

# NATIONAL SECURITY IN JEOPARDY

**the growing intolerance with  
nuclear deterrence**

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## Executive summary

Across Europe and beyond, political debate and media commentary on nuclear weapons are increasingly dominated by calls for greater reliance on nuclear deterrence. As Russia's war against Ukraine has sharpened regional security anxieties, governments in several European countries have strengthened nuclear sharing arrangements, debated whether to increase reliance on nuclear weapons, and signaled a new willingness to endorse nuclear weapons as a legitimate pillar of national security. This moment marks a striking shift in tone compared to just a decade ago. It is gaining traction in political spaces and commanding sustained attention in mainstream media.

However, this is not the full story of what is happening at the moment.

This report documents a parallel — and largely overlooked — trend moving in the opposite direction. In recent years non-nuclear-armed states have become increasingly outspoken in their rejection of nuclear deterrence. What sets this trend apart from previous disarmament efforts is its motivation: for these states, the security calculus has changed. In their view, urgent action to address the intrinsic problem of nuclear deterrence must now be pursued given its intolerable effect on their national, regional and global security.

Drawing on a longitudinal analysis of 128 statements delivered between 2022 and 2025 in meetings of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), this paper charts the rise of this trend through the lens of six influential non-nuclear weapons states from different regions: Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico and South Africa. Among this group, the paper identifies growing skepticism with nuclear weapons states' so-called "risk-reduction measures", a loss of patience with those states' narratives on deterrence, and an emphasis on the security injustice in current nuclear arrangements. Additionally, group members contrast the unproven nature of nuclear deterrence with the expanding body of evidence on its pitfalls.

All nuclear-armed states are in the process of expanding or modernising their nuclear arsenals, citing national security imperatives amid rising global tensions. This study shows that there is another story which is largely overlooked: the upsurge of non-nuclear weapons states now invoking their own national security imperatives; imperatives which demand urgent action to challenge the system of deterrence underpinning nuclear weapons ownership.

## Introduction

In the 2010s, a large group of states, civil society and international organisations examined the humanitarian consequences and the risks associated with nuclear weapons. The movement culminated in the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in 2017 – which entered into force in January 2021. After prohibitions on biological and chemical weapons were established in the 1970s and the 1990s, respectively, the TPNW filled a legal gap in the project to ban weapons of mass destruction<sup>1</sup>. The majority of the world’s countries have now signed, ratified or acceded to the TPNW<sup>2</sup>.

After three cycles of TPNW state discussions between 2022 and 2025, a new trend is emerging: a growing intolerance with the security calculus of nuclear deterrence itself. Building on humanitarian- and risk-related research, its proponents assert what they frequently refer to as their “legitimate security concerns” requiring renewed action to address the threats inherent to nuclear deterrence. Since the objection is with the presence of any nuclear weapon in any state’s security doctrine, proponents will not be appeased by nuclear-armed states’ promise of measures to manage risks, which they increasingly see as a distraction. Alongside the national security imperative to protect populations from the risks associated with nuclear deterrence, these countries are agitated by the injustice of a system which privileges one group of countries’ perceived security (nuclear weapons states) over the security of another group (non-nuclear weapons states).

Leading members of the camp include Austria, Brazil, Malaysia, Mexico, Ireland and South Africa. Despite the prominence of these countries, the trend remains largely unnoticed in establishment security discourse and mainstream media.

This study tracks the emergence of this trend and identifies questions which will need to be answered by states attempting to justify the ongoing inclusion of nuclear deterrence in their national security doctrines.

## Humanitarian consequences

The success of the humanitarian disarmament movement on landmines and cluster munitions in the 1990s and 2000s coincided with nuclear weapons states flouting their own commitments on disarmament. Following the adoption of the cluster munitions convention in 2008, civil society, states, international organisations and scientists turned the logic of humanitarian disarmament to nuclear weapons.

Research on the humanitarian and environmental impact of a nuclear detonation showed that the consequences of a detonation would be graver than previously thought. By 2013, evidence had been amassed on food security, climate change and the gendered and intergenerational impacts, making clear the impossibility of any effective emergency response to a nuclear blast<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2014 Austria issued a pledge to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons that has been internationalised as a “humanitarian pledge” which became supported by more than 127 States:

[https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Zentrale/Aussenpolitik/Abruestung/HINW14/HINW14vienna\\_Pledge\\_Document.pdf](https://www.bmeia.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Zentrale/Aussenpolitik/Abruestung/HINW14/HINW14vienna_Pledge_Document.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> See Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor for the status of the TPNW’s membership: <https://banmonitor.org/tpnw-status>

<sup>3</sup> See for example “Unspeakable Suffering – the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons” published in 2013 by RCW, <https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Publications/Publications/humanitarian-impact-nuclear-weapons-2nd-edition.pdf>;

“Catastrophic Humanitarian Harm” published in 2012 by ICAN

<https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/ican/pages/749/attachments/original/1575657291/CHH-Booklet-WEB-2015.pdf?1575657291>

Nuclear weapons states acknowledge the existence of humanitarian and environmental concerns, but draw a different conclusion. As one Austrian diplomat put it, “the argument is turned on its head to underscore the effectiveness of nuclear deterrence”<sup>4</sup>.

## A focus on risk

Next international community interrogated the effectiveness of nuclear deterrence, reaching the conclusion that the risk calculus is more complex and more fallible than previously thought.

Research on the risks of miscalculation, technical error, accident and escalation dented the idea promoted by nuclear weapons states that nuclear deterrence could be safe, and could be relied on as a rational approach to security<sup>5</sup>. The movement mobilised at a 2014 Mexico conference attended by over 140 states.

Evidence brought forward suggested that the reason nuclear weapons had not been detonated outside of testing since 1945 was not down to a well-calibrated system of nuclear deterrence, but instead: dumb luck.

As evidence mounted on further risks, including around emerging technology and proliferation, it became almost impossible not to concede that, even before factoring in rising geopolitical tensions, nuclear weapons offered less strategic stability and were less safe than previously known.

## A new trend based on legitimate security perspectives

After the TPNW entered into force, non-nuclear-armed states continued discussing the significance of the ever-growing body of evidence.

In 2023 a subtle but important shift in the discourse seemed to take place: non-nuclear-armed states started challenging nuclear deterrence based on their own “legitimate security concerns”<sup>6</sup>. Drawing on the waves of humanitarian and risk-based research, proponents rejected the claim by nuclear-armed states that nuclear weapons could be made safe<sup>7</sup>, and took aim at issues inherent to nuclear deterrence.

The security-based framing sets the challenge apart from previous objections which have gathered pace, which tended to be made on legal<sup>8</sup>, ethical<sup>9</sup>, or — from campaigners within nuclear weapons states — cost<sup>10</sup>- based grounds.

