GET THE FACTS

NPT Treaty

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

What is it?

1970 treaty that defines States Parties as nuclear weapon states (NWS) and non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS)

A Grand Bargain: NWS must not share or transfer weapons technology, NNWS must not acquire nuclear weapons and all States Parties to the Treaty must work toward general and complete disarmament and may access peaceful nuclear technology under IAEA safeguards

USA, Russia, China, France, UK are the only Treaty-recognized NWS

NWS must have built and tested a nuclear explosive device before 1 January 1967

Why is it important?

191 States Parties – India, Israel, North Korea, and Pakistan, all of which have nuclear weapons, are notable non-members

Cornerstone of the global nonproliferation regime: dozens of other treaties and initiatives are based on the NPT; IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements were negotiated to facilitate treaty compliance

What should I know?

North Korea is the only State Party to withdraw from the NPT, in 2003

The 1995, 2000, and 2010 RevCons resulted in agreement on forward-looking steps, but slow or nonexistent implementation continues to frustrate non-nuclear weapon states

Was originally in force for 25 years, but was extended indefinitely in 1995; Review Conferences (RevCons) are held every 5 years, and each RevCon is preceded by three annual Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) meetings

The 1995 indefinite extension included an agreement to negotiate the creation of a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone (WMDFZ) in the Middle East. Lack of progress toward that goal is a contentious issue.

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