

# VICTORIA SHANGHAI ACADEMY MODEL UNITED NATIONS



*15-16th April 2023*

## **Council Name**

Chair Report

Topic 1: Discussing the future of the NATO Nuclear  
Deterrent

Chairs: Yoyo Ngai and Maximus Han



## Message from the Chairs

Hi delegates!

Welcome to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization! This committee will be chaired by Yoyo Ngai, a Y10 student from St. Paul's Convent School, and Maximus Han, a Y11 student from Victoria Shanghai Academy. I'm Maximus Han (you can call me Max), and I'll be your deputy chair for the upcoming VSAMUN XII conference. I'm a junior (Y11) from VSA, so if you have any questions about where all the facilities are, I'm your man. Long story short, we are honored to be your chairs for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) at VSAMUN 2023!

NATO, as a consensus decision-making committee embodies a type of diplomacy that delegates will not find in other committees. One cannot simply look for a bloc of friendly countries or work towards a majority. NATO is a test of compromise, wide-ranging solution-building, inclusion, and discussion. This combined with a comprehensive knowledge of the subject of discussion turns NATO into a very challenging and fun committee. We hope that this conference can enhance your view on the important topics discussed and provide new insights that can not be achieved through research alone.

Please bear in mind that while the chair reports serve as good starting points and guidance for your research, they are by no means conclusive. All delegates are strongly encouraged and advised to conduct their research regarding their respective delegation's stances. To facilitate meaningful and comprehensive debate, delegates are advised to come prepared with background information and notes for the conference.

Furthermore, NATO is a committee where reaching a consensus is crucial to understand one another and passing resolutions, delegations should keep the spirit of diplomacy, trust-building, and unanimity at heart throughout the conference. With all of that being said, the chair hopes that all the delegates thoroughly enjoy themselves during the conference. Should any inquiries arise, please feel free to contact Yoyo and me via the email addresses/phone numbers below.

Many thanks,

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## Background Information

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was founded in 1949 to combat the issues presented by the Soviet Union and the multi-faceted threats it posed against Europe. One particular event that comes to mind is the attempted annexation of Czechoslovakia in 1948 via a communist party overthrowing the democratically elected party. This served to alert the USA of the USSR's influence and reach. With countries desperate to develop nuclear weapons of their own in the late 1940s, the destructive capabilities of nuclear weapons were observed from the fallout in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. 12 nations agreed (via the Non-Proliferation Treaty - the NPT) to halt the production of nuclear warheads for all member states except the UK and the US, who had already developed such weapons.

The United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, and China had already developed nuclear weapons before the release of the NPT, many nations decided to sign the treaty, as those 5 nations appeared to be strong supporters of the non-proliferation treaty. In addition, most of the other signatories lacked the resource to research, engineer, and manufacture such weapons, so these signatories had no problems in signing the treaty. However, Israel, India, and Pakistan decided to abstain from signing the treaty and instead created nuclear warheads of their own, in the situation that the NPT is rendered useless in a no-holds-barred conflict.

Under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, all members of NATO shall come together when fighting against a common enemy. In addition, the nuclear deterrent policies employed by NATO state that “the fundamental purpose of NATO's nuclear capability is to preserve peace, prevent coercion and deter aggression.”

However, some members of NATO have been pushing for nuclear disarmament altogether, such as the Netherlands and Sweden, whilst Turkey has also been urging for equality as well. However, if complete nuclear disarmament were to occur, it would contradict the purpose of NATO, ultimately rendering the nuclear deterrent policy invalid too. Finally, the development of a WMD from being invented should be something to consider when researching this topic further.

As such, the issues of nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament, and nuclear deterrents are of utmost importance and hence must be discussed in further detail in the NATO committee. Should we continue with the current status quo and just let countries hold on to their nuclear weapons and trust that they will be only used for defensive measures? Or should we begin to strive for complete disarmament of nuclear weapons and WMDs as a whole? These are some critical questions to think about when discussing into this topic. So member states can reach a consensus on a viable solution to such problems and a plan for the use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD) going forward.