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4 “Time to engage seriously with the TPNW’s security concerns” - ELN Article by Alexander Kmentt, Director for Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation at the Austrian Foreign Ministry, <https://europeanleadershipnetwork.org/commentary/time-to-engage-seriously-with-the-tpnws-security-concerns/#:~:text=Nuclear%2Darmed%20states%20and%20their,the%20practice%20of%20nuclear%20deterrence>.

5 See for example “Too Close For Comfort” published by Chatham House in 2014: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2014/04/too-close-comfort-cases-near-nuclear-use-and-options-policy>; “Command and Control” by Eric Schlosser published in 2013 <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/oct/25/command-control-eric-schlosser-review>

6 [https://docs-library.unoda.org/Treaty\\_on\\_the\\_Prohibition\\_of\\_Nuclear\\_Weapons\\_-\\_ThirdMeeting\\_of\\_States\\_Parties\\_\(2025\)/TPNW\\_MSP\\_2025\\_7\\_SUPPLEMENTARY\\_INFORMATION\\_Austria\\_\(security\\_concerns\).pdf](https://docs-library.unoda.org/Treaty_on_the_Prohibition_of_Nuclear_Weapons_-_ThirdMeeting_of_States_Parties_(2025)/TPNW_MSP_2025_7_SUPPLEMENTARY_INFORMATION_Austria_(security_concerns).pdf)

7 Benoît Pelopidas, Kjølsv Egeland, The false promise of nuclear risk reduction, *International Affairs*, Volume 100, Issue 1, January 2024, Pages 345–360, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiaad290>

8 ICJ Advisory Opinion the Legality of nuclear weapons: <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/95>

9 <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4067948?ln=en>

10 [https://www.icanw.org/global\\_spending\\_on\\_nuclear\\_weapons\\_topped\\_100\\_billion\\_in\\_2024#:~:text=In%202024%2C%20the%20nine%20nuclear.Nuclear%20Weapons%20Spending%20in%202024](https://www.icanw.org/global_spending_on_nuclear_weapons_topped_100_billion_in_2024#:~:text=In%202024%2C%20the%20nine%20nuclear.Nuclear%20Weapons%20Spending%20in%202024)

An organising principle of the approach is non-nuclear-armed states' assertion of their own right to security and the imperative to keep their own populations safe. The move is motivated by new evidence showing nuclear deterrence to be more fallible and the consequences of failure graver than previously thought. In other words, it would not only be impossible to insulate their populations from the consequences of a nuclear weapons exchange, but that such a catastrophe is more likely to occur than previously thought.

By invoking their own national security as a challenge to nuclear deterrence — a discourse that itself is dominated and driven by the national security of nuclear-armed states — a light is shone on the inequity of the current system in which one group's perceived security is delivered at the expense of another. This grievance is frequently raised by non-nuclear weapons states.

At the second meeting of states parties to the TPNW in late 2023, Austria became one of the first states to assert the legitimate security concerns frame. It did so in the presence of observer states, including allies of nuclear armed states:

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We cannot wait for catastrophe, we need progress. Let me therefore acknowledge, at this moment, the presence of several observer states at this meeting and express our hope that this is a sign for and a step toward such constructive engagement with the profound arguments and **legitimate security concerns** that are now expressed through the TPNW.<sup>11</sup>

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Language on “legitimate security interests” subsequently appeared in the political declaration agreed by TPNW states at this meeting<sup>12</sup> where a decision was also taken to appoint Austrian diplomat Alexander Kmentt to lead a consultation to better articulate and promote “the legitimate security concerns [...] that result from the existence of nuclear weapons and the concept of nuclear deterrence” and to produce a report on the subject to be presented at the third meeting of states parties to the TPNW.<sup>13</sup>

This process acted like an incubator — refining argumentation and broadening support for the approach among member states. Over the next two years, the framing gained traction with a large number of non-nuclear-armed states, with the frame adopted in a swathe of national statements at meetings of the NPT and the TPNW. These states include Cuba, Brazil, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, New Zealand, Peru, Thailand and South Africa.

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<sup>11</sup> Austrian statement at the Second Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW, December 2023

<sup>12</sup> 2MSP outcome document - political declaration: “The threat of inflicting mass destruction runs counter to the legitimate security interests of humanity as a whole. This is a dangerous, misguided and unacceptable approach to security. - [https://docs-library.unoda.org/Treaty\\_on\\_the\\_Prohibition\\_of\\_Nuclear\\_Weapons\\_-\\_SecondMeeting\\_of\\_States\\_Parties\\_\(2023\)/TPNW.MSP\\_2023.CRP\\_4.Rev\\_1\\_revised\\_draft\\_dec.pdf](https://docs-library.unoda.org/Treaty_on_the_Prohibition_of_Nuclear_Weapons_-_SecondMeeting_of_States_Parties_(2023)/TPNW.MSP_2023.CRP_4.Rev_1_revised_draft_dec.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> 2MSP outcome document - decisions taken: [https://docs-library.unoda.org/Treaty\\_on\\_the\\_Prohibition\\_of\\_Nuclear\\_Weapons\\_-\\_SecondMeeting\\_of\\_States\\_Parties\\_\(2023\)/TPNW.MSP\\_2023.CRP\\_3.Rev\\_1\\_draft\\_decisions.pdf](https://docs-library.unoda.org/Treaty_on_the_Prohibition_of_Nuclear_Weapons_-_SecondMeeting_of_States_Parties_(2023)/TPNW.MSP_2023.CRP_3.Rev_1_draft_decisions.pdf)

## Mapping growing state concern with nuclear deterrence

To explore the substance and uptake of this trend in which states assert their own security interests to oppose nuclear deterrence, this section looks at six influential states from four continents at the forefront of this new mobilisation: Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico and South Africa. These states are key actors in nuclear weapons discussions and three of them (Brazil, Mexico and South Africa) are listed by CSIS as key countries that will profoundly shape the future of the international order.

The author performed a longitudinal analysis on statements delivered by these states over the past four years in the TPNW (three meetings taking place in 2022, 2023 and 2025) and the NPT (four conferences taking place in 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025).

Honing in on the most relevant segments of these meetings, the source material comprised 128 statements spanning the four years: Austria: 27 sources, Brazil: 16 statements, Ireland: 28 statements, Malaysia: 19 statements, Mexico: 19 statements, South Africa: 19 statements .

This section highlights the adoption of the framing by each of the six states.

**Austria** Austria has been at the forefront of the security concerns movement, having offered detailed critiques of nuclear deterrence throughout the activity window. In the material studied, Austria was the first to adopt the security concerns framing when, at 2MSP in late 2022, Austria hoped that the presence of observers, some of whom were allies of nuclear-armed states, would lead to “constructive engagement with the profound arguments and legitimate security concerns that are now expressed through the TPNW”. Austria used the framing in all subsequent meetings and led the consultative process within the TPNW to develop the security concerns angle.

