

THE IMPLICATIONS OF INCREASING MILITARY SPENDING ON HUMAN SECURITY: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

The war between Russia and Ukraine which started on the 24th of February 2022, has heightened concerns about the implications of rising military expenditure on the spread of weapons and world security. Since the 9/11 attacks in the United States, studies have indicated that state military spending has increased, raising concerns among policymakers throughout the world. Therefore, the objective of this study is to investigate how an increase in military spending may affect both human security and the proliferation of weapons. Data for this study were gathered from secondary sources using a historical research approach, and content analysis was used for analysing the data. This study makes the case that increasing military spending has detrimental effects on human security in a variety of contexts, including the political, socio-psychological, and economic components of daily living. On the economic front, funds that could be utilised to raise citizen welfare are instead being spent to buy military hardware and software. In the political realm, it results in invasion and the funding of proxy wars, while on the social front, it has sparked hostility and concerns among nations. Lastly, this study recommended among other things that there is the need for collective efforts by member states of the United Nations through collective security to pressurised erring states.

Keywords

State, Budget, Military, War, United Nations.

Resumo

A guerra entre a Rússia e a Ucrânia, que teve início em 24 de fevereiro de 2022, aumentou as preocupações sobre as implicações do aumento das despesas militares na disseminação de armas e na segurança mundial. Desde os ataques de 11 de setembro nos Estados Unidos, os estudos indicam que as despesas militares do Estado aumentaram, suscitando preocupações entre os decisores políticos em todo o mundo. Por conseguinte, o objetivo deste estudo é investigar de que forma um aumento das despesas militares pode afetar tanto a segurança humana como a proliferação de armas. Os dados para este estudo foram recolhidos de fontes secundárias, utilizando uma abordagem de investigação histórica, e foi utilizada a análise de conteúdo para analisar os dados. Este estudo defende que o aumento das despesas militares tem efeitos prejudiciais para a segurança humana numa variedade de contextos, incluindo as componentes política, sócio-psicológica e económica da vida quotidiana. No plano económico, os fundos que poderiam ser utilizados para aumentar o bem-estar dos cidadãos são, em vez disso, gastos na compra de equipamento e software militares. No domínio político, resulta em



invasões e no financiamento de guerras por procuração, enquanto na frente social provocou hostilidade e preocupações entre as nações. Por fim, este estudo recomendou, entre outras coisas, a necessidade de esforços colectivos por parte dos Estados membros das Nações Unidas, através da segurança colectiva, para pressionar os Estados prevaricadores.

Palavras-chave

Estado, Orçamento, Militar, Guerra, Nações Unidas.

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FROM THE IMPLICATIONS OF INCREASING MILITARY SPENDING ON HUMAN SECURITY: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction

The military remains one of the key institutions of the state charged with the responsibility of defending the state against external aggression. Therefore, the survival of any state is more often than not left in the hands of the military. In recent years, increasing military budgets has been considered a desideratum in securing the territorial integrity and prevention of any act of aggression from the perceived enemy(ies) of the state by any government.

The rising military budget for states across the world especially from 1999 and later in 2001 has attracted the attention of policymakers, researchers and scholars in International Relations and strategic studies considering its intended and unintended consequences on human security and development. From the realist's perspective, military capabilities remain one of the fundamental elements of state power. The realist theory maintained that the ability to use military might to coerce an enemy state is far more rewarding than obtaining favours or concessions from them. This position was contrary to the liberal strategic thinkers who maintain that under the contemporary era of globalisation where the global economy has been economically, politically and culturally integrated in a way that economic might is considered valuable to national strength and security when compared to military capabilities (Nye, 2008).

Nevertheless, one the ways to know state capability is to compare the extent to which they spread money on acquiring military weapons; other sources of determining the power potential of a state aside from military expenditures, include state economy, population and territorial size, geographic location, natural resources, levels of technological advancement, political cultural, the volume of trade, level of educational national moral, efficiency of political decision making and domestic solidarity among others (Kegley et al, 2011, pp. 277-278).

