrols in the South China Sea. According to experts interviewed for this paper, the Chinese government asked policy analysts to look into this issue. The expert reports to Beijing confirmed that such fears are ungrounded.⁴¹ With Beijing's concerns now resolved, it remains to be seen if the US concerns can be mitigated.

China and the United States have the greatest reservations about signing the protocol to the Bangkok Treaty.

The United Kingdom, France and Russia seem ready to proceed with signature and ratification, provided that this is done as a group.⁴² Russian officials have indicated in interviews that President Putin has issued them with a decree to sign the protocol, and so would be willing to proceed with signature and ratification in coordination with the other P5 states 'as soon as we have had time to buy the aeroplane tickets to the place of signature, wherever that might be. We are not in a hurry to sign because we don't want to create problems for the other P5 states. As far as Russia is concerned, we are ready.'⁴³

Although there has been progress on the Bangkok Treaty discussions, the P5 have neither signed nor ratified the protocol. The insistence on signing as a group is a delicate issue. For the P5, it provides greater leverage

⁴⁰ Interviews with P5 experts and officials, 15, 19, 24 July, 29 and 30 August 2019.

⁴¹ Telephone interview with an expert from a P5 state, 19 July 2019.

⁴² Interviews with P5 experts and officials, 15, 19, 24 July, 29 and 30 August 2019.

⁴³ Interview with P5 officials, 30 August 2019.

in the resolution of individual states' concerns. For the non-nuclear-weapon states, it fuels the impression of P5 unity, which is sometimes misperceived as unity across the range of issues and 'there exist concerns, particularly among the NNWS [non-nuclear-weapon states], that P5 unity might not necessarily always work in the interests of the NPT.'⁴⁴

The Peaceful Uses Pillar

Although the P5 have long advocated strengthening cooperation on the peaceful uses pillar, this work area is given special attention ahead of the 2020 RevCon. This is in response to Ambassador Rafael Grossi of Argentina, the designated chair of the 2020 RevCon, having affirmed that this is the pillar that 'has been if not marginalised, then less looked into. It is an area that means a lot for the vast majority of the [NPT] membership.'⁴⁵

This development is to be commended, according to officials, as some progress seems indeed possible on this pillar. In the sphere of nuclear security, for example, the United States, the United Kingdom, Norway, China and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have successfully worked with Nigeria to convert the NIRR-1 high-enriched uranium civilian research reactor into a low-enriched uranium model.⁴⁶ Similarly, the United States, China and the IAEA also worked with Ghana on the conversion of the country's Miniature Neutron Source Reactor 'from the use of high-enriched uranium (HEU) fuel to low-enriched uranium (LEU) fuel.'⁴⁷

44 Wilton Park (2013) 'Conference Report: Towards the 2015 NPT Review Conference', WP1265, p. 5, <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/WP1265-Report.pdf>.

45 Rafael Mariano Grossi (2019) 'The 2020 NPT Review Conference Starts Now: An Interview with Argentine Diplomat Rafael Mariano Grossi', Arms Control Association (online), June, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2019-06/features/2020-npt-review-conference-starts-now-interview-argentine-diplomat-rafael>.

46 Petr Chakrov and Thomas Hanlon (2018) 'Nigeria Converts its Research Reactor from HEU to LEU Fuel', IAEA (online), 20 December, <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/nigeria-converts-its-research-reactor-from-heu-to-leu-fuel>.

47 Sandor Tozser (2017) 'Supporting Nuclear Non-Proliferation: Ghana Converts Research Reactor

In replacing the Chinese manufactured reactor cores, Beijing followed through on one of its commitments from the Nuclear Security Summit process.⁴⁸ Although Russia has reservations about discussing nuclear security in the NPT framework,⁴⁹ many non-nuclear-weapon states welcome efforts to strengthen nuclear security worldwide.⁵⁰ Thus, individual members of the P5 should explore the possibility of similar HEU minimisation projects in close coordination with the IAEA and other states.

Though the P5 states agree that the Additional Protocol should be universalised, China and Russia have expressed concerns about the state-level concept, used by the IAEA.