## Key Terms

### North Atlantic Treaty

The Treaty that governs the workings of NATO, and was first signed by 12 countries including the US, UK, and France including 14 clauses or articles, detailing the importance of cooperation among its members and to guard their freedom

### Article 5

The article of the North Atlantic Treaty defines the reasoning behind the formation of the alliance by committing all member states to consider an armed attack against one member state to be an attack against all member states. In the case of an attack against one member, all members would dish out appropriate retaliation against the country which initiated the attack

### Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)

Weapons of Mass Destruction include Nuclear, Biological and Chemical weapons which have the potential to cause significant harm to a large number of people. These are only used in case of wars, and more than 180 members have signed treaties such as the BWC and CWC to prevent such attacks.

### Tactical Nuclear Weapons

Nuclear weapons are intended to deal damage to a certain enemy area without causing widespread damage to the region and decreasing the extent of civilian casualties or collateral damage such as long-spread radiation carrying through generations, to prevent situations such as what happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

### Nuclear Sharing

A concept part of NATO's policy on nuclear deterrence allows member countries without nuclear weapons of their own to participate in planning for the use of NATO's nuclear weapons.

### Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

It is an international treaty that aims to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and technology to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament

### Nuclear Deterrent

A nuclear weapon or weapons system regarded as deterring an enemy from attacking in the first place.



## Key Clashes

1. The Main Clash - Member states from NATO wish for complete disarmament, whereas other members wish to keep supporting the NPT treaty and hope to maintain the status quo, with plans to entertain only a few minor amendments to the current treaty at most. The amendments may include but are not limited to incorporating certain policies regarding nuclear sharing or another clause that serves to inhibit the further development of nuclear weapons and WMDs.
2. Secondary Clash - Another clash is the extent to which nuclear sharing should take place in the NATO committee. Some member states support nuclear sharing so they gain equal security among all members. On the other side of the spectrum, other members wish to reduce the total number of states with nuclear weapons, promote peace, and abolish the premise of nuclear sharing entirely
3. Article 5's Role in the clashes - Who will control the decision behind the usage of nuclear warheads by any NATO member state? Under Article 5, all member states are compliant to fight if one member state is attacked, which threatens the national security of all members. As such, it is in the best interest of all member states to vote on the usage of nuclear weapons in case of a war, rather than leave it in the hands of individual states to use their discretion on whether or not to use such weapons.
4. Logistics and Sovereignty - Where should the nuclear weapons be stored? All member states are compliant to fight an enemy if one member state is attacked, and as such nuclear warheads should be not placed only in certain countries sovereignty. As such, all nuclear warheads should be pooled together and kept in a neutral location, such as in the country where the NATO headquarters are present. However, this decision would cause problems, as conflict would occur on when to use the weapons, and given the disparity in the damage, it would be unfair to give each NATO member state an equal vote in the use of weapons, as certain members stand to lose more than others.



## Key Actors

Country	General Stance & Key Information
USA	<p>Total No. of Warheads: 5428            No. of Warheads Deployed: 1644            Delivery Methods: Nuclear triad (Land, Sea, and Air)            NPT Status: Ratifier (strong supporter, and has signed the treaty)</p> <p>General Stance: In the past, the US has emphasized the need for nuclear warheads in deterrence tactics, however; they still condemn continued production of new nuclear warheads.</p>
Russia	<p>Total No. of Warheads: 5977            No. of Warheads Deployed: 1588            Delivery Methods: Nuclear triad (Land, Sea, and Air)            NPT Status: They signed the NPT in 1968, but in a recent NPT Review Conference in August 2022, they expressed some conflicting opinions about the NPT.</p> <p>General Stance: Russia has officially said on record that it will only use nuclear force as a deterrent if other weapons of mass destruction are involved in a conflict. Despite clarifying this, western analysts have stated that Russia may use nuclear force before these aforementioned conditions have been fulfilled to nip a conflict in the bud and end the conflict on their terms.</p>
China	<p>Total No. of Warheads: 350            No. of Warheads Deployed: Unknown            Delivery Methods: Nuclear triad (Land, Sea, and Air)            NPT Status: Ratifier (strong supporter, and has signed the treaty)</p> <p>General Stance: China has pledged to only use nuclear weapons in self-defense scenarios and will not use nuclear weapons first regardless of circumstance.</p>
France	<p>Total No. of Warheads: 290            No. of Warheads Deployed: 280            Delivery Methods: Sea- and air-based            NPT Status: Has signed the NPT</p> <p>General Stance: France strongly believes in its nuclear prowess and understands that using nuclear weapons should be strictly in response to oncoming threats.</p>
UK	<p>Total No. of Warheads: 225            No. of Warheads Deployed: 120            Delivery Methods: Sea-based            NPT Status: Ratifier (strong supporter, and has signed the treaty)</p> <p>General Stance: The UK's nuclear deterrent system is operationally dependent, meaning it can only be authorized by the prime minister. The UK also lacks a "no-first-use policy."</p>



