

**CSCAP Nonproliferation and Disarmament Study Group Meeting  
Putrajaya, Malaysia, April 17-18, 2016  
Conference Report**

The second meeting of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) Study Group on Nonproliferation and Disarmament (NPD) was held in Putrajaya on April 17-18, 2016. Approximately 40 officials and scholars from 16 countries along with 10 Pacific Forum CSIS Young Leaders met. All attended in their private capacities. The group examined recent developments in nonproliferation, disarmament, and the peaceful use of nuclear technology. Specific focus was given to recent developments on the Korean Peninsula and to a review of the ARF Work Plan on NPD. The group also discussed future expert group priorities and focused on ways to build capacity to strengthen the nonproliferation regime.

**Session 1: Recent Developments in Nonproliferation and Disarmament**

The first session focused on developments in promoting nonproliferation and disarmament. Manpreet Sethi (*Center for Air Power Studies*) opened the session with a presentation on the 2015 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference (RevCon) and on the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), also known as the Iranian deal. She also provided comments on Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)'s most recent nuclear-related activities and the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit. After highlighting the major challenges faced by member states at the RevCon – the failure to adopt a final consensus document, lack of progress on establishing a Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone (MEWMDFZ) - Sethi shifted her attention to the JCPOA, describing it as “a good deal” and the result of “patient and persistent multilateral diplomacy.” It has several positive attributes, including limits on enrichment (3.67 percent), centrifuges (5,060) and LEU stockpiles (300kg in 15 years), stronger verification and safeguards measures, and the phased removal of sanctions. The deal, however, still faces obstacles and it is still not fully accepted in Iran, the United States, and by other countries, notably Israel. Iran's March 2016 missile tests did not help. Meanwhile, the situation is worsening on the Korean Peninsula, with the DPRK conducting a nuclear test in January 2016 and launching a rocket in February 2016. Sethi concluded by analyzing the outcome of the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit (NNS). It was successful in raising the level of awareness and understanding on nuclear security and in persuading countries to make stronger high-level commitments to enhance protection of nuclear and radioactive materials. Yet more work is needed and the current state of relations between the United States, Russia, and China could jeopardize the objectives already achieved.

Hirofumi Tosaki (*Center for the Promotion of Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, the Japan Institute of International Affairs*) gave the second presentation, which introduced the “Hiroshima Report Publication Project”, a project commissioned by the Prefecture of Hiroshima intended to assess current perceptions on disarmament and non-proliferation in 36 countries. With 12 questions on disarmament, 6 questions on non-proliferation, and 3 questions on nuclear security, the project highlighted a greater rift among nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states, including countries under the nuclear umbrella, and the return to a nuclear arms race.

Victor Mizin's (*Institute for Strategic Assessments of MGIMO University*) presentation focused on Russia's perspective on arms control, the NPT, and the NSS. Mizin started by exploring the

current international state of affairs, from the “annexation” of Crimea by Russia in 2014 to President Putin’s decision not to take part in the 2016 NSS. He explained that despite rising tensions between Russia and the United States, there are still some “meekly inspiring signals” of hope for arms control. Russia is currently engaged in a “massive nuclear buildup” and it views nuclear deterrence (and the concept of “mutual assured destruction,” MAD) as still pivotal for its national security. In the current context, “track II” dialogues and trust-building measures (i.e., notifications, better communication channels, data exchanges, self-restraint from provocative activities), as well as steps to reduce nuclear ambiguity and confrontation, are the best ways to resolve the current deadlock.

During the discussion, participants expressed concern that the current arms control regime and related treaties might collapse. They all recognized, however, the importance of the JCPOA, considering it a milestone and a positive contribution to international peace and security. Some speakers also stressed how a number of countries, especially in Asia, are now increasingly looking to nuclear weapons as viable options for national defense. This raised the question of the effectiveness of “extended deterrence”, defined by some as the tacit 4th pillar of the NPT, and the potential consequences of its failure. In this context, some discussants questioned the willingness of the US to engage in conflicts involving countries under its nuclear umbrella. This has led some to question the viability of the umbrella. Other participants felt that the seemingly inconsistent policies of some states, especially regarding the Middle East WMDFZ, was one of the main causes of the failure of the NPT.

