



INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR POLITICS: WHY DO COUNTRIES WANT TO HAVE NUCLEAR WEAPONS?

Any weapon that creates an explosion as a result of the release of energy by a chemical reaction of atomic nuclei through fission, fusion, or the mixing of both is generally called a nuclear weapon. The first use of nuclear weapons in international relations was realized by the United States of America (USA) against Japan on August 6th and 9th 1945.

There are eight sovereign states in the world that have successfully tested nuclear weapons. Five of these are recognized as “nuclear-armed states” in accordance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Historically, the order to acquire nuclear weapons is as follows: USA, Russia (successor to the Soviet Union), The United Kingdom (UK), France and China. After the USA, on August 29th 1949, the Soviet Union tested a twenty kiloton bomb named “Joe 1” in the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan. The UK detonated its first nuclear weapon made of plutonium in 1952 on the Monte Bello Islands (one hundred and twenty kilometers from the north-west of Australia). France, the fourth largest nuclear power, tested its nuclear weapon on February 13th 1960. China, receiving aid from Europe and especially the Soviet Union, tested the uranium nuclear weapon in 1964. Thus, these states that carry out successive nuclear weapons tests are counted by the NPT as states that have gained the status of “nuclear power”.

In order to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, NPT was opened for signature on July 1st 1968 and was signed by the majority of sovereign states. It entered into force on March 5th 1970. Every state that signed the treaty, by signing a “Security Audit Agreement” with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has to accept the implementation of security controls. NPT, in addition to acknowledging the benefits of nuclear technology used for peaceful purposes to humanity, has adopted the necessity of restricting its use for non-peaceful purposes, since the same technology can also be used in nuclear weapons production. For this purpose, in this new conservation regime, a distinction has been made between “states with nuclear weapons” (USA, Soviet Union, United Kingdom (UK), France and People’s Republic of China) and “states without nuclear weapons”. According to this regulation, countries that have developed a controlled chain nuclear reaction and detonated a nuclear mechanism before the emergence of this treaty will not give up their capabilities.

First of all, India has described this different arrangement in the structure of the treaty as discrimination and declared that it cannot be a party to the treaty. India carried out its first nuclear weapon test in 1974 after this announcement. Pakistan, which has security problems with India, has made the same announcement and conducted its first nuclear weapon test in 1998. Since these two countries are not a party to the NPT, they do not have the status of “state with nuclear weapons” and are recognized as “de facto state with nuclear weapons” or “state

progressing towards becoming a nuclear power”. Another country that is not a party to the NPT is Israel. It is claimed that Israel has about 200 nuclear weapon titles. Israel prefers to pursue a policy of silence, neither accepting nor denying these claims.

North Korea, which started developing nuclear weapons with the idea of protecting itself against Japan and the USA with its small state psychology, received significant support from the Soviet Union and China in these efforts. It is known that as of the beginning of 2004, North Korea, which is believed to have enough plutonium to develop at least two nuclear warheads, has ballistic missiles that can send these heads to a distance of 1,350 km. The North Korean administration announced its withdrawal from the NPT with a decision taken on January 10th 2003, and it has been excluded from the NPT since April 10th 2003 and it is the first country to take such a decision throughout the history of the Treaty. As of February 2004, it is not possible to determine exactly what stage North Korea is at in its nuclear weapons program, as IAEA inspectors have left the country and the monitoring devices installed at the facilities have been removed.

Another country that has been claimed to have nuclear weapons or to have enough material to produce nuclear weapons is Iran. It is worth remembering that Iran signed the NPT on July 1st 1968 on the day it opened, and ratified this treaty on February 2nd 1970. Iran then signed the Additional Protocol allowing for immediate inspections in 2003, ratified it in 2016, but suspended the protocol in 2021 because it was not to take steps to normalize banking relations and oil exports of Tehran administration. Although Iran’s nuclear program has been declared peaceful many times by the Tehran government, it is claimed that it was developed to produce nuclear weapons by the West. For this reason, sanctions against the Iranian government by the West have continued to be applied for many years.

So why have these countries been willing to have nuclear weapons since 1945? States’ desire to have nuclear weapons has been explored in the light of different theories, models and concepts. In theory, the desire of states to have nuclear weapons grouped as State Survival Theory, National Prestige Theory and Great Power Status. Scott D. Sagan and Joseph Cirincione presented their models such as security model, domestic policy model and norm model, and security, domestic policy, technology and economic models, respectively.

In 1945, when the USA used its first nuclear weapon against Japan, the Soviet Union’s acceleration of its nuclear study and making its first test in 1952 can be explained by the survival theory. It can also be defined by the security model of Sagan and Cirincione. According to the “security model” of Sagan, states want to acquire these weapons in order to increase their national security against external threats, especially nuclear threats. According to

Cirincione’s definition, states want to acquire nuclear weapons to ensure their own security. Later, the UK, France and China’s desire to have nuclear weapons may be related to their desire to gain prestige as a great power and to survive due to security concerns. The “prestige” model emphasizes the symbolic value of nuclear weapons. According to this, states that have these weapons see it as a precondition for being a great power. Having nuclear weapons has become a matter of prestige for other states that want to gain great power status after the nuclear weapons test of the USA and the Soviet Union, as the great powers of the bipolar system.