Similarly, although the P5 have long consulted on strengthening nuclear safeguards, there are divergent preferences for how this is to be achieved. Though the P5 states agree that the Additional Protocol should be universalised, China and Russia have expressed concerns about the state-level concept, used by the IAEA.⁵¹ In essence, the state-level concept enables the IAEA to look at each state's nuclear programme in isolation to identify which aspects of its nuclear programme are most proliferation sensitive and to focus attention and resources there. China and Russia argue that the state-level concept is prone to politicisation and could be misused as a political judgement on whether a state is likely to proliferate.⁵²

from HEU to LEU Fuel', IAEA (online), 29 August, <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/supporting-nuclear-non-proliferation-ghana-converts-research-reactor-from-heu-to-leu-fuel>.

48 World Nuclear News (2018) 'LEU fuel en route to Nigerian research reactor', 19 October, <http://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/LEU-fuel-en-route-to-Nigerian-research-reactor>.

49 Interviews with P5 officials, 30 August 2019.

50 Telephone interview with a non-P5 official, 15 July 2019.

51 Interview with P5 officials, 5 August 2019.

52 Interviews with P5 experts and officials, 15, 19, 24 July, 5, 29 and 30 August 2019.

Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT)

According to the P5 workplan, technical discussions on the FMCT in the CD are to be advanced. Although experts and officials interviewed for this study see some potential in this area for progress, given that technical discussions on the CTBT ultimately helped to facilitate political agreement, they were equally clear that no P5 state is blocking the opening of FMCT negotiations.⁵³ Some P5 experts and officials regretted that China seemed unwilling to persuade its ally Pakistan to agree to negotiations.⁵⁴

It should be noted that the P5 have consulted on the FMCT since the last review cycle with little success. Given that Pakistan is blocking negotiations, the P5 could either engage Pakistan on the issue as a group with a view to resolving Pakistan's reservations about the treaty, or the P5 should prioritise other work areas, where progress is more likely. Russian officials seemed to concur with this assessment, stating that,

The FMCT is not a priority for Russia because it is obsolete in our view. The FMCT might have been useful 50 years ago or before the CTBT, but the moratoria that are in place on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes make it obsolete in our age. Russia remains ready to talk about the FMCT, but those talks should be taken forward in the CD on the basis of the mandate contained in document 1299.⁵⁵

The nuclear doctrines discussion and the glossary are two examples that could make a more meaningful contribution to the NPT review process as outlined above.

⁵³ Interviews with P5 experts and officials, 15, 19, 24 July, 29 and 30 August 2019.

⁵⁴ Interviews with P5 experts and officials, 15, 19, 24 July 2019.

⁵⁵ Interview with P5 officials, 30 August 2019.

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)

Finally, the P5 CTBT group has concentrated on on-site inspection (OSI) issues, helping to develop the list of radionuclides of interest for OSIs, i.e. radionuclides released in nuclear explosions. If samples are taken during an OSI, there is the possibility of proliferation sensitive information being revealed if a test has indeed occurred, hence analysis equipment has to be operated in what is known as a blinded mode. In this mode, the equipment should look for the 17 radionuclides informed by the P5 group, and not for other signatures. This would still identify if a test has occurred but protect potentially proliferative information being revealed. This list was developed 10 years ago and the group still meets to discuss various issues, and progressing the OSI capabilities, but nothing as concrete as this list has been developed since.⁵⁶

The recent US allegations against Russia (without providing substantiated evidence) for violating the CTBT not only weakens international confidence in the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization's (CTBTO) capacity to verify the absence of nuclear testing but they also fuel speculation of US brinkmanship around the treaty, including the possibility of impeding withdrawal of the US signature from the CTBT.⁵⁷ Given that 'many non-nuclear-weapon states regard the CTBT as fundamental to achieving the aims of the NPT'⁵⁸, the P5 should reaffirm their commitment to CTBT universalisation by means of a group statement to this effect. Because the P5 issued a number of group statements since

⁵⁶ Interview with a P5 official, 24 July 2019.

⁵⁷ Maximilian Hoell (2019) 'The CTBT is in danger: Here's how to save it' (London: European Leadership Network), <https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/190829-The-Comprehensive-Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty-is-in-danger.pdf>.

⁵⁸ Maximilian Hoell (2019) 'The CTBT is in danger: Here's how to save it' (London: European Leadership Network), p. 7, see also pp. 5-6, <https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/190829-The-Comprehensive-Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty-is-in-danger.pdf>.

