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Symposium on nuclear doctrines
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PREFACE

The world is cold war-free for a decade. In the popular sense, the Millennium has begun. Strictly speaking, we are in a year-long celebration of the eve of the 21st century and the third Millennium. One or the other, it seems an appropriate time for reckoning. Looking back and looking ahead. By some accounts, it is surprising that, far from diminishing, there is growing concern—even dismay—about the continued reliance by the most powerful military States on nuclear weapons of inconceivable mass destructive capacity. Questions revolve around not only the amount of nuclear weapons deployed and in storage—estimates are in the 30,000 range—but also the reasons why States need to retain military doctrines that include the possible use of their awesome power. There is also deep worry of how the continued existence of such doctrines affects the defence policies of other States: those that have demonstrated a nuclear weapons capability and those that have not. And how they continue to affect fragile multilateral disarmament and arms regulation and non-proliferation regimes. Is peace, Winston Churchill's proverbial sturdy child of terror, still to be procured at such a risky price?

NATO adopted a new Strategic Concept at the Washington summit in April 1999, at the heart of which still is nuclear deterrence. The United States Senate rejected ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in October 1999, with some arguing that the Treaty would undermine American nuclear capability. In part because of the parlous state of its conventional forces, the Russian Federation's draft nuclear doctrine is increasing reliance on nuclear weapons. The nuclear tests in South Asia in May 1998 challenged the viability of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Earlier this year, India floated a nuclear doctrine in draft version that includes reliance on a minimum nuclear deterrent

At the closing meeting of the First Committee in 1998, the representative of the Solomon Islands asked the Department for Disarmament Affairs to organize a symposium that might shed more light on the real effectiveness of nuclear deterrence. The debate on that topic, however, may never be resolved. Instead, the Department seized the opportunity to invite four distinguished experts to United Nations Headquarters on 18 October 1999 to speak from their very different national, regional and political perspectives on the subject of nuclear doctrines.

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The Department is grateful for their participation in this Symposium. It hopes that this publication, as an educational and informational tool, will extend the insights and opinions of the four authors to diplomats, students, researchers, staff of international organizations, the press and interested public not able to participate in the Symposium directly.

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India's draft nuclear doctrine

*Ashok Kapur**

Abstract

India's draft nuclear doctrine and its nuclear and missile testing are a response to recent international, regional and domestic developments. Nehru's policy of nuclear disarmament, non-discriminatory international arrangements and unilateral restraint has been overturned in favour of self-reliant security and negotiated nuclear restraints. The draft nuclear doctrine is aimed at transparency and formalization of existing capacities. It is anchored in the United Nations Charter, based on the legitimacy of self-defence and espouses minimum nuclear deterrence. After the launching of Pokhran II, the debate in India has been settled on weaponization and deployment. The doctrine is not country-specific with respect to threat perceptions, but the author posits that the long-term focus is on China and the short-term on Pakistan. The doctrine emphasizes civilian command and control. India's decision to test incurred diplomatic and other economic costs, but afforded new opportunities for the country to assert itself militarily and politically in Asia and in the world. There were no diplomatic costs in issuing the draft nuclear doctrine, but the author estimates the economic costs of a full-blown (triad) Indian nuclear deterrent.

India's nuclear doctrine¹ and its nuclear and missile testing are not ad hoc, reversible events. They

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are the culmination of an evolving response to a series of international, regional and domestic developments. First, the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) strengthened the Indian belief that the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) had lost its limited leverage on the issue of nuclear disarmament. Second, the conviction grew that nuclear weapons were here to stay, at least for the duration of the United States Stewardship programme.²

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) debate had a negative fallout in India. It was seen as an NPT equivalent measure, with harassment potential, creating the possibility of a technical discrimination between, let us say, Indian and Chinese atomic capabilities in the future. The entry into force clause put India into a corner. With 30 September 1999 on the horizon, the 'use it or lose it' argument gained ground.³

Regionally, the mounting evidence about Chinese-Pakistani nuclear and missile supply relations (as well as Democratic People's Republic of Korea supplies) and United States ambivalence about the evidence raised doubts about the strategic intent of the permanent five members of the Security Council (P-5) non-proliferators vis-à-vis Indian interests. They came to be viewed as a part of the problem rather than the solution.

Within India, party politics produced a shift towards the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Prime Minister Vajpayee has extensive experience and knowledge of atomic issues as a long-standing member of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee on the subject. He knew the nuances before he became prime minister. Furthermore, although Indian military officials, like General Sundarji, had openly written about the deterrent, and the nuclear question had engaged the Indian

military officers since 1981, the military as an institution had not weighed in on the internal policy debate. As China/Pakistani supply evidence mounted, they did. Recent annual reports of the Defence Ministry attest to that fact. Add to this the impact of external pressures stimulating Indian nationalism and it is easy to see how internal alliances had acquired a pro-nuclear weapons stance. Of course, there were and continue to be debates about weaponization, numbers, who is the enemy/enemies, relations with the United States, China and Pakistan. They are details, albeit important ones. They do not change the fundamental rejection of the Nehruvian line on atomic energy: to have the technological base for a weapons option, plus a firm political policy of not exercising it, and no authorizing of reduction in lead time to an exercise (a constant demand of Indian physicists who believed that India could not be independent without demonstrating a capability to use chemical and nuclear explosives). The Nehru line wanted nuclear disarmament and non-discriminatory international arrangements and it offered unilateral self-restraint by choice or under United States and Soviet pressure.

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The BJP-led government now seeks negotiated restraint. The new Indian lines are as follows: forget about NAM because NAM stalwarts like Nelson Mandela pushed for the indefinite extension of the NPT; specify the Indian strategic agenda, show political will, have a few blasts to catch American and Chinese attention, and

follow it up with security dialogues with them. Part of this approach is to learn to rely on itself and to develop the means to do so.

