



Nuclear Negotiations

BACKGROUND

The Trump administration has been taking a more proactive and hardline approach to nuclear negotiations during his term, rarely compromising and actively pushing the United States' agenda forward. In order to understand the importance of the developed nuclear negotiations that President Trump is pulling the U.S. out of, it is crucial to look back at the history of nuclear development.

In August 1942, the U.S. established the Manhattan Project, which would eventually develop the first nuclear weapon, the atomic bomb. Secrecy was paramount in this operation, as the Axis powers could not learn of its developments or technology, lest its power fall into the wrong hands. Three years later the U.S. conducts its first-ever nuclear test, code-named "Trinity," in New Mexico, ushering in the nuclear age.¹

One month later, the U.S. detonates a uranium bomb over the Japanese city of Hiroshima and a plutonium bomb over Nagasaki. An estimated number of over 210,000 people died directly from these atomic bombs, many later dying from radiation-related illnesses.²

Despite the U.N.'s call for the elimination of atomic bombs following Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear development continued with the U.S.S.R. becoming the second nation to develop and successfully test a nuclear device in 1949. The U.K. then followed suit in 1952, conducting a series of tests in Australia and later France began testing nuclear weapons in 1960.

The nuclear-arms race was well underway in the 1950's with the U.S. raising the stakes by creating a 17-megaton hydrogen bomb, "Bravo," that is detonated at Bikini Atoll in the Pacific Ocean. The competition and tensions only escalated in the 1960's with the Cuban Missile Crisis, bringing the U.S. and U.S.S.R. on the brink of nuclear war.

Over the next 30 years, nuclear weapons continued to develop and became increasingly available to a multitude of countries, including: the U.S., U.S.S.R., U.K., France, China, India, Israel, South Africa, and Pakistan.³ Towards the end of the 1980's and early 1990's restrictions on nuclear weapons began to become more prominent, with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty becoming the

¹ "Nuclear Weapons Timeline," *International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons*, <http://www.icanw.org/the-facts/the-nuclear-age/>.

² "Hiroshima and Nagasaki Death Toll," *Children of the Atomic Bomb*, October 7, 2007, <http://www.aasc.ucla.edu/cab/200708230009.html>.

³ "Nuclear Weapons Timeline."



first nuclear arms treaty to eliminate all land-based missiles between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. in 1987.⁴ Four years later, the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty drastically reduced the number of long-range Soviet and American nuclear weapons, ending the nuclear-arms race between the U.S. and U.S.S.R.

Nuclear limitation and prevention treaties continued to call for the reduction of nuclear weapons and development throughout the 1990's, leading into the 2000's, with treaties like START I & II, the JCPOA, NPT, Antarctic Treaty and many more. However, the twenty-first century has since seen a resurgence of nuclear development globally with activity in North Korea, Iran, and even Russia.

Nuclear negotiations are more crucial now that these new developments are being made and it is important to utilize our knowledge of past events to guide future actions. President Trump's decision to withdraw from certain nuclear treaties has increased the pressure, escalating the already tense climate over nuclear weapons. This then leads to the question of what future nuclear negotiations will look like and if a nuclear war is on the horizon.

⁴ "Treaty Between The United States Of America And The Union Of Soviet Socialist Republics On The Elimination Of Their Intermediate-Range And Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty)" *U.S. Department of State*, December 8, 1987, <https://www.state.gov/t/avc/trty/102360.htm>.

LET'S THINK ABOUT IT

Your SWAC leader will prompt you with questions concerning the same idea:
Due to the resurgence of nuclear development and the U.S.' decision to withdraw from certain nuclear treaties, do you think we are on the verge of a global nuclear war or will compromises and treaties start to be made? Explain.

Express your thoughts and contribute to discussion with your SWAC peers!
(room to write your thoughts)

This lesson plan is meant as an aid for the Faculty Sponsor, President or Vice-President to lead their respective SWAC chapter in the discussion of this two weeks' focus: Nuclear Negotiations.



Kahoot! Introductory Quiz

Kahoot! is an online Quiz platform. This small four-question quiz is to test the student's prior knowledge of the nuclear negotiations, introducing them to the discussion to come. The quiz does not require the proctor to have a Kahoot account in order to start. Students will use an electronic device in order to answer. The link is below; click START NOW and select Classic mode. After the Game PIN is generated, students will be able to join the session by accessing kahoot.it on their computer or mobile device. Begin the quiz once all students have joined! This activity shouldn't take more than 10 minutes.

LINK: <https://create.kahoot.it/share/nuclear-negotiations/80660bae-8ad9-493f-844f-c3dce51f0679>

Lesson Handout

Now is when the handouts should be passed out to students. This handout will cover an analysis of nuclear negotiations, particularly pertaining to the United States, and question whether a nuclear war is on the horizon. It is recommended that the handout be read aloud as a group instead of individually.

Take some time after the document has been read to cover the material with the students and make sure that its been generally understood. Ask questions to students; get them to summarize what they've read and make sure that the students are engaged and understanding. The reading shouldn't take more than 20 minutes.

Video Resources

We have two video resources below that will present the current event portion of the handout, one focusing on the INF treaty, the other discussing Russia's new weapons and the potential for an arms race. Following each link we've included a description of the video and possible questions that you can ask students to see what they've taken away from watching the clips. Each video clip is between 2 and 7 minutes; coupled with questions this segment should take no more than 15 minutes.

- **INF TREATY WALKS U.S., RUSSIA BACK FROM A COLD WAR NUCLEAR SHOWDOWN**



LINK: <https://youtu.be/Ri9VORxQKmE>

- This is a 2-minute video from the Washington Post that discusses the INF treaty and what it would mean for the U.S. to withdraw from it.
- After watching this video, do you think that the INF treaty is outdated and that the U.S. made the right decision by withdrawing from it or do you think this will only increase tensions towards nuclear war?
- Considering that this video was made by the Washington Post, do you believe it to be biased towards the U.S.' position and decision?

- **RUSSIA'S NEW WEAPON, NUCLEAR PARITY AND ARMS RACE**

LINK: <https://youtu.be/Q4LejOtYiyw>

- This video analyzes Russia's new nuclear weapons and takes the position that the U.S. is an aggressor for nuclear warfare.
- Why do you think this video focused on Russia's new nuclear weapons while simultaneously stating that Russia wants to restore nuclear parity and peace?
- RT, the organization that produced this video, is a global news channel that broadcasts from Moscow. Do you believe this video to be biased towards Russia's position?

DISCUSSION

- After watching both videos, do you think that nuclear warfare is a realistic threat?
- Who was the intended audience for each of these videos? Do you think they were the same or different? Explain.
- Analyze the tone and type of music that was utilized in the background of each video.

(This shouldn't take more than 10 minutes – total estimated meeting time: no more than 1 hour.)