

**CENTRE FOR SCIENCE
& SECURITY STUDIES**

KING'S
College
LONDON



The P5 Process

Opportunities for Success in the
NPT Review Conference



**EUROPEAN
LEADERSHIP
NETWORK**

About the Centre for Science and Security Studies at King's College London

The Centre for Science and Security Studies (CSSS) is a multi-disciplinary research and teaching group at King's College London that brings together scientific experts with specialists in politics, international relations, and history. CSSS forms part of the School of Security Studies at King's and draws on experts from the Department of War Studies and the Department of Defence Studies. Members of the Centre conduct scholarly and policy-relevant research on weapons proliferation, non-proliferation, verification and disarmament, nuclear security, space security and mass effect terrorism including the CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear) dimension. In addition to academic staff, CSSS hosts masters and postgraduate research students, as well as visiting fellows and associates drawn from the academic, government, and business sectors. Our educational activities include contributions to the undergraduate and postgraduate offerings in the Department of War Studies, as well as professional development workshops for industry professionals.

About the European Leadership Network

The European Leadership Network (ELN) is an independent, non-partisan, pan-European network of past, present and future European leaders working to provide practical real-world solutions to political and security challenges. Through its high-quality research, publications, events, advocacy, media reach and pan-European networks, the ELN works for better security in greater Europe. It focuses primarily on addressing Euro-Atlantic security challenges, including Russia-West relations, nuclear and conventional arms control and the future of European defence. It produces independent research and analysis and provides a platform for dialogue and debate. The ELN's active networks of political, military, expert and diplomatic figures and its multinational team work collectively and individually alongside governments to achieve practical, positive progress towards better security.



**EUROPEAN
LEADERSHIP
NETWORK**



The Project

In 2019-2020, King's College London (KCL) and the European Leadership Network (ELN) conducted a project to investigate challenges and opportunities for the P5 process. Our objective was to offer expert guidance and recommendations for the next Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The project analysed the issues faced by P5 states and in their dialogues. It was particularly successful in encouraging further transparency within the P5 process among the P5 states and to the wider NPT community, including through leading a civil society event as part of the official P5 meeting in London in February 2020. The project constructed and promoted realistic and politically feasible recommendations, built a network of experts and officials engaged in nuclear and P5-specific issues, and showcased talent from next generation specialists from across the P5 countries.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the participants from our workshops, particularly those who also provided feedback on this report. In addition, we wish to thank the civil society participants, many of whom travelled significant distance, of the Civil Society Engagement event as part of the February 2020 P5 meeting in London. We are particularly grateful to Robert Einhorn for his continued support of our efforts and guidance in navigating particularly sensitive areas. Jamie Kwong, Emily Enright, and Max Hoell provided exceptional support throughout the project both in managing logistics and in substantively contributing to the policy recommendations and final report. Above all, we are grateful to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which is pictured on the report cover, for the opportunity to lead this project and allowing us to take an ambitious approach at times. Their commitment to transparency and inclusivity proved essential for this work.

Supported by:



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Table of contents

Preface	05
<i>H.E. Ambassador Gustavo Zlaugvinnen</i>	
Executive Summary	06
Introduction	07
The Role of the P5 Process Within the NPT	08
Nuclear Doctrines and Strategic Stability	09
<i>Nuclear Doctrines and Strategic Stability Recommendations</i>	
Risk Reduction	10
<i>Risk Reduction Recommendations</i>	
The P5 and Review Conference	11
<i>The P5 and Review Conference Recommendations</i>	
The Future of the P5 Process	13
<i>The Future of the P5 Process Recommendations</i>	
Conclusion	15

Preface



**H.E. AMBASSADOR
GUSTAVO
ZLAUVINEN**

*President-Designate
of the 10th Review
Conference for
the Nuclear Non-
Proliferation Treaty*

At this important juncture in the history of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and in the lead up to the 10th Review Conference, it is prudent to assess the contribution to the treaty by all States Parties. Many initiatives have been established to further the treaty's objectives. The five Nuclear Weapon States, who have a unique responsibility for nuclear disarmament under Article VI of the treaty, established the P5 process, where they have been working this past year.