However, studies have shown that the use of territorial size as a criterion for measuring the power potential of any state has been criticized. For instance, Russia's territorial space is twice the size of countries like Canada, China, the US, Brazil and Australia; but cannot be said to be the most powerful nation in the world but one of the most powerful states in the world. Again, the use of population size as a criterion for measuring state



power potential has also been criticized. For instance, if population size is used as the sole criteria for measuring state power, countries like China, India, the US, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria and Brazil would have been the most powerful countries in the world (Kegley et al, 2011). Similarly, when the use of countries' expenditures on research and development (especially concerning the country's GDP) to find future economic prosperity and military capability, countries like Israel, Sweden, Finland, Japan, the US, South Korea, Switzerland, Denmark, Germany, Australia and Singapore would be the most powerful countries in the world (WDI, 2009, pp. 314-315).

Besides, there is a consensus among scholars in international relations and strategic studies that power is relative. This is because some leading states in some areas of power potential may not be leading in other areas since there are various dimensions of power potential. Also to put into consideration, the lack of consensus on how to measure the power potentials of states in the international system. In this study, we shall situate our measurement of state power potentials within the context military budget and the state's economy. However, this criterion has been criticised because most countries in the world with larger military arsenals have not necessarily won in most political conflicts like in Vietnam, North Korea's seizure of USS Pueblo in 1968, Iran's hostage-taking of American diplomats and the Al-Qaeda terrorist 9/11 attack among others (Diamond, 2005, Kegley, 2011). Another instance is where the inability of the Soviet Union to dislodge and take total control of political events in Afghanistan. Besides, Switzerland was against the Habsburg Empire, the Netherlands against Spain and Greece against the Ottomans (Kegley, 2011).

On the whole, despite the criticisms levelled against the use of military might in measuring state power potential. The use of military might in measuring state power potential remains one of the dominant criteria for measuring state capacity. This is so because it served as a desideration for the successful exercise of coercive diplomacy, especially through the use of limited force. Hinging on this background, this study seeks to examine the implications of the increased military budget on arms, race and human security.

Literature Review

There is growing research on the implications of increasing military spending on human security. However, there is consensus among some scholars that state power potential has shifted from military might (hard power) that characterized the Cold War era to factors such as technology, external respect and reputation, education and economic growth (Nye, 2005, p. 55), also known as soft power.

Rej et al (2023) evaluate the effects of terrorism, military spending, and capital creation on tourism in India using data from 1980 to 2017. According to the study, there is a reversed relationship between the two variables, with terrorist occurrences having a positive influence on foreign tourist arrivals but their squared term having a negative impact. Additionally, it is discovered that the amount spent on defence and its squared term has both a negative and positive impact on foreign tourist arrivals, demonstrating the presence of a 'U-shaped' link between military spending and foreign tourist arrivals.



Using armed conflict as a moderator and adjusting for population, wealth, distance to destination, and closeness to cultural and linguistic groups, Khalid et al. (2020) investigated the impact of military spending on tourism for the years 1995–2015. The research proved that supporting the military encourages tourism. By moderating the impact of terrorists on the number of tourists in 163 countries throughout 2010–2015, Asongu et al (2020) studied the impact of military spending. According to the study, spending on the military affects visitors' number.

Okafor et al (2021) investigated the impact of military spending on travel in 67 nations between 1995 and 2013 using a gravity model. The authors discovered that spending on the military encourages visitor traffic. Santamaria (2021) employed an unequal sample of 167 nations using a fixed and random effect model to study the effects of terrorism and military expenditures on tourism between 1994 and 2014. The study provided proof that lower tourism was caused by terrorism, income, and military spending. However, spending on the military in response to terrorism encourages traveller arrivals.

Other studies including Samitas et al. (2018) have shown that terrorism slows down visitors to Greece by using analysis of principal components to create a tourism-related proxy. Besides, Rauf et al (2020) looked into the links between terrorism and travel in Pakistan. According to the study, terrorist attacks eventually discourage people from travelling. Charfeddine et al (2020) investigated the asymmetrical impact caused by terrorism on tourism in Turkey compared to the symmetrical effect. Similarly, Iyavarakul (2019) used monthly data from 2004 to 2018 to examine the relationship between terrorism and tourism in South Thailand. According to the study, incidents of terrorism have negative impacts on tourism.