There was a lengthy discussion on the reasons behind rising pessimism about the grand bargain between nonproliferation and disarmament. Given the current international political climate of growing strategic mistrust and the significant increase in the number of new nuclear weapon systems, the introduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, the development of advanced anti-ballistic missile defense systems, and the deployment of new missile systems a fresh approach to satisfying the demands on both sides of the bargain is paramount.

It was generally agreed that the Nuclear Security Summit did increase awareness of the need for enhanced security of nuclear and radioactive materials. Although there was some disappointment with the absence of Russia from the fourth and final summit, there has been considerable progress made on multilateral cooperation on improved security through improved coordination among the key international organizations and institutions (International Atomic Energy Agency, United Nations, INTERPOL, Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction). Nevertheless, it remains a critical priority in the Asia-Pacific region for states to sign and ratify the 2005 Amendment to the Convention of the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials and to ensure adequate security for nuclear and radioactive materials.

## **Session 2: The Korean Peninsula and Denuclearization**

The second session looked at the Korean Peninsula. The first speaker, Stephanie Kleine-Ahlbrandt (*UN Panel of Experts established Pursuant to UNSCR 1874, UN Security Council*), focused on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK)’s ongoing nuclear and ballistic missile-related activities and the new sanctions regime imposed by United Nations Security

Council Resolution 2270 (UNSCR 2270). After providing an overview of recent activities undertaken by the DPRK and explaining how they infringe on several provisions of UNSCR 1540, Kleine-Ahlbrandt examined UNSCR 2270. With a broader scope, stronger financial provisions, and mandatory inspection mechanisms, UNSCR 2270 builds on the work of the UNSC aimed at countering DPRK's illicit nuclear programs. The new sanctions target DPRK's proliferation networks by imposing stronger requirements for the country's trading partners to control the flow of goods into the country (i.e., prohibits countries from transferring aviation fuel, small arms and light weapons, and luxury goods) and by introducing stronger limitations on the DPRK's exports (i.e., limits transfer of minerals, including gold, titanium and rare earth materials). The rationale behind stronger sanctions is to persuade the DPRK to refrain from missile and nuclear tests and to return to the negotiation table. The resolution does not intend to have adverse humanitarian consequences for the civilian population of the DPRK and the Security Council is prepared to modify or lift them if the DPRK complies with the demand for denuclearization, or strengthen these measures if the DPRK persists in its violation of UNSC resolutions.

Song Il Hyok (*DPRK Institute of Disarmament and Peace*) defined UNSCR 2270 as a tool serving the political interests of the United States. According to Song, the new sanctions are aimed at decapitating the DPRK's regime and preventing the development of the DPRK. He explained that the DPRK has made consistent efforts to ensure peace on the Peninsula, even though it is the object of hostile policies and nuclear threats by the United States. These threats have been apparent in the increasing number of US military exercises in South Korea. Song explained that the only reason behind the expansion of DPRK's nuclear capability is national security. Making several historic references to actions by the United States and South Korea that demonstrate an aim to change the DPRK's regime, Song claimed that "some countries" are demonizing the DPRK and misleading the international community about DPRK's intentions. This behavior is further jeopardizing the current state of affairs and exacerbating tensions on the Peninsula. Song argued that only with the adoption of a peace treaty can the current deadlock be removed. He also suggested the immediate lift of the sanctions imposed by UNSCR 2270 and concluded by inviting all participants to visit Pyongyang, to witness its "blooming economic growth."