**Brazil** Brazil has signed the TPNW but is the only one of the six states in this study that has not yet ratified or acceded to the Treaty. Brazil’s stance has developed across the four years in a similar pattern to the others, from non-specific concern with nuclear deterrence to raising the specific security needs of non-nuclear-armed states and the injustice of nuclear-armed state security being privileged over non-nuclear-armed states. While outside of the scope of this study, it should be noted that Brazil’s assertion of non-nuclear-armed states’ security concerns, and their consistent rejection of the concept supported by nuclear-armed states of “undiminished security for all”, significantly predates the activity window explored in this study<sup>14</sup>.

**Ireland** In the source material Ireland does not use the term “nuclear deterrence”, but heavily critiques its underpinning policies such as the reliance on nuclear weapons in security doctrines and the concept of mutually-assured destruction. By the end of the four years Ireland invokes specific security concerns of the TPNW states and contrasts the evidence showing the dangers of nuclear weapons with the unproven nature of nuclear deterrence. Ireland sees some currency in risk reduction measures but notes it is not a substitute for disarmament.

**Malaysia** Malaysia heavily criticises inherent issues with nuclear deterrence throughout the four years and calls out the double standard where the security of a select group of states is placed above that of others. By the end of the four years Malaysia welcomes the focus on the security concerns associated with nuclear weapons, including to TPNW states, that result from the

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<sup>14</sup> Brazil’s 2010 statement to the Conference on Disarmament highlights the overlooked issue of NNWS security concerns and critiques the concept of undiminished security for all [https://www.opanal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CD\\_March10\\_2011\\_Brazil.pdf](https://www.opanal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CD_March10_2011_Brazil.pdf)

very existence and persistence of nuclear weapons in the military and security doctrines of some states.

**Mexico** Across the four years Mexico consistently raised its objections to nuclear deterrence and rejected the idea that nuclear weapons underpin international security. Within the material studied, Mexico specifically invoked the security concerns of non-nuclear-armed states in 2025 while stating that Mexico’s security concern should be on the same footing as nuclear-armed states’ security.

**South Africa** South Africa uses the security injustice angle throughout the source material to make detailed critiques of nuclear deterrence. In 2025 South Africa welcomes the focus on the legitimate security concerns of TPNW states, noting that for too long the debate has been dominated by the “narrow national security interests” of a small number of states to the detriment of humanity. South Africa supports the idea of developing the approach and for TPNW states to emphasise the risk to their populations.

## Distinctive features of the legitimate security concerns approach

Alongside the security framing, the six states studied employ a wide range supporting arguments to challenge nuclear deterrence, with common themes emerging around (1) scepticism with risk-reduction measures (2) rejection of nuclear-armed state narratives (3) an evidence-based approach in contrast to the unproven nature of nuclear deterrence, and (4) the security injustice of a system which privileges one group’s perceived security over another.

This section explores the presence of these themes in the source material.

### 1. Scepticism with risk-reduction measures

Evidence showing that the business of nuclear deterrence is riskier than previously known in the 2010s challenges the nuclear-armed state narrative that the system offers strategic stability. Nuclear-armed states responded by promoting policies to make nuclear deterrence more safe through risk reduction measures such as negative security assurances and conceptualisations of responsible nuclear weapons ownership.

For non-nuclear-armed states though, the security calculus has fundamentally changed: as well research showing nuclear deterrence is more complex and riskier, the humanitarian and environmental research shows that the consequences, should nuclear deterrence fail, are more dangerous than previously thought.

As a result, attempts by nuclear-armed states to reassure non-nuclear-armed states are being met with increasing scepticism<sup>15</sup>. This stance is widely identifiable in the group of states studied. In 2023 South Africa addressed the NPT, stating that:

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<sup>15</sup> Benoît Pelopidas, Kjølvi Egeland, The false promise of nuclear risk reduction, *International Affairs*, Volume 100, Issue 1, January 2024, Pages 345–360, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiaad290> - see abstract “‘nuclear risk reduction’ has gained renewed attention as a pragmatic framework for managing and progressively reducing nuclear dangers”

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“the risk reduction efforts being proposed while maintaining the value of deterrence are contradictory and of no value or contribution towards nuclear disarmament. Nuclear risk cannot be adjusted at will for the purposes of deterrence.”

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States in the TPNW are not so much arguing against risk-reduction, rather, they are intent on engaging nuclear-armed states on ,as Malaysia put it in 2022, “the unacceptable risks inherent in nuclear weapons”. In 2023 Austria made a similar point, remarking that “*we learn more and more every year about the inherent risks*” while Brazil critiques nuclear deterrence by pointing out “*inherent contradictions on all sides*”.

Between 2022-2025 Ireland continued to cautiously welcome risk-reduction efforts while stating that such efforts must not be a substitute for disarmament. Ireland explained the approach at the 2024 NPT meeting:

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“Ireland’s position is that the only way to remove the risks associated with them, completely, is through the total, irreversible and verifiable elimination”

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From the source material studied it’s clear that the nuclear-armed state narrative on risk reduction fails to respond to the concerns raised by TPNW states. For non-nuclear-armed states, attempts to make nuclear weapons safe is a contradiction and a potentially dangerous distraction. Non-nuclear weapons states instead are determined to engage with nuclear-armed states on fundamental concerns relating to nuclear deterrence. Austria summed up the sentiment in its report to 3MSP on the consultative process: “*Elimination is the “risk reduction gold standard”*”.

## 2. Rejection of nuclear-armed state narratives

In recent decades nuclear-armed states have failed to make progress on disarmament while repeatedly insisting they are working to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons. During this period, it has been the perspective of nuclear-armed states that the security conditions have not been conducive to disarmament. This pro forma position is articulated in scores of statements made by the five nuclear weapons states recognised by the NPT, as well as in their 2022 joint statement<sup>16</sup>. Their position is frequently accompanied by the principle of “undiminished security for all” – an evergreen principle of the NPT and UN disarmament discourse intended to mean that during the process of nuclear disarmament no state or group of states’ security should be harmed<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61d308ffe90e071971e25654/Joint\\_Statement\\_Of\\_the\\_Leaders\\_of\\_the\\_Five\\_Nuclear\\_Weapon\\_States\\_On\\_Preventing\\_Nuclear\\_War\\_and\\_Avoiding\\_Arms\\_Races.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61d308ffe90e071971e25654/Joint_Statement_Of_the_Leaders_of_the_Five_Nuclear_Weapon_States_On_Preventing_Nuclear_War_and_Avoiding_Arms_Races.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Ritchie, N., & Kmentt, A. A. (2021). Universalising the TPNW: Challenges and Opportunities. *Journal for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament*, 4(1), 70–93. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25751654.2021.1935673> - see “Approaches to Universalisation with Non-nuclear-armed States”

From the source material it is clear that non-nuclear-armed states believe the principle is being used expediently by nuclear-armed states to avoid the issue of disarmament. For non-nuclear-armed states, when nuclear-armed states invoke undiminished security for all, in fact, the security needs being considered are not for all, but for the exclusive group of nuclear-armed states and their allies. For this reason, robust critiques of the principle frequently accompany non-nuclear weapons states' assertion of their own security needs.

