

POLICY REPORT

Re-thinking the Political Strategy
for Nuclear Disarmament



**S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL
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A Graduate School of Nanyang Technological University

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March 2014

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Executive Summary

Since 2007, four icons of the U.S. policy establishment – Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, Sam Nunn and William Perry, labelled the Four Horsemen by some and the Four Statesmen by others – have pressed the thesis that it would be in the U.S. interest to see the abolition of nuclear weapons globally. Barack Obama joined them when he assumed the Presidency in 2009, by which time Lawrence Freedman felt able to note that “key members of the international policy-making elite have come to take [nuclear disarmament] seriously”. That momentum has essentially been lost. This brief suggests that the political strategy currently being followed to advance this thesis has been overtaken. Circumstances have changed and a rethink is called for. The current strategy involves the U.S. and Russia continuing to view their nuclear arsenals through arms control lenses in the expectation that this process can somehow and at some point be recast to deliver universal nuclear disarmament. The recommendation here is that we need to ascertain the true interest of all the states with nuclear weapons in becoming substantively involved in this quest and to explicitly making disarmament subordinate to arms control. Is there really a bandwagon behind the U.S. and Russia or just rhetorical support for an ideal considered unachievable? This approach clearly runs the risk of encountering a decisive ‘no’ to abandoning the current political strategy. It is also clear, however, that the current strategy is not going to carry us to a point at which an attempt to transition to a disarmament track will have any prospect whatever of success. The approach being recommended here is to commit now to a formal and overt process designed to ascertain the strength of the commitment to nuclear disarmament and to establish which states with nuclear weapons are prepared to get involved in substantive and accountable ways. This process will involve, inter alia, clarifying and sharpening understandings on when particular states should join negotiations on nuclear diminution; identifying preparatory steps that states could and should consider prior to joining the formal negotiations; developing a common position on core issues like nuclear proliferation and ballistic missile defence; and building a willingness to ensure that wider foreign and security policies are supportive of the goal of nuclear disarmament.

In the July/August 2009 issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Lawrence Freedman noted that “key members of the international policy-making elite have come to take [nuclear disarmament] seriously” but also observed that this development had not been accompanied by, nor had it generated, any re-examination of the logical or theoretical foundations of this objective. Freedman, of course, had in mind the debate conducted in the late 1950s and into the early 1960s (with Australia’s Hedley Bull as a major contributor) on whether prudence and restraint in the conduct of affairs between states should be informed by the objective of disarmament or by the far more prosaic objectives of arms control. Much of his article is a characteristically elegant vignette of this debate in which, as we all know, arms control prevailed and remained as the essentially unchallenged paradigm for the next 50 years. One of the key pivots in this debate was whether armaments caused or resulted from competition and tension between states. If armaments caused tension then disarmament was the answer, but if they resulted from tension then disarmament would have to wait until the underlying causes of that tension could be addressed with arms control as far as possible attenuating the risks in the interim.

Freedman contends that, with the revival of interest in nuclear disarmament, it is not clear that we can simply continue to extrapolate from the guidelines that emerged from a debate conducted nearly 60 years ago. His instinct is that the context, that is, the character of the international system, has changed so much that any revival of political and policy interest in nuclear disarmament must be accompanied by a new theory of disarmament. Freedman does not venture a new theory and neither does this comment aspire to an analytical review, 68 years after the advent of nuclear weapons, of the choice between arms control and disarmament.

This comment takes as its starting point that, as a practical matter, we are still firmly committed to the U.S. and Russia viewing their nuclear arsenals through arms control lenses, and to the expectation that this process can somehow and at some point be recast to deliver universal nuclear disarmament. The contention here is that



July 1, 1946, Operation Crossroads: "Tests to determine the effects of atomic bombs on naval targets were conducted at Bikini Atoll in the Pacific. In the first test, the bomb was dropped from a B-29 at 30,000 feet on ships anchored in the lagoon. Five sank outright and nine others were heavily damaged." Source:http://www.navy.mil/navydata/nav_legacy.asp?id=21

this approach is demonstrably losing momentum and that we remain well short of the point at which an attempt to transition to a disarmament track has any prospect whatever of success. We need to consider a new political strategy for nuclear disarmament.