Nadeem et al. (2020) investigate the impact of terrorism, military spending, governance frameworks, and infrastructure on tourism. The research showed that both short and long-term growth of the tourist business are slowed by terrorism and military spending. Asongu et al. (2019) used negative binomial regression and the system GMM to examine the impact of terrorism, military spending, and peace on tourism in 163 countries over the years, 2010 to 2015. The authors provided evidence that the number of visitors was affected by political upheaval and easy access to weapons. Tourist arrivals and military spending have a bad, but statistically insignificant, association. Liu and Pratt (2017) looked at how much terrorist acts damaged the travel and tourism sector in 95 nations between 1995 and 2012. According to the research, terrorist activity hinders the flow of tourists. By utilising the information collected every quarter from 2002 to 2016 and focusing on Pakistan.

The aforementioned reviews make it evident that the majority of empirical studies in the literature focus on the relationship between military spending, terrorism and tourism. Additionally, no research has been carried out using the interactional term between military spending and human security up to 2022 in the corpus of literature. Additionally, we found that there is a study gap in the literature when it comes to examining the connection between military spending and human security using recent data up to 2022. Hence, the need for this inquiry.



Trend Analysis Global Military Spending

Military spending worldwide has surpassed previous highs. Thousands of hundreds of millions of citizens are simultaneously threatened by uncommon "essential" hazards to their security, including threats to their safety, earnings, and dignity. Investments in people's security are more urgent than ever because of the acceleration of climate change and the continuing loss of ecosystems. The notion of human security emphasizes individual protection without ignoring governmental security or law and order. The approach to human security places a strong emphasis on the need to balance financial requirements with all significant risks and hazards, regardless of their origin. It logically results in a review of military spending. It also takes seriously the concern that cutting military spending may weaken state security, which has been a key impediment to previous multilateral efforts to cut military spending (Brzoska et al, 2022).

The UNDP's Human Development Report from 1994 was the first to introduce the idea of human security. It made the case that for peace to last, people must be free from both fear and want: "For most individuals nowadays, an impression of insecurity arises greater to fears regarding everyday issues compared to from a terror of a catastrophic global event." The new worldwide priorities for human security include things like financial security, medical safety, preservation of the environment, and protection against crime (Brzoska et al, 2022).

The Commission on Human Security expanded on the wide definition of human security presented by the UNDP in its 2003 report *Human Security Now*. According to the commission's interpretation of the UNDP's 1994 report, human security refers to safeguarding "the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment." Human security was defined as "freedom from want, freedom from fear, and freedom to live in dignity" in the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's 2005 report, "In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security, and Human Rights for All." This three-part definition has endured (Brzoska et al, 2022).

The Human Development Report Office of the UNDP declared in 2020 that it will be re-examining the notion of human security. An organisation of "independent eminent experts" provided advice to the office on examining "what "freedom from want and freedom from fear" means today," building on the Human Development Report 1994 and *Human Security Now*. A special study on the Anthropocene's new generation of interconnected risks, how they influence human security and possible solutions will be released in February 2022. Calls for an ambitious agenda to fit the scope of the difficulties are made in the conclusion. Instead of tolerating disjointed approaches to security, this necessitates systematic, ongoing, and global attention to human solidarity (Brzoska et al, 2022).

However, World Bank categorises the following nations as being affected by (1) high-intensity conflict based on the intensity of the war and the likelihood that governments will invest in their military capabilities: (1) High institutional and social fragility: Afghanistan, Libya, Somalia, Syria Arab Republic; (2) medium-intensity conflict: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Rep. of Yemen; and (3) high institutional and social fragility: Burundi, Comoros, Rep. of Congo, Eritrea, The



Gambia, Guinea-Bis The aforementioned classification served as one of the foundation for an examination of state expenditure trends on the military. Also, examining budget credibility, or the extent to which governments carry out their budgets as intended (and as approved by their legislatures), is another technique to determine how governments prioritise certain sectors. (United Nations Women, 2022).