Brazil is a particularly longstanding critic of the “undiminished security for all” shibboleth, condemning it since at least 2009<sup>18</sup>. A resurgence in Brazil's opposition to the principle can be seen during this study's 2022-2025 activity window. Brazil did not address the issue in 2022 or 2023, but in a 2024 NPT meeting Brazil stated that:

**“This principle has been consistently abused by some States to justify their continued refusal to accept even a most modest reduction in their security, thus preventing a huge net increase in global security.”**

Like Brazil, Austria addressed the issue at the 2024 NPT meeting, taking aim at what it saw as the misuse of the principle when only nuclear-armed states' security is taken into account:

**“The humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons do not know borders. In fact, their effects already extend globally in even a limited nuclear conflict, thereby diminishing all of our security. The principle of undiminished security for all must therefore be seen correctly as a call for acceleration of disarmament efforts, rather than as a conditionality or a means to delay or avoid the implementation of Article 6.”**

At the 2025 NPT meeting Malaysia called for interrogation of the principle while raising wider issues with nuclear-armed states' attempts to justify nuclear deterrence:

**“The catastrophic humanitarian consequences would pay no heed to political boundaries, and therefore implicate the security interests of all States. This should be borne in mind in interrogating such notions as “undiminished security for all [...] Ever more sophisticated arguments put forward by advocates of nuclear deterrence will not blind us to the stark realities at hand, whether in security, ethical or moral terms.”**

Brazil elaborated its position at the 2025 NPT meeting:

**“The principle of “undiminished security for all” is often used as a justification for inaction in the field of disarmament.”**

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<sup>18</sup> [https://www.opanal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CD\\_March10\\_2011\\_Brazil.pdf](https://www.opanal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CD_March10_2011_Brazil.pdf)

At the 2025 TPNW meeting Mexico critiques the use of the principle by nuclear-armed states and shares its own interpretation which appears consistent with other TPNW states:

**“we agree with undiminished security for all, but that means that the security of one state such as Mexico and those present here, has to be on the same footing as nuclear weapons states’ security”**

The increasing rejections of “undiminished security for all” in recent years is important dimension of non-nuclear weapons’ states security-related challenge. It also shows the intent to meet nuclear weapons states on their turf to call out an approach which overlooks non-nuclear-armed states’ own security.

### **3. An evidence-based approach in contrast with the unproven nature of nuclear deterrence**

A key characteristic of non-nuclear-armed states’ security-based challenge is the extent to which it is driven by authoritative research.

When making their case, TPNW states frequently contrast the well-evidenced flaws inherent to nuclear deterrence with the unproven arguments deployed by nuclear-armed states in its favour. At 1MSP in 2022 Austria made the point:

**“We cannot continue to assume that these weapons will never be used again. Our policies should not be based on wishful thinking. We need a more realistic approach, based on evidence. And we have the evidence on our side.”**

The following year Austria elaborated at a meeting of the NPT, stating:

**“We cannot rely with any degree of certainty that nuclear deterrence is or will be effective but we know for sure that nuclear deterrence can fail. On the other hand, we learn more and more every year about the inherent risks and the catastrophic complex consequences for humanity and the environment.”**

In 2025 Austria tells NPT states that the TPNW proposes the adoption of a precautionary principle driven by evidence:

**“The TPNW proposes a re-orientation of global security policy based on the precautionary principle: that we take policy decisions based not on assumptions of success, but on evidence of what can go wrong. These concerns have not been adequately addressed in the NPT.”**

Ireland also uses the evidence vs unproven framing but warns that despite this, the appeal of nuclear weapons is growing. From a statement delivered by Ireland at a 2025 TPNW meeting:

**“Regrettably, despite the irrefutable evidence regarding the devastating humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, we still see increasing salience of and emphasis on nuclear weapons in security postures and doctrines.**

**We also see renewed interest in nuclear proliferation and arguments that nuclear weapons can serve as an essential element of security guarantees. Despite the unproven nature of those arguments, their perceived appeal is growing”**

South Africa makes a similar point in at the 2025 TPNW meeting:

**“policy decisions regarding nuclear weapons should be based primarily on the available scientific facts [...] Mr President those that continue to possess nuclear weapons and those that rely on them for their security have devised sophisticated arguments in favor of nuclear deterrence. What is clear is that these arguments seem to be based on unproven beliefs rather than scientific evidence about their security value”**

In its statement to the NPT in 2025, Malaysia promotes the idea of decision-making based on an objective reading of scientific data, not tenuous assumptions:

**"Dispassionate engagement with the evolving scientific evidence on nuclear-weapon use and testing, and a recognition of the tenuous assumptions upon which nuclear deterrence relies, is imperative."**

The data-driven approach of non-nuclear-armed states is a significant dimension of the security concerns trend which provides useful entry points for discussion with supporters of nuclear deterrence.

#### **4. The security injustice of a system which privileges one group’s perceived security over another**

Alongside the security framing, non-nuclear-armed states’ increasingly remark on the injustice of a system that privileges the perceived security of one group (nuclear-armed states) over the security of another group (non-nuclear-armed states). This injustice framing chimes with broader global justice movements influenced by the inequity of global north vs global south power dynamics.

Across the four years South Africa spoke at each of the four NPT meetings to warn states that selective consideration of security concerns undermines the Treaty. This strand frequently overlaps with non-nuclear weapons states’ critique of the concept of undiminished security for all.

The following rebuke was deployed by South Africa in the 2022 meeting and repeated with minimal variations at each of the following three NPT meetings:

**“South Africa firmly believes that the object and purpose of the NPT can never be achieved if it is seen only as a means to address security concerns of some, but not security for all.”**

Other states in this study invoked the inequality of the current set-up more explicitly. In a 2024 NPT statement, Brazil rejected that there should be a hierarchy between the security interests of states:

**“The NPT is a treaty about a very scarce commodity nowadays: security. This commodity is indivisible and is to be equitably distributed among NWS and NNWS alike. In brief, there is no hierarchy between security needs of an NWS and an NNWS.”**

The following year at the NPT Brazil summed it up *“The NPT cannot take into account only the security concerns of the five Nuclear Weapon States (NPT)”*

In 2025 Mexico said at a meeting of the TPNW:

**“Mexico has also been very vocal in saying that undiminished security for all applies also to NNWS; that our own security is reduced and so when they want to apply this concept we have to be very vocal about what the consequences for us are”.**

As with other strands of the security concerns framing, the use by some TPNW states of the injustice dimension shows the intent to approach this issue from multiple different angles using different techniques. The recourse to security injustice is significant as it could help TPNW states to elevate and mobilise in their quest to counter nuclear deterrence by tapping into established global injustice movements that are more well known for their focus on economic inequality, development and climate justice<sup>19</sup>.