The culmination of these efforts was the P5 process conference held in London in February 2020, where I was invited, together with the members of the Bureau, to express my approach to the Conference. As a relevant contribution to the NPT review cycle, the meeting captured progress in a number of areas, such as an updated glossary of nuclear terms and transparency in nuclear doctrines, and included broad civil society participation through the P5 Civil Society Engagement event.

Commitment to disarmament, building consensus, transparency, and diversity of views are at the core of my approach to the Review Conference. Thus, I welcome and encourage the contribution of the P5 to that endeavour. Maintaining the credibility of the NPT and working for a successful outcome of the Review Conference should be a priority for all, and I am pleased to see that it is recommended in this paper. Other recommendations include specific steps that the P5 and other States Parties can take to further progress, such as considering the impact of emerging technology, developing an agenda for the next review cycle, and further contributions to nuclear disarmament, thus ensuring the NPT's success beyond the current review cycle.

Amidst the current pandemic crisis, global cooperation is needed now more than ever. This crisis has woken us all to the reality of catastrophic risk and previously unthinkable scenarios. This also applies to the threat posed by nuclear weapons and nuclear proliferation. Strategic risk reduction was a theme of the P5 discussions and has generated interest in the nuclear disarmament community. Among others, it serves as a common objective going into the Review Conference.

I am grateful to King's College London and the European Leadership Network for coordinating such an important initiative, and to all the government and non-government participants from 30 countries across six continents who contributed to the success of the P5 Civil Society Engagement event. I would also like to thank the UK Government for hosting the P5 meeting and its ongoing commitment to transparency. Hopefully, this spirit can contribute to increased progress in the P5 disarmament process and lead us to success at the 10th Review Conference.

Gustavo Zlauvinen, *President-Designate for 2020/2021 NPT Review Conference*



**AS A RELEVANT
CONTRIBUTION TO
THE NPT REVIEW
CYCLE, THE
MEETING CAPTURED
PROGRESS IN A
NUMBER OF AREAS.**



Executive Summary



**SHATABHISHA
SHETTY**

*European Leadership
Network*



**HEATHER
WILLIAMS**

*King's College
London*



**THIS JOINT REPORT
OFFERS PRACTICAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR THE P5 IN
ADVANCE OF THE
NPT'S QUINTENNIAL
REVIEW
CONFERENCE.**



This joint report offers practical recommendations for the P5 in advance of the NPT's quintennial Review Conference (RevCon). These recommendations have been distilled from discussions with nuclear experts and government officials as part of this project. Initial recommendations were captured in a short policy memo¹ published in December 2019. These were focused on doctrine and transparency, strategic risk reduction, expectations for the 10th RevCon and the future of the P5 process. This report will follow the same typology, expanding the analysis and recommendations.

Several points of consensus emerged from the initiative. New START, the bilateral strategic arms control treaty between the United States and Russia, should be extended. There was agreement that transparency should be increased between the P5 and the wider global community. To do this, there must be improved information-sharing between Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) and Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS). There should also be greater transparency on capability, posture and intent to reduce misperceptions and escalation risks.

Risk reduction – reducing the chance of accidental or intentional nuclear weapons use – is an area of interest where practical measures should be examined and adopted. The NWS must do more to demonstrate that the risks of nuclear accidents are low, and that these risks can be managed. Risk reduction steps are nonetheless an interim measure which cannot substitute for concrete disarmament. In general, the P5 must work to counter the perception that their efforts in the P5 process ahead of the RevCon are merely an exercise in “damage limitation” intended to counter any criticism of their lack of progress on disarmament.

Regardless of when it takes place following delays due to the COVID-19 crisis, the P5 should make every effort to support a consensus Final Document and encourage a positive outcome. This will require finding areas of consensus among the P5 members. They should seek to find a joint P5 position on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) that does not alienate TPNW supporters. As another example, in the absence of P5 unity on ratification and entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the P5 could issue a statement addressing their unilateral nuclear testing moratoria and the valuable work of the CTBT Organization (CTBTO).