Why Nuclear Disarmament Still Matters

The advent of nuclear weapons was a major discontinuity in the affairs of humankind. These weapons were so disproportionately destructive that they did not fit our frames of reference in respect of the costs of war, the losses we were prepared to endure and to inflict in defence of the things we valued. Nuclear weapons were, in effect, powerful beyond purpose.

As we know, we have endeavoured to expand our frames of reference to accommodate them: to build, deploy and manipulate nuclear arsenals in a rational manner to achieve traditional objectives like advantage, influence, restraint and defence. This endeavour to normalise nuclear weapons involved risks that most of us still seem to be only dimly aware of. We are learning retrospectively that these risks may have been more frequent and more acute than the still patchy public record seems to suggest. There was always the irreducible risk that a major nuclear exchange could have been triggered by the accidental or unauthorised use of a nuclear weapon, so-called catalytic nuclear war. Even setting this aside, we

are now beginning to understand that even in times commonly assessed as characterised by stable, robust deterrence there were acute anxieties fuelled by gross misperceptions of intent. Military activities and political commentary that one side regarded as routine and unremarkable were in fact fuelling assessments of imminent war on the other side. At other times, we worked our way successfully through political crises involving states with nuclear weapons but later discovered gaps in the intelligence available at the time that could have spelt disaster. Additionally, the risks stemming from the existence of nuclear weapons - and, therefore, inescapably, their possible acquisition by non-state actors - have been further sharpened by the characteristics of contemporary international terrorism.

To our collective credit, we have not succeeded in expanding our frames of reference and 'normalising' these weapons. We have sustained the non-use of nuclear weapons for 68 years, long enough for people to now speak of a 'taboo' that should be valued in and of itself, and be protected at all costs. This has included periodic proposals that warhead designs were within reach technologically that enhanced or attenuated weapon effects so as to reduce inhibitions about using them. Examples include the 'neutron bomb' and more recent suggestions that radioactive fallout could be minimised. In every case, thus far, the political assessment has been that it is wiser to focus on staying away from the nuclear threshold than to consider marginally safer ways

of crossing it.

It has to be acknowledged, however, that this fortunate outcome cannot be accounted for entirely by caution, intelligence and diligence or any other combination of human virtues. We have also simply been lucky. And as an intelligent species we should conclude that, where we have a choice, chance should play no part in whether our species continues to flourish. If mistakes can be made we will surely make them eventually. Nothing can change that. But we can get back to a point where we can afford to make all the mistakes that we could, and eventually will, make. Retaining nuclear arsenals means consciously accepting a risk that demands the impossible of us, namely, the perpetual infallibility of restraint and deterrence.

We cannot take solace in the fact that the obscenely large nuclear arsenals of the Cold War, the instantly available capability to actually put at risk the capacity of planet earth to sustain life, is an obsolete worry. It may be hard to imagine the geopolitical transformations that could trigger another round of intense nuclear competition amongst wealthy major powers. But it is not something that can be dismissed as fanciful. Indeed, we may be witnessing the genesis of one or more such competitions. Even if it is something that many people would find hard to take very seriously, there is the further reality that all nuclear arsenals can inflict destruction of a singularly absolute and irreversible character. How much (or how little) of this is worth having, especially when we must accept that having some generates continuous pressures for more, both more weapons in states that already them and more states seeking to join the nuclear club?

Why Nuclear Disarmament is So Difficult

Biological and chemical means of warfare have been deemed so morally abhorrent and so abusive of the principles of discrimination and proportionality that underpin the contemporary laws of war that we have been prepared to put in place comprehensive legal prohibitions on their manufacture, possession and use. Nuclear weapons out-class their biological and chemical cousins in all these respects but a comparable prohibition is a very remote prospect. Why?