2009 in support of the CTBT, not reaffirming their support for the CTBT could fuel perceptions that some of the P5, in particular the United States, are no longer committed to this crucial treaty of the international non-proliferation regime. Individual P5 states should also work with non-signatory and non-ratifying Annex II and non-Annex II states to strengthen the international norm against nuclear testing through 1) further progress on CTBT universalisation; 2) raising the profile of the CTBT in the 2020 NPT RevCon; 3) coordinated unilateral declarations from the remaining non-signatory and non-ratifying states to re-consider signing and/or ratifying the CTBT; and 4) establishing a formal relationship between the CTBTO and non-signatory states by encouraging them in the first instance to become accredited observers to the Preparatory Commission, the CTBTO's plenary body.⁵⁹

A Deteriorating Geostrategic Context

As the P5 Process enters its tenth year, it is clear that the shifting geostrategic context has made progress in the P5 framework more difficult. In 2009, when the P5 Process convened for its inaugural conference, US President Barack Obama had just outlined his so-called Prague agenda, broadly defined as a world without nuclear weapons. In particular, Obama sought a fresh round of strategic arms reductions with Russia, US Senate ratification of the CTBT, negotiations of a FMCT as well as measures to strengthen nuclear security worldwide through the launch of the Nuclear Security Summits.⁶⁰

In this environment, the P5 Process was credibly conceived as a platform for the P5 to consult on their implementation of the NPT's three pillars, including on confidence-building

measures that would eventually facilitate disarmament measures. As one official put it,

The P5 Process was designed as a means for the P5 to meet their commitments under the 2010 Action Plan. The point was to build a common vocabulary and a pattern of transparency amongst the P5 that would demonstrate in a tangible way that we are taking our obligations seriously. There was a clear expectation that eventually the P5 Process would produce tangible disarmament measures. A secondary objective of the P5 Process was to give the P5 a forum for talking about nuclear dynamics more generally, including Iran and North Korea.⁶¹

As relations between the P5 states changed over the last decade, cooperation on nuclear arms control in the P5 Process evolved, too.

The principal indicator and influencer of this shift remains the bilateral US-Russia relationship.⁶² Moscow's annexation of Crimea in 2014 resulted in the suspension of important consultation mechanisms with Russia, such as the NATO-Russia Council. Relations between the United Kingdom and Russia also deteriorated following the alleged use of chemical weapons by Moscow against a Russian national on British soil in 2016. This contributed to the non-materialisation of France's offer at the 2016 P5 conference to host the next conference in 2017.⁶³ In the meantime, relations between China and the United States have also cooled with the onset of a trade war.

These deteriorating geopolitical relations have caused a shift in the strategic thinking of the P5 states. The United States under President Trump appears less inclined to view arms control as serving its interests. The US withdrawal from the JCPOA as well as the termination of the INF Treaty are cases in

59 Maximilian Hoell (2019) 'The CTBT is in danger: Here's how to save it' (London: European Leadership Network), pp. 5-7, <https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/190829-The-Comprehensive-Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty-is-in-danger.pdf>.

60 Barack H. Obama (2009) 'Remarks By President Obama In Prague As Delivered', 5 April, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-prague-delivered>.

61 Telephone interview with a P5 official, 30 July 2019.

62 Interviews with P5 experts and officials, 15, 19, 24 July, 29 and 30 August 2019.

63 Ibid.

point. And the recent US allegations against Russia for violating the CTBT have fuelled speculation that the United States might withdraw its signature from the treaty.⁶⁴

Changing Expectations

As the key deliverables of the P5 Process for the 2015 RevCon—the glossary and the common reporting form—fell short of expectations, many non-nuclear-weapon states became ‘disillusioned’⁶⁵ and ‘disappointed’⁶⁶ with the grouping. Some non-nuclear-weapon states even share the ‘cartel’ description of the P5 Process—a term used by its founder Lord Browne:⁶⁷

I thought that I was creating a dynamic for disarmament and peace, and what I created was a cartel—a group of nuclear-weapon states that in many other ways could not bear the sight of each other, but when it came to the common ownership of nuclear weapons were very good at articulating an argument as to why they needed nuclear weapons only because the rest of the world did not behave itself well enough.⁶⁸

In addition to geopolitical tensions and substantive disagreements, another reason for this perception amongst non-nuclear-weapon states is the opaqueness of the P5 Process. For example, many P5 officials pointed out that the real value of the glossary work is not the final document *per se*, but rather

the process of these deliberations: ‘The most interesting terms are those that we cannot agree on because these disagreements offer deep insights into each other’s thinking.’⁶⁹ These insights are inaccessible to the non-nuclear-weapon states because the P5 do not publicly elaborate on details of the glossary work.