To preserve and improve the health and wellbeing of the NPT, the P5 must also consider and prepare for the next review cycle. They should commit to continuing the P5 process and meeting annually, and agree on a programme of work that will include addressing the impact of emerging technologies on nuclear doctrines and strategic risk reduction; the future of arms control, including “rules of the road,” confidence-building measures and communications channels; and improving and continuing to engage with NNWS. These efforts would contribute to a positive environment and narrative going into the RevCon and would help to encourage nuclear responsibility among all nuclear possessors.

¹ “Policy Recommendations: Options for P5 Cooperation.” London: King's College London and European Leadership Network, 2019. <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/csss/assets/p5-cooperation.pdf>

Introduction



THE NPT REMAINS CRITICAL AND IS AN IMPORTANT SUCCESS STORY IN THE GLOBAL NUCLEAR ORDER.



In 2020, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) celebrates the 50th anniversary of its entry into force. Many worry that the NPT's next Review Conference (RevCon) – which will assess progress against the Treaty's objectives of non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful nuclear uses – will end in failure. This meeting of NPT States Parties will take place against the background of a deteriorating arms control environment with the termination of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty, uncertainty over the New START treaty, the Open Skies treaty and the “Iran nuclear deal” in peril, a deterioration of U.S.-Russia and U.S.-China relations, and the growing impact of new and emerging technologies. One of the many challenging repercussions of the global COVID-19 pandemic includes the postponement of the RevCon. Depending on the new RevCon schedule, this also could coincide with the ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which might exacerbate existing tensions within the NPT regime and between States Parties.

Many would judge that the NPT regime is experiencing a moment of acute vulnerability and is being undermined and damaged by these developments. Nonetheless, the NPT remains critical and is an important success story in the global nuclear order. The P5 process, which brings together the treaty's five Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) in a dedicated forum to discuss their unique NPT responsibilities, offers the opportunity to show that progress is still possible within the NPT regime despite these challenges. For example, the January 2019 P5 meeting in Beijing was the first time that the P5 agreed on a formal workplan. This workplan focuses on advancing transparency in nuclear doctrines, developing a shared glossary of key nuclear terms, making progress towards a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) and signing the protocol to the Bangkok Treaty for a nuclear weapons free zone (NWFZ) in Southeast Asia. Progress is possible and should be encouraged.

Eager to avoid a second “failed” RevCon, the P5 are now attempting to show their commitment to the NPT through a revived P5 process. Substantive outcomes from the P5 process would contribute to positive atmospherics and progress at the RevCon and help foster greater trust among P5 states at a crucial time in the NPT's history. Although this does not guarantee a successful outcome at the RevCon, substantive efforts and progress by the P5 would be received favourably by the wider NPT community and may lay the groundwork for a constructive conference.

Drawing on a series of international Track 2 and Track 1.5 workshops, this policy paper examines four areas where the P5 can cooperate and contribute to the RevCon: doctrines and strategic stability, risk reduction, the P5 process and the RevCon, and the future of the P5 process.

The Role of the P5 Process within the NPT

Established in 2009, the P5 process was intended to demonstrate the NWS's commitment to their NPT obligations, facilitate confidence-building between them and lay the groundwork for progress on disarmament. Formal conferences have taken place on rotation since 2009 but were stalled in 2017 and 2018 due to geopolitical tensions between these states. The resumption of the P5 conferences in 2019 created the opportunity for NWS to make progress on their obligations and breathe new life into the NPT process. In the eleven years since its establishment, the NWS have slowly made progress in promoting transparency; developing a common reporting form on postures, stockpiles and doctrines; and producing an agreed glossary of nuclear terms. Aside from this, P5 discussions have not progressed as much as initially hoped or expected.