The context is important in this case as the devil is not in the details of the draft nuclear doctrine; it is in the context and the motivations of the major players within and outside India.

Features of the draft nuclear doctrine

India's draft nuclear doctrine is anchored in the United Nations Charter and in the doctrine of self-defence. It is a step towards transparency and formalization of existing capabilities, policy and

India's draft nuclear doctrine is a step towards transparency and formalization of existing capabilities, policy and public attitudes and national interests.

public attitudes and national interests. The new element is that the Indian Government has put down in doctrinal form and in a coherent manner the bits and pieces that were in place before August 1999. Previously, these pieces were in secret compartments; now they will be coordinated and orchestrated in a semi-public way. The issues will have a clear public identification in terms of risks and costs of non-weaponization and non-deployment. Now that the curtain has been lifted, no Indian Government will be able to change the parameters unless there is a radical change in State form (e.g., South Africa) or a transformation in a country's regime (e.g., Argentina and Brazil).

The draft doctrine reconfirms the moratorium on nuclear testing, and makes no change in the Indian

position regarding the CTBT. That must await an internal consensus among Indian political parties. The draft also indicates that research and development in the strategic sphere now has no political limits.

The Agni missile is to have an extended range;⁴ this means that Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong will be brought into Agni's range unless the Sino-Indian security dialogue produces negotiated restraint(s).

The draft emphasizes deterrence only. There is no mention of tactical nuclear weapons. This silence can mean ambiguity or suggests that 'deterrence only', not war fighting by nuclear means, is contemplated.

The policy of 'no first use' is stressed, which has clear implications. It means a large arsenal is envisaged so that a strike can be absorbed. Also affected is the size of the Indian fissile material stockpile that is already or will be required for nuclear deterrence. That will have an impact on the discussions on the ban of fissile material for weapons purposes (Fissban). The 'no first use' idea also strengthens the case for a nuclear triad in the coming decade and increases the value of a sea-based deterrent.

Domestic nuclear debate

The Indian debate on nuclear weaponization and deployment appears to be settled in favour of both. That aspect of the draft doctrine is aimed at Indian and foreign critics of Pokhran II and After.⁵ We should expect the Indian and international debate to shift again. The parameters of Indian debates keep shifting. Until May 1998,⁶ the Nehruvian policy line held: complain ceaselessly about discriminatory international arms control arrangements; maintain Indian nuclear ambiguity; do not give Indian scientists the

political authority to test or to reduce the lead time for testing. In this context, unilateral nuclear restraint produced the view that since India did not intend to test, why not join the NPT and reap the benefits of the Western connection? After 1974, the debate was to test or not to test. There was general agreement not to weaponize. After Pokhran II (May 1998), the debate was about weaponizing, but there was little discussion about deployment. There are other variations on the theme. For instance, some suggest signing the CTBT after testing, that is, be nice to America and be seen as an outward-looking internationalist force. That policy could open many doors. Another suggestion is to sign the Treaty if the P-5 accept India's nuclear-weapon status. Yet another recommends to test, weaponize, deploy and do not sign the CTBT because of the harassment potential of the verification regime. A case in point was the harassment of Iraq under the former United Nations Special Commission. With the issuance of the current draft doctrine, not only will the internal debate continue, in view of the size of the Indian intelligentsia and the press in Delhi, but the international debate as well.

Threat perceptions

The draft doctrine is not country-specific. The threat perceptions have not been spelled out. That would have been undiplomatic, I presume. Threat perceptions, however, can be inferred from the doctrine. An extended Agni missile has a clear China rationale. (In due course, it could reach Canada, Saudi Arabia and Israel but, happily, there is no conflict of interest here that merits a missile attack.) The focus on a sea-based deterrent fits neatly into the process of engagement of Chinese and Indian interests and activities in the Bay of

Bengal and Southeast Asia. Chinese strategists understand this rivalry even though their public pose is one of indifference about Indian activities and the private one projects contempt. This is the long-term threat perception. It could be affected, in my view, by the nature of the bilateral security dialogue, which has been resumed.

The short-term threat perception concerns Pakistan. The Lahore Declaration of 21 February 1999⁷ dealt with bilateral confidence-building measures (CBMs) and mutual nuclear doctrinal dialogue. If India can locate effective negotiating partners in Pakistan (especially in the Pakistani military and intelligence organizations) and if Pakistani authorities appreciate that the costs of defence and deterrence infrastructures are higher for Pakistan than they are for India, then military and economic normalization is a possibility in the coming decade.

The third main country-specific 'threat' refers to the United States. This threat is not territorial; it derives from Indian calculations about the nature of United States policies in the past. They refer to: (i) seeking an India-Pakistan military balance and parity and Indian concessions on Kashmir for Pakistan's benefit; (ii) ignoring the China factor in Indian security calculations; (iii) emphasizing non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament and using international conference diplomacy to corner India; and (iv) marginalizing India in the Asian and international spheres. These past difficulties have been managed, as revealed by the constructive role of the United States in the (Strobe) Talbot-(Jaswat) Singh talks⁸ and the recent Kargil conflict (summer 1999). Washington seeks constructive engagement compared to the crude and aggressive rhetoric of some United Nations Security Council members.

Additional features

The draft doctrine emphasizes civilian command and control. The size of the nuclear arsenal will be classified along with the chain of command, targeting strategies and deployment details.

A connection between 'minimum credible deterrent' (relative to a fluid strategic environment), size of arsenal (relative to threat perception) and 'no first use' (have enough in reserve to inflict punishment) is implicitly indicated in the draft paper.

