

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

The NPT is the cornerstone of the international nuclear nonproliferation regime. It embodies the international community's efforts to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons, to cooperate in achieving a world without these weapons, and to facilitate states' pursuit of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

**Opened for signature:** 1 July 1968

**Entered into force:** 5 March 1970

**Duration:** Indefinite (extended in 1995)

**Depositaries:** Russia, UK, and US

**States Parties:** 191

## Overview

The NPT is a multilateral treaty aimed at limiting the spread of nuclear weapons including three elements: (1) non-proliferation, (2) disarmament, and (3) peaceful use of nuclear energy.

1. States without nuclear weapons will not acquire them
2. States with nuclear weapons will pursue disarmament
3. All states can access nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, under appropriate safeguards

These three elements constitute a "grand bargain" between the five nuclear weapon states and the non-nuclear weapon states with corresponding rights and responsibilities.

## Nuclear Weapon States (NWS)

- May not transfer nuclear weapons to NNWS (Art. I)
- May not assist or encourage any NNWS to acquire or manufacture nuclear weapons (Art. I)
- May not provide nuclear material for peaceful purposes or technology for its production to NNWS unless it is placed under safeguards (Art. III)
- Must pursue negotiations in good faith towards ending the nuclear arms race and achieving nuclear disarmament (Art. VI)

## Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS)

- Must not build, acquire, possess, or seek to obtain nuclear weapons (Art. II)
- May not receive transfers of nuclear weapons or any other nuclear explosive devices from anyone (Art. II)
- Maintain an "inalienable right" to research, produce, and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes (Art. IV)
- Must accept IAEA safeguards (audits, monitoring and inspections) on all of their peaceful nuclear activities and materials to verify that they are not diverted to nuclear weapons purposes (Art. III)
- Must pursue negotiations in good faith towards ending the nuclear arms race and achieving nuclear disarmament (Art. VI)

## Review Process

States parties convene every five years to review the implementation of the Treaty (Art. VIII) and, since 1995, to set a forward-looking agenda. At the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, States parties decided to "strengthen" the review process and to convene 10-day Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) meetings in each of the three years preceding a Review Conference (RevCon). If necessary, a fourth PrepCom may convene in the year of the Conference.



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