



HOUSE OF LORDS

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

CALL FOR EVIDENCE: THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY AND NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

As a result of rising tensions between nuclear-armed states and the fragmenting of existing non-proliferation and arms control agreements, nuclear weapons are on the international agenda in a way they have not been since the end of the Cold War.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), along with other components of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, form a critical pillar of the rules-based international order. Since the NPT's most recent Review Conference in 2015 there have been significant developments affecting the proliferation, development and use of nuclear weapons. The United States has taken the step of withdrawing from the Iran nuclear deal, opened negotiations with North Korea, and announced its intention to pull out of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) with Russia. Meanwhile, nuclear-armed states have begun significant modernisation programmes, with the United States and Russia signalling the substantial expansion of future capabilities and considering the use of nuclear weapons in the battlefield.

Rising nuclear tensions have been accompanied by a growing dissatisfaction amongst proponents of nuclear disarmament. In 2017, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (commonly referred to as the Ban Treaty) opened for signature, further widening the divide between nuclear-armed states (and their allies) and proponents of disarmament.

In this context, the House of Lords International Relations Committee is launching an inquiry into the NPT and nuclear disarmament, during which it will examine the state of global nuclear diplomacy and the United Kingdom's role in it. During this inquiry the Committee will focus on the non-proliferation and disarmament aspects of the NPT, and not consider directly the civilian use of nuclear energy.

The questions set out below are intended to provide a framework for those who wish to offer their views. You need not answer all these questions.

Information on how to submit evidence is set out below. If you have any questions or require adjustments to enable you to respond, please contact the Committee team: details also below.

The deadline for submissions is **18 January 2019**.

Questions

Nuclear risk

1. What is your evaluation of the current level of risk that nuclear weapons, of any type, could be used?

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

2. Ahead of the 2020 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), what are the biggest challenges facing global nuclear diplomacy?
 - a. To what extent do states still view the NPT as relevant?
 - b. What are the prospects for other components of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, such as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty (CTBT)?
 - c. How important are these agreements to the wider rules-based international order?

- d. To what extent does the existence of three nuclear armed states outside the NPT (India, Israel and Pakistan) destabilise the overall regime?
- e. What prospects are there for a Middle East WMD free zone?

The United States

- 3. To what extent will the United States' withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal, as well as US efforts to achieve the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, affect the wider nuclear non-proliferation regime?

Nuclear arms control

- 4. To what extent and why are existing nuclear arms control agreements being challenged, particularly the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) and the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), and what prospect is there for further such agreements? What prospects are there of progress in negotiating a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT)?

Nuclear modernisation programmes

- 5. What effect will nuclear renewal programmes have on the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime? To what extent could technological developments—including in missile capabilities, warhead strength, and verification—undermine existing non-proliferation and arms control agreements?

New technologies

- 6. To what extent will technological developments, both directly relating to nuclear weapons and in the wider defence and security sphere, affect nuclear diplomacy?

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

- 7. If it were to enter into force, how would the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (commonly referred to as the Ban Treaty) affect efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and bring about disarmament?

The P5

- 8. What are the policies of other P5 countries (China, France, Russia and the United States), and the UK's other partners, on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and on nuclear weapons more generally? Have these policies changed, and if so, why? How effective has the P5 process been, and what role will it have in the future?

The role of the UK

- 9. How effective a role has the UK played in global nuclear diplomacy in recent years? How could the UK more effectively engage on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament? What should the UK Government's priorities be ahead of the 2020 NPT Review Conference?

ANNEX: GUIDANCE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Written evidence should be submitted online using the written submission form available at <https://www.parliament.uk/npt-nuclear-disarmament-submission-form>. This page also provides guidance on submitting evidence. If you have difficulty submitting evidence online, please contact the Committee staff by email at cullentb@parliament.uk or by telephoning 020 7219 7412.

The deadline for submitting written evidence is 18 January 2019.

Short submissions are preferred. A submission longer than six pages should include a one page summary. Paragraphs should be numbered. All submissions made through the written submission form will be acknowledged automatically by email.

Evidence which is accepted by the Committee may be published online at any stage; when it is so published it becomes subject to parliamentary copyright and is protected by parliamentary privilege. Submissions which have been previously published will not be accepted as evidence. Once you have received acknowledgement that the evidence has been accepted you will receive a further email, and at this point you may publicise or publish your evidence yourself. In doing so you must indicate that it was prepared for the Committee, and you should be aware that your publication or re-publication of your evidence may not be protected by parliamentary privilege.

Personal contact details will be removed from evidence before publication, but will be retained by the Committee Office and used for specific purposes relating to the Committee's work, for instance to seek additional information.

Persons who submit written evidence, and others, may be invited to give oral evidence. Oral evidence is usually given in public at Westminster and broadcast online; transcripts are also taken and published online. Persons invited to give oral evidence will be notified separately of the procedure to be followed and the topics likely to be discussed.

Substantive communications to the Committee about the inquiry should be addressed through the Clerk of the Committee, Eva George (georgee@parliament.uk) whether or not they are intended to constitute formal evidence to the Committee.

This is a public call for evidence. Please bring it to the attention of other groups and individuals who may not have received a copy direct.

You may follow the progress of the inquiry at: <https://www.parliament.uk/npt-nuclear-disarmament>.