Finally, the draft paper is directed to diverse and difficult audiences. First, there are two nuclear-armed neighbours with territorial disputes; both are strategic allies and one is a P-5 country. Second, there is one international power (United States), which in the past contained India and despite the fellow democracy status, maintained at best a difficult relationship. Indo-US relations come in the 'secret foe' category, which, however, may be changing. Third, countries in the Southeast Asian neighbourhood which, like India, worry about the future direction of Chinese military activities and its internal politics, would like to know if India would engage China or accept the proposition that China is the natural leader of Asia. Fourth, the international arms control community—which manages the regime-building and the norm-building loops in New York, Geneva and Vienna, and which worries about the deterioration in post-cold war international relations and about the diminishing prospects of multilateral arms control.

Costs and opportunities

India's decision to test had costs in the form of economic sanctions and international criticism. How-

ever, for India the testing created opportunities to publicize its nuclear and missile capabilities, to strengthen Indian military capabilities, and to create an incentive (particularly for the United States and the People's Republic of China) to take India seriously and to develop serious security dialogues.

Compared to the price India paid for its testing, there are no significant diplomatic costs attached to the publication of the draft nuclear doctrine. In criticizing the Indian test decision in 1998, the United States and others had questioned the rationale of Indian nuclearization; it sought transparency. It got it although this is not the answer the United States wanted.

There are, however, economic costs of a full-blown (triad) nuclear deterrent. Overall, Indian defence expenditures are among the lowest in the world. If the Indian nuclear deter-

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rent costs 0.5 per cent of the GDP, that is manageable. In the US experience, the ratio of costs is somewhat as follows: 7 per cent for bomb-making; 14 per cent for targeting and controls; 56 per cent for deployment and triad costs. What real Indian costs will be depends on (i) how much of these costs have already been paid in ongoing activities, and (ii) the actual requirements in terms of number of warheads and delivery vehicles. The first aspect is past history and hidden in compartmentalized and probably secret categories of Indian budgets. The second one depends on threat perceptions and the status of the security dialogues. In the Kashmir fighting during June-July 1999, the United States

helped India and China was neutral. The United States was seen as shifting from 'difficult', 'balanced' 'pro-Pakistani' to 'pro-India', and China was seen as shifting from pro-Pakistan, as strategic ally of Pakistan to a neutral with a new sensitivity about Indian interests and a potential awareness of the danger to Chinese interests of a 'Talibanized' Pakistan or a militant Pakistan.

Room for creative diplomacy

The draft doctrine leaves openings for creative diplomacy. This can occur if practitioners make a distinction between the NPT/International Atomic Energy Agency system and the non-proliferation norm (and as a corollary, there is a distinction between signing/ratifying the CTBT and following the no-testing norm). As a de facto nuclear Power and as an outward-looking internationalist force, India recognizes the value of embracing selected aspects of non-proliferation: maintaining a moratorium against testing; seeking a national consensus in favour of the CTBT (i.e., keeping the issue alive in domestic and international politics), participating in Fissban talks, and developing mechanisms for export controls. The premise here is that with nuclear status comes nuclear responsibility. The second premise is that even though the P-5 cannot stop singing the praises of the non-proliferation regime—which, in reality, is a non-binding regime—the United States Government is pragmatic enough to realize the realities, and given time it is possible to fence off the NPT issue from non-proliferation issues and to put non-proliferation into a bigger basket of issues such as the requirements of Indian security, need for CBMs between India and her nuclear-armed regional neighbours, multipolarity in Asia and

the changing patterns of alignments in Asia-Pacific in the world today.

Questions and loose ends in the draft doctrine

How will India balance two concepts: minimum deterrence and maximum survivability? The latter puts more weight on the role of nuclear submarines, which are a few years away. Minimum deterrence at the moment relies on land and air delivery means; this means a reliance on fewer nuclear weapons, for say, five years. This requires an optimistic scenario that there is no imminent danger to Indian security from China and Pakistan. Such optimism could be based on the following notions.

First, China is not militarily able to fight or threaten India because of internal preoccupations, internal power struggle involving the President, the Prime Minister and the People's Liberation Army, economic conditions are not good and promising, and China's ties with Pakistan will continue only as long as it is in Chinese interests. When the matrix of calculations change, the relationship could change as well.

Second, Pakistan does not have a large nuclear and military arsenal to wage war with India, its political and military leadership is divided on the question of confronting India, and as a result of its economic situation and the sanctions it is not in a position to engage India in an arms race. The costs of confrontation are much higher for Pakistan than for India.

How will India manage the nuclear relationship with Pakistan? What is the process to develop the modalities of CBMs? Who are the negotiators and interlocutors in Pakistan (and outside Pakistan with

influence within the Pakistan establishment), given the problem of instability within Pakistan and the pattern of civil-military relations? Will the Sino-Indian security dialogue lead to CBMs? Is there a case for a multilateral convention against 'no first use'? This would strengthen the deterrent role of nuclear weapons but it would also postpone nuclear disarmament.

Notes

¹ Published by India's National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) on 17 August 1999.

² The conduct of the science-based United States Stockpile Stewardship programme is to ensure a high level of confidence in the safety and reliability of nuclear weapons in the active United States stockpile, including the conduct of a broad range of effective and continuing experimental programmes. The programme integrates the activities of the Department of Energy (DOE) nuclear weapons complex, which includes four production sites and the Nevada Test Site, as well as Livermore, Los Alamos, and Sandia national laboratories. A critical element of stockpile stewardship is a requirement to provide the President with accurate assessments of the safety, security, and reliability of each weapons system in the nation's nuclear stockpile. (*Compiled from press releases from the United States Department of Energy and Department of State websites, www.state.gov and www.doe.gov, respectively*).

³ Article XIV of the CTBT stipulates, *inter alia*, that, if after three years from the anniversary of its opening for signature the Treaty has not entered into force, the Depositary shall convene a Conference of States Parties. That date fell on 24 September 1999. The article also provides that the Conference shall consider and decide by consensus what measures consistent with international law may be undertaken to accelerate the ratification process. The Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT took place

from 6 to 8 October 1999, adopting a Final Declaration (A/54/514-S/1999/1102).