During the discussion, some participants considered the presence of the DPRK delegation as a positive development in itself, given the current international situation. Several sought to explain the logic behind UN sanctions as a way to encourage peace and stability on the Peninsula and a resumption of negotiations. Other participants explained that the United States and South Korea would be willing to engage with DPRK and be open to sign a peace treaty so long as the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is on the agenda. In this regard, some participants noted that, in 2005, DPRK already agreed on this point and, therefore, encouraged the current DPRK leadership to follow through on their commitment.

Given the impasse between those who see denuclearization as the first step in returning to dialogue and the DPRK view that it needs a nuclear deterrent in the face of the current armistice system on the Korean Peninsula, there was little enthusiasm for returning to the Six-Party Talks. While several participants acknowledged the importance of the September 2005 Agreement, there was little prospect for implementing those provisions without some measure of trust

between the two sides. In this context, there was agreement that there was an urgent need for some form of dialogue to better understand what steps can be taken to reduce tensions.

### **Session 3 and 4: Promoting Nonproliferation, Disarmament, and Peaceful Use of Nuclear Technology in the Asia Pacific and CSCAP Handbook and ARF Action Plan on NPD**

In the interest of time, sessions 3 and 4 were combined into a single session. After providing an overview of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Action Plan on NPD and the Handbook on Preventing the Proliferation of WMDs in the Asia Pacific, Carl Baker (*Pacific Forum CSIS*) invited participants to provide comments and recommendations on how to sustain and enhance the progress achieved so far by the ARF. The ARF Work Plan has resulted in a number of successful projects including workshops on export licensing; 1540 implementation; chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear risk mitigation; safeguards; nuclear forensics; and missile defense. Baker's overview, however, revealed that the ARF should make efforts to control the use and spread of sensitive biological, chemical, and radiological materials. It also underlined the need to including nonproliferation capacity-building and concrete, practical activities in future ARF workshops, which so far have been focusing mainly on raising awareness.

Anupam Srivastava (*Center for International Trade and Security, University of Georgia*), focused on strategic trade controls (STC), explaining how CSCAP can promote their implementation in Asia. Starting from CSCAP Memo #14 of 2009, which recommends specific measures involving legislation, licensing procedures, enforcement, and industry outreach, Srivastava suggested the creation of a more detailed "matrix" where all CSCAP members could input information on their country's progress toward implementation of the four general areas of an STC system as outlined in CSCAP Memo #14. These results would then be used to draft a report aimed at assessing the establishment of common guidelines within ASEAN. The report could also include a section on additional steps to take and enforce UNSCR 1540. Once approved, the report could be used as a guide to further enhance national STC systems and improve regional coordination. A copy could be also submitted to the ARF. The group welcomed Srivastava's proposal.

Jor-Shan Choi (*US Berkeley Nuclear Research Center*) focused on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, with particular attention to safeguards, safety, and security. Choi defined *nuclear safeguards* as a way to prevent the spread (or proliferation) of nuclear weapons; *nuclear safety* as aiming to prevent or mitigate accidents, including their radiological consequences; and *nuclear security* as aiming to prevent, detect, and respond to theft, sabotage, unauthorized access, illegal transfer, or any other malicious activity involving nuclear and radiological materials and facilities. Choi explained that while safeguards and security are often considered as the two faces of the same coin, security and safety are inherently in contradiction: the former involves confidentiality and strong control of information, while the latter requires openness and transparency. After a detailed introduction, Choi provided an historic overview of the peaceful use of nuclear technology, from the US Atom-for-Peace program to current days. He analyzed the different accidents (i.e., Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, Fukushima) as well as the challenges facing the three S's today ("release of radioactivity" for safety; "weaponization" for security; and "inalienable right" for safeguards). Choi concluded by offering a summary of the key legal basis

for the three S's in the Asia-Pacific region, and by stressing the need for coordination of activity among the center of excellence (COE), especially in Northeast Asia. Choi argued that CSCAP could play a leading role in this effort.