The expectations of the P5 states of what they can collectively achieve through the P5 Process appear to have declined in the current geopolitical climate.

Moreover, most P5 officials interviewed for this study demonstrated an acute awareness of the signalling power that the P5 Process agenda has for the non-nuclear-weapon states. According to one Russian official, ‘We should focus on non-proliferation and disarmament issues. These are the deal-maker or deal-breaker issues for the non-nuclear-weapon states. Everything else might be dismissed as peanuts.’⁷⁰ But the expectations of the P5 states of what they can collectively achieve through the P5 Process appear to have declined in the current geopolitical climate. As the British government noted in its response to a House of Lords report encouraging the P5 Process to take on a more ‘substantive’⁷¹ agenda, ‘The P5 often take divergent views on a range of issues.’⁷²

It is therefore not surprising that the most pressing non-proliferation and disarmament

64 Maximilian Hoell (2019) ‘The CTBT is in danger: Here’s how to save it’ (London: European Leadership Network), <https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/190829-The-Comprehensive-Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty-is-in-danger.pdf>.

65 Telephone interview with a non-P5 official, 15 July 2019.

66 Ibid.

67 Interview with a Non-Aligned Movement official, 25 June 2019.

68 House of Lords Select Committee on International Relations (2019) ‘Rising nuclear risk, disarmament and the Non-Proliferation Treaty’, HL Paper 338, p. 37, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201719/ldselect/ldintrel/338/338.pdf>.

69 Interview with a P5 official, 24 July 2019.

70 Interview with P5 officials, 30 August 2019.

71 House of Lords Select Committee on International Relations (2019) ‘Rising nuclear risk, disarmament and the Non-Proliferation Treaty’, HL Paper 338, p. 101, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201719/ldselect/ldintrel/338/338.pdf>.

72 UK Government (2019) ‘Government Response: Rising nuclear risk, disarmament and Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty’, <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/International-Relations-Committee/NPT-and-Nuclear-Disarmament/Government-Response-Rising-nuclear-risk,-disarmament-and-the-Nuclear-Non-Proliferation-Report.pdf>.

issues, such as the CTBT, the JCPOA and the Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone do not feature on the P5 Process agenda. There is simply no P5 agreement on these issues.

The expectations of some of the P5 states, however, seem to have increased in the following two cases. First, there is no doubt that the P5 Process unites the P5 on issues like their joint opposition to the TPNW and their signing of the Bangkok Treaty protocol. At the P5 conference in Beijing for example, the P5 were very explicit about their joint criticism of the TPNW. Second, China in particular desires to be seen by the NPT community as a responsible nuclear-weapon state and as a responsible great power. Absent tangible disarmament measures, for which there is no political support in Beijing at the moment given the adverse geopolitical climate, Beijing hopes to receive credit from the non-nuclear-weapon states for its glossary work and its leadership in restarting the P5 Process.⁷³ This marks a notable shift from Beijing's initial hesitation towards the P5 Process.⁷⁴

Recommendations

The P5 Process to date has made slow progress on the work areas that the P5 have themselves chosen due to a deteriorating geopolitical environment and substantive disagreements. This section proposes recommendations for the P5 for finding common ground between themselves but also among the P5 and the non-nuclear-weapon states. As such, these recommendations, if adopted, could be conducive to agreeing a consensus final document at the 2020 RevCon.

- Given the disappointment of non-nuclear-weapon states with the first edition of the glossary, the P5 should ensure that the second edition is clearer about which terms are borrowed and which terms are original innovations. If in the limited time

between now and RevCon such progress on challenging terms is not possible, the P5 should communicate very clearly that this shorter version is due to a two-year break in the process and that a follow-up version will be realised. The P5 should set a clear timeline for this final product and reiterate the value of the glossary work. Moreover, the P5 should do their utmost to preserve the intrinsic procedural value of the glossary work by continuing to meet at the working-group level even when there is no formal P5 conference, such as in 2017 and 2018. This will help frame this phase of the glossary project as 1) a notable improvement over the first edition; and 2) to increase transparency and counter the cartel perception amongst some non-nuclear-weapon states by fostering greater understanding for how difficult it is to find intra-P5 agreement.