While India’s desire to develop nuclear weapons can be explained by the survival theory related to the security problems from China, Pakistan’s willingness for nuclear weapons is related to the security problem arising from India. At this point, we can explain the desire to develop and acquire nuclear weapons with the technology model. According to the technology model, if a state has the technology to produce nuclear weapons, most leaders will not be able to resist the temptation of achieving such a scientific achievement. Since these three countries mentioned above are constantly developing in technology, it is natural for them to want to announce their achievements in all kinds of technology.

While Israel’s desire for nuclear weapons is linked to security reasons from the Arab-Israeli War, it also fits the norm model. According to the “norm model”, states try to acquire these weapons because they see them as a symbol of a state’s modernity and identity. While gaining national prestige lies in the background of the North Korean example of wanting to own nuclear weapons, security concerns remain at the forefront. At the same time, it is possible to say that the domestic political model has an effect. According to the “domestic policy model” states use the power of nuclear weapons as a tool to protect local and bureaucratic interests. While the whole world, especially the West, does not want Iran to have nuclear weapons for security reasons, the possibility of Iran having nuclear weapons also stems from security concerns. Because Iran, which is in the center of the conflict zone as the Middle East due to its location, seeks to protect its own national interests and security like other states.

As can be seen, the nuclear arms race that started with the USA in 1945 continues today with the possibility of Iran having nuclear weapons. In the study, while the desire of states to have nuclear weapons was examined in terms of different theories and models, it was determined that their common concern was the security problem, and the reasons such as the desire to be a great power, gaining prestige, domestic politics and technology also affected it. In this context, it has emerged that while it may be the only reason that pushes states to have nuclear weapons, it can also contain several reasons depending on the location, structure and perceived threat of the country.

Politics, Foreign Affairs, and Security

- President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev attended the Second Science and Technology Summit titled "Science, Technology and Innovation: Opening New Horizons" organized by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) via videoconference. Speaking at the Summit, President Tokayev called for concerted actions to achieve a stable and prosperous future for the OIC's countries and beyond. He stressed Kazakhstan's intention to increase funding of science to 1%, and funding of education up to 7% of GDP by 2025 (Kazinform, 16.06.2021).
- The Presidential election in Uzbekistan was scheduled for October 24, 2021. Recently, the country's Central Election Commission announced that the organization of the election would cost \$28 million. The parties and candidates will correspondingly receive \$1.5 million and \$300 thousand for pre-election events. Around \$1.67 million will be directed for the training courses for employees of election commissions. Electoral districts and precincts will receive almost 80% of the funds (UzReport, 17.06.2021).
- Azerbaijan initiated consultations with Russia over issues related to the Caspian Sea. Deputy Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan Khalaf Khalafov had a meeting with Russia's Foreign Ministry Ambassador-at-large Mikhail Petrakov. The parties discussed the implementation of the convention on the Caspian Sea's legal status. They considered measures over the preparations for the next Caspian Sea summit at the level of heads of state. The politicians also focused on draft agreements between the Caspian littoral states (AzerNews, 18.06.2021).
- The Chairman of the Senate of the Kazakh Parliament Maulem Ashimbayev held a meeting with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Turkey to Kazakhstan Ufuk Ekici. Discussing the bilateral relations, the sides note a significant success in establishing cooperation in trade, economy, culture, and education. Chairman Ashimbayev said that Turkey has been an important strategic partner of Kazakhstan since the first days of its independence. The parties also pointed out the progressive development of integration of the Turkic-speaking states within the Turkic Council (Kazinform, 15.06.2021).
- The President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited the symbolic city of Shusha in Nagorno-Karabakh. During the meeting with his Azerbaijani counterpart Ilham Aliyev, the sides signed a "historic declaration" on allied relations. At the same time, the Turkish leader called for the normalization of relations with Armenia and proposed a six-sided format of cooperation in the South Caucasus - with the participation of Turkey, Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and Iran (Kommersant, 16.06.2021).
- Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan held a trilateral meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Antalya, Turkey. The meeting was held at the sidelines of the three-day Antalya Diplomacy Forum that brought together political leaders, diplomats, opinion makers and academics from different countries. The participants discussed a wide array of topics ranging from the Balkans, the future of the EU, trans-Atlantic relations, the refugee crisis and the threats of terrorism to regional security (Anadolu Agency, 20.06.2021).