## Timeline

Date	Description
April 4, 1949	The Formation of NATO and first ratification of the North Atlantic Treaty by 12 Nations
July 1, 1968	First ratification of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by the United Kingdom, United States of America, and the USSR (Soviet Union). The signing of NPT is open to all other members.
March 5, 1970	The NPT is first enforced with 46 member states have ratified it
April 10, 1972	Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) first opened for signing, prohibiting the use of biological research to build WMDs (Weapons of Mass Destruction)
March 26, 1975	BWC is enforced with 107 signatories
January 14, 1993	Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) first opened for signing, prohibiting the use of chemical weapons, and abolishing all chemical weapons in countries in a certain timeframe
September 24, 1996	CTBT open for signing, prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons in testing
October 27, 1996	CTBT is enforced for all member nations who have signed it
April 27, 1997	CWC is enforced with 164 signatories
September 20, 2017	TPNW opened for signing, prohibiting a comprehensive set of activities having to do with nuclear weapons
January 22, 2021	TPNW is enforced on all member nations who have signed it



## Past Actions by the Council

### 1. 2012 Deterrence and Defense Posture Review

In essence, this was a holistic review of NATO's deterrence and defence capabilities that was conducted by NATO in 2012. It served to further confirm that NATO must have the full range of capabilities necessary to deter and defend against threats to ensure the safety of its populations and the security of its territory. Fundamentally, reestablishing the purpose of the NATO council and how striving for and achieving credible nuclear deterrence tactics is its single greatest responsibility.

### 2. NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept

The Strategic Concept is a key document for the Alliance. Some would say that it is second only to NATO's founding North Atlantic Treaty in importance. Additionally, it was able to provide a collective assessment of the current security environment and geopolitical landscape. Furthermore, it also drives NATO's strategic adaptation to current events and guides its future political and military development. Since the end of the Cold War, it has been updated approximately every 10 years, to take account of changes to the global security environment.

### 3. Classifying nuclear deterrence and defense as "credible" or not

In the analytical field of nuclear deterrence and defensive measures, there has been the emergence of the term "credibility" which describes the competence of a nation's ability to defend against and deter any and all nuclear threats from other countries. This is often judged based on each country's methods of deployment ranging from one deployment method to the nuclear triad. Being able to distinguish credible and not credible nuclear deterrence is especially important for this topic and serves to allow members of NATO to gauge the capabilities of each country and their nuclear weapon competencies.





## Possible Solutions

1. Increase nuclear weapons within NATO and adapt the nuclear sharing treaty to all NATO members

This allows all NATO members to have nuclear weapons on their soil, and makes all members satisfied, as they now all have equal weaponry. However, this could increase the likelihood of a blown-out nuclear war, as nations would have a stockpile of nuclear weapons ready in any conflict.

2. Work with other nations outside of NATO to adapt the TPNW towards total disarmament of nuclear weapons

This would help to remove all nuclear weapons and the threat that comes with these in case of a World War. NATO members such as the Netherlands, Germany, and Sweden will be very pleased with such an outcome. Peace negotiations have to be met with nations such as India, Israel, and Pakistan, as they have not signed onto the NPT.

3. Coming to a consensus about “no-first-use” policies and striving for complete nuclear disarmament

In an ideal world, all countries would come to a consensus about nuclear deterrence policies and slowly inch towards the final goal of complete disarmament. Don't forget the entire intention of the NPT and all of the other treaties restricting further development of WMDs (BWC, CWC) is to move towards complete disarmament.

4. Abolishment of Nuclear Sharing

This solution would cause France, Britain, and the UK to hold control over the usage of nuclear weapons by NATO and could be frowned upon by certain states who have not been very trusting of these nations recently. However, this would decrease the likelihood of a nuclear war, as fewer nations would be able to gain access to a nuclear stockpile in any conflict regarding a party within NATO.



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