⁴ The Agni II missile, tested by India on 11 April 1999, has a range of 2,000 kms (1,240 miles). It extended the range of Agni I, which was at the 1,500 kms mark (900 miles).

⁵ Nuclear testing and missile launching site in the Rajasthan desert, in northeast India.

⁶ On 11 and 13 May 1998, India conducted a planned series of underground nuclear tests, declaring that they provided a valuable database useful in the design of nuclear weapons of different yields for different applications and for different delivery systems, as well as to assist in the development of a computer simulation capability that might be supported by subcritical experiments, if necessary. (*Official press statements of the Government of India to the United Nations of 11 and 13 May 1998*)

⁷ The Lahore Declaration of 21 February 1999 was signed by India and Pakistan at the end of a visit by the Prime Minister of India to Pakistan, intended to enhance people-to-people contact between the two countries. The "bus diplomacy", so called because it opened the Delhi-Lahore bus service, resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding signed by Mr. Sharif and Mr. Vajpayee, containing major bilateral policy objectives. The two sides agreed to engage in bilateral consultations on security concepts and nuclear doctrines; to consult on CBMs regarding nuclear and conventional forces; to provide advance notification in respect of ballistic missile tests; to undertake national measures to reduce the risks of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons; to abide by their respective unilateral moratoriums on conducting further nuclear test explosions; and to conclude an agreement on prevention of incidents at sea.

⁸ These talks are secret. The meetings relate to political level and experts level issues. Thus far, nine rounds

of talks have taken place and the tenth round is scheduled. The December 1999 experts meetings included participants on the American side with expertise in non-proliferation, economic, counter-terrorism, ocean and environmental affairs. A tangible result of this dialogue is that the US Government has pruned the 'entities list', which imposed sanctions against Indian organizations following the May 1998 nuclear tests. About 51 organizations of the over 200 groups have been taken off the list. The dialogue includes discussions about US licensing policy and US high technology transfers to India. In other words, the US-India relationship appears to be gaining strategic, economic and technological content and depth following the May 1998 nuclear tests even though the process had started in the 1980s.

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The non-aligned nuclear posture

*Miguel Marín Bosch**

Abstract

Though the cold war ended over a decade ago, it appears the nuclear-weapon States are not ready to give up their weapons. Despite quantitative reductions, those weapons remain at the heart of their military planning. Over a half of the world's population live in countries with nuclear weapons or are allied to such countries. The decision of India and Pakistan to explode nuclear devices in May 1998, as regrettable as they were, nevertheless shook the five nuclear-weapon States out of their complacency concerning their exclusive possession of nuclear weapons. Those actions also complicated the position of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and led to highly diplomatic language to accommodate that fact in the latest summit meeting of the Movement in August-September 1998. Voting patterns in the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament show that the debate on who is a "legitimate" nuclear-weapon State is in full swing.

The world seems to have lost its way in matters nuclear. The end of the cold war and disappearance of East/West confrontation has brought about many

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political, economic, and social changes, but in the field of nuclear weapons, the nuclear-weapon States, whether *de jure* or *de facto*, have demonstrated that they are not about to give them up. In fact, despite quantitative reductions, nuclear weapons and their delivery (and now, again, defensive) systems are still at the centre of military planning. Despite the International Court of Justice's 1996 advisory opinion,¹ nuclear-weapon States continue to rely on them as a means of threatening others.

Quantitatively, about half of the world's inhabitants live in countries with nuclear weapons. If one adds the military allies of the nuclear-weapon States, then well over half of all persons live in countries that have subscribed to one doctrine or another with regard to the actual use of nuclear weapons. For someone from a nation that firmly believes in the spread of nuclear-weapon-free zones rather than the spread of nuclear weapons, these numbers are most disheartening.

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I must confess that I feel somewhat uncomfortable presenting the Non-Aligned Movement's (NAM) point of view at this meeting. It is not because Mexico is not a member of the NAM. (It is an observer.) Its track record on disarmament issues speaks for itself. It is rather that I would have preferred to have seen a representative of India in my place. But things have changed.

A case of nuclear denial

In May 1998, first India and then Pakistan decided to play the nuclear card.² Those decisions shocked many governments and complicated matters within the NAM. Let me hasten to add that neither India nor Pakistan has violated any international treaty. They have not signed the 1970 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) or the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). What they have done is to shake the heretofore five nuclear-weapon States—United States, Russia, United Kingdom, France and China—out of their complacent arrogance. The reaction of the international community in general and those five nations in particular has been predictably wrong and reflects the confusion that has characterized the attitude of the vast majority of countries towards nuclear weapons—who can and who cannot have them.

The reaction to the tests in South Asia of the international community in general and the five nuclear-weapon States in particular has been predictably wrong.

The five countries that the NPT recognizes as nuclear-weapon States issued a joint declaration on the Indian and Pakistani tests and that text became the basis of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1172 of 6 June 1998. For decades the international community knew that certain countries were contemplating the possibility of playing the nuclear card. Some, including Argentina and Brazil, desisted. South Africa did play the card but later surrendered the deck. Another, the Ukraine, became a de facto nuclear-weapon State when

the Soviet Union disintegrated. Here the international community offered enough incentives to allow the Ukraine to recover its status as a non-nuclear-weapon State. But the cases of India, Pakistan and Israel have never been the object of a concerted effort by the international community. The world lived a fiction. As for the first two, it was a question of time. They simply came out of the closet. On the other hand, Israel continues to enjoy a very different treatment by the international community, especially the five nuclear-weapon States. To ask them now to sign and ratify the NPT is to continue obstinately on a path which, for years, has been the wrong one. To continue now insisting on the fiction that some are "legitimate" while others are not, is to deny an overwhelming reality.