Natasha Barnes (*Public Advisory Committee for Disarmament and Arms Control, New Zealand*) took a closer look at the 2015 NPT RevCon and the Humanitarian Consequences Initiative. While the initiative has increasingly gained support, with 159 states delivering statements in its favor at the 2015 NPT RevCon, and 127 state endorsing the Austrian Pledge in 2016, it has failed to persuade nuclear-weapons states (NWS) of the need for urgent action toward disarmament. Barnes explored ideas and recommendations to enhance disarmament visibility and to encourage more work on the matter, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. Training programs for officials and educational workshops, together with joint programs of work between ARF and CSCAP, were considered paramount to make progress and bridge the gap between non-proliferation and disarmament.

Participants agreed that CSCAP and the ARF should explore new ways of cooperation. One, in particular, is in the management of nuclear facilities and the institutionalization of nuclear governance. One area where better coordination is required is with the various Nuclear Security Centers of Excellence. While all the centers provide an important service in promoting nuclear, they could be much more efficiently utilized if there was better coordination among them in establishing curricula and specific expertise in areas such as physical protection, safeguards, and nuclear security culture. Another top priority is faster implementation of key treaties to prevent the spread of strategic goods and technologies to nonstate actors. In an effort to generate ideas for new ARF workshops (the last one was held in September 2015, and no other workshops have been scheduled since then), the participants discussed potential topic of interests. Ideas presented included: spent fuel management, including study on the feasibility and desirability of regional spent fuel storage or a regional fuel bank; handling and transportation of radioactive materials; regional response to a nuclear incident (including possible tabletop exercises); implementation of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials and its 2005 Amendment; nuclear security culture; strategic trade control commodity identification training; a World Customs Organization workshop on Authorized Economic Operators; SEANWFZ Protocol for NWS; and a pilot project between NWS and NNWS on verification mechanisms for disarmament.

Key findings from this CSCAP Study Group Meeting include:

There was a shared concern that the current international political climate could seriously jeopardize the accomplishments achieved in arms control. The significant increase in the number of new nuclear weapon systems, the introduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, the development of advanced anti-ballistic missile defense systems, and the deployment of new missile systems have created increased concern that the current arms control approach is failing, which could lead to the collapse of several arms control treaties.

Participants agreed on the necessity of additional work and efforts in strengthening nonproliferation and arms control regimes. Track II dialogues and trust-building measures (notifications, better communication channels, data exchanges, self-restraint from provocative

activities, etc.) as well as steps to reduce nuclear ambiguity and confrontation were seen as the best ways to resolve the current international political impasse.

The inability to agree on a final document during the 2015 Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference was a serious sign of a deeper rift between nuclear weapons states (NWS) and non-nuclear weapons states (NNWS). The dramatic deterioration of relations between Russia and the US/West together with the lack of progress and commitment toward establishing a Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone significantly contributed to the failure. Russia and the West need to move beyond political differences to build upon their mutual commitment to non-proliferation and disarmament.

There is a growing lack of confidence in the sustainability of the NPT. States under the US nuclear umbrella are concerned about the credibility of the deterrence regime, an increasing number of NNWS are becoming frustrated with the lack of progress on disarmament, and several nuclear-armed states are expanding arsenals.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Iran is a significant milestone, demonstrating the value of perseverance and multilateral diplomacy. However, there is still a great deal of skepticism about the domestic acceptance of the deal in the US, Iran, and elsewhere. Some participants considered the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as pivotal in the ultimate success or failure of the deal.

Despite the absence of the Russian Federation, the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit was considered successful in raising the level of awareness and understanding on nuclear security, persuading countries to make stronger high-level commitments to enhancing protection of nuclear and radioactive materials, and improving coordination among several key international agencies in combating smuggling. The ARF and CSCAP need to examine ways to build upon this cooperation at the regional level.

The recently passed UN Security Council Resolution 2270 will make it significantly more difficult for the DPRK to engage in normal trading activities and will impose new requirements on its trading partners to evaluate transactions, in an attempt to halt the further development of nuclear weapons and missile delivery systems. The objective is behavior change, not regime change.