The Second World War (WWII) led to the emergence of the Cold War between the US and her ally, known as the Western Bloc and the Soviet Union and her ally, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, known as the Eastern Bloc. One of the dominant features of the Cold War era was the arms race between the Eastern and Western Bloc. However, the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked the end of the Cold, the decline arms race and the increase in military spending, especially between the Eastern and Western Blocs. It is also important to note that since the end of the Cold War, states and international organisations involved in the production of both conventional and non-conventional weapons no longer have the strategic ties that once connected them when selling, trading, and producing their products. As a result, the spread of conventional and non-conventional weapons has become a more prevalent issue (Ayson, 2008).

Another defining feature of the collapse of the Soviet Union was that it brought forth a new issue. For instance, former states that were under the control of the Soviet Union nations became independent governments like the Russian Federation, Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan just to mention a few with sizable conventional and nuclear weaponry stockpiles (Davis, 1995). In many cases, these newly independent states had a dire need for money and were in financial instability. They were unable to maintain or continue housing with the arsenals that the Soviet government had left in their custody since they were insufficient for the smaller-scale wars or unrest that these nations were anticipated to have in the future (Keohane, 2008).

Moreover, from 1999, the world witnessed increased military spending to about 45 per cent with an estimate of \$ 1.46 trillion. By 2001, the world witnessed an average of 4 increase in military spending with an estimate of 2.4% of global GDP spent on the procurement of weapons. This shows that \$217 is spent for each person in the world on a military budget. Besides, 2,785,000 is spent every minute on military preparedness (SIPRI, 2009: p. 7; Kegley, 2011, p. 281).

Nevertheless, studies have shown that developed countries allocate more resources to arms procurement than developing countries. For instance, available statistics have shown that in 2009 the developed countries spent \$1039 billion on military preparation when compared to the developing countries that spent \$193.9 billion. Again, the developed countries of the world spend an estimate of 2.6% per cent of their GDP on military preparedness while the developing countries spend an estimate of 2.0% on military preparedness (WDI, 2009, p. 296).

United Nations Women Research Paper (2022) posits that the Afghan government underspent on health spending overall for the same time by 29.7% and its budget for immunisations by 27.4% between 2012 and 2016. Between 2009 and 2015, Burkina Faso had an average underspending of 25.4% on immunisations and 37.8% on the entire health system. Additionally, Niger underspent by 18.9% per cent on immunisation between 2009 and 2016 and by almost 30% overall on health. A related study by the



United Nations Women Research Paper (2022) posits that a recent study on budget credibility in Nigeria which is classified by the World Bank as a medium-intensity country shows that the Ministry of Defence and the Office of the National Security Adviser to the President in 2015 spent 65 per cent and 100 per cent of their budgetary allocation for the 2015 fiscal year. Meanwhile, government institutions that deal with women and youth-related issues spent 34 per cent and 50 per cent of their budgetary allocation for the 2015 fiscal year.

It is important to note that the United Nations Women Research Paper (2022) indicates that governments typically spend about twice as much on health as on their military in nations that are not considered fragile or conflict-affected. The tendencies are inverted in nations where there is war when military spending is often more than twice as high as health spending. However, developed countries tend to spend more on social protection due to their responsibility to their citizens' welfare since they are less prone to instability or violence. Besides, in most developed nations, spending on education exceeds investment on defence not until recently that there is a gradual shift, albeit the difference is lower in in most developing countries that are prone to armed conflict and countries under intense security threat. However, when we account for national revenue, the propensity for conflict-affected countries to spend more on their military than on social safety remains is also like.

Moreover, military spending accounted for roughly a quarter (24%) of the government's investment in Afghanistan in 2019; the remaining 13% went to projects involving "public order and safety." Comparatively speaking, less than 6% of government spending went to the health sector, 9% went to education, and 4% went to social protection (which includes all programmes designated as focusing on families and children). In Burkina Faso, a nation with a medium level of conflict, the government planned more than ten times as much on defence as for social protection in 2020 (including all programmes designated as focusing on families and children). Similar trends were seen in Mali in 2017, another African nation with a war of moderate severity, where the authorities spent more on the military than they did on welfare programmes. Contrarily, in most low-income countries that aren't supposed to be affected by war, there are distinct trends. For instance, less than 6% of total government expenditures in Senegal were allocated to the armed forces, ensuring safety and protection in 2018, compared to 14% for education and research, 4% for health and social services, and less than 6% for education (United Nations Women Research Paper, 2022).