The P5 process is challenged by structural and geopolitical issues. Within the P5, there are differences between states, including increased military competition and the breakdown of arms control. The United States is concerned about the Chinese missile threat in Asia and its counterspace and offensive cyber capabilities. Russia is concerned about U.S. missile defence in the European theatre. The United States is concerned that Russia has an “escalate to de-escalate” nuclear strategy and about its development of novel strategic systems. There are also clear limitations to the P5 format itself. The multilateral nature of P5 discussions faces inherent challenges, with states potentially unwilling to engage in detailed discussions on issues that are too sensitive to address in a multilateral forum and are better suited to bilateral discussions – even amidst concerns that some P5 states may use their participation in the P5 process as an excuse not to engage in bilateral discussions on nuclear policy and doctrine.

The P5 process is frequently criticised by Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS) and civil society groups for its slow progress on disarmament and failure to deliver practical results. Some argue that this is due to a lack of interest in disarmament amongst the P5. Even if the P5 were able to overcome geopolitical tensions, there are very few easy areas for cooperative progress. In 2019 evidence to a House of Lords inquiry, Lord Des Browne, one of the originators of the P5 process, criticised that the initiative has turned into a “cartel” permitting the NWS to maintain their arsenals without demonstrating any real progress towards disarmament. Such criticisms are increasingly common and intensify pressure on the NWS going into the RevCon.

Given the challenges and tensions in the current international security environment, all states – nuclear and non-nuclear – must be realistic about what the P5 process can achieve. Nevertheless, the P5 process remains a vital means for NWS to better understand each other's strategic intentions and capabilities. It has unique value in fostering dialogue on risk reduction, transparency and strategic stability.

The P5 process also provides an opportunity for transparency with NNWS so that they can observe the various perspectives among the P5 members and understand how and why these differ or converge. On nuclear policy and doctrine, for example, the P5 process offers a way for states to express their national perspectives on strategic issues, and to provide an opportunity for other NPT States Parties to meaningfully engage with the P5 on those perspectives.



**THE RESUMPTION
OF THE P5
CONFERENCES IN
2019 CREATED
THE OPPORTUNITY
FOR NWS TO MAKE
PROGRESS ON
THEIR OBLIGATIONS
AND BREATHE NEW
LIFE INTO THE NPT
PROCESS.**



Nuclear Doctrines and Strategic Stability



**P5 DISCUSSIONS
ON NUCLEAR POLICY
AND DOCTRINES
FOSTER A CLEARER
UNDERSTANDING
OF INTENTIONS AND
CAPABILITIES.**



The P5 discussions on nuclear policy and doctrines are intended to foster a clearer understanding of intentions and capabilities to avoid misperceptions and worst-case calculations. Yet a number of challenges arise when considering doctrines and strategic stability within the P5. The multilateral character of the P5 process may hinder frank and open conversation. Discussions on doctrines and strategic stability in particular – such as on concerns over missile defence developments – may be too sensitive to address in the P5 context and are better discussed in bilateral settings.

The P5 is not a monolith. States have different concerns and preoccupations and different views on what should be included in strategic stability dialogues. For instance, both Russia and China are concerned about U.S. missile defence, space and cyber capabilities. Russia is also concerned about enhanced NATO forward deployments and possible U.S. ground-based INF systems. In addition, some countries within the P5 are affected more than others by certain issues. For example, discussions relating to the extension of the New START Treaty only pertain to the United States and Russia even as they remain relevant to the wider NPT community.

Nuclear Doctrines and Strategic Stability Recommendations

The P5 should:

