

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO IMAGINE A NUCLEAR STRIKE ON TEHRAN



ROBERT GARD

is an American political scientist, military expert, head of the US Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. He is a retired lieutenant general of the US Army, and is a former special assistant to the US Secretary of Defence for international security affairs.

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The notion of nuclear weapons as a deterrent factor is hardly outdated. Rather, this understanding should be tempered somewhat by the thesis that no weapons, including nuclear weapons, can deter terrorists if they obtain such weapons themselves. Fighting nuclear terrorism should be on top of the agenda, and that's exactly what Barack Obama declared in his recent Nuclear Posture Review. Today it is necessary to strengthen the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The new doctrine is a document approved by the American legislature. It was not created with any PR objective in mind, but merely with the objective of decreasing

budgetary expenses. The new nuclear doctrine has fixed a new attitude for the US towards the nuclear subject, and it is much different from the vision once held on the issue by the previous administration. The previous administration believed that nuclear weapons could be used for preventive strikes on other states. **The new American doctrine reduces the prominence of nuclear weapons in the national security structure** through the following consideration: if we continue to assign the decisive role to nuclear weapons in the structure of our national security, how will it be perceived by the countries we are trying to dissuade from developing nuclear weapons?

America has made a commitment not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states. The one exception may be a situation where a country acquires a powerful biological weapon, which, due to certain factors, will need to be contained with the threat of using nuclear weapons. The new nuclear doctrine has by no means been written to create an opportunity for using nuclear weapons against Iran or North Korea, which is something that is receiving heightened discussion at the moment. This doctrine insists on observing the international regime of non-proliferation.

But if Iran or North Korea give nuclear weapons to terrorists, if these countries contribute to nuclear proliferation, then the reaction of the US will be extremely serious. However, it is absolutely impossible to imagine that the US would ever make a nuclear strike on Tehran or Pyongyang solely on the basis of Iran or North Korea withdrawing from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. ■

IT IS UNREALISTIC FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS TO DISAPPEAR



ANDREY KOKOSHIN

is a Russian statesman, political scientist, who is a Russian State Duma Deputy and Deputy Chairman of the United Russia Party. He is also the First Vice-Chairman of the Commission for Science and High Technology, and the former secretary of the Russian Federation Security Council. He has authored several books, including 'Political science and the sociology of military strategy' (2005), and 'Real sovereignty in the present-day world political system' (2005).

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Our Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty can be very influential in resolving the issue of non-proliferation. Without such a treaty, Russia and the USA could hardly be able to promote a regime based on non-proliferation.

In the present-day world, the 'global zero' target concerning nuclear weapons is almost unbelievable in the long run. **For a number of countries, nuclear weapons are a political and military equaliser of war-related opportunities in the face of more powerful countries.** This is how many Pakistani

experts explain the role of nuclear weapons in the face of the considerable predominance of India in the field of conventional weapons.

This does not mean that the process of nuclear proliferation is doomed to continue. In addition, technical ability does not necessarily equate to nuclear weapons production.

To start a nuclear weapons program, what is required, first of all, is a political decision taken at the highest level, which should be supported by the majority of the population. **Nuclear weapons do not only entail additional political opportunities. They are also a great responsibility.** In the 1960s, it was assumed that, soon, there would be about 30 to 40 nuclear states in the world. This did not happen, mainly because of efforts made by different countries based on the conditions of the START treaty.

The new Russian-American Strategic Arms Treaty should maintain the conditions of strategic stability for the foreseeable future. This is not to be perceived as something that is done automatically, but only in the case that Russia continues with the improvement of its strategic forces.

Strategic stability will mostly depend on the level of attention that is paid to the development of new conventional weapons, thereby providing Russia a new deterrence posture.

An important detail of the new treaty is that it provides the necessary terms for turning submarines and heavy bombardment aircraft into conventional weapons. The verification system was significantly simplified compared to the previous treaty. ■