



# NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT

## LEARNING GOALS

- To learn about the world's efforts to promote nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, in particular through international treaties like the Non-Proliferation Treaty and Ban Treaty.
- To think critically about the merits and shortcomings of these treaties, and how the United States and the world should proceed to promote security and avoid the risk of nuclear war.
- To consider Hawaii's relationship and proximity to nuclear weapons and international nuclear issues.

## ASSIGNMENT

Estimated Time: ~28 min

- Watch: "[Should More Countries Have Nuclear Weapons?](#)" (7:23)
- Read: "[Non-Proliferation Treaty Module 1: Introduction](#)" (~5 min) Read everything in the drop-down tabs.
- Read: "[Non-Proliferation Treaty Module 4: Current Issues and Challenges](#)" (~5 min) Read all the tabs.
- Read: "[75 years after Hiroshima, here are 4 things to know about nuclear disarmament efforts](#)" (~5 min)
- Read: "[Kauai Plays a Growing Role Testing Technology For Tomorrow's Nuclear Weapons](#)" (~6 min)

## TERMINOLOGY

- **Nuclear Weapon States (NWS):** The five states which are formally recognized as possessing nuclear weapons by the United Nations Non-Proliferation Treaty. The five states are: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. However, Pakistan, India, Israel, and North Korea have nuclear weapons as well, and there are five additional countries (Turkey, Italy, Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands) which host U.S. nuclear weapons.
- **Non-Nuclear Weapon States:** States recognized as not possessing nuclear weapons as of January 1, 1967 under the UN Non-Proliferation Treaty. Under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, these states are required to refrain from building or obtaining nuclear weapons.
- **Nuclear Proliferation:** Refers to the spread of nuclear weapons among both the nuclear weapon states and the non-nuclear weapon states. Although the Non-Proliferation Treaty tries to prevent nuclear proliferation, countries have withdrawn from the Treaty or failed to comply with its provisions in recent years.
- **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime:** Refers to the collective efforts of the international community to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and to encourage the disarmament of nuclear weapons. The UN Non-Proliferation Treaty is the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime.
- **Disarmament:** Refers to actions taken by states to decrease the quantity and capabilities of their military weapons, particularly nuclear ones.
- **Deterrence Theory:** The belief that, by continuously building, testing, and stockpiling nuclear weapons, countries can prevent attacks from other countries through the threat of nuclear retaliation. Critics claim that this theory is irrelevant in the modern world and cannot be depended upon to keep countries safe.



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## TERMINOLOGY (continued)

- **The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons:** Also referred to as the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), it is a United Nations treaty which works to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and achieve nuclear disarmament. The treaty also calls for a conference every five years to produce a final declaration recommending state actions for implementing the Treaty's provisions.
- **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons:** A United Nations treaty created in 2017, also known as the "Ban Treaty." The Treaty outlaws countries from building, possessing, testing, and threatening the use of nuclear weapons. The Treaty needs to be ratified by 50 countries before it can come into force.
- **Hibakusha:** survivors of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

## QUIZ

Take this [online quiz](#) from Non-Proliferation Treaty Module 6 to test your knowledge of the NPT.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are the two types of nuclear weapons? Why are nuclear weapons so dangerous, more so than conventional bombs?
- Why were only certain countries able to develop nuclear weapons in the 20th century, and what impact did this have on the balance of power in the international community?
- What is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)? What provisions does it have to encourage international cooperation with regard to nuclear weapons and nuclear energy?
- In what ways has the NPT successfully promoted the disarmament of nuclear weapons since 1970? In what ways has it lacked accountability and concrete progress from the nuclear weapon states, particularly Russia and the United States, in recent years?
- What is the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons ("Ban Treaty"), and in what ways does it expand upon the previous provisions in the NPT?
- Should the United States sign the Ban Treaty? Why or why not?
- What are some of the political barriers in the international community preventing a further reduction of nuclear weapons?
- What is the theory of deterrence? Do you agree or disagree with the strategy? Why? If you disagree, what alternative strategies should the U.S. follow to ensure national security?
- How do the NPT and the Ban Treaty relate to and impact progress on the SDGs?
- What role is Hawaii playing in the development of the United States' nuclear arsenal? Do you think Kauai should be a site for the development and testing of nuclear weapons technology? Why or why not?
- In the Civil Beat article, the director of Sandia National Laboratories for the Department of Energy said that the HOT SHOT experiments on Kauai are important in developing nuclear technologies that can act as a deterrent to other nations and show the strength of the U.S.' national security. Do you agree?