The first order of business is to acknowledge the perfect correlation between the presence of

nuclear weapons and the absence of war between the major nuclear weapon states. The two world wars showed graphically that the fearsome cost of full-scale, industrial age conventional war was still an imperfect deterrent, if only because the costs could not be anticipated. Nuclear weapons, it would appear, tipped the scales and continuously reinforced the judgement that no prospective gain from adventurism or aggression was worth the risk of censure or retaliation with nuclear weapons. No one claimed that nuclear weapons had transformed the international system, let alone human nature, for the better. There was just something about the Bomb – the certainty of brutishly excessive destructive power with the scars of each detonation enduring for centuries – that made being risk-averse enduringly fashionable. And, of course, this caution extended downwards to actions that might escalate up to and beyond the (inescapably indeterminate) nuclear threshold. America's nuclear posture, in particular, endeavoured to drive the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons down that escalatory chain to discourage challenges to its vital interests around the world, particularly where its opponents possessed a local or regional superiority in conventional military power.

Hard data on the disciplinary effects of nuclear weapons – consisting largely, as it does, of transformative geopolitical ambitions that were stillborn - is essentially absent. But the anecdotal evidence is compelling. Generations of members of security communities in an expanding group of countries have, in a manner of speaking, been indoctrinated to the view that nuclear weapons deliver singular and significant security benefits. They believe, in essence, that the security benefits of nuclear weapons have been far greater than the handful of events on the public record would suggest, that any number of geopolitical aspirations that could have led to major power war have been suppressed by the presence of nuclear weapons and that nuclear weapons are the reason for the small number of events on the public record. Adherents to these views also consider that there are no compelling reasons to believe that we can in the future dispense with the discipline that nuclear weapons have imposed. Many in these communities will therefore view actual or prospective nuclear disarmament as a significant deterioration in their national security environment that should be resisted if possible and compensated for urgently if that resistance looks like failing. In other words, on top of everything else, the quest for nuclear disarmament must anticipate strong and widespread turbulence on the national security front as the process approaches its climax.



President Barack Obama, left, smiles after signing the New START treaty with Russian president Dmitry Medvedev at the Prague Castle in Prague, April 8, 2010. Source: <http://moscow.usembassy.gov/start.html>

Dialogue of the Deaf

This state of affairs set the stage for an enduring, and deepening, miscommunication between supporters and opponents of nuclear weapons. As the nuclear age matured and non-use hardened into the 'taboo' on any use of nuclear weapons, opponents drifted toward the contention that nuclear weapons, if not absolutely useless, were clearly irrelevant to the security challenges of the day. Supporters, on the other hand, insisted that the reassuring tranquillity at the big end of town had been forged and was sustained by nuclear weapons. The scope for logical argument and factual evidence to put these schools on the same wavelength is limited.

The inability of these schools to engage in meaningful debate was softened by a decisive change in U.S. sentiments about nuclear weapons to the effect that they had not fully realised just how compellingly they deterred. The microscopic attention to quantitative and qualitative aspects of the nuclear balance that characterised much of the Cold War period was deemed to have been substantially misplaced. All the functions that nuclear weapons performed, or contributed to performing, could be accomplished with far fewer weapons and with greater tolerance of imbalances with 'opposing' nuclear forces. Former US Secretary of State George Shultz dates this change in sentiments from around the late 1980s, that is, before the end of the Cold War. One result of this revelation, of course, was that both supporters and disarmers could come together on the desirability (or, least, tolerability) of smaller nuclear forces.