Furthermore, studies on military spending between developed and developing countries have increased significantly over the years. For instance, the share of global military spending from developing countries rose from 7% in 1961 to 14% in 2008 (SIPRI, 2009, p. 209). It can be argued here that developing countries are emulating the developed countries in terms of their military spending. The implication of this increased military spending is that, resources that would have been used to develop other sectors of the society are diverted for the funding of military operations. Hence making others sectors of the economy to suffer insufficient funding. This will have negative implications on human security. Hence, striking a balance between increased military spending and funding research and development has been problematic for many countries.



During the Cold War era (1945-1991), while countries like the US and the Soviet Union were investing heavily in arms procurement, some countries like Japan were investing in Research and development (R&D). Today, one of the long-term implications of increasing military spending is that, it often leads to the neglect of other critical sectors like; science and education or makes a country face what Friedman, 2005:6, Florida, 2007, and Kegley et al, (2011) called "creativity Crisis".

The implication of this is that developing countries are emulating the developed countries in terms of their military spending. Another implication of the increased military spending is that huge resources that would have been used for research and development are diverted for funding military preparation. This has further negative implications on human capital development. Hence, striking a balance between increased military spending and funding research and development has been problematic for many countries. For instance, during the Cold War era (1945-1991) why countries like the US and the Soviet Union were investing heavily in arms procurement, some countries like Japan were investing in Research and development (R&D). today, one of the long-term implications of increasing military spending is that, it often leads to the neglect of other critical sectors like science and education, or it makes a country face what Friedman, 2005:6, Florida, 2007, and Kegley et al, (2011) called "creativity Crisis".

Again, Kegley (2011, p. 283) rightly observed that increased military spending often results in opportunity cost. A situation where what is gained for one purpose (military preparation) is lost for other purposes. The consequence of this, according to Kegley et al (2011), any choice made will be a lost opportunity that must be paid for by other sectors of the economy. In addition, studies have shown that military spending often slows down a country's economic growth and creates fiscal deficits. This is because a significant amount of funds spent on arms procurement has aided the eroding of a country's welfare.

The table below shows the military spending of the five highest military spenders based on their annual budgetary allocation as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Global Military Spending as at 2022

S/No	Country	Military Spending
1	United States	USD 766.6 Billion
2	China	USD 244.9 Billion
3	India	USD 73 Billion
4	Russia	USD 66 Billion
5	United Kingdom	USD 58.5 Billion

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI, 2022).

From the table above the United States occupy the top position as the country with the highest military budget of USD 766.6 billion. China occupies the second position with a military budget of USD 244.9 billion. Moreover, India occupies the third position with USD 73 billion. Besides, Russia occupies the fourth position with a military spending of USD 66 billion and the United Kingdom occupies the fifth position with a military spending of USD 58.5 billion. The United States of America held the top spot among the five nations



ranked in Table 1 above as the world's leading military spender as of 2022, while the United Kingdom held the bottom spot among the five nations rated as the world's least military spender.

Table 2: Top Ten Military Spending Nations

S/No	Country	Military Budget	Global Percentage of Military Budget
1	United States	USD 801 Billion	37.9%
2	China	USD 293 Billion	13.9%
3	India	USD 76.6 Billion	3.6%
4	United Kingdom	USD 68.4 Billion	3.2%
5	Russia	USD 65.9 Billion	3.1%
6	France	USD 56.6 Billion	2.7%
7	Germany	USD 56.0 Billion	2.7%
8	Saudi Arabia	USD 55.6 Billion	2.6%
9	Japan	USD 55.13 Billion	2.6%
10	South Korea	USD 50.23 Billion	2.4%
11	Rest of the World	USD 536 Billion	25.3%