- ♦ **Initiate discussions specifically addressing strategic stability:** This dialogue would explore the impact of emerging technologies (e.g., cyber, counterspace, conventional and hypersonic strike systems) on nuclear doctrines and promote greater understanding between the states. This could eventually be developed into “rules of the road” or codes of conduct to improve strategic stability. The forum might include Track 2 experts from the private sector who specialise in specific technologies, for example.
- ♦ **Complement the P5 process with bilateral strategic stability discussions:** The P5 process is a useful forum for generating ideas, scoping “rules of the road,” and maintaining dialogue amidst growing tensions and misconceptions between the P5 states. However, it should not be a substitute for more detailed work and initiatives at the bilateral level. P5 states should also engage in bilateral dialogues on sensitive issues and include military officials as much as possible to increase transparency around nuclear doctrines.
- ♦ **Continue detailed discussions on nuclear doctrines:** Dialogue should be continued in the P5 format on the changing strategic environment to reduce mistrust. As this would also help to develop a common understanding of terminology, the P5 could usefully refer to the Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms in these discussions.
- ♦ **Preserve what remains of the arms control architecture and extend New START:** The majority of international actors recognise the need to reconceptualise strategic stability and arms control. Extending New START allows for some breathing space to assess what the future of arms control will look like and what is possible in the short-, medium-, and long-terms. There is also an important need to take non-nuclear and emerging technologies into account.

Risk Reduction

Reducing the risks of nuclear weapons is challenged by the introduction of new weapons systems, disparity of forces, entanglement of conventional and nuclear forces, the rise of conventional long-range missiles, and evolutions in dual-use and stealth technology. Escalatory risks are difficult to predict and manage because of the multidimensional nature of warfare. If states believe that emerging technologies impede their ability to reduce nuclear risks, they have an obligation to examine and discuss these risks.

One problem with the risk reduction narrative and agenda, however, is that states view it differently. China considers its No First Use (NFU) pledge to be a reasonable first step towards risk reduction. France might argue that the P5 process addresses the strategic element of risk reduction as part of their nuclear doctrines discussions. There must be a better understanding between states on what risk reduction means and which measures effectively address it.

The P5 must also acknowledge NNWS's concerns about the risks of accidental detonation, unauthorized use, misinformation and miscalculations. To address these concerns, the steps taken to reduce these risks – for instance on alert status, missile launch notifications or functioning hotline agreements – should be clearly explained. This would serve the dual purpose of increasing transparency and identifying gaps where more could be done.

Risk Reduction Recommendations

The P5 should:

- ♦ **Raise awareness of existing risk reduction measures and explore new ones:** The P5 should share existing agreements pertaining to risk reduction and identify gaps in them. Particular attention could be paid to bilateral or regional initiatives. The P5 should explore parallel unilateral restraints or formal confidence-building or risk reduction measures to reduce tensions and the likelihood of nuclear armed conflict.
- ♦ **Develop a common understanding of lexicon and terminology:** In support of the nuclear glossary efforts, P5 states should work to develop a common understanding of risk reduction terms, including those that relate to emerging technologies. This should be communicated to NNWS and the wider nuclear community.
- ♦ **Explore the possibility of a “no build-up” statement amongst the P5:** The P5 could commit to no further *quantitative* build-up of nuclear arsenals, and issue a joint political statement to this effect.
- ♦ **Affirm a “zero-yield” testing moratorium:** The P5 should restate their commitment to a testing moratorium, and also engage in discussions on what constitutes “zero-yield” testing, versus subcritical testing, for example. This dialogue may not produce any consensus, but would provide a useful forum for increasing transparency and avoiding misperception in the absence of entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) at least among NWS. We acknowledge this recommendation may be particularly challenging given different positions on the CTBT within the NWS.



IF STATES BELIEVE THAT EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES IMPEDE THEIR ABILITY TO REDUCE NUCLEAR RISK, THEY HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO EXAMINE AND DISCUSS THESE RISKS.



The P5 and Review Conference



THE P5 MUST CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE THEIR SUPPORT FOR ARTICLE VI AND THAT THEIR DISARMAMENT OBLIGATIONS ARE BEING TAKEN SERIOUSLY.



A lack of significant steps towards nuclear disarmament over the past five years risks derailing the RevCon. The P5 must clearly demonstrate their support for Article VI and that their disarmament obligations are being taken seriously despite setbacks. They should restate their obligation to Article VI and explicitly lay out to NNWS how they will move forward with Article VI commitments as opposed to discussing this in the abstract. Such a discussion could be done in parallel with or in the context of the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament (CEND) dialogues. Given their unique positions and responsibilities within the NPT regime, the P5 must demonstrate that they understand their responsibilities to prevent nuclear war and nuclear accidents and show that they are undertaking efforts to reduce these risks.