## What next?

Austria’s [report to the 2025 meeting of the TPNW](#), based on consultations with TPNW states and civil society, noted that *“the voices of Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons supporters tend not to be sufficiently heard in international forums, despite the fact that they constitute a majority and can draw on ample scientific evidence”*. The report recommends that states increase advocacy and public engagement to challenge nuclear deterrence across multiple fora, including expert bodies, UN bodies and regional platforms. The report also recommends engagement with States reliant on nuclear weapons through *“all available avenues and forums to systematically and publicly demand detailed information from nuclear-armed and -hosting States.”*

Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico and South Africa are significant players on the world stage with opportunities to raise concerns in influential blocs including the G20 (Brazil and South Africa), the EU (Austria and Ireland), African Union (South Africa), BRICS (Brazil and South Africa), the Organization of American States (Brazil and Mexico), the Association of East Asian Nations (Malaysia) as well as through relevant multilateral fora and bilateral interactions. According to [CSIS](#), Brazil, Mexico, and South Africa are three of the eight countries that will profoundly shape the future of the international order.

Beyond the states in this study, Cuba, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Thailand, Peru, Nigeria and New Zealand have also used their national voice to highlight legitimate security concerns, suggesting the potential for a strong group of advocates for this position to emerge. The New Agenda

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<sup>19</sup> See for example Global Justice Now <https://www.globaljustice.org.uk/>, SDG Action, <https://sdg-action.org/the-sdgs-need-a-strong-and-loud-civil-society/>, Mary Robinson Foundation on Climate Justice <https://www.mrfcj.org/principles-of-climate-justice/>

Coalition, which comprises six of these states (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand and South Africa) may provide a useful grouping to develop and promote the objectives further.

Following the March 2025 TPNW meeting, TPNW states took their case to the NPT. The following excerpt, which was delivered on behalf of all states parties and signatories of the TPNW (over 90 states), showing the willingness for the full membership of the TPNW to advance the legitimate security concerns framing:

**“The risk of nuclear weapons being used again remains a latent threat due to their very existence, which results in profound and legitimate security concerns for States not engaged in nuclear deterrence.”<sup>20</sup>**

In October 2025 at the General Assembly’s First Committee, TPNW states sharpened their tone, referencing the instances where non-nuclear-armed states have been explicitly threatened by nuclear-armed states:

**“The risk of nuclear weapons being used again remains an inherent threat due to their very existence, which results in profound and legitimate security concerns for all States, including examples of Non-Nuclear Weapon States that have been subjected to explicit threats by Nuclear Weapon States”<sup>21</sup>**

Eyes now turn to the review conferences scheduled later in 2026 for both the NPT and the TPNW where opportunities exist for proponents to bring the conversation forward. At the NPT, the opportunity for nuclear-armed states to work with non-nuclear-armed states on an outcome document could present an intriguing opportunity for dialogue using the common language of security concern.

Given the TPNW’s support from a majority of UN member states, the adoption of a stand alone General Assembly resolution on the legitimate security concerns may provide a useful mobilisation tool. More broadly, opportunities to raise and integrate the approach outside the peace and security space will help TPNW states build support beyond traditional constituencies. Trade negotiations, SDG discussions and the race to select the UN’s next Secretary-General may all provide useful opportunities to gain traction.

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<sup>20</sup> [https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom25/statements/28April\\_TPNW.pdf](https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom25/statements/28April_TPNW.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> [https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/1com/1com25/statements/17Oct\\_TPNW.pdf](https://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/1com/1com25/statements/17Oct_TPNW.pdf)

## Conclusion

The global discourse on nuclear weapons is transforming. Establishment narratives and media commentary suggest this is a one-way track towards re-armament and a strengthening of nuclear weapons postures while overlooking mounting evidence of the dangers. Global security concerns are increasing — geopolitical tensions are high and violent conflict is on the rise and the nuclear weapons postures of nuclear armed states are being expanded<sup>22</sup>.

But there is another story that deserves oxygen. The number of states opposed to nuclear weapons, and their determination to make progress on disarmament, is growing, not despite, but spurred on by the poor security environment.

The substance of the objection to nuclear weapons is also evolving, based on fifteen years of research showing that the humanitarian consequences and risks associated with nuclear weapons to be graver than previously thought. TPNW states are now challenging the fundamentals of nuclear deterrence. Protagonists of this approach include Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico and South Africa.

The movement is characterized by a strategic shift in argumentation, employing security-based language to articulate the "legitimate security concerns" of non-nuclear-armed states while countering the security justifications offered by nuclear-armed states. Proponents are increasingly critical of nuclear-armed-state-promoted concepts like "undiminished security for all" and "responsible" nuclear weapons ownership while asserting that the conversation needs to move beyond risk-reduction measures. According to proponents, action cannot afford to wait for an improved international security context.

Proponents frequently critique nuclear deterrence as an unproven and unevidence-able belief, in contrast to the extensive body of scientific evidence on the increased humanitarian impact and the increased fallibility of nuclear deterrence. Proponents also highlight the inequality of a system that privileges the perceived security of nuclear-armed states at the expense of the security of non-nuclear-armed states.

One of the enduring failures of the discourse between non-nuclear-armed states and nuclear-armed states is each of the two communities' dismissal of the other's perspectives giving rise to a sense that the two camps are not talking with each other, but past each other: calls from non-nuclear-armed states for disarmament are responded to by nuclear-armed states with calls for non-nuclear-armed states to respect their security needs. This has resulted in the repeated arrival at a diplomatic dead end.

The new approach may offer some promise in this respect. The adoption of a frame traditionally associated with the architects of nuclear deterrence theory, not of those challenging it, brings the potential for more constructive dialogue. Inhabiting the same discourse brings opportunities for a more coherent exchange and the potential for a more inclusive discussion around the evidence which has caused non-nuclear-armed states to arrive at this point.

It may prove harder for nuclear-armed states to dismiss the concerns being brought forth by non-nuclear-armed states since doing so would be to dismiss what is typically considered the top priority of any government: national security. In many cases, those raising these concerns are states that

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.prio.org/news/3616>

are allies on other issues. Furthermore, the hypocrisy of such dismissals would be sharp given that nuclear-armed states' own justification for continued nuclear weapons ownership relies on the same argumentation. The 2026 NPT review conference will be a key test for how effectively non-nuclear-armed states can use this framing to engage nuclear-armed states.

Given how ambitious the objective is, making progress on this agenda will not be easy or fast. Deeper security analysis will be required as will rigorous processes to elaborate and embed the findings into individual national security strategies. With an emerging strong core group working on this agenda there is good potential for mobilisation. The prominence, influence and connectedness of proponents of the legitimate security concerns approach —many of whom are significant players in blocs like the G20, EU, AU, and BRICS— will bring opportunities to promote and expand the initiative on the international stage. Furthermore, given the alignment of the approach with broader movements for global justice, there is the potential for non-nuclear-armed states to find affinity and support among broad-based networks concerned with inequality, debt relief, financing for development and democratisation of the global system.