This window of shared interest seems all but closed. The New START agreement of 2010 lowered the ceiling for strategic nuclear warheads modestly from the 1700-2200 range prescribed in the 2002 Moscow Treaty to 1550. New START also – and this was its principal purpose – rescued a large and invaluable body of understandings and implementation procedures accumulated over the SALT/START era which, in legal terms, were attached to the 1991 START 1 agreement that expired in 2009. Despite these limited and practical objectives, the ratification debate in the U.S. was fierce and divisive and the eventual margin of support narrower than for any of the earlier agreements. The Obama administration has for some years signalled a preparedness to consider reducing the strategic nuclear warhead ceiling to 1000 but Congress and elements in the wider strategic community have made clear that it is now time to have a fundamental debate about the role of nuclear weapons in America's security posture. One marker that has been clearly put down is that the U.S. should not consider further cuts in strategic nuclear warheads until Russia agrees to expand the negotiations to include sub-strategic nuclear forces. Russia has become equally adamant that it needs the confidence of legally-binding constraints on U.S. ballistic missile defences to consider further reductions in its strategic nuclear arsenal. Russia has also signalled that it cannot indefinitely be bound by the Cold War INF treaty (1987) while other states on its periphery are free to develop and deploy the delivery systems banned by this treaty.

The Contemporary Case for Nuclear Disarmament

The thesis developed by the four statesmen and embraced by President Obama rested on U.S. national interests and not to any significant extent on the dubious legality of nuclear weapons or the moral dilemmas they posed. It is well documented that, as the post-Cold War era unfolded, the spectrum of challenges and threats perceived by the U.S. security community shifted to marginalise those contingencies for which nuclear weapons seemed to be an indispensable part of the answer. As time passed without compelling signs that these nuclear contingencies would regain their prominence, the Four Statesmen elected in 2008 to capture this transformation and contend that, if the other nuclear powers could be persuaded to come along, the abolition of nuclear weapons would be of net benefit to the interests of the United States. This was because they saw nuclear abolition as central to

the management of the most compelling security challenges now confronting the U.S., namely, the emergence of new nuclear weapon states and the threat this posed to the nuclear taboo, and the acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-state actors. For the Four Statesmen, the primary concern was clearly proliferation to new states. The Obama Administration, presumably judging that acquisition by non-state actors is both more urgent and more susceptible to practical policy measures, elected to give prominence to this dimension of the issue through initiating a series of nuclear security summits to encourage states to locate all sensitive nuclear materials under their jurisdiction and ensure that they are protected.



President Barack Obama meets with, from left: former Defense Secretary William Perry; former Georgia Sen. Sam Nunn; former Secretary of State George P. Shultz; and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in the Oval Office Tuesday, May 19, 2009 [“to discuss their common vision of a world free of nuclear weapons”]. Source: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2009/05/19/secretaries>

Some have also contended that global governance – that complex of norms and processes that discipline state behaviour, plus the gathering propensity to enforce compliance through concepts like the Responsibility to Protect – has rendered brutish nuclear threats excessive and unnecessary.

While these are legitimate and, in many ways, compelling contentions, there is little evidence that they are gathering the kind of driving momentum needed to overturn the caution of those who, while not necessarily enamoured of nuclear weapons, believe that their disciplinary effects on state behaviour are invaluable and that it would be folly in any way to gamble that

we can now dispense with them. As noted, this stand-off is not necessarily utterly incompatible with the quest to strive, initially, to reduce reliance on nuclear forces and to reflect this demotion in their importance both quantitatively (minimal numbers) and qualitatively (deployment postures that are relatively passive and clearly signal their status as weapons of last resort). At the same time, it is clear that in all states that believe, or sense, that nuclear weapons are important to their security, there will be a substantial body of opinion that proceeds from the view that all of this is quite unworldly and certainly (or at least very probably) misguided.