Both NWS and NNWS must demonstrate that the NPT is not at the point of failure and work hard to achieve a positive outcome for the RevCon. The P5 should engage in a frank discussion prior to the RevCon on how to handle contentious issues during the conference such as agreeing not to publicly provoke other P5 members (e.g., regarding the Open Skies treaty or the “Iran nuclear deal”). The P5 should be working, at a minimum, to protect the gains achieved in 2019 through the P5 process and prevent any deterioration of the process. They should point to the existence of an ongoing P5 process, which will operate beyond the current review cycle.

The P5 and Review Conference Recommendations

P5 states should:

- ♦ **Jointly develop and agree to a new version of the Reagan-Gorbachev statement:** P5 states should make a joint statement that affirms their commitment to work cooperatively to prevent nuclear war, whether it is some version of the Reagan-Gorbachev statement or uses different language to reflect a changed security environment. If P5 states agree to a reiteration or reformulation of the Reagan-Gorbachev statement, they could then urge non-P5 nuclear weapons possessors to make similar statements about their intent to avoid nuclear war.
- ♦ **Be transparent about challenges in the P5 process:** The P5 members should be transparent about areas where they do not have consensus but demonstrate they are working to reconcile different perspectives and interests. This would provide NNWS with some better understanding of the fraught P5 dynamics and disagreements. One of the benefits of increased transparency in the P5 process and *some* participation by civil society is that it demonstrates the P5 is not a monolith.
- ♦ **Celebrate the NPT’s past and current successes:** To mark the anniversary year of the NPT, the P5 and the rest of the NPT community should celebrate the NPT’s past and current successes – namely that there are fewer than 10 nuclear weapon possessor states. There are notable non-proliferation “wins,” such as South Africa giving up nuclear weapons and former Soviet states joining the NPT. States should celebrate the flexibility of the NPT regime whereby the international community was able to come together and develop the Model Additional Protocol after the case of Iraq illustrated weaknesses of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement. They should celebrate IAEA safeguards and the 75-year norm of nuclear non-use.

- ♦ **Set out a vision for the next 50 years of the NPT:** The P5 should develop an agreed-upon vision for the future of the Treaty. This would build confidence in the NPT's permanence within the global security architecture. It should include longer-term goals for the future such as universal commitment to safeguards standards, working toward better relations, reducing the role of nuclear weapons and working towards their elimination, and fixing the NPT's Article X withdrawal clause. These goals should include eventually working with the nuclear possessor states outside of the NPT. States should highlight future challenges in non-proliferation and emphasise that the NPT's work has ongoing importance.
- ♦ **Do not denigrate the TPNW, or proponents of the TPNW:** It is unhelpful and unproductive for the P5 to focus on criticising the TPNW. Instead, they should clarify that the TPNW does not apply to non-members, including the P5, and will not be recognised as customary international law or ever become a substitute for the NPT.



**BOTH NWS AND
NNWS MUST
DEMONSTRATE
THAT THE NPT IS
NOT AT THE POINT
OF FAILURE.**



The Future of the P5 Process



**A DEGREE OF
TRANSPARENCY
AND
ACCOUNTABILITY
MUST BE INJECTED
INTO THE PROCESS.**



The closed nature of the P5 process allows states to be relatively comfortable disclosing sensitive information on nuclear policy, posture and doctrine. This is valuable and necessary. However, a degree of transparency and accountability must be injected into the process for NNWS to see the continued value of the process and its contribution to the NPT. The P5 process does not operate in isolation and consideration should be given to engagement with other NPT non-proliferation and disarmament initiatives.

The NWS should lay groundwork for the continuation of the P5 process into the next review cycle. To maintain momentum and credibility, future plans for the process should be discussed prior to the next review conference and described in detail at the RevCon. Moreover, given the changing international environment, strategic stability and arms control must be re-conceptualised to take into account the impact of emerging technologies and account for the roles of nuclear-armed countries that are not recognised by the NPT.