- The P5 should not only demonstrate meaningful progress on the doctrines discussion at the dedicated 2020 RevCon side event, but there should be a clear plan for where this discussion is supposed to lead beyond 2020. For instance, whilst a greater understanding of each other's nuclear doctrines is undoubtedly conducive to strategic stability and to reducing the risk of miscalculation and misunderstandings, the P5 should demonstrate a willingness to engage in more substantive risk reduction measures in the sphere of crisis communication. Concrete steps to this end could include a P5 agreement on managing dangerous situations, modelled on the 1989 US-USSR Agreement on Preventing Dangerous Military Activities as well as the establishment of a P5 crisis hotline. The P5 should also review the functioning and utility of bilateral crisis hotlines and, if applicable, re-instate or use this tool more frequently.⁷⁵ Some of the P5 states

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Dedicated nuclear crisis hotlines exist or have existed at one point between the United States and Russia, France and Russia, China and Russia, China and the United States. See Arms Control Association (2018) 'Fact sheets and briefs', <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Hotlines>.

“The P5 should demonstrate a willingness to engage in more substantive risk reduction measures in the sphere of crisis communication.”

- have proposed the establishment of crisis hotlines at the colonel level, but such proposals have thus far not gained traction due to concerns, in the Western P5 states and Russia, that they might be interpreted as ‘concessions’, ‘rewards’ and ‘gifts’ to the other side.⁷⁶
- Whilst China and Russia see little purpose in talking about accident response, the P5 should consider related risk reduction measures through ‘accident prevention’.
 - Individual members of the P5 should explore the possibility of further HEU minimisation projects in close coordination with the IAEA and other states.
 - Given the recent speculation of impending withdrawal of the US signature from the CTBT, the P5 should issue a clear statement in support of the CTBT and assist in the universalisation of the CTBT. Specific measures to this end could include encouraging the remaining states to issue coordinated unilateral declarations to re-consider signing and/or ratifying the CTBT. The P5 could also encourage non-signatory states to become observers to the CTBTO Preparatory Commission.
 - The P5 should focus on fewer work areas but provide more meaningful deliverables. Although the commencement of negotiations of an FMCT would undoubtedly be an important step, the P5 have consulted on this issue for a decade without results and at least one of the P5 states now believes that the FMCT is obsolete. Given that P5 conferences usually only last a day, the P5 should focus on areas where meaningful progress can be made. Spending more time on the doctrines (risk reduction), glossary and peaceful uses work could deliver the outcomes that would satisfy non-nuclear-weapon states.
- Given the frustration with the slow progress amongst some non-nuclear-weapon states, the P5 should seek to counter such perceptions by:
 - a) **Communicating better.** Although the P5 have since 2015 interacted with Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPTDI) states, this interaction has not gone beyond *ad hoc* discussions. Non-nuclear-weapon states in general should be more systematically involved in P5 matters, including involvement in some (but by no means all) P5 conference discussions to facilitate mutual understanding and channel some accountability and pressure in an otherwise closed P5 Process.
 - b) **Broadening the scope of the civil society portion in the P5 Process.** At the 2019 Beijing conference for example, civil society were briefed for half a day only, with limited opportunities for probing questions (the questions and answers session was ‘well protected from critical questions’⁷⁷ according to experts present). Civil society involvement should be broadened to achieve greater inclusivity by inviting a greater range of organisations. Similarly, frank questions should be tackled head-on to offer some external scrutiny on an otherwise closed process. The P5 should also help facilitate a civil society shadow process to the P5 Process to unofficially explore ideas and test recommendations. The United Kingdom has pioneered such an effort, in 2015 with Chatham House and in 2019 with the European Leadership Network and King’s College London. This shadow process should continue on an annual basis to provide systematic and coherent scrutiny—the scrutiny that a one-off event cannot deliver.
 - c) **Better communicating the areas of disagreements amongst the P5.** When the P5 Process agreed on the common reporting mechanism during the 2010-2015 review cycle, this was first criticised

76 Interview with P5 experts, 29 and 30 August 2019.

77 Interview with P5 experts, 18 and 19 July 2019.

as falling short of the NPDI's template.⁷⁸ After the P5 explained to the non-nuclear-weapon states how difficult it was to agree on this form and why, some non-nuclear-weapon states became less critical.⁷⁹ Becoming more transparent about the areas of disagreement could foster greater understanding amongst the non-nuclear-weapon states.