Source: SIPRI, 2022

From Table 2 above, the United States occupy the top position as the country with the highest military budget of USD 801 billion with a global percentage of military budget of 37.9%. China occupies the second position with a military budget of USD 293 billion and a global percentage of the military budget of 13.9%. Moreover, India occupies the third position with USD 76.6 billion with a global percentage of military budget of 3.6%. The United Kingdom occupies the fourth position with a military spending of USD 68.4 billion and a global percentage of the military budget of 3.2%. Besides, Russia occupies the fifth position with a military spending of USD 65.9 billion and a global percentage of the military budget of 3.1%. France occupies the sixth position with a military spending of USD 56.6 billion and a global percentage of the military budget of 2.7%. Germany occupies the seventh position with a military spending of USD 56.0 billion and a global percentage of the military budget of 2.7%. Saudi Arabia occupies the eighth position with a military spending of USD 68.4 billion and a global percentage of the military budget of 2.6%. In addition, Japan occupies the ninth position with a military spending of USD 68.4 billion and a global percentage of the military budget of 2.6%. Furthermore, South Korea occupies the tenth position with a military spending of USD 68.4 billion and a global percentage of the military budget of 2.4% while the rest of the world has USD 536 on military spending and a global percentage of military spending of 25.3%.



Table 3: Global Military Spending as at 2023

S/No	Country	Military Spending
1	United States	USD 877 Billion
2	China	USD 292 Billion
3	Russia	USD 86.4 Billion
4	India	USD 81.4 Billion
5	Saudi Arabia	USD 75 Billion
6	United Kingdom	USD 68.5 Billion
7	Germany	USD 55.8 Billion
8	France	USD 53.6 Billion
9	South Korea	USD 46.4 Billion
10	Japan	USD 46 Billion
11	Ukraine	USD 44 Billion

Source: Military News (2023)

Table 3 above shows that, with an estimated military budget of USD 877 billion in 2023, the US will continue to spend the most on defence. With an anticipated USD 292 billion, China remained in second place. With an estimated budget of USD 86.4 billion, Russia comes in third place, followed by India (\$81.4 billion), Saudi Arabia (\$75 billion), the United Kingdom (\$68.5 billion), Germany (\$55.8 billion), France (\$53.6 billion), South Korea (\$46.4 billion), Japan (\$46 billion), and Ukraine (\$44 billion). The aforementioned growing military budget implies that each nation increases its military spending annually.

On the whole, the implications of increasing military spending on human security are that other sectors of the economy are neglected while much attention is spent on acquiring more military hard and soft wares. This is particularly becoming a common trend in both the developed and the developing countries. In contemporary times, especially since the inversion of Ukraine by Russia on the 24th of February, 2022, states are beginning to reconsider military might as critical for the sustenance of their territorial integrity. Today countries are beginning to increase their military budget. Again, the increasing militarization of the United States, Russia, China, Germany, India, Pakistan, Israel, Iran, Turkey and non-state actors like terrorist groups who are in the business of the production of weapons like modern aircraft, tanks and missiles. The destructive nature of these weapons has necessitated increased military spending around the world. Also, the growth and expansion of military industries around the world have further triggered increased military spending to address growing security threats.

Conclusion

There is a growing concern globally today on the dangers posed as a result of increased military arms proliferation both in the long and short run human security as well as the stability of the international system. To this end, despite international instruments put in place by the international community particularly under the aegis of the United Nations to curtail to spread of various arms and aminations around the world, arms proliferation has remained unabated among the developed countries of the world like the United States, China, Russia, Britain, France, Japan just to mention a few that has doubled and in some instances tripled their military budgets in curtail the rising threats posed by perceived enemies within the international system. One of the consequences of the



increased military budget and arms proliferation on the international system as argued in the literature is that it often led to the neglect of human security. Based on this background, this study seeks to make some suggestions on measures to be adopted in a bid to curb the growing military spending and arms proliferation on human security.

Recommendations

Firstly, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in collaboration with the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) should come up with a resolution that goes beyond political statements to restrain arms proliferation and set a benchmark for military spending by states.

Second, Civil Society Organisations should pressurise their home government on the need to strike a balance between meeting the needs of the citizens and achieving increased military spending. In this regard, this will help to limit states spending in procuring arms and ammunitions.

Lastly, there is the need for global re-orientation of state leaders along the thinking that it is arguably safer when states limit the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. This implies that existing nuclear proliferation Treaties should be reviewed in line with current realities of nuclear proliferation.

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