The NAM reacts

The NAM has also not come to terms with these developments. A few months after those nuclear tests, they held their twelfth summit, in Durban, South Africa. It was not easy to draft the Final Document's paragraphs regarding nuclear disarmament. The heads of State or government "reiterated that with the end of the cold war, there is no justification for the maintenance of nuclear arsenals, or concepts of international security based on promoting and developing military alliances and policies of nuclear deterrence. . . . They also noted that the present situation whereby nuclear-weapon States insist that nuclear weapons provide unique security benefits, and yet monopolize the right to own them, is highly discriminatory, unstable and cannot be sustained. . . . They expressed their concern at the slow pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament, which constitutes their primary disarmament objective." Here, because of the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests,

they had to resort to some drafting acrobatics. They "noted the complexities arising from nuclear tests in South Asia, which underlined the need to work even harder to achieve their disarmament objectives, including elimination of nuclear weapons"—and the acrobatics continue—"they considered positively the commitment by the parties concerned in the region to exercise restraint, which contributes to regional security, to discontinue nuclear tests and not to transfer nuclear weapons-related material, equipment and technology."³

Since the Non-Aligned Movement's point of departure with regard to nuclear weapons is that they must be eliminated, then it follows that they promote temporary or palliative measures, including arrangements for the non-use of those weapons and the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. To put it another way, the NAM countries insist on what not to do with nuclear weapons, whereas nuclear-weapon States insist on what to do with them. That is why the NAM heads of State or government expressed their conviction that efforts for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States should be pursued as a matter of priority by the members of the Non-Aligned Movement.

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committee on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons in the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate universal, unconditional and legally binding assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States. In this context, they expressed their conviction that efforts for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States should be pursued as a matter of priority by the members of the Non-Aligned Movement.”⁴

Voting patterns are revealing

The voting patterns on United Nations General Assembly resolutions regarding nuclear disarmament issues serve to quantify the problem. The item on a “Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons” is a case in point. In one form or another it has appeared on the General Assembly agenda for over three decades. The text of the annual resolution has been more or less the same for many years. This permits us to identify the changing position of certain States. Take the last six resolutions, adopted from 1993 to 1998 (48/76 B, 49/76 E, 50/71 E, 51/46 D, 52/39 C and 53/78 D). A total of 70 member States have at one time or another opposed or abstained on those resolutions. Twenty-two countries have opposed all of those resolutions. These include 18 of the 19 NATO members, as well as Andorra, Finland, Monaco and Slovakia. Only Greece abstained once (in 1993), but has since joined its military allies.

Nine countries, including Russia and Israel, have abstained year after year. Of the five NPT nuclear-weapon States, only China voted in favour of the resolution. Until last year, that is. What prompted China to abstain in 1998 and six traditional abstainers

(Australia, Austria, Ireland, Liechtenstein, New Zealand and Sweden) to move to a negative vote?

The reason is to be found in the debate on who is a "legitimate nuclear-weapon State" and who is not. The five NPT nuclear-weapon States insist that India and Pakistan join the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States. It is the "Do as I say, not as I do" syndrome. Not a word about Israel, however. Against this background, India decided to tinker with the draft resolution on the convention on the non-use of nuclear weapons. In the fall of 1998, the preliminary draft distributed by India included two changes that caused some concern among a number of delegations. The first change, which was to remain in the final text, was in a preambular paragraph that referred to the convention banning the use of nuclear weapons as an "important step in a phased programme towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, within a time-bound framework." In the 1998 draft, this last phrase was changed to "with a specified framework of time." But it was the second change that produced the strongest reaction. In the past, the resolution included the text of a draft convention with an article stating that the convention would enter into force upon ratification by twenty-five governments, including the "five nuclear-weapon States." India omitted that phrase, and replaced it with "all the States possessing nuclear weapons." In the end, the text contained no mention of a draft convention, but certain delegations were left with the impression that India had tried to use the draft resolution to gain recognition of its status as a nuclear-weapon State, regardless of the NPT.

The NAM position vis-à-vis the nuclear-weapon States is no longer what it was, and it is bound to get more and more complicated.

Notes

¹ On 8 July 1996, the ICJ delivered, *inter alia*, its findings on the question before it from the General Assembly in resolution 49/75 K of 1994, "Is the threat or use of nuclear weapons in any circumstance permitted under international law?" It decided unanimously that the threat of use of force by means of nuclear weapons that was contrary to Article 2, paragraph 4 (refraining from the threat or use of force) of the Charter and did not meet the requirements of Article 51 (inherent right of individual or collective self-defence) was unlawful, and that such threat or use of force should be compatible with international law applicable in armed conflict. It split evenly, in favour and against, on the decision that it could not conclude definitively whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful in an extreme circumstance of self-defence, in which the very survival of a State would be at stake. It decided unanimously that "there exists an obligation to . . . bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament." (The advisory opinion was submitted to the General Assembly in a Note by the Secretary-General-A/51/218, annex.)

² The tests carried out by India on 11 and on 13 May 1998 and by Pakistan on 27 and 30 May of that same year were reported to the General Assembly in a Note by the Secretary-General on the notification of nuclear tests (A/53/427).

³ Final Document of the Twelfth Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries, held at Durban, South Africa, from 29 August to 3 September 1998 (A/53/667-S/1998/1071, annex, paragraph 113).

⁴ *Ibid.*, paragraph 117.