As always, these conflicting positions on nuclear weapons are most clearly visible in the U.S., but it can be safely taken for granted that the same cleavage exists in the other states. Proponents of nuclear disarmament are understandably drawn to the position that the only legitimate function performed by nuclear weapons is deterring their use by other nuclear-armed states. This is attractive because it confines the challenge of nuclear disarmament to building reliable means of verification to: (i) confirm the destruction of all residual nuclear weapons on a given day; and (ii) provide confidence of sufficiently timely detection of any endeavour to re-constitute a nuclear weapons capability to allow effective countervailing steps to be taken. Much more troubling, of course, is that, even for the major states, nuclear weapons are a back-stop for threats from conventional forces that prove (or could prove) impossible to overcome by conventional means.

Commitments of extended deterrence function both as a substitute for national nuclear weapon capabilities on the part of recipient states and as means to obviate the need for the supplier (in particular) of extended deterrence assurances to have conventional forces in all locations at all times that constitute a compelling deterrent (because they could defeat all threats or at least signal that the interests at stake are vital and will be defended by all means available). For some of the smaller (and, mostly, newer) nuclear weapon states, such as Israel, Pakistan, the DPRK and, potentially, Iran, countering superior conventional capacities constitutes the core rationale for the acquisition of nuclear weapons. And since sustainable conventional defences correlate so strongly with geography, population and economic capacity, this reality abruptly presents the eradication of nuclear weapons as a daunting challenge of geopolitical transformation.

A New Political Strategy for Nuclear Disarmament

The dominant paradigm for the achievement of nuclear disarmament has been in place for some time but has been most memorably characterised by former U.S. Senator, Sam Nunn. Nunn suggested that nuclear disarmament could be likened to the summit of a mountain shrouded in cloud. No one at the base of the mountain knew in detail how to get to the top so the challenge transformed into one of building successive base camps higher up the mountain in the expectation that, at some point, a clear path to the summit would be revealed. This paradigm essentially acknowledges that the results of even a casual enquiry into what has to be made to happen to make nuclear disarmament imaginable can be so daunting that it produces political and policy paralysis. The Nunn paradigm skirts around this dilemma by positing that there is a range of objectives that are in themselves important, sensible and achievable regardless of whether one believes in the feasibility or merit of aspiring to complete nuclear disarmament. The most authoritative and comprehensive articulation of this agenda of successive base camps can be found in the 2009 report of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament co-chaired by Australia's Gareth Evans and Japan's Yoriko Kawaguchi.

Nuclear weapons are clearly embedded in the fabric of security mindsets in deep and complex and interdependent ways. It is neither the counsel of despair nor a profound insight to point out that learning to conduct our affairs without fantastically potent weapons that exist and cannot be uninvented will involve far-reaching change, only some of which is foreseeable at the present time.

The U.S. and Russia own 95% of the nuclear weapons in existence but it does not follow that a comparably dominant part of the solution also rests in their hands. The manner in which nuclear capabilities are embedded in security mindsets around the world is the product of history since 1945, and that history has not been written exclusively in Washington and Moscow. A nuclear disarmament campaign that relies essentially on the U.S. and Russia continuing to dismantle their nuclear weapons for an indefinite period will not generate the intellectual and political momentum needed to engineer the deep changes in security thinking that truly marginalising nuclear weapons and bringing nuclear disarmament into the realm of the imaginable will require.

What has been conspicuously absent is any real basis for confidence that the other established nuclear weapon states, let alone the more recent members of the nuclear club, in any way or to any degree share the aspiration of nuclear disarmament or consider themselves to be under any sort of pressure to demonstrate what their attitude toward it might be. To the contrary, the dominant impression one has is that playing the 'great game', manoeuvring to make the most of the geopolitical opportunities and challenges in the period immediately ahead is an all-consuming preoccupation. The trouble, of course, is that this behaviour demonstrably strengthens the opposing instinct that, in the real world, a powerful nuclear deterrent is indispensable. The U.S. and Russia must lead, but they also need, both as reassurance and incentive, to see the other states with nuclear weapons band-wagging behind them.

