

Summary of the Model Nuclear Weapons Convention

(For a copy of the full convention see www.lcnp.org)

General Obligations

The model nuclear weapons convention (treaty) prohibits development, testing, production, stockpiling, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. States possessing nuclear weapons will be required to destroy their arsenals in a series of phases over fifteen years. The treaty also prohibits the production of weapons usable fissile material and requires delivery vehicles to be destroyed or converted to make them non-nuclear capable.

Agency

An agency will be established to implement the treaty. It will be responsible for verification, ensuring compliance, and decision making, and will comprise a Conference of States Parties, an Executive Council and a Technical Secretariat.

Verification

Verification will include declarations and reports from States, routine inspections, challenge inspections, fixed on-site sensors, satellite photography, radionuclide sampling and other remote sensors, information sharing with other organizations, and citizen reporting (societal verification).

Whistleblower protection will be available to citizens reporting suspected violations of the convention.

The Agency will establish an international monitoring system to gather information, and will make most of this information available through a registry. Information which may jeopardize commercial secrets or national security will be kept confidential.

Conflict Resolution

The treaty includes provisions for consultation, cooperation and fact-finding to clarify and resolve questions of interpretation with respect to compliance and other matters. A legal dispute may be referred to the International Court of Justice by mutual consent of States Parties. The Agency may request an advisory opinion from the ICJ on a legal dispute.

Compliance and Enforcement

The treaty provides incentives for compliance plus a series of graduated responses for non-compliance beginning with consultation and clarification, negotiation, and, if required, sanctions or recourse to the U.N. General Assembly and Security Council.

Individual responsibility

The obligations will apply to individuals as well as States. Procedures for the apprehension and fair trial of individuals accused of committing crimes under the treaty are provided for.

Phases for elimination

The treaty outlines a series of five phases for the elimination of nuclear weapons. Steps in these phases include gradual reductions in stockpiles, taking nuclear weapons off alert, removing weapons from deployment, removing nuclear warheads from their delivery vehicles, disabling the warheads, removing and disfiguring the "pits" and placing the fissile material under international control. In the initial phases the U.S. and Russia are required to make the deepest cuts in their nuclear arsenals.

Financing

The treaty obliges nuclear weapon states to cover the costs of the elimination of their nuclear arsenals, but establishes an international fund to assist states which may have financial difficulties in meeting their obligations.

Nuclear Material & Nuclear Energy

The treaty prohibits the production of any fissionable or fusionable material which can be used to make a nuclear bomb, including plutonium and highly enriched uranium. Low enriched uranium is permitted for nuclear energy, but the treaty includes an optional protocol which would establish a program of energy assistance for States Parties choosing not to develop nuclear energy or to phase out existing nuclear energy programs.