

The NPT

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is a landmark international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament. The Treaty represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States. Opened for signature in 1968, the Treaty entered into force in 1970. On 11 May 1995, the Treaty was extended indefinitely. A total of 190 parties have joined the Treaty, including the five nuclear-weapon States. More countries have ratified the NPT than any other arms limitation and disarmament agreement, a testament to the Treaty's significance.

The provisions of the Treaty, particularly article VIII, paragraph 3, envisage a review of the operation of the Treaty every five years, a provision which was reaffirmed by the States parties at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

To further the goal of non-proliferation and as a confidence-building measure between States parties, the Treaty establishes a safeguards system under the responsibility of the IAEA. Safeguards are used to verify compliance with the Treaty through inspections conducted by the IAEA. The Treaty promotes cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear technology and equal access to this technology for all States parties, while safeguards prevent the diversion of fissile material for weapons use.

The 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons met at the United Nations in New York from 2 to 27 May 2005. A total of 153 States parties to the Treaty participated in the event. The Conference was unable to produce a consensus substantive outcome on the review of the implementation of the provisions of the Treaty.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference is scheduled to be held in New York, USA, from 26 April to 21 May 2010.