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*Russia's nuclear doctrine: the end of the period of transition?**

by Nikolai Sokov**

Abstract

The Russian Federation issued a draft Military Doctrine in October 1999, widely circulating it for study and reactions. In January 2000, Russia published its 2000 National Security Concept and on 4 February, the Security Council approved its new military doctrine. Nuclear weapons are seen as the only reliable means to dissuade NATO from using force against Russia. There is a distinct focus in the new doctrine on the immediate military utility of nuclear weapons. Russia, like NATO, is continuing to reduce its nuclear weapons, though at a slower clip than foreseen by the START agreements. The doctrine reasserts the policy of first use of nuclear weapons in response to a conventional attack. Its policy provides for the use of nuclear weapons in response to an attack in which other weapons of mass destruction (chemical or biological) are used.

* This paper is based on a presentation on the Russian Federation's draft military doctrine made at the "Symposium on Nuclear Doctrines", held at United Nations Headquarters on 18 October 1999. The author has updated this article to take account of the publication of the National Security Concept in January 2000 and the approval by Russia's Security Council of the new military doctrine on 4 February 2000.

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Even as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has been reducing reliance on nuclear weapons in its security policy, NATO enlargement and massive conventional inferiority to NATO (inferiority which is much greater than NATO's inferiority vis-à-vis the Warsaw Pact at any time during the cold war) has led Russia to rely more on nuclear weapons as the key provider of security. Various regional crises, (most notably around Iraq and Kosovo) further contributed to the reassessment of nuclear weapons' role.

The change, however, has to do mostly with doctrinal innovations.¹ Like NATO, Russia continues to reduce its nuclear weapons, albeit at a rate much slower than originally foreseen by the START II Treaty; the 1991 informal regime limiting tactical nuclear weapons is still being implemented.² Another area of similarity is nuclear doctrine: Russia has adopted all or almost all features of NATO's cold war nuclear doctrine, as well as the post-cold war innovations. In a sense, a curious collusion emerges between Russia and NATO in terms of their nuclear doctrines, although the political "packaging" is markedly different.

Russia's nuclear doctrine has taken a better part of the 1990s to emerge, but now it is possible to speak about it with a reasonable level of certainty. The publication of the draft of a new doctrine in October crowned several years of efforts to develop an intelligent and cohesive concept of what the missions of nuclear weapons are, under which scenarios they can be used, and to which ends.

The doctrine generally characterizes nuclear weapons as "an effective means of deterring aggression, ensuring the military security of the Russian Federation

and its allies, [and] maintaining international stability and peace.”

This mission is achieved by maintaining nuclear deterrence, defined as “guaranteed infliction of predetermined damage to any aggressor State or a coalition of States under any circumstances.”

The doctrine also provides for using nuclear weapons first, in response to a conventional attack. This plank, first introduced in 1993, has caused considerable criticism. It continues to remain in force, for obvious reasons.

The 1999 doctrine introduced a new plank: the use of nuclear weapons in response to the use of other weapons of mass destruction, copying the relatively recent innovation by the United States.

Generally speaking, there is little particularly interesting about these general propositions except the term “predetermined damage”, which is used instead of a more common “unacceptable damage.” This point will be discussed a bit later.

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Strategic and sub-strategic settings

Going beyond formal provisions, there are two elements of the nuclear doctrine or, rather, two overlapping and interconnected missions that nuclear weapons are supposed to achieve. One is strategic deterrence, which is primarily oriented towards the bilateral United States-Russian nuclear balance. (The United States status as the possessor of the largest nuclear arsenal in the world is an obvious benchmark to measure the Russian capability.) Another is the use of nuclear weapons in sub-strategic, regional conflicts.

These two areas are fundamentally different because they provide for very different types of utility of nuclear weapons. In the context of strategic balance, nuclear weapons are supposed to prevent the use of nuclear weapons by maintaining a credible capability to inflict unacceptable damage to the United States and/or other nuclear Powers should it/they attack Russia. This mission is rather standard, very traditional, and well developed conceptually.

Two aspects require additional elaboration. The first is the mode of use of nuclear weapons in the strategic context. Currently, Russia appears to be oriented towards the launch-on-warning strategy (known in Russia as *otvetno-vstrechnyy udar*), although the preferable option is a second strike (*otvetnyy udar*), which is more conducive to strategic stability. The choice in favour of launch-on-warning was determined primarily on technical criteria: Russia's strategic forces do not appear to be able to ride out the theoretical first strike of the United States. The ongoing, albeit slow because of insufficient funding, modernization of the Russian strategic arsenal can conceivably allow the transition towards the second-strike strategy.

It is well known that Russia's concern about United States plans to deploy a national missile defence (NMD) system stems from the possibility that such a system might undermine Russia's transition to a second-strike capability.

Unacceptable damage and predetermined damage explained

Another aspect that requires elaboration is the definition of "unacceptable damage." The internationally recognized default criterion is the so-called McNamara criterion of 400 deliverable warheads. Few doubt now that this is excessive. Even some conservative commentators in Russia consider 100-150 deliverable warheads sufficient. A revision of the definition of unacceptable damage, if it has happened, can have profound consequences: the same conservative commentators suggested that even if Russia ratifies START II and the United States deploys Phase III of its currently foreseen NMD system, Russia will still be able to deliver this number of warheads in a second strike. Thus, a revision of the criterion could allow a faster transition to the second-strike strategy than current modernization plans allow. Whether this revision has or will take place depends primarily on political leaders and the political situation in Russia, a topic that is outside the scope of this presentation.

The use of nuclear weapons in a sub-strategic context is a thoroughly different matter, and it is here that the distinction between the terms "unacceptable damage" and "predetermined damage" is crucial.

The current doctrine allows for the use of nuclear weapons in two out of four classes of armed confrontations. They are global war, regional war, local war, and

armed conflict. The last one has to do primarily with ethnic and national conflicts rather than inter-State wars. Nuclear weapons are associated with global and regional wars, although the doctrine explicitly states that escalation from one level to another is possible, i.e., a local war can develop into a regional one.

