



Nuclear Responsibilities in an Interconnected World

Perspectives from Kuala Lumpur

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Introduction

This report arises from a one-day roundtable on ‘nuclear responsibilities’ on the 6th March 2019, hosted by the Institute for Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia, in Kuala Lumpur. Held under the Chatham House Rule, the Roundtable included representatives of the Malaysian Government, think-tanks, academia and civil society, and was facilitated by Sebastian Brixey-Williams (Programme Director, BASIC) and Paul Ingram (Executive Director, BASIC). The purpose was to introduce the Malaysian nuclear policy community to the ‘nuclear responsibilities’ framing and to canvass opinions on the concrete nuclear responsibilities of the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) and Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS). All participants attended in their personal capacities; the views they expressed did not necessarily reflect those of the Malaysian Government or any organisation.

The roundtable was one of a series funded by the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and is part of a broader programme of work by BASIC and ICCS that intends to build international understanding, dialogue, and a shared culture of responsibilities around nuclear weapons. So far, BASIC and ICCS have held ‘Foregrounding Nuclear Responsibilities’ roundtables in London in October 2018 and Tokyo in January 2019. A brief recap of the conclusions of these meetings are included on the following pages.

Nuclear weapons issues rarely feature in Malaysian public discourse and the country is not nuclear-armed. It also has no nuclear power plants and the Mahathir Mohamad government elected in 2018 recently announced plans to abolish the Malaysian Nuclear Power Corporation, although it uses and regulates radiological materials and ionising isotopes for non-power applications such as agriculture, medicine, and industry. So what was the rationale for choosing Malaysia? There were three main reasons:

First, Malaysia is the Chair of the Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee 2019 and was chosen among the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) states for this responsibility. Being the third and final PrepCom before the Review Conference (RevCon) in May 2020, the Chair has the difficult target of achieving a consensus outcome document and agreeing a RevCon agenda, a feat that has yet to be achieved in any review cycle since this objective was mandated in 2005. This challenge is all the greater owing to the fact that the original Chair appointed in 2018, Dato’ Seri Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob, has since been made Secretary-General of the Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was obliged to pass the task of PrepCom Chair in February to Malaysia’s Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates Dato’ Syed Md Hasrin Tengku Hussin.

Second, Malaysia is a leading proponent of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). While it is not one of the TPNW’s ‘Core Group of States’ (Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, and South Africa), it played a role in shaping the treaty and was one of the earliest states to sign.¹ Ratification is expected without controversy, but will take some time because convention requires Malaysia to comprehensively absorb the provisions of international obligations into domestic law at the point of ratification. The long-awaited Atomic Energy Bill, the vehicle seen as essential for ratification of the TPNW and a number of other pieces of nuclear legislation, has been held up in Parliament. As such, Malaysia is one state that could be instrumental in negotiating the interplay between the NPT and the TPNW.

Third, Malaysia is a neutral state, and its security and foreign policy communities typically consider that it has no significant territorial threats. Border or maritime disputes with neighbours are largely mediated through multilateral fora like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), behind which Malaysia was a driving force, and the Asian Regional Forum (ARF). While they keep a healthy watch on emerging powers in the region, with colonisation under the British Empire until 1957 still in living memory, Malaysia’s trade relations with China and India are generally positive, mutually beneficial, and growing. And although

Malaysia has previously taken part in regional confrontations over sovereignty in the South China Sea, with considerable oil reserves at stake, it has always done so behind states like Vietnam and the Philippines, and has taken a low profile strategy in the last few years. Its neutrality and low threat perception means that Malaysia – like many Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS) in NAM – observes but remains largely outside of narratives about East-West confrontation. It is crucial that the NWS and their allies are reminded frequently of genuinely alternative perspectives, and do not fall into the trap of a single narrative.

Nuclear Responsibilities: A Short Summary

'Nuclear responsibilities' are *the responsibilities of states and other actors around nuclear weapons*. The definition intends to capture all aspects of nuclear weapons policy, including force structure, declaratory policy, non-proliferation, arms control, disarmament, and the nuclear industrial complex. The vast majority of states and a body of existing international law support the idea that there is an overriding responsibility to achieve global, verifiable and irreversible disarmament ('responsibility to disarm'). Indeed, the view was expressed strongly in our roundtable by one participant that this is the only responsibility, and that talk of other responsibilities weakened the commitment to this overriding one (see 'Challenges to the Nuclear Responsibilities Framework' below). But there is more work to be done to determine the numerous, more fuzzy responsibilities of states during the disarmament process ('responsibilities while disarming'): for instance, to reduce risks, minimise the salience of nuclear weapons in security doctrines, and create the environment for reductions.

We start from the assumption that all actors that have the power (directly or indirectly) