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Navigating NATO Framework of Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Arms Control Policy in Modern Warfare

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Abstract: Since its inception in 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has been a cornerstone in the architecture of international security, playing a crucial role in shaping the global agenda on non-proliferation and arms control. This paper critically examines the evolution of NATO's strategies and policies in these domains, assessing their significant impact on international peace and security. The study employs qualitative analysis, utilizing secondary data sources. Through a comprehensive analysis of NATO documents, scholarly research, and policy critiques, the study delineates the alliance's pivotal contributions to the reinforcement of international norms and treaties, such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). It also explores NATO's engagements with non-member states and international organizations, highlighting its instrumental role in fostering global cooperation against the backdrop of diverse geopolitical interests among member states and the dynamic nature of security threats. Despite notable successes, the research identifies challenges that hinder NATO's effectiveness, including internal divergences and evolving global security landscapes. The conclusion presents strategic recommendations to enhance NATO's impact in non-proliferation and arms control, advocating for policy recalibrations and strengthened international collaborations to navigate contemporary and future security dilemmas effectively.

Keywords: Arms Control, Global Security, International Peace NATO, Non-Proliferation,

Introduction

In the 21st century, NATO continues to

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face the same threats it has encountered since its inception, including international terrorism, cyber terrorism, nuclear terrorism, biological terrorism, hybrid warfare, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. These threats pose an escalating danger due to growing conflicts and destabilization in various regions" (Guchua, 2023). Initially forged as a collective defence mechanism to counter Soviet expansion during the Cold War in 1949, NATO's purpose and scope have dramatically evolved over the decades. The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked a significant turning point in world politics and consequently in NATO's strategic orientation (Osimen, Fulani, Chidozie, & Dada, 2024). The post-Cold War era witnessed a redefined role for NATO, transitioning from a primarily collective defence focus to a broader security mandate (Yost, 1998). Marked by the expansion of NATO's membership and the adoption of new roles that included crisis management and cooperative security measures. NATO's involvement in non-proliferation and arms control initiatives became increasingly pronounced during this period. The rise of global terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and advancements in missile technologies necessitated a strategic response from NATO (Daalder & Goldgeier, 2006). Recognizing the changing nature of security threats, NATO began to focus more on preventing the spread of WMDs and promoting arms control. Key to this strategic shift was NATO's alignment with international non-proliferation treaties and agreements. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT), ratified in 1970, has been a

cornerstone of global non-proliferation efforts, and NATO's policies have been shaped within the framework of this treaty (Thakur, 2016). Additionally, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) have further defined the international standards that NATO seeks to uphold. NATO's approach to non-proliferation and arms control is characterized by a commitment to international law, disarmament, and the prevention of the proliferation of WMDs (Osimen, et al. 2024). However, these strategies are not developed in a vacuum; they are influenced by the national policies of member states and the need to balance collective security with the sovereignty of individual nations, notably, among NATO countries, three (the United Kingdom, France, and the United States) are recognized as Nuclear Weapons States under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), showcasing NATO's extensive engagement with nuclear weapons policies in contrast to smaller arms (Kienzle, 2013).

The 21st century poses new challenges for NATO in the realm of non-proliferation and arms control. The rise of non-state actors, the increasing sophistication of cyber threats, and the complexity of modern geopolitical conflicts have added new dimensions to NATO's strategic considerations in these areas (Rühle, 2009). As NATO continues to adapt to these evolving challenges, understanding its historical trajectory remains crucial in assessing its current and future role in international peace and security. In a world increasingly threatened by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and escalating arms races, posing a substantial challenge to the global

stability, the alliance's influence extends far beyond traditional defence roles, engaging with complex security issues such as non-proliferation and arms control and these areas are particularly vital (Wallander, 2000; Thakur, 2016). Gottemoeller and Hill (2020) acknowledge that the realm of arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation (ADN) is currently facing challenges, yet they emphasize that this field is far from obsolete, viewing the present situation as an opportune moment to re-evaluate and enhance the global framework for ADN. and suggesting that NATO is actively assessing how to modify its approach to remain pertinent amidst the evolving global security landscape. This period presents an ideal opportunity for NATO to amplify its role in bolstering and refining ADN practices. They propose several avenues through which NATO can contribute, including efforts to uphold and enforce the Non-Proliferation Treaty, update the Vienna Document, reform nuclear arms control agreements, and address the challenges posed by emerging and disruptive technologies (EDTs). Additionally, advocating for NATO to become a hub of innovation in ADN by promoting advancements in verification processes, improving the sharing and utilization of data across nations, and fostering discussions on outer space matters. The landscape of non-proliferation and arms control is inherently complex, involving diverse actors, interests, and geopolitical dynamics. Within this intricate framework, NATO's role is multifaceted, encompassing a range of diplomatic efforts, policy initiatives, and concrete actions on the ground (Osimen, et al. 2024).

Pifer (2011) submit that since the

inception in the mid-1950s, NATO has emphasized the role of nuclear deterrence as a cornerstone of its defence strategy, aiming to deter or, if necessary, counter any aggression against the Alliance. Over the span of 55 years, NATO's stance has evolved, increasingly emphasizing that the likelihood of resorting to nuclear arms is extremely low. There has been a significant reduction in the presence of U.S. non-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe, from a peak of over 7,000 in the 1970s to approximately 200 in recent years. Nevertheless, as affirmed by NATO leaders in the 2010 Strategic Concept, NATO will continue to be a nuclear alliance as long as nuclear weapons exist globally. This document further pledges the Alliance to work towards creating conditions conducive to further reducing the number of nuclear weapons based in Europe and diminishing NATO's reliance on nuclear capabilities within its strategic framework (Rühle, 2009; Daalder & Goldgeier, 2006).

Despite these challenges, ADN presents an opportunity to envision the future. NATO is actively deliberating on the best approach to adapt to the forthcoming security environment. The NATO 2030 initiative, led by Stoltenberg, has formed a Reflection Group of experts, advocating for NATO's enhanced role in discussing challenges to current arms control mechanisms and consulting on future agreements (Gottemoeller & Hill, 2020). NATO is encouraged to continue supporting robust verification regimes, enhancing monitoring and enforcement capabilities, and developing an agenda for international arms control in key areas of EDTs with military applications (Gottemoeller & Hill, 2020). This period offers NATO a prime opportunity to

consider future actions and strategies, ensuring that arms control remains an effective tool for collective security in the face of evolving global threats (Chidozie, Osimen, Newo, Bhadmus, 2024).

However, the study is particularly timely, given the evolving nature of global threats and the pressing need for effective multilateral approaches to security challenges. NATO's actions in the domains of non-proliferation and arms control are not isolated but are intricately interwoven with broader global security dynamics. The alliance's initiatives in these areas reflect and influence the policies of both its member states and non-member states. This interplay highlights NATO's significant role as a barometer and influencer of the international political climate, offering insights into the various challenges and opportunities in global security governance.

Therefore, this research main objective is to explore the impact of NATO's strategies and policies on non-proliferation and arms control, examining how these efforts contribute to the overarching goal of maintaining international peace and security. Other research objectives and questions to explore for this study are to examine the historical development of NATO's policy framework and its responses to global nuclear threats. The study further assesses the effectiveness of NATO's arms control initiatives and its impact on disarmament efforts on international security and non-proliferation. Finally, the study explores NATO's interactions with international organizations and treaties promoting non-proliferation and disarmament, the challenges and opportunities in identifying the complexities and potential areas for improvement in its

nuclear non-proliferation and arms control policy. To properly aligned with the study objectives, the following preeminent research questions will be given thoughtfulness; How has NATO's nuclear non-proliferation and arms control policy adapted to emerging global security threats? What are the key factors influencing NATO's disarmament and non-proliferation decisions? How effective are NATO's arms control initiatives in preventing nuclear proliferation? What are the implications of NATO's nuclear policy on international relations and global security? And how can NATO improve its nuclear non-proliferation and arms control efforts in the face of evolving threats?

These research objectives and questions provide a solid foundation for exploring NATO's framework on nuclear non-proliferation and arms control policy.

This study employs qualitative analysis, utilizing secondary data sources. The research data is gathered from print sources and is analyzed conceptually

From Theory to Practice: Analyzing Global Security Through Non-Proliferation and Arms Control

In the multifaceted domain of international relations and strategic studies, the principles of non-proliferation, arms control, and the overarching concept of global peace and security are central to understanding the dynamics of contemporary global governance. These principles, as engaged with by NATO and various scholars, provide a nuanced framework for dissecting the complexities of international peace and security.

In the spring of 2010, NATO initiated

preparations for the development of a new Strategic Concept to be reviewed by its leaders during the summit in Lisbon, November 2010. An informal meeting of NATO foreign ministers took place in Tallinn at the end of April 2010, where discussions centred around the integration of nuclear issues within the concept. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton proposed five key principles concerning nuclear weapons and arms control during this meeting:

- NATO will maintain its status as a nuclear alliance as long as nuclear weapons exist.
- It is crucial for the alliance, as a nuclear entity, to distribute nuclear risks and responsibilities broadly;
- NATO's overarching objective should be the reduction in the reliance on, and the quantity of, nuclear weapons, acknowledging the significant reductions already achieved.
- The alliance needs to expand its deterrence capabilities to address threats of the 21st century, including improvements in missile defence and Article 5 training and exercises, along with developing contingency plans for emerging threats.
- Future efforts to reduce nuclear arms should aim at securing a commitment from Russia to enhance transparency regarding non-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe, relocate these arms away from NATO territories, and include them in forthcoming U.S.-Russia arms control discussions, along with strategic and non-deployed nuclear weapons.

These principles outlined by Clinton substantially framed the ensuing debate within NATO, with a consensus agreement that decisions regarding the Alliance's nuclear posture would be

reached collectively. Following the Tallinn gathering in May 2010, a panel of experts, appointed by the NATO Secretary-General and led by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, presented a report recommending strategies for the new Strategic Concept. This report affirmed the importance of retaining certain U.S. forward-based systems in Europe under the prevailing security conditions, highlighting that such measures bolster the principles of extended nuclear deterrence and collective defence. It also emphasized the critical role of the broad participation of non-nuclear allies as a testament to transatlantic unity and shared responsibilities (Pifer, 2011).

In December 2019, at the NATO meeting in London, the leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) reiterated their unwavering commitment to enhancing and preserving effective arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation (ADN), while also considering the prevailing security environment (NATO, 2019). This declaration underlines the complex challenges faced by NATO allies in supporting ADN initiatives amidst the evolving landscape of global security and the necessity of maintaining and adapting NATO's robust deterrence and defence posture (Osimen, et al. 2024). NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, in a speech at the High-level NATO Conference on Arms Control and Disarmament in October 2019, candidly addressed these difficulties, acknowledging the challenging times for arms control (Stoltenberg, 2019). He specifically pointed to Russia's significant breach of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, recognized by NATO allies, and leading

to the treaty's termination (NATO, 2019). This incident highlights wider concerns affecting NATO's security context, including Russia's development of weapons systems and military exercises, which often contravene international norms (NATO, 2016). Russia is not the only external factor shaping NATO nuclear posture. The prospect of an Iran with nuclear weapons raises the question of maintaining U.S. forward-deployed nuclear weapons particularly.

in Turkey, as a deterrent against Tehran (Pifer, 2011). In addition to the Russian threat, NATO also faces challenges related to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), whose nuclear program continues to impede ADN progress (NATO, 2017). The use of chemical weapons in Syria and on NATO territory further challenges the global prohibition on such arms, as stated in various NATO council statements (NATO, 2018). Moreover, NATO's security assessments increasingly consider the influence of China, a nation that has grown in military and nuclear capabilities, raising concerns about its engagement in arms control negotiations (Stoltenberg, 2020). The advent of emerging and disruptive technologies (EDTs) adds another layer of complexity, presenting both challenges and potential advantages. NATO is actively developing a roadmap to guide the alliance's work, recognizing the need to adapt to these technological advancements (Geoană, 2020). Given this backdrop, Stoltenberg's remarks about the difficulties in the ADN field are well-founded (Gottemoeller & Hill, 2020). The evolution of the non-proliferation regime is subject to intense debate. Bilateral US-Russian arms control stands at a critical juncture, and efforts to expand the existing framework

to encompass China are proving to be intricate and challenging (Gottemoeller & Hill, 2020).

Non-Proliferation, as explicated by Scott D. Sagan, concerns the concerted efforts to prevent the dissemination of nuclear weapons among states, highlighting the interplay between the theory of nuclear proliferation and its ramifications for international security. This notion is complemented by NATO's stance, which emphasizes the Alliance's dedication to thwarting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) through an active political agenda of arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation efforts (Sagan, 1996; NATO, 2023). "NATO's policy of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction faces many challenges and threats from aggressive states, terrorists, extremists, and criminal groups. The Alliance's role is crucial in the security policy of the alliance and the policy of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the world" (Guchua, 2023; Osimen, Dele-Dada & Osere, N. J. 2025).

Joseph S. Nye accentuates the importance of international collaboration and treaty-based frameworks in addressing the proliferation threats posed by nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. Nye's advocacy for a collaborative approach is mirrored in NATO's engagement with various international treaties, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Chemical Weapons Convention, which underscore the Alliance's commitment to non-proliferation and the maintenance of international security (Nye, 1981; NATO, 2023). Various definitions exist for weapons of mass destruction, but they generally refer to exceptionally potent

and destructive weapons designed to inflict extensive casualties and cause widespread devastation (Osimen, et al. 2024). Weapons of mass destruction can cause significant loss of life and inflict catastrophic damage upon cities, countries, natural environments, and the biosphere" (Guchua, 2023).

Arms control, delineated by George Quester, focuses on the strategic management of armaments through international agreements to promote global security by regulating both conventional and unconventional weapons. NATO's definition of arms control includes the implementation of agreements that enhance transparency of military capabilities and activities, aiming to mitigate the risks of misinterpretation or miscalculation. This strategic approach aligns with NATO's endeavours to support effective and verifiable arms control initiatives, further bridging the gap between theoretical perspectives and practical applications in international arms control (Quester, 1973; NATO, 2023).

The conceptualization of "International Peace and Security" involves a collective effort to manage international relations and conflicts within a framework of rules and institutions, as articulated by Hedley Bull. This conceptual framework is echoed in NATO's strategic documents, which articulate the Alliance's strategies and goals in promoting regional and international stability, thereby underscoring the essential role of diplomacy, international law, and the balance of power in maintaining global tranquility (Bull, H., 1977; Moore, 2007; NATO, 2023).

In examining NATO's approach to non-proliferation and arms control through the lenses of Realism and Liberalism, this

paper elucidates the strategic interests and collective security mechanisms that underpin the Alliance's policies. Realism, with its emphasis on state sovereignty and the pursuit of power, offers insights into how NATO navigates the complex international security environment (Osimen, Fulani, Chidozie, & Dada, 2024). Liberalism, highlighting the significance of international institutions and cooperation, provides a framework for understanding NATO's role in fostering collective security and global cooperation. Together, these theoretical perspectives shed light on NATO's adaptive strategies in the face of evolving security challenges, demonstrating the Alliance's pivotal role in shaping the landscape of international relations and security governance (Morgenthau, H. J., 1948; Keohane & Nye, 1977; NATO, 2023).

By way of integrating NATO's definitions and scholarly perspectives, this analysis presents a comprehensive overview of the critical issues at the heart of international security discussions. It showcases the intricate interplay between theoretical foundations and practical engagements in the realm of non-proliferation, arms control, and global security, emphasizing the importance of a multidimensional approach in navigating the complexities of contemporary international relations.

NATO and Global Peace and Security

Thakur (2016) critically examines NATO's policy alignment with global non-proliferation treaties, particularly the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT). Thakur highlights how NATO's strategies support the objectives of the NPT, including preventing the spread of

nuclear weapons, promoting disarmament, and facilitating peaceful use of nuclear energy. The signing of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty on December 11, 1987, represented a pivotal milestone in arms control history, being the first agreement to eliminate an entire category of nuclear weapons. Following its signing, the North Atlantic Council voiced its approval, proclaiming the treaty to be fully aligned with the security objectives of the Alliance. The signing of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty on December 11, 1987, represented a pivotal milestone in arms control history, being the first agreement to completely eliminate an entire category of nuclear weapons. Following its signing, the North Atlantic Council voiced its approval, proclaiming the treaty to be fully aligned with the security objectives of the Alliance (Nuti, 2021).

During the December 1998 Council meeting, Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy brought forth a proposal, urging that the forthcoming NATO Strategic Concept recognize the diminished role of nuclear weapons in the Alliance's strategy compared to their significance during the 1980s and early 1990s. Axworthy advocated for a stronger commitment by the Alliance towards disarmament efforts. The Strategic Concept adopted by the NATO Council in Washington in April 1999 managed to find a middle ground. It maintained the traditional emphasis on nuclear deterrence but also acknowledged the need for reduction in the Alliance's nuclear arsenal and supported disarmament and arms control initiatives. This approach reflected a dual commitment: while it reiterated the

importance of nuclear forces in preventing aggression and ensuring the security of Alliance members, it also recognized the value of decreasing reliance on nuclear arms and pursuing arms control measures (Nuti, 2021).

In the summer of 2011, NATO ramped up efforts on the Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR) through in-depth analysis based on four foundational "scoping papers." This set the stage for more vigorous discussions that fall. After eighteen months of continuous negotiation, the outcome was a series of compromises designed to maintain the unity of the Alliance. At the Chicago summit in May 2012, the North Atlantic Council adopted the new DDPR, which, true to tradition, balanced the promotion of arms control and disarmament with the imperative of deterrence. This review positioned nuclear deterrence, alongside missile defense and conventional forces, as key to NATO's security architecture. The Council affirmed its intent to reduce tactical nuclear weapons (TNW) holdings, contingent upon reciprocal measures from Russia. Additionally, the adoption of a regional missile defense strategy did not diminish the role of nuclear deterrence as significantly as some members may have anticipated, maintaining its critical position in NATO's strategic calculus (Nuti, 2021). NATO has faced a complex challenge in reconciling its nuclear deterrence strategy with arms control aspirations, leading to what Jeffrey Larsen, Jacek Durkalec, and others describe as a nuclear identity crisis. The alliance's unity on the role of nuclear deterrence has weakened, with some members advocating for a reduced emphasis on nuclear weapons and an increased focus on arms control, while others resist further changes. This

division became particularly pronounced following Russia's actions in Crimea and Ukraine from 2014 and the subsequent accusations of Russia violating the INF Treaty. The strategic landscape's deterioration, especially under the Trump administration, forced NATO to reassess its approach, complicating the continuation of arms control dialogues with Russia.

The 2016 Warsaw Summit marked a significant shift, reasserting the importance of deterrence in a manner that signaled a new consensus among NATO members. Despite this shift, the alliance has not abandoned its commitment to arms control. However, the Trump administration's 2018 Nuclear Posture Review, which downplayed arms control, received a mixed response from NATO members, highlighting differences within the alliance.

In 2019, NATO unanimously supported the U.S. decision to withdraw from the INF Treaty due to Russian violations, while still affirming its dedication to international arms control efforts. This stance extended to NATO's collective opposition to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which it criticized for undermining the existing non-proliferation framework and not aligning with the current security context. When the TPNW was ratified by fifty countries in 2020, leading to its entry into force in 2021, NATO reiterated its opposition, emphasizing the treaty's incompatibility with the challenging international security environment and existing disarmament architecture. This ongoing tension within NATO reflects the complex balance the alliance seeks between maintaining nuclear deterrence and pursuing disarmament goals in an

increasingly uncertain global security landscape (Nuti, 2021).

Daalder, & Goldgeier (2006) analyse NATO's strategic documents to dissect its policy stance on arms control and non-proliferation. They argue that NATO's policies have evolved to address not only the challenges posed by state actors but also the emerging threats from non-state actors and the proliferation of WMDs. Their analysis suggests that NATO has adapted its strategies to the changing nature of global security threats, making non-proliferation a central element of its agenda. Furthermore, NATO's involvement in specific initiatives and operations related to non-proliferation and arms control underscores its active role in this domain. The NATO-Russia Council, for instance, provides a platform for dialogue and cooperation on arms control and WMD non-proliferation, reflecting NATO's commitment to collaborative approaches in addressing global security challenges (Chukwudi, Osimen, Dele-Dada, Ahmed, 2024).

The evaluation of the effectiveness of NATO's non-proliferation and arms control policies, along with the challenges encountered in their implementation, is vital for understanding the alliance's impact and adaptability within the international security landscape. Kienzle, B. (2013), in "The Effectiveness of NATO's Non-Proliferation Policy" from European Security, offers a detailed assessment of NATO's policies in the realm of non-proliferation. Kienzle's analysis focuses on the implementation of these policies and their impact on curbing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other WMDs. Kienzle suggests that while NATO has developed robust non-

proliferation policies, their effectiveness largely depends on the political will and capabilities of individual member states. Wallander, (2000), in her article "Institutional Assets and Adaptability: NATO After the Cold War" published in *International Organization*, explores the challenges NATO faces, including the divergent interests among member states. Wallander's work highlights the impact of these divergences on NATO's decision-making processes and policy implementation, pointing out the necessity for NATO to continually adapt and evolve to effectively manage the differing priorities and security concerns of its members. She also notes how institutional assets, like NATO's integrated military structure and established mechanisms for political consultation, provide the alliance with a unique capacity to adapt to new security challenges, including those in the realm of non-proliferation and arms control. Adding to this, NATO's long-standing role in ADN, dating back to its first summit in 1957, where leaders committed to restricting armaments within security limits, has been pivotal (NATO, 1957). This historical commitment includes contributions to key treaties such as the NPT and involvement in negotiations for arms control regimes like the Vienna Document and the Open Skies Treaty. The Alliance's balanced approach, based on the 1967 Harmel Report, has been crucial in managing relations with Russia and other global actors (NATO, 1967). This approach emphasizes the necessity of maintaining NATO's defences while supporting dialogue and diplomatic engagement, especially in light of challenges from Russia, China, and emerging technologies (Maizière &

Mitchell, 2020). Furthermore, NATO's institutional framework, which includes the Committee on Proliferation and the Political Committee, facilitates ADN discussions and strategic policy formulation. This structure, along with NATO's military expertise and network of partnerships, positions the Alliance to continue playing a significant role in contemporary ADN issues (NATO, 2020). However, there are challenges and risks, including differing views among Allies and potential complications in political dynamics within international bodies (Gottemoeller et al., 2020).¹⁶ The Atlantic Alliance's policy foundations, structures, and relationships are essential for its role in ADN, balancing deterrence, defence, and dialogue in a complex security environment. This comprehensive analysis of NATO's role in ADN, which includes the effective implementation of policies and the management of diverse challenges, underscores the alliance's ongoing significance in global security governance. The effectiveness of NATO's policies, and their adaptability to the changing global security environment, remain critical areas for study and strategic planning.

NATO's initiatives in non-proliferation and arms control have significantly influenced international peace and security, yielding both commendable outcomes and facing critical scrutiny. The delve unto diverse perspectives on the impact and efficacy of NATO's strategies in these areas. Carpenter (2007), in "NATO's Empty Victory: A Postmortem on the Balkan War" published in *World Affairs*, 160(3), 135-141, discusses the positive outcomes of NATO's actions. Carpenter's analysis focuses on the Balkan Wars, where

NATO's intervention played a crucial role in ceasing hostilities and establishing a semblance of peace in the region. The article argues that NATO's involvement in the Balkans, while controversial, ultimately contributed to stabilizing the region and preventing further ethnic cleansing. This case exemplifies how NATO's proactive stance in crisis situations can lead to significant contributions to international peace and security, especially in regions afflicted by conflict and instability. On the other hand, Schroeder (1994), in "Historical Reality vs. Neo-Realist Theory" from *International Security*, 19(1), 108-148, provides a critique of NATO's approaches, highlighting criticisms and limitations. Schroeder challenges the effectiveness of NATO's strategies, particularly in the context of broader geopolitical dynamics. The article contends that NATO's actions, while often well-intentioned, may not always align with the complexities of international relations and the realities of global power structures. NATO's nuclear policy challenges are complex and multifaceted; Russia's unprovoked war against Ukraine, NATO has condemned Russia's actions, and in response, has strengthened its deterrence and defense posture, including its nuclear capabilities, maintaining credible deterrence, NATO must ensure the credibility, effectiveness, safety, and security of its nuclear deterrent mission, while exercising strong political control.

However, despite NATO record of success, NATO must address emerging challenges, such as the impact of artificial intelligence on nuclear weapons systems and the increasing threat of cyber-attacks. NATO's nuclear sharing arrangements, which involve the deployment of US

nuclear weapons in Europe, are a contentious issue, with some arguing they undermine non-proliferation efforts. This perspective suggests that NATO's interventions, though aimed at promoting peace and security, can sometimes have unintended consequences or be perceived as extensions of Western geopolitical interests. The diverse views presented in these scholarly works underscore the complexity of evaluating NATO's impact on international peace and security. While NATO's actions in non-proliferation and arms control have had positive effects in certain contexts, they have also been subject to criticism and debate. These discussions reflect the multifaceted nature of international peace and security, where strategic actions can have varying interpretations and consequences.

In his scholarly examination, Hill (2021) delves into the intricate dynamics between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) nuclear strategies and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Hill articulates that the enactment of the TPNW on January 22, 2021, represents a monumental stride in the sphere of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament endeavours. Despite this, NATO persistently articulates a unified opposition towards the TPNW, voicing apprehensions about its conceivable ramifications on the Alliance's security framework and its potential to destabilize the established non-proliferation and disarmament infrastructure, notably the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Hill's discourse underscores the imperative for an augmented comprehension of NATO's commitments and their intersection with global legal and policy

directives concerning nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Despite the objections from NATO regarding the TPNW, the treaty's support among various NATO partner nations necessitates a nuanced scrutiny of its implications on NATO's nuclear policy and its broader commitments to global security. Hill posits that the TPNW's objective to outlaw nuclear weapons, absent the engagement of nuclear-armed states, may not efficaciously diminish nuclear arsenals or ameliorate global security. Nevertheless, he raises pivotal inquiries regarding the future trajectory of nuclear disarmament and the essential conditions for its advancement. Moreover, Hill elucidates that NATO's initiatives in non-proliferation and arms control have profoundly influenced international peace and security, eliciting both laudable outcomes and critical evaluations. The exploration of diverse perspectives on the efficacy and impact of NATO's strategies in these domains illustrates the Alliance's intricate role in the governance of global security. While the endeavours of NATO in non-proliferation and arms control have yielded positive effects in specific contexts, they have concurrently been the subject of scrutiny and debate, reflecting the complex nature of international peace and security where strategic actions bear varying interpretations and consequences.

In conclusion, Hill offers recommendations for how NATO might navigate its stance on the TPNW while reaffirming its dedication to arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation. He underscores the significance of dialogue and the exploration of new approaches to reconcile strategic stability with

disarmament efforts. Hill's paper accentuates the challenge of aligning NATO's nuclear deterrence posture with the global aspiration for a nuclear-free world, emphasizing the necessity for realistic and verifiable measures that can promote international stability and foster progress towards disarmament (Hill, 2021).

NATO's stance on arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation (ADN) is encapsulated in various declarations issued during summits and high-level gatherings, with a notable statement from the 2019 Brussels Summit outlining the current policy framework. This declaration emphasizes the significant role of ADN in fulfilling the Alliance's security goals and ensuring strategic stability and collective security. The statement acknowledges NATO's historical contributions to disarmament and non-proliferation, highlighting the substantial reduction of nuclear weapons in Europe and the diminished reliance on nuclear strategies post-Cold War. However, it expresses regret over the less favorable conditions for disarmament progress since the 2016 Warsaw Summit. The Allies assert a unified commitment to sustaining existing disarmament, arms control, and non-proliferation accords and pledges, and they express openness to engaging in further arms control negotiations to enhance the Alliance's security, taking into consideration the contemporary international security landscape.

Furthermore, the declaration delineates NATO's dedication to preventing the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), upholding the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and adhering to other foundational components of the global ADN

framework. With the 10th NPT Review Conference on the horizon, the imperative for NATO to actively demonstrate its commitment to the shared objectives with the TPNW proponents has never been more critical (Hill, 2021). This proactive engagement is essential for reinforcing NATO's role in promoting international stability and progress towards disarmament and global peace and security.

The 2023 Vilnius Summit underscored NATO's unwavering commitment to arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation (ADN) within the intricate web of global peace and security. This gathering, held amid the tumultuous backdrop of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, served not only as a platform for deliberating over the Alliance's expansion but also as a pivotal moment for reinforcing NATO's role in fostering global stability through ADN initiatives. The discussions and agreements forged during the summit, particularly those concerning Sweden and Ukraine's prospective memberships, reflect a strategic navigation of the current security challenges while maintaining a steadfast focus on ADN principles.

NATO's engagement in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and broader disarmament efforts was highlighted, demonstrating the Alliance's significant contributions towards achieving a safer, nuclear-weapon-free world. The declaration from the 2019 Brussels Summit, reiterated at Vilnius, accentuates NATO's historical achievements in reducing nuclear arsenals in Europe post-Cold War and the collective resolve to uphold disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. However, it also acknowledges the less favourable

conditions for disarmament progress, underscoring the complex interplay between global security dynamics and disarmament objectives.

In the face of evolving threats and the imperative for strategic stability, the 2023 Vilnius Summit marks a critical juncture for NATO to advocate for ADN goals more proactively, particularly leading up to the 10th NPT Review Conference. The summit's outcomes and NATO's ongoing dedication to ADN initiatives underscore the Alliance's pivotal role in shaping a global security architecture that balances deterrence with the aspirational goal of disarmament, thereby contributing significantly to international peace and security (Shankar, 2023).

NATO's Deterrence and defence Posture: A Pillar for Peace among Allies within International Community

NATO's Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR), articulated in 2012 and refined in 2022, underscores the Alliance's multifaceted approach to ensuring global peace and security. This strategic framework reaffirms NATO's commitment to safeguarding its territories and populations against diverse threats, underscoring the readiness to respond if member security is compromised. Central to the DDPR is the balanced integration of nuclear, conventional, and missile defence forces, establishing a robust deterrence and defence strategy to counter and defend against potential threats (NATO, 2022). Nuclear forces, deemed a core component of NATO's deterrence capability, underscore the highly remote circumstances under which their use might be considered. This nuclear posture, complemented by versatile conventional forces and advanced missile

defence systems, underscores NATO's comprehensive strategy to deter aggression and ensure collective security (Osimen, et al. 2024). The incorporation of technological advancements and innovation, especially in cyber defence and space, further enhances NATO's deterrence capabilities, adapting to emerging security challenges like hybrid warfare and cyber threats (NATO, 2022). Moreover, the DDPR emphasizes the pivotal role of arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation efforts in attaining NATO's security objectives. Successful arms control initiatives contribute significantly to a secure, stable, and predictable international environment, with NATO actively engaging in dialogue, particularly within the NATO-Russia Council, to foster transparency and reciprocal disarmament actions. In response to evolving security landscapes and economic constraints on defence budgets, NATO has embraced innovative and cooperative approaches in capability development. Prioritizing multinational cooperation and specialization, the Alliance aims to efficiently meet security objectives, extending the principles of collective defence and crisis management through partnership programs like the Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the Mediterranean Dialogue. NATO's deterrence and defence posture, as delineated in the DDPR, is instrumental in promoting international peace and security. By maintaining a strategic mix of capabilities and engaging in arms control and disarmament efforts, NATO not only deters aggression but also fosters a global security environment conducive to peace and stability. This posture demonstrates NATO's adaptive strategies to changing security dynamics, ensuring

its pivotal role in 21st-century international peace and security.

Conclusion

NATO's stance on non-proliferation and arms control, encapsulated through various declarations and the Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR), exemplifies the Alliance's multifaceted strategy to uphold global peace amidst evolving challenges. The DDPR, particularly, reaffirms NATO's commitment to safeguarding its territories through a carefully balanced mix of nuclear, conventional, and missile defence forces. This comprehensive approach, while emphasizing the critical yet remote use of nuclear capabilities, showcases NATO's readiness to counter diverse threats, reinforcing the Alliance's pivotal role in global security dynamics. Historically, since its establishment in 1949, NATO has significantly influenced international security policies, especially in non-proliferation and arms control domains. The Alliance's strategic evolution from a Cold War-era collective defence mechanism to a broad security mandate highlights its adaptive strategies in response to shifting global threats. These include the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), cyber threats, and terrorism, necessitating a strategic recalibration towards preventing WMD spread and promoting arms control. NATO's engagement with international non-proliferation treaties, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Chemical Weapons Convention, underscores its commitment to global security norms. However, the implementation of these policies is not without challenges, influenced by member states' national policies and the

need to balance collective security with sovereignty. The 21st century introduces further complexities, including non-state actors and cyber threats, into NATO's strategic considerations, requiring continual adaptation. The alliance's initiatives, reflecting and influencing both member and non-member states' policies, underscore its significant role as a global security influencer. NATO's significant capacity to influence the global policy on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Given the complexity of countering these threats, NATO's comprehensive policies and strategic measures have proven effective in addressing both current and emergent challenges. However, to enhance global security further, there is a pressing need for NATO to reinforce its efforts in the non-proliferation domain to NATO's Deterrence and Defence Posture, along with its historical and ongoing engagement in non-proliferation and arms control, serves as a cornerstone for not only safeguarding its member territories but also promoting international peace and security. As the global security environment evolves, NATO's ability to anticipate, adapt, and implement strategic measures in arms control and non-proliferation will be paramount in maintaining its relevance and effectiveness in contributing to a stable and secure international order.

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