# Annex A:

## Progression of states' positions on nuclear deterrence / security concerns over time

Austria		
	Summary of language on nuclear deterrence / security concerns	Example
2022	<b>Attacks the idea that nuclear weapons provide security but not yet specifically asserting non-nuclear-armed states' own security</b>	<p>Nuclear risks have not been this high for decades. And it is our responsibility to draw the right lessons. Some see recent developments as a validation of nuclear deterrence. I am convinced that such a conclusion is not only wrong, but also extremely dangerous. Because, in its final consequence, it is no less than a call for further proliferation. The logic that nuclear weapons provide security is a fundamental error. Because deterrence requires credibility. Meaning the readiness to actually use these weapons. This is nothing less than a massive nuclear Damocles sword hanging over the heads of all of us, of all of humanity.</p> <p>1MSP</p>
2023	<b>Introduces the framing of the legitimate security perspective of the non-nuclear majority</b>	<p>Nuclear deterrence theory relies on the constant threat to actually use these weapons. This means the constant readiness to potentially end the world as we know it. And this despite the many risks, uncertainties, assumptions and the risk of confirmation bias on which deterrence theory is based.</p> <p><b>We cannot rely with any degree of certainty that nuclear deterrence is or will be effective but we know for sure that nuclear deterrence can fail. On the other hand, we learn more and more every year about the inherent risks and the catastrophic complex consequences for humanity and the environment.</b></p> <p>NPT2023</p> <p>We cannot wait for catastrophe, we need progress. Let me therefore acknowledge, at this moment, the presence of several observer states at this meeting and express our hope that this is a sign for and a step toward such constructive engagement with the profound arguments and <b>legitimate security concerns</b> that are now expressed through the TPNW.</p> <p>2MSP</p>
2024	<b>Continues to adopt the framing at the NPT</b>	<p>Those who argue the value of nuclear weapons for their security should acknowledge the <b>legitimate concerns that this very approach creates for the rest of the international community</b>. More importantly, they should engage with these concerns. NPT 2024</p> <p>The humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons do not know borders. In fact, their effects already</p>

## Austria

Summary of language on nuclear deterrence / security concerns

Example

		<p>extend globally in even a limited nuclear conflict, thereby diminishing all of our security. <b>The principle of undiminished security for all must therefore be seen correctly as a call for acceleration of disarmament efforts</b>, rather than as a conditionality or a means to delay or avoid the implementation of Art 6. NPT2024</p>
<p>2025</p>	<p><b>Austria presents the consultation outcome, consolidating the views of non-nuclear-armed states on the security concerns with nuclear deterrence, refining and reinforcing the legitimate security concern framing. Brings in the theme of one group’s security being pursued at the expense of another group’s security arrangements.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Graver, more complex and global consequences than previously understood with multiple and direct impacts on TPNW States</li> <li>— No region in the world would remain immune</li> <li>— This creates security threats to TPNW States, as all states carry the risks of NWs Seeking to eliminate these risks is a prime responsibility and legitimate concern for TPNW States</li> <li>— Elimination is the “risk reduction gold standard”</li> <li>— 3MSP - summary of consultative process</li> <li>— Nuclear deterrence theory abstracts the reality and risks of consequences of nuclear weapons</li> <li>— Weighing the Humanitarian Consequences and Risks vs. “Security Benefits”:</li> <li>— Don’t know if nuclear deterrence “works” or not but know for sure that it can fail.</li> <li>— More evidence on consequences and risks than on nuclear deterrence stability</li> <li>— Acknowledge uncertainties and apply prudential principle</li> <li>— Pursuit of elimination is rational and realist response to nuclear dangers and increasing scientific evidence</li> <li>— 3MSP - summary of consultative process</li> </ul> <p>Seeking to eliminate the risks that could lead to such catastrophic consequences is neither naïve or idealistic. This is ultimately only possible through the elimination of nuclear weapons. The core of the problem we face in the NPT is that the creation of these very security threats and concerns is justified by those who rely on nuclear weapons with security arguments as well. In short, <b>the nuclear weapons based security approaches of one part of the NPT membership are seen as diminishing and undermining the security of the rest of the NPT Membership – and in fact of global security.</b> The TPNW proposes a re-orientation of global security policy based on the precautionary principle: that we take policy decisions based not on assumptions of success, but on evidence of what can go wrong.</p> <p>These concerns have not been adequately addressed in the NPT. 2025 NPT</p>

## Brazil

	Summary of language on nuclear deterrence / security concerns	Example
2022	<b>Statements have non-specific language warning about belief in nuclear deterrence</b>	“Brazil has warned about the dangers of overvaluing the role played by the possession of nuclear weapons in national security strategies and of the continuing belief in nuclear deterrence as a security guarantee.” (NPT)
2023	<b>Statements hone in on the inherent issues with nuclear deterrence but remain non-specific</b>	“Recent events have made clear the limitations of nuclear deterrence and exposed its inherent contradictions on all sides.” TPNW
2024	<b>Raises concerns about the security of non-nuclear-armed states and brings in the theme of the injustice of nuclear-armed state security being privileged over non-nuclear-armed states and critiques “undiminished security for all” principle.</b>	<p>“The NPT is a treaty about a very scarce commodity nowadays: security. This commodity is indivisible and is to be equitably distributed among nuclear-armed states and non-nuclear-armed states alike. In brief, there is no hierarchy between the security needs of a nuclear-armed state and a non-nuclear-armed state.</p> <p>Moreover, security is not an absolute. Rather, any pursuit of this absolute is doomed to backfire, as absolute security for one will inevitably imply absolute insecurity for everybody else. The nuclear-armed states that believe they have acquired their security in advance by having guaranteed their access to nuclear weapons, will certainly be disabused by how elusive such security is, as they have to guard themselves against each other. (NPT)</p> <p>"And yet, like in many other discussions in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, the adoption of NSAs is thwarted by arguments that rest on the principle of “undiminished security for all”. This principle has been consistently abused by some States to justify their continued refusal to accept even a most modest reduction in their security, thus preventing a huge net increase in global security." NPT</p>
2025	<b>Continues to call out the injustice of privileging nuclear-armed state security while taking aim at the nuclear-armed-state-endorsed concept of “undiminished security for all”</b>	<p>The NPT cannot take into account only the security concerns of the five Nuclear Weapon States (NPT)</p> <p>...</p> <p>The principle of “undiminished security for all” is often used as a justification for inaction in the field of disarmament. However, the indefinite retention of nuclear arsenals, their qualitative and quantitative expansion and, last but not least, their use as instruments of threat and coercion, severely jeopardize the security of all. NPT</p>

## Ireland

Summary of language on nuclear deterrence / security concerns

Example

<p>2022</p>	<p><b>General statements regarding security threats posed by nuclear weapons and concern about nuclear weapons in security doctrines</b></p>	<p>It is our fundamental belief that nuclear weapons offer no security. And we know that no amount of resources could provide an adequate humanitarian response to nuclear weapons use (TPNW)</p> <p>Nuclear weapons are indiscriminate and afford none of us any security. The only way we can guarantee safety of humanity and our planet from their catastrophic humanitarian, societal, economic and environmental consequences, is their total elimination. NPT</p> <p>Regrettably, since the last Review Conference, we have seen moves towards a greater reliance on nuclear weapons in security doctrines. (NPT)</p>
<p>2023</p>	<p><b>A continuation of concern relating to security doctrines. Expresses security concerns but doesn't specifically assert security of non-nuclear-armed states.</b></p>	<p>Regrettably, we continue to see States move towards a greater reliance on nuclear weapons in security doctrines NPT</p> <p>Nuclear weapons offer no security. No amount of resources could ever provide an adequate humanitarian response to the use of such weapons.</p> <p>Their uncontrollable and global impact means that we all have a stake in disarmament. Our deepening understanding of the humanitarian consequences, including the environmental impact, of these weapons, increases the urgency of the task. 2MSP</p>
<p>2024</p>	<p><b>General denouncements of nuclear weapons saying they offer no security, views risk reduction measures as desirable but no substitute for disarmament.</b></p>	<p>Nuclear weapons offer no security. The only way to remove the risks associated with them, completely, is through the total, irreversible and verifiable elimination. We must also make concrete progress on credible and meaningful risk reduction measures. Ireland fully supports urgent work on such measures, including with Non-Nuclear Weapon States, with a particular focus on their implementation. Nevertheless, risk reduction measures are not a substitute for disarmament.</p>

## Ireland

Summary of language on nuclear deterrence / security concerns

Example

<p>2025</p>	<p><b>Critique of inherent issues with nuclear deterrence, invokes specific security concerns of the TPNW states and contrasts the evidence showing the dangers of nuclear weapons with the unproven nature of nuclear deterrence. Views risk reduction measures as desirable but no substitute for disarmament.</b></p>	<p>so-called “strategic stability” between nuclear-armed states cannot be definitively proven - but we do know of the real-world risks in maintaining this fallacy of mutually-assured destruction. (TPNW)</p> <p>We must also make urgent progress on credible and meaningful risk reduction measures. While not a substitute for disarmament, Ireland recognises the significant role such measures can play in building trust amongst the international community. These initiatives and proposals must lead to concrete and demonstrable action. There is dissonance between the modernising and expansion of nuclear arsenals and capabilities and concrete actions on risk reduction. NPT</p> <p>Ireland’s position is long-standing and consistent: disarmament is a necessary and integral security measure. Progress can be made in difficult times. Progress on nuclear disarmament is not dependent upon ideal security conditions but rather, can help achieve them. Now more than ever, we must embody the cooperative spirit that led to the agreement of the NPT, and work for urgent and real action on nuclear disarmament – for the security of all. NPT</p> <p>And as we have heard throughout this week, our significant security concerns are justified by this level of mounting nuclear risk. Reflecting on this profoundly troubling situation, the demand among States Parties for a closer examination of our concerns, making an analytical study of them, and presenting a strong pronouncement about them is a novel and welcome achievement.</p> <p>It is our response to the dangerous conduct of some, who continue to endanger all of us and the planet, through the perpetuation of nuclear weapons. TPNW</p> <p>Our work in articulating security concerns has brought some success - our young treaty has grown rapidly and now forms an integral part of the disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. TPNW</p> <p>Regrettably, despite the irrefutable evidence regarding the devastating humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, we still see increasing salience of and emphasis on nuclear weapons in security postures and doctrines.</p>

## Ireland

Summary of language on nuclear deterrence / security concerns

Example

We also see renewed interest in nuclear proliferation and arguments that nuclear weapons can serve as an essential element of security guarantees.

Despite the unproven nature of those arguments, their perceived appeal is growing. We must find a way to convincingly counter this trend. We must renew and redouble our earnest engagement with sceptics. We must convince the world that our security concerns are universal, that they are planetary, and that the only truly lasting security - for all of us - is a world free of nuclear weapons (TPNW)

One such innovation has been the work completed in the track focused on the security concerns of the States Parties to the TPNW.

These security concerns, centered on the threat of over 12,000 nuclear weapons are global. TPNW

## Malaysia

Summary of language on nuclear deterrence / security concerns

Example

2022	<p><b>Criticises nuclear deterrence and the “inherent” danger of the weapons and raises the security concern for all humanity for humanitarian- and risk-related reasons.</b></p>	<p>Arsenals are constantly modernised and upgraded, and the very concept of deterrence is predicated on the credibility of the threat that nuclear weapons may be used. The inherent danger of these weapons is thrown into sharp relief in times of heightened geopolitical tension. 1MSP we echo the view of many states that there is a need to emphasise the security concern of all humanity on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and the unacceptable risks inherent in nuclear weapons. NPT 2022</p>
2023	<p><b>Calling out fundamental elements of deterrence theory. Makes a case on humanitarian, environmental, risk, moral and ethical considerations.</b></p>	<p>In August 2022, the UN Secretary-General issued a poignant reminder that we were “just one misunderstanding, one miscalculation away from nuclear annihilation.” Regrettably, this assessment holds true at the present juncture. Rising geopolitical tension and major-power competition threaten the integrity and credibility of core instruments in the field of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. 2MSP it is the inherent capacity of nuclear weapons to inflict catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences which underlies their supposed utility. Indeed, notions of “deterrence” and “mutually assured destruction” are irreconcilable with basic moral and ethical considerations 2MSP.</p> <p>Deterrence is predicated on double standards, wherein the security of a select group of States is placed above that of others. 2023 NPT</p>
2024	<p><b>Raises concerns about the security of non-nuclear-armed states and brings in the theme of the injustice of nuclear-armed state security being privileged over non-nuclear-armed states and critiques “undiminished security for all” principle.</b></p>	<p>The end of reliance on nuclear deterrence and the total elimination of nuclear weapons must be pursued as a matter of priority NPT2024</p>

## Malaysia

Summary of language on nuclear deterrence / security concerns

Example

2025

**Rejects nuclear-armed state concepts like “undiminished security for all”...asserts the security concerns of TPNW states due to the security doctrines based on nuclear deterrence**

The catastrophic humanitarian consequences would pay no heed to political boundaries, and therefore implicate the security interests of all States. This should be borne in mind in interrogating such notions as “undiminished security for all”. NPT2025

This consultative process has allowed us to better understand and articulate the security threats facing the entire global community including of course TPNW States parties that result from the very existence and persistence of nuclear weapons in the military and security doctrines concepts and policies of some states. This is an important dimension of our ongoing efforts to counter the false logic of nuclear deterrence, recognizing the unacceptable humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. 3MSP