We are dealing here with a reversal of the Soviet thesis that any use of nuclear weapons would end in a global catastrophe. Much like some United States theorists in the 1970s and 1980s, Russian military experts seem to suggest that the effect of a limited use of nuclear weapons could have the opposite effect. The mission of nuclear weapons in regional wars is more instrumental than in the context of central deterrence: instrumental in the sense that nuclear weapons are not intended to deter by promise of global annihilation, but rather are supposed to achieve specific, limited military objectives. The purpose of nuclear weapons in a regional conflict is de-escalation, i.e., to avoid defeat in a conventional war, limit the conflict, and create conditions for negotiated termination on conditions favourable to Russia.

Zapad-99

The mode of employment of nuclear weapons in regional wars was demonstrated by a series of manoeuvres in the summer and fall of 1999, especially the "West-99" or Zapad-99 manoeuvres. They simulated a NATO attack against Kaliningrad Oblast, a narrow strip of Russian territory between Poland and Lithuania. According to the scenario, Russian conventional troops were able to resist NATO attack for a limited time only, and then, facing imminent defeat, resorted to nuclear weapons. One strike was against NATO military assets in Europe, another against targets in the United States.

It appears that the simulated strike against the United States was a political warning that the United States will not escape unharmed if NATO attacks Russia. The strike against NATO assets in Europe was more "for real" and was intended to limit and de-escalate the war.

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The new missions might require new weapons. The simulated strikes in the summer and fall of 1999 involved heavy bombers, which are strategic weapons. In April 1999, Russia's Security Council, however, reportedly discussed the option of withdrawing from the informal 1991 regime on tactical nuclear weapons and redeploying land-based missiles. No decision was made then, but neither was that option ruled out. There is a strong group within Russia's political-military elite that favours greater reliance on tactical nuclear weapons precisely because they better fit the mission of de-escalation.

Stress is on more immediate utility of nuclear weapons

In short, we witness a gradual emergence of a new nuclear strategy in Russia that is different from both the "classic" Soviet one and the late-Soviet, Gorbachev-era policy. The new doctrine is likely to transcend the

concentration on central deterrence and stress more immediate military utility of nuclear weapons.

The new developments are not irreversible. There are, apparently, two sets of conditions that might arrest the ongoing evolution. One is improvement in conventional forces that would make nuclear weapons less critical to Russian security. This option appears unlikely because the country is in dire economic straits. Another is the improvement of Russia's security environment, which would remove the perceived threat from the United States and NATO, causing them to be viewed as partners, or at least neutral. This, however, appears unlikely as well, primarily because United States domestic politics will hardly allow changes in United States foreign policy that would be seen favourably in Russia. Thus, reversal in the evolution of Russia's nuclear doctrine is hardly possible.

Notes

¹ For more details, see the author's assessment of the Russian National Security Concept and draft Military Doctrine on <http://www.cns.miis.edu/pubs/reports/sokov2.htm>.

² On 27 September 1991, President Bush announced that the United States was taking all strategic bombers off alert and removing all ballistic missiles scheduled for retirement from alert as well. He further declared that the United States would eliminate its entire worldwide inventory of ground-launched tactical nuclear weapons and would remove all nuclear weapons from surface ships and attack submarines. On 5 October 1991, President Gorbachev responded to the Bush declaration with a parallel initiative to eliminate all nuclear warheads on land-based tactical missiles as well as nuclear artillery munitions and mines. He also proposed to withdraw nuclear warheads from air defence

systems; to remove all tactical weapons from Soviet surface ships, submarines, and land-based aviation; and to secure all tactical nuclear weapons that were not eliminated at Russian bases. The Russian Government subsequently reaffirmed the Soviet commitment, and on 29 January 1992, President Yeltsin announced that pursuant to the Gorbachev initiative production of warheads for land-based tactical missiles, artillery and landmines had ceased, and stockpiles of those weapons would be destroyed.

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NATO's nuclear doctrine

*Stephen F. Szabo**

Abstract

At its April 1999 summit in Washington, NATO acknowledged that "the circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons might have to be contemplated by the Allies are . . . extremely remote". NATO doctrine continues to rely on nuclear deterrence, maintains the first-use option, and envisages a possible nuclear response to an attack with non-nuclear weapons of mass destruction. NATO is committed to nuclear reductions and is trimming down its nuclear forces in accordance with the terms of the START agreements.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is an alliance of now nineteen, three of which (the United States, France and the United Kingdom) are nuclear Powers. While there is an alliance doctrine, nuclear policy remains largely a national policy. France has made it clear that its nuclear doctrine is independent from NATO doctrine and the United Kingdom reserves the right to remove its nuclear forces from NATO command when its extreme vital interests are at stake. The United States is the primary shaper of NATO

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nuclear doctrine and reserves the right as well to use its nuclear forces for national purposes.

During the cold war, nuclear deterrence was at the heart of NATO's strategy. Although it had modified its nuclear doctrine from massive retaliation during the 1950s to flexible response in the 1960s, and added a détente component to defence in 1967, it relied heavily upon the threat of nuclear retaliation to conventional attack. This was the result of the great disparity between the Warsaw Pact and NATO conventional forces, with the former seen as having conventional superiority. Thus the threat of early use of nuclear weapons was a means of counteracting this imbalance and of linking the United States to European security and making reality of the principle of the equal sharing of risks.

With the beginning of the end of the cold war, NATO began to modify its posture. In the London NATO summit of 1990,¹ NATO adopted the posture that nuclear weapons had

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now become weapons of "last resort." This was done largely at the urging of the Alliance's most important non-nuclear-weapon Power, the Federal Republic of Germany, which wished to facilitate Soviet acceptance of German unification. The United States pushed this doctrinal shift through over the objections of France and the United Kingdom, both of which wished to preserve the centrality of nuclear deterrence and the principle of early first use. The Final Settlement on Germany, the treaty which unified Germany in 1990, made the

territory of the former German Democratic Republic a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Post-cold war reductions

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the withdrawal of all its forces from central Europe, the Alliance has further modified its posture.