In my view, however, all the states directly concerned need to become involved in substantive and accountable ways as soon as possible, not just 'perhaps' and then only as and when the U.S. and Russia cease to be nuclear superpowers. What should be and, I believe, must be (or become) distinctive about this wider deliberative process is that states participate in the knowledge that they will be engaged in doing as much as they reasonably can to alleviate the political and strategic dilemmas that other participants encounter as they contemplate increasingly decisive diminution of their nuclear capabilities.

It has to be acknowledged that this is a difficult and politically risky recommendation. If it fails, or if success is significantly incomplete, it could rob the nuclear disarmament enterprise of the limited momentum it currently has. However, I also believe that whatever momentum the quest for nuclear disarmament may acquire will be only too readily dissipated by the absence of a shared determination:

- (i) to convince the international community that the elimination of nuclear weapons is a genuine objective;
- (ii) to ensure that this objective is not put at risk by the emergence of new states with nuclear weapons; and
- (iii) to bring serious political will to bear to address other foreseeable challenges like ballistic missile defences and new

mechanisms or processes to sustain stability among former (but inescapably) latent nuclear weapon states.

As a practical matter, leadership of this process will fall to the United States and Russia. They have to convince the international community and, specifically, the other states with nuclear weapons, that their bilateral endeavour to diminish their nuclear arsenals has essentially run its course and that further significant progress will require the substantive involvement of at least most of the other nuclear armed states. The precise modalities of this campaign are a matter that can safely be left to the huge pools of talent available in Washington and Moscow. Of greater interest to us here are some of the themes that Washington and Moscow might focus on to sell the proposition that they cannot proceed further by themselves, that the counter-currents being generated by the non-participants are becoming too strong, and that their domestic political circumstances make a visible bandwagon indispensable.

Among the more obvious of these themes is that, in some states, when the objective of nuclear diminution and disarmament clashes with other policy interests, the former rarely prevails. If one reflects on the events of any given year in the post-Cold War era, one is struck by the fact that even the core nuclear weapon states rather frequently adopt policy settings on particular foreign and security policy issues that indirectly, and often directly, stimulate appetites to acquire or retain nuclear forces. In the policy development process, it would seem, the objectives of nuclear diminution and of non-proliferation are often marginalised by the considerations that fuel traditional geopolitical manoeuvring. One can think here of: (i) the inability over prolonged periods of time to forge a reliable consensus to confront behaviour blatantly defiant of the norm of nuclear non-proliferation; or (ii) of the circumstances associated with political circles and public opinion in Japan and South Korea adopting positions more accommodating of a national nuclear weapon capability and pressing the U.S. to establish high-level alliance forums to assess the effectiveness of extended deterrence assurances. One objective of these wider consultations would be minimising such reverberations through building the commitment to make nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament habitual and prominent considerations in the policy formulation process.

The question of stocks of fissile material might

be another issue. States that have been engaged in the production of fissile material for decades, and typically in significant secrecy, are going to have a difficult time reassuring others about the integrity of any declaration on stockpiles. This will become a decisively important question and the modalities of building confidence and trust needs to become a topic of conversation as soon as possible. Indeed, fissile material stocks might be the best available vehicle for states to signal substantive and accountable involvement ahead of formal limits on or reductions in their operational nuclear forces. This trust-building perspective on stocks of fissile material is distinct from that taken in the context of the interminable manoeuvring to avoid substantive negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty. The FMCT process has stalled, arguably because states are being asked to cap the absolute and relative dimensions of their nuclear capabilities ahead of any substantive characterisation of what a post-nuclear world would have to offer.

Yet another would be Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD). Not long after launching his Strategic Defence Initiative in 1983, Ronald Reagan publicly acknowledged that unilateral possession of both the sword and the shield could be destabilising, and tasked Paul Nitze to figure a way out. Since that time, substantive discussions on how BMD plays into the ambition to abolish nuclear weapons have become steadily rarer. The allegation that the U.S. is seeking to deprive others of a viable nuclear deterrent has become a convenient default complaint that absolves others of any responsibility to expose their thinking on meaningful trade-offs in capability, both actual and aspirational, that could begin to soften the tensions between offensive and defensive deterrence.