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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Nuclear Arsenals - ICAN](#)  
A series of graphics from ICAN concisely explaining nine nuclear states' respective nuclear capabilities and stances on nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation.
- [Atomic Timeline](#)  
A resource from the Atomic Heritage Foundation with information on the development of nuclear weapons, ranging from the discovery of x-rays in 1895 to the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident in 2011.
- [Nuclear Threat Initiative \(NTI\) interactive modules](#)  
More interaction modules from the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), including topics such as the U.S. nuclear budget, nuclear testing, and chemical and biological weapons non-proliferation
- [Nuclear Weapons versus the Sustainable Development Goals](#)  
A short article by Move the Nuclear Weapons Money campaign explaining the relevance of ending the proliferation of nuclear weapons to the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- [Securing our Common Future](#),  
A report from the United Nations explaining the economic and humanitarian need to destroy nuclear weapons and end their proliferation, as well as the concrete tools and steps states can take toward disarmament. Read pages 6 through 12 (see Figure 1 on page 8 for specific information on the Sustainable Development Goals)
- [Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings - ICAN](#)  
An article by ICAN on the devastating long-term and short-term effects of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The article also explains the importance of the *hibakusha* in the campaign against nuclear weapons.
- [How A Nuclear Waste Site 2,800 Miles Away Became A Hawaii Priority](#)  
An article by the Honolulu Civil Beat explaining Hawaii's federal delegation's concerns of radiation from the Runit Dome on the Marshall Islands, built by the U.S. government after conducting nuclear tests in the Pacific in the 1940s and 1950s.

## IDEAS FOR ACTION

### Easier:

- Learn more about nuclear weapons, disarmament, non-proliferation, nuclear testing and its impact on people and the environment, nuclear bombing survivors (*hibakusha*), and other efforts to limit nuclear weapons. See additional resources for ideas.



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## IDEAS FOR ACTION (continued)

- Research more about the disproportionate impact of nuclear weapons on women and indigenous groups, as outlined in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Specifically, look up the history of U.S. nuclear testing on the Marshall Islands and the Bikini and Enewetak Atolls, as well as the impact of the nuclear tests on the environment and communities' health.
- Learn more about the devastating effects of nuclear weapons. Students from Nagasaki Higashi High School have created [booklets](#), which include short quizzes, discussion questions, and stories from survivors, on the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- Spread awareness: taking inspiration from the work of Nagasaki Higashi High School, create similar resources that you can share with your peers or even younger students to raise awareness about the bombings. Or, research and create a presentation on important equity issues related to nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands and other areas. See the additional resources section for relevant articles.
- The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is a coalition of non-governmental organizations promoting adherence to and implementation of the United Nations nuclear weapon ban treaty. Go to [ICAN's database](#) on countries' respective stances on nuclear disarmament and the Ban Treaty. After exploring the database, choose one specific country to research in-depth and give a presentation on its history and current stance with regard to nuclear weapons.

### Medium:

- Organize a viewing of *The Vow* from Hiroshima, a powerful film on the life of Setsuko Thurlow, a survivor of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and current activist for denuclearization. After watching the film with your classmates, discuss what you have learned, and what steps countries can take to continue to work toward a nuclear-free world.

### Difficult:

- Organize a debate or a role play (with groups representing various NWS and NNWS) on the following statements:
  - Deterrence is an effective strategy to avoid nuclear war.
  - The United States should sign the Ban Treaty.
  - The NPT has been successful.
  - Or, another statement of your choice.

## HAWAII CORE STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES (HCSSS) LINKS

- Content Standard [SS.WH.7.17.3](#)
- Content Standard [SS.WH.8.12.1](#)
- Content Standard [SS.US.9.19.1](#)
- Content Standard [SS.US.12.16.2](#)
- Content Standard [SS.PID.4.16.3](#)
- Content Standard [SS.7PI.3.14.1](#)
- Content Standard [SS.MHH.9.4.1](#)
- Action Projects link to [SS.PID.5.7.1](#)

This lesson was created by Megan Tagami.

Your feedback is important! Please share your thoughts with PAAC via this [short survey](#).

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