The Future of the P5 Process Recommendations

The P5 should:

- ♦ **Engage with other relevant fora:** Clear proposals about effective engagement with other fora such as the CEND initiative should be established to avoid duplication and stress test ideas across different fora. At present, all P5 states are participating in CEND so feasible proposals could be adopted for the P5 process and the NPT. Indeed, all P5 members' involvement in CEND demonstrates a commitment to dialogue and disarmament.
- ♦ **Engagement with NNWS and civil society:** The P5 should consider holding more frequent P5 events where they report to civil society. This would demonstrate an ongoing commitment to transparency and engagement with the wider NPT community.
- ♦ **Hold annual P5 summits:** Planning yearly summits of P5 leaders would inject a greater degree of ambition into the process. This would require advance preparatory work to assess the prospects for a successful meeting of leaders but would demonstrate that the P5 are committed to making progress.
- ♦ **Highlight P5 leadership in non-proliferation and peaceful uses:** While this paper focuses on how the P5 process might contribute to nuclear disarmament and the future of the NPT, the P5 also have an important role to play in the other two pillars of the NPT, non-proliferation and peaceful uses. Progress in these areas should also be a focus of P5 discussions and transparency, especially with NNWS.

Recommendations for success in the P5 process

NUCLEAR DOCTRINES AND STRATEGIC STABILITY



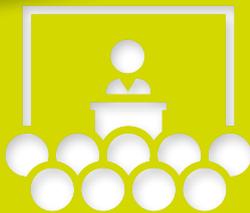
- Strategic stability forum
- Bilateral dialogues
- Nuclear doctrines dialogue
- Preserve arms control architecture

RISK REDUCTION



- Explore risk reduction measures
- Develop common lexicon
- “No build-up” statement
- “Zero-yield” testing moratorium

THE P5 AND REVIEW CONFERENCE



- Update Reagan-Gorbachev statement
- Transparency about P5 challenges
- Celebrate the NPT
- 50-year vision
- Limited engagement on TPNW

THE FUTURE OF THE P5 PROCESS



- Engage with relevant fora
- Engage with NNWS and civil society
- Annual P5 summits
- Highlight progress on non-proliferation and peaceful uses

Conclusion

This report offers relatively modest recommendations, however, we believe all of these recommendations are achievable and worthy of the P5's attention. Table 1, *Recommendations for Success in the P5 Process*, not only summarises these recommendations but also offers a future workplan for the P5.

There are inherent limitations to the P5 process. It is no substitute for serious bilateral strategic discussions on nuclear policy and doctrine and is also not a panacea to address all the problems in the NPT. Overloading the process risks opening up areas to debate where there is currently tacit agreement. This could undermine the process.

P5 discussions remain valuable, however, because they create dialogue and help foster understanding and reduce misunderstandings. Given the importance of the P5 process, every effort should be made to make P5 engagement as productive and constructive as possible. It is currently the only initiative where officials from all the nuclear weapon states meet to discuss their NPT obligations and ways to support disarmament and non-proliferation. NWS and NNWS alike must be realistic to what this initiative can accomplish; expectations must be adjusted. Nevertheless, there is more that the P5 could and should do within the process. The five NWS must approach P5 meetings with an equal commitment to engage seriously on strategic issues, an equal readiness to share information, and an equal willingness to avoid accusations and scoring points. This in turn demonstrates that the step-by-step disarmament process is not bankrupt and ultimately serves to reinforce the NPT, an objective that all states share.



**P5 DISCUSSIONS
REMAIN VALUABLE
BECAUSE THEY
CREATE DIALOGUE
AND HELP FOSTER
UNDERSTANDING
AND REDUCE
MISUNDERSTANDINGS.**



Centre for Science and Security Studies

Department of War Studies

King's College London

Strand

London WC2R 2LS

United Kingdom

www.kcl.ac.uk/csss

@KCL_CSSS

© 2020 King's College London