Clearly, it is not the contention here that concerns about U.S. BMD capabilities are without foundation. The point is simply that the objective of nuclear disarmament requires states at some point to examine BMD collectively as a phenomenon that can certainly block progress toward the objective but which might, if appropriately shaped and positioned in time, also facilitate such progress.

A final example of the sort of dialogue that needs to be engaged in to give nuclear disarmament the quality of a political reality, rather than the 'other-world' quality it still clearly has now, is one that seeks to anticipate the pressures that could arise to press new conventional military capabilities into the spaces supposedly vacated by nuclear

weapons and to consider how such pressures could be dampened.

In an important sense, the broad approach being recommended here is distinctive only from the standpoint of timing. The objective of nuclear disarmament must involve a core group of states at some point addressing the critical issues as challenges on the path toward a common goal. Particularly when existential matters are seen to be at stake, notions that states can be coerced or out-witted are entirely misplaced. The question is when do we consciously test the substantive interest in nuclear disarmament? My sense is that the current approach has run

its course and that the moment has arrived to change gears, adopt a new political strategy and see where it takes us. The core group of states that might take shape as a result will possess a formidable collective strategic weight. Provided the group can establish political credibility on nuclear disarmament through what transpires within it, it would have the capacity to transform the otherwise bleak outlook on further nuclear proliferation. In addition, it would have the broad capacities needed to consider the sort of 'heavy geopolitical engineering' that may be required to help unravel the nuclear tangles that have emerged in the Middle East, South Asia and Northeast Asia.

¹Lawrence Freedman, "A New Theory for Nuclear Disarmament," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, July/August 2009, pp. 14-30.

²The U.S. and China are clearly having an increasingly difficult time containing a drift toward a hardening strategic relationship, one that revives the contingencies that were increasingly marginalised over the first 20 years of post-Cold War era. A new US statement on nuclear weapons employment strategy infers strongly that US nuclear forces help maintain and improve "strategic stability" in relation to China. See *FACT SHEET: Nuclear Weapons Employment Strategy of the United States* (White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 19 June 2013), which addresses a document available on the Pentagon's website called Report on Nuclear Weapons Employment Strategy of the United States Specified in Section 491 of 10 U.S.C. For an historical account of how China played in US nuclear policy and doctrine see Ron Huisken, "Nuclear weapons in US-China Relations – A Resilient Connection", *Global Change, Peace & Security*, October 2009, pp. 341-355.

Author's Biography

Ron Huisken joined the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre (SDSC), Australian National University, as a Senior Fellow in 2001, after nearly 20 years in government with the departments of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Prime Minister and Cabinet. His research interests are focused on U.S. security policies, the security order in East Asia, non-proliferation and arms control, and China's foreign and security policies. Prior to his career in government, he worked at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (1968-1976), the University of Malaya (1970-1972), the UN Department of Disarmament Affairs (1979-1981), and was a Visiting Fellow with the SDSC (1976-1977). In 1995-1996, he was a member of the secretariat for the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. He retired in 2012 and is now an Adjunct Associate Professor with SDSC.

Ron Huisken holds a Bachelor of Economics (First Class Hons) from the University of Western Australia, a Master of Social Science (Economics) from the Royal Stockholm University, and a PhD (International Relations) from the Australian National University. His publications include *Arms Uncontrolled* (with Frank Barnaby, 1975); *The Origin of the Strategic Cruise Missile* (1981); *The Road to War on Iraq* (2003); *Rising China: Power and Reassurance* (edited, 2009); and *Introducing China: The world's Oldest Major Power Charts Its Next Comeback* (2010).

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