d) Setting clearer goals for the P5 Process in each review cycle, including early agreement on when and where P5 conferences are to be held as well as detailed outlines of planned work areas and where this work is supposed to lead. Currently, this is agreed at each P5 conference. There is therefore little clarity on what is happening. Similarly, the glossary work is sometimes seen by some non-nuclear-weapon states as evidence that the P5 are uninterested in substantive disarmament measures.⁸⁰ **The P5 should be clearer about the purpose of each work area. How will the glossary facilitate disarmament? Where is the doctrines discussion going to lead?**

Conclusion

On the tenth anniversary of the P5 Process, the P5 have made slow progress on the work areas that they have themselves chosen: the Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms has borrowed definitions from existing glossaries, FMCT negotiations have not commenced, the CTBT is not in force, and the doctrines work has yet to evolve beyond the opaque goal of enhancing strategic stability. The P5 point to a deteriorating geostrategic environment and substantive disagreements as impediments to progress. Some non-nuclear-weapon states blame a lack of interest from the P5. None of this bodes well for the 2020 RevCon.

In the limited time between now and the 2020 RevCon, progress on some of these issues, particularly the doctrines discussion, is possible. Where no progress is achieved, the P5 should communicate this clearly and provide a timeline for resolution. Of the several recommendations set forth, the P5 should prioritise the practical measures relating to risk reduction and to enhancing the procedural transparency of the P5 Process. The P5 should also get better at setting out timelines and how their specific work areas facilitate the NPT review process, particularly progress on disarmament under NPT Article VI.

⁷⁸ Interviews with P5 and NPDI officials, 15 and 24 July 2019.

⁷⁹ Interviews with a non-P5 official, 15 July 2019.

⁸⁰ Interview with a non-P5 officials, 25 June and 15 July 2019.

Table 1: P5 conference discussion topics since 2009

<p>London, 3-4 September 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance and verification challenges associated with disarmament • Transparency and confidence-building measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nuclear doctrines ○ Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms • Nuclear accident response
<p>Paris, 30 June – 1 July 2011</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency and confidence-building measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nuclear doctrines ○ Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms • Disarmament verification • Discourage use of NPT Article X • Strengthening IAEA safeguards • CTBT universalisation • FMCT
<p>Washington, DC, 27-29 June 2012</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency and confidence-building measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Standard reporting form ○ US briefing on Nevada National Security Site; tour of US Nuclear Risk Reduction Center (to show examples for further transparency) ○ Glossary working group set up, led by China • Disarmament verification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UK-Norway Initiative ○ US-UK verification work ○ New START • Discourage use of NPT Article X • Strengthening IAEA safeguards • CTBT universalisation • FMCT
<p>Geneva, 18-19 April 2013 (hosted by Russia)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil society briefing • FMCT • Transparency and confidence-building measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Standard reporting form, led by France • Discourage use of NPT Article X • Strengthening IAEA safeguards • CTBT universalisation • Bangkok Treaty

Beijing, 14-15 April 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil society briefing • Transparency and confidence-building measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Standard reporting form, led by France ○ Glossary, first phase to be completed by 2015 RevCon ○ Nuclear doctrines and strategic stability • Disarmament verification • CTBT universalisation • FMCT • Strengthening IAEA safeguards • Bangkok Treaty • Discourage use of NPT Article X
London, 4-5 February 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-nuclear-weapon states and civil society briefing • CTBT universalisation • FMCT • Transparency and confidence-building measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Glossary, first phase to be completed by 2015 RevCon, second phase to start 'in due course' • Disarmament verification • Strengthening IAEA safeguards • Bangkok Treaty, Protocol to Central Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone signed in 2014 • Discourage use of NPT Article X • France volunteered to host the 2016 conference
Washington, DC, 14-15 September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency and confidence-building measures: nuclear doctrines and strategic stability • CTBT technical experts to complete verification regime • Bangkok Treaty • Strengthening nuclear security • France announced plans to host the 2017 conference
Beijing, 30- 31 January 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangkok Treaty • Transparency and confidence-building measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nuclear doctrines ○ Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms • Strengthening cooperation on the peaceful uses pillar • FMCT



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