


# Intergovernmental Efforts for Peace

## EFFORTS TO CONTROL AND ELIMINATE NUCLEAR WEAPONS


Many governments and political leaders have, since the dawn of the nuclear age, recognized the grave danger and responsibility that go with the possession of weapons of such unprecedented power. Negotiations and treaties attempt to avoid the worst consequences of such power.



Inside a US Titan II missile silo, later destroyed in compliance with the SALT II Treaty.

*“Weapons of mass destruction cannot be uninvited. But they can be outlawed, as biological and chemical weapons already have been, and their use made unthinkable. Compliance, verification and enforcement rules can, with the requisite will, be effectively applied. And with that will, even the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons is not beyond the world’s reach.”*

—Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, 2006



Workers examine shattered concrete and twisted wire at a destroyed Titan II missile silo in Arkansas, 1987.



US President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev sign the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Reduction Treaty, 1987.

1961

The first Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone treaty, the Antarctic Treaty, goes into force. So far, there are nine recognized zones that have been established or that are in the process of being established by multilateral treaties or by UN resolution.

1963

To prevent contamination from nuclear fallout, the Partial Test Ban Treaty restricts all nuclear testing to underground testing.

1967

The Treaty of Tlatelolco creates a Latin America nuclear-weapons-free zone.

1970

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty enters into force; 190 states have ratified the treaty to date.

1978

The United Nations General Assembly’s Special Session on Disarmament is held.

1987

The New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament, and Arms Control Act prohibits the stationing of nuclear weapons on the territory of New Zealand and the entry into New Zealand waters of nuclear-armed or propelled ships.

1988

The Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty, signed by the United States and the Soviet Union, eliminates an entire class of nuclear weapons, those with a range between 500 and 5,000 km.

1989

The Berlin Wall falls as East Germany opens its borders with West Germany, marking the end of the Cold War.

1995

178 states agree to extend the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty indefinitely.

1996

The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty is adopted at the United Nations General Assembly. To date, it has been signed by 177 states and ratified by 137 but is not yet legally binding.

2000

A review conference of the parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is held in New York. Steps to nuclear disarmament include the unequivocal promise of the total elimination of nuclear arsenals. This momentum unfortunately did not continue.

2005

The United Nations General Assembly adopts the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

2006

The Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, an independent commission funded by the Swedish government and chaired by Hans Blix, presents its report, “Weapons of Terror,” to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, offering sixty concrete proposals on how the world could be freed of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.