"Dispassionate engagement with the evolving scientific evidence on nuclear-weapon use and testing, and a recognition of the tenuous assumptions upon which nuclear deterrence relies, is imperative." NPT

## Mexico

Summary of language on nuclear deterrence / security concerns

Example

2022	<p><b>General critique of illogic of the doctrines underpinning nuclear deterrence</b></p>	<p>“The mere existence of these weapons has been a significant burden on finding the fundamental spaces that allow us to prioritize cooperation in a fragmented world, and not rely for global security on the intricate and illogical game of threats from the use of these weapons, which put the very existence of humanity at risk” MSP (translated from Spanish).</p> <p>Mexico recalls the historical choice to structure its security based on international law rather than adhering to the "sistema de disuasión nuclear" (system of nuclear deterrence) NPT 2022</p>
2023	<p><b>Continuing their opposition to deterrence</b></p>	<p>Mexico pointed out that they presided over 2MSP which adopted a declaration with "strong messages rejecting the false premises of nuclear deterrence" (3MSP)</p> <p>Mexico notes that nuclear weapons continue to be used as "supuesta disuasión, como amenaza y ahora como coerción" (supposed deterrence, as a threat, and now as coercion)</p> <p>(NPT)</p>
2024	<p><b>Rejects the idea that nuclear weapons can bring security</b></p>	<p>Mexico categorically rejects the idea that nuclear weapons underpin international security</p> <p>The so-called doctrine of nuclear deterrence), coupled with the modernization and increase of nuclear arsenals and military spending, constitutes a continuous threat of the use of force contrary to the UN Charter</p> <p>(NPT)</p>
2025	<p><b>Directly asserting the security concerns of non-nuclear-armed states while criticising nuclear-armed state approach to security. Reinterprets “undiminished security for all” as meaning that Mexico’s security should be on the same footing as nuclear-armed states’ security.</b></p>	<p>The concept of undiminished security for all which is something that has been consistently used by NW possessor states to justify their possession of NW but also their theory of deterrence. Mexico has also been very vocal in saying that this applies also to non-nuclear-armed states; that our own security is reduced and so when they want to apply this concept we have to be very vocal about what the consequences for us are. So we agree with undiminished security for all, but that means that the security of one state such as Mexico and those present here, has to be on the same footing as their security. I’m also grateful to the representative from El Salvador for mentioning the legitimate concerns of non-possessors, we have to keep speaking about this these are very legitimate matters. TPNW</p>

## South Africa

Summary of language on nuclear deterrence / security concerns

Example

<p>2022</p>	<p><b>Criticises nuclear deterrence as a flawed concept and uses the security justice angle.</b></p>	<p>“nuclear deterrence does not preserve peace” TPNW</p> <p>The continued retention of nuclear weapons on the basis of the perceived security interests of some States comes at the expense of the rest of humanity. TPNW</p> <p>Most of the significant events related to nuclear weapons that have taken place over the last few years, both globally and regionally, highlight that nuclear deterrence does not preserve peace.</p> <p>South Africa calls on policymakers in States under the extended nuclear security guarantee to shift their policy towards nuclear weapon elimination and free themselves from this notion of nuclear deterrence. TPNW</p> <p>We must recognize that this Treaty is the democratic wish of the overwhelming majority of UN Member States and the people of the world. No longer should the world’s peoples be held hostage to the unspeakable terror of these weapons. TPNW</p> <p>South Africa firmly believes that, the object and purpose of the Treaty NPT can never be achieved if it is seen only as a means to address security concerns of some, but not security for all. NPT</p>
<p>2023</p>	<p><b>Deterrence Encourages Proliferation: Giving credence to the nuclear deterrence doctrine is viewed as an argument in favour of the proliferation of nuclear weapons Critiques risk reduction practices Elaborates on justice</b></p>	<p>Therefore, conditionalities and the strategic nuclear deterrence doctrine not only prevents the fulfilment of nuclear disarmament commitments, but also undermines non-proliferation objectives and thus the NPT itself. In the same vein, deterrence policies heighten risk and are an argument for proliferation, if seen as imperative to the defence doctrines of states. Thus, the risk reduction efforts being proposed while maintaining the value of deterrence are contradictory and of no value or contribution towards nuclear disarmament. Nuclear risk cannot be adjusted at will for the purposes of deterrence. Accordingly, South Africa firmly believes that the object and purpose of the Treaty can never be achieved if it is seen only as a means to address security concerns of some, but not security for all. (NPT)</p> <p>A further hardening of stances by some States on the benefit of nuclear deterrence</p>

## South Africa

Summary of language on nuclear deterrence / security concerns

Example

<p>2024</p>	<p><b>Rejects the idea that nuclear weapons can bring security</b></p>	<p>The doctrine of nuclear deterrence continues to hold sway in the strategic thinking of nuclear weapons States, and gaining prominence in an increasing number of on-nuclear-weapon States that are under extended nuclear security guarantees.</p> <p>We share the view that the increased emphasis on nuclear weapons in the management of some States' security is incompatible with the consolidation of a non-proliferation regime and does not contribute to the strengthening of international security for all, confidence in the NPT and the achievement of its objectives. South Africa regrets that despite strong criticism by the international community against doctrines of nuclear deterrence in the strategic thinking of the nuclear-weapon States, these doctrines continue to hold sway and are gaining prominence in an increasing number of non-nuclear-weapon States that are under extended nuclear security guarantees. NPT</p>
<p>2025</p>	<p><b>Welcomes action on the legitimate security concerns of TPNW states while lamenting that the debate has previously been dominated by the narrow national security interests of a small number of states.</b></p>	<p>For far too long the debate on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation has been dominated by the narrow national security interests, whether real or perceived, of a small number of states to the detriment of humanity as a whole. South Africa considers it timely that TPNW states parties bring to the fore the legitimate security concerns that result from the perpetuation of security policies that rely on nuclear weapons. We welcome the report presented by Austria and we especially appreciate aspects highlighting that Sou. The report articulating the fact that nuclear deterrence can fail is undeniable and has serious implications for the security interests of TPNW states. In terms of the recommendations of the report we fully support the need for TPNW States to strengthen their messaging in international forums, challenging the deterrence paradigm, emphasizing the humanitarian and environmental consequences and the risks for their populations and most importantly emphasizing the security benefits of being nuclear weapons free. As a result South Africa supports the proposal for the next intercessional period to develop a potential products to further promote the universities especially taking into consideration of security concerns of TPNW states TPNW</p> <p>We are witnessing an upsurge in value attached to nuclear deterrence and extended nuclear security guarantees...an amplified nuclear arms race the with expansion and modernisation of nuclear arsenals, the advancement of technological developments that have the potential to be misused and an ever-growing risk of a nuclear detonation whether by miscalculation or design. South Africa regrets that in spite of strong</p>

## South Africa

Summary of language on nuclear deterrence / security concerns

Example

criticism by the international community, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence continues to hold sway in the strategic thinking of the nuclear-armed States TPNW