No longer concerned with the prospect of a short warning conventional attack, NATO reduced its nuclear forces by 80 per cent in Europe.

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NATO's Strategic Concept, adopted in its Washington summit in April 1999,² stated that, "The circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons might have to be contemplated by the Allies are . . . extremely remote."

Today less than 200 free-fall bombs are deployed at sites in Europe. All short-range and tactical nuclear forces have been removed from European soil. In the 1970s, over 7,400 such weapons were deployed in Europe. The United States now has about 12,000 nuclear warheads compared to about 23,000 in Russia. In its Strategic Defence Review of 1998, the United Kingdom reduced its warheads to less than 200, all on Trident submarines. It now has only one submarine with 48 warheads on patrol at a time and it has reduced the alert status of its nuclear arsenal. It should be noted, however, that these 48 warheads have the total explosive power of 300 Hiroshima bombs. France has 64 submarine-launched ballistic missiles on 4 submarines and another

roughly 400 warheads delivered by bombers for a total of 450 warheads.

The Alliance coordinates its targeting strategy within the Nuclear Planning Group, which includes non-nuclear-weapon States. The extended deterrent now also includes the three new member States: Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. There are, however, no plans to deploy nuclear forces on the territory of the new member States. In other words, they will have the same status as Norway and other non-nuclear-weapon member States that are under the nuclear umbrella but do not have nuclear weapons stationed on their soil.

NATO's minimum deterrence

While the Alliance had de-alerted its forces and no longer aims at specific targets, nuclear deterrence remains central both to Alliance doctrine and the national doctrines of the three nuclear-weapon States within the Alliance. Even

the United Kingdom's new Strategic Review, which emphasizes that its long-term goal remains a nuclear-weapon-free world (also the United States position), recognizes that weapons of mass destruction are not going to disappear. It cites the need for a minimum deterrent to discourage threats to the United Kingdom's vital interests. The elements of the rationale for a continued NATO are:

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- The continued existence of large nuclear arsenals, especially that of Russia. This has gained in importance as Russia, with the deterioration of its conventional forces, has renewed the emphasis it places on nuclear weapons.
 - The role of nuclear weapons as the essential link between the United States and European security interests.
 - The need for uncertainty about NATO's response to military aggression and to conventional, biological and chemical threats, as well as to nuclear blackmail.
 - The prevention of proliferation. The NATO deterrent provides security to non-nuclear-weapon States, most importantly Germany (and by implication, Japan), which might otherwise have to develop an independent deterrent.
 - An unstated rationale is the sense of great Power status that goes with being a nuclear-weapon Power, that is, nuclear weapons gain a nation a seat at the table.

European leaders of the Second World War generation believe that nuclear deterrence has been more effective than conventional deterrence, which they maintain has failed twice in Europe in the last century. As they cut their defence spending, they also are aware that nuclear weapons are less expensive than conventional forces.

Arms control, reducing nuclear stockpiles and reducing nuclear dangers

The Alliance remains committed to arms control and other methods of reducing nuclear stockpiles and

dangers. The United States and the European Union are helping to ensure nuclear safety and to find ways to employ Russian nuclear scientists. NATO continues to urge the Russian Duma to ratify START II in order to move towards START III. All Alliance leaders support the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and regret the action taken in the past week by the United States Senate in failing to do so.³ NATO, however, continues to reject efforts, such as those put forward by Germany, the Netherlands and Canada to adopt a no-first-use pledge, although an Alliance follow-on study is under way. The debate on nuclear policy must continue, given the radically altered strategic context of Europe, and a no-first-use statement cannot be ruled out in the future. The Alliance is bound by the NPT not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States (negative security assurances), yet the United States and the Alliance continue to retain the nuclear option as a deterrent against the use of non-nuclear weapons of mass destruction against it.

If European integration proceeds beyond economic integration into defence and foreign policy integration, new and important questions will arise about the possibility and desirability of a European Union nuclear deterrent, an option left open by the European signatories of the NPT.

Public opinion and nuclear deterrence

While European and American publics are uncomfortable with nuclear weapons and would like to see the levels of nuclear stockpiles reduced, the publics in nuclear-weapon States seem to support the existence of their national deterrents. Demonstrations and anti-nuclear movements in the 1980s against the deployment

of intermediate-range nuclear forces were directed primarily at the presence of American weapons on European soil, and not at national deterrents. In the nuclear-weapon nations of NATO, independent deterrents are linked to feelings of national identity and sovereignty. In addition, nuclear policy remains the domain of a specialist elite that remains relatively immune to protests. Still the public wants the arms race to be controlled and slowed down. It favoured by large margins the negotiation of the CTBT and continues to support further negotiations for reductions in nuclear arms. With the end of the cold war and the rise to power of a post-war generation in the non-nuclear-weapon States, pressure may increase on nuclear issues and NATO's doctrine.

Notes

¹ See "The Transformation of NATO's Defence Posture", which gives highlights of the results of the London Summit in 1990 at <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/m970708/infopres/e-defpost.htm>.

² See the Washington Summit Communiqué, "An Alliance for the 21st Century", issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Washington D.C. on 24 April 1999 at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1999/p99-064e.htm>.

³ See, for example, the widely circulated article entitled "A Treaty We All Need", by President Jacques Chirac of France, Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and Chancellor Gerhard Schröder of Germany, in the *New York Times* of 8 October 1999. In it, the three leaders stressed that the United States and its allies have worked side by side for a CTBT since the days of President Eisenhower and urged the United States Senate to ratify the Treaty.

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