There is a serious impasse over prioritizing Korean Peninsula denuclearization versus a peace treaty. While it remains important to understand the different views, the general lack of trust and the enormous differences in perspectives will require innovative thinking to move the process forward. In this context, there seems little prospect for the resumption of Six-Party Talks in the near future despite the desirability of such dialogue.

Current DPRK preconditions for denuclearization discussions, including a US-DPRK Peace Treaty and a withdrawal of US forces, could provide incentive for DPRK neighbors to move toward the acquisition of their own nuclear weapons in the absence of a US nuclear umbrella. More discussion is needed on the role of extended deterrence in promoting regional stability and its impact on proliferation and disarmament.

There remains an urgent need to move toward implementation of key nonproliferation and disarmament treaties and implementing mechanisms, including UNSCR 1540, in the Asia-Pacific region. All ARF member states should be encouraged to accede to the key implementing mechanisms for enhancing nuclear safety and security and preventing the spread of strategic goods and technologies to nonstate actors.

A review of the ARF Work Plan on Nonproliferation and Disarmament reveals that past efforts have focused almost exclusively on nuclear issues centered on nonproliferation and nuclear security. There is also a significant need to control the use and spread of sensitive biological, chemical, and radiological materials. ASEAN, given its role as the “driver” of the ARF, should consider expanding its Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ) into a WMD-free zone and/or a Reprocessing and Enrichment-Free Zone to further raise awareness of the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction and set high standards.

Most previous ARF workshops have focused on raising awareness. Future workshops should expand their agenda to include building capacity and provide practical activities such as exercises or pilot projects. The last ARF workshop was held in September 2015; no other workshops are scheduled. The following topics were discussed as potential ideas for future workshops: spent fuel management, including study on the feasibility and desirability of regional spent fuel storage or a regional fuel bank; handling and transportation of radioactive materials; regional response to a nuclear incident (including possible table top exercises); implementation of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials 2005 Amendment; nuclear security culture; strategic trade control commodity identification training; a world Customs Organization workshop on Authorized Economic Operators; SEANWFZ Protocol for NWS; and a pilot project between NWS and NNWS on verification mechanisms for disarmament.

Participants emphasized the necessity to continue working on institutionalizing nuclear governance in Asia, especially by improving coordination among the Nuclear Security Centers of Excellence, to avoid duplication of efforts and take advantage of economies of scale and comparative advantages of each center.

Regional coordination in the regulatory management of nuclear facilities is increasingly important in Asia. While ASEANTOM is an important first step in this area there remains a significant amount of work to improve this coordination process.

Disarmament education remains an important goal for helping to reconcile the compromise between disarmament and nonproliferation. It is important to understand their respective expectations and to find ways to bridge the gaps between these mutually dependent goals.

The humanitarian consequences initiative lost considerable momentum following its inability to influence the outcome of the 2015 NPT Review Conference. While many remain committed to its goals, the group has struggled with finding a common approach to persuading governments and the general public of the need for urgent action. The difficulty (perhaps even impossibility) of getting to zero should not deter efforts to move toward zero and a continued assessment of actions that undermine or support this goal.

CSCAP Memorandums covering nonproliferation, management of trade of strategic goods, UNSCR 1540, disarmament, and peaceful use of nuclear energy [<http://www.cscap.org/index.php?page=memoranda>] and the CSCAP Handbook on Preventing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Asia-Pacific [<http://www.cscap.org/uploads/docs/WMDSGReports/CSCAP%20WMD%20Handbook%20final%201%20Dec%202010.pdf>] provide specific recommendations and background information that could prove useful to ARF member states and others interested in nonproliferation and disarmament.

*For more information, please contact CSCAP WMD Study Group co-chair Ralph Cossa [Ralph@pacforum.org]. These findings reflect the view of the seminar chairmen; this is not a consensus document.*