Economy, Finance, and Energy

- The Minister of Finance of Kazakhstan Erlan Jamaubaev recently participated in a plenary session of the country's Senate. According to Jamaubaev, the 2020 global crisis led to a considerable reduction in business activities. Despite the pandemic-induced restrictions, Kazakhstan's economy increased by 2%. Sectoral growth varied from 3.9% to 11.2%. However, fixed capital investments experienced a reduction of 3.4%. The government, in turn, provided low-interest-rate financing to 40 thousand small and medium enterprises, which allowed keeping the unemployment rate at 4.9% (Kazinform, 17.06.2021).
- The World Bank will assist in the implementation of the fiscal reforms in Uzbekistan. Recently, it approved the Tax Administration Reform Project in Uzbekistan, which aims to deliver better services to local taxpayers. For these purposes, the World Bank will allocate a \$60 million low rate credit from the International Development Association. It is expected that the project will lead to a reduction in the informal sector of the economy (UzReport, 18.06.2021).
- Tajikistan's Minister of Finance Faiziddin Qahhorzoda had a meeting with the Country Director of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for Tajikistan Ms. Shanny Campbell, where they discussed the bank's draft operations business plan for Tajikistan for 2022-2024. Within the business plan, the ADB plans to allocate \$462 million in grants over the next three years. It is expected that the funds will be spent for the implementation of joint investment projects (Asia-Plus, 18.06.2021).
- The Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Turkmenistan organized a videoconference with the participation of representatives of governments and business circles of Turkmenistan and Ukraine. The parties discussed the current state and prospects of bilateral trade. They also considered cooperation in transport and logistics, which would have a significant positive effect on the competitiveness of products of both countries. The participants agreed to strengthen bilateral economic ties (Orient, 15.06.2021).
- According to the Deputy CEO of the Russian Gazprom Famil Sadygov, in 2021, gas holding plans to increase gas deliveries to China more than two times through the Power of Siberia gas pipeline. As a result, the company's supply will reach 8.5 billion cubic meters. In 2020, Gazprom delivered 4.1 billion cubic meters of gas. According to the company's forecasts, gas demand in China will grow by more than 50% over the decade comparing with 2020 (TASS, 16.06.2021).
- Head of the Administration of the China-Belarus Industrial Park Great Stone Aleksandr Yaroshenko conducted a press conference, where he announced that the Great Stone attracted more than \$670 million of investments. Yaroshenko mentioned that 70 resident companies from 13 countries actively invest their financial resources. Belarus, in turn, has invested about \$31 million in the park, while China provided \$50 million in technical aid. The official noted that the state budget's involvement was minimal (BelTA, 15.06.2021).

Society and Culture

- The III. International Congress of the Turkic World on Science and Engineering TURK-COISE-2021 was held in an online format by the Gumilyov Eurasian National University (Kazakhstan) and the Nigde Omer Halisdemir University (Turkey). The event was attended by the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Kazakhstan to Turkey Abzal Saparbekuly, Rectors, Vice-Rectors and Heads of the Departments of the two universities as well as scholars. Scientific works in information and telecommunication technologies applied sciences, energy, earth sciences and other fields were presented at the congress by scholars from Turkic states (Enu.kz, 14.06.2021).
- A park named after the great Kazakh poet and thinker Abai opened in the Turkish city of Alanya. The opening ceremony was organized by the Kazakh Embassy in Turkey, Kazakh Consulate in Alanya, Alanya Municipality and Association of Kazakhstanis in Alanya. The new park is expected to contribute to the strengthening of cultural and humanitarian ties between Kazakhstan and Turkey as people visiting the park would learn more about Kazakh poet Abai (Kazinform, 15.06.2021).
- Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan Sharaf Sheralizoda met with Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism of Turkey Nadir Alpaslan. The sides exchanged views on the development of cooperation between Tajikistan and the Republic of Turkey in the field of tourism, in particular, the creation of tourism infrastructure, organization of joint events, participation in exhibitions, etc. The day before, a regular meeting of the Tajik-Turkish joint commission on tourism was held, where the parties discussed the implementation of the Cooperation Program in the field of tourism between the two countries (Avesta.tj, 15.06.2021).
- A book titled "Cultural Heritage of Karabakh" has been presented by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation during an event organized in Shusha. The event was attended by the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, the First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva, the President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the First Lady Emine Erdogan. The book narrates the vandalism of cultural monuments on the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh during the Armenian occupation. The Heydar Aliyev Foundation is actively working on the restoration of religious and cultural monuments in the territories liberated from Armenian occupation (Azernews.az, 17.06.2021).
- The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan Ruslan Kazakbaev received the Head of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Program Office in Kyrgyzstan Andrey Seleznev. The sides discussed the further expansion of project and program cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and UNODC, especially in combating organized crime, drug trafficking, terrorism and border protection. The parties also agreed to continue working together to promote the opening of the unmanned aerial vehicles Operator Training Center in Kyrgyzstan (Kabar, 15.06.2021).
- Tashkent hosted the International Business Forum entitled "Expanding the Economic Empowerment of Women in Central Asia and Afghanistan on the Path of Sustainable Development". The Forum is aimed at empowering women in the fight against COVID-19, recognizing and reducing the burden of unpaid care and domestic work for women, promoting women's entrepreneurship and development of skills. Government officials from Central Asian states including Afghanistan, national and regional structures, international organizations, NGOs and representatives of the private sector attended the event (Turkmenistan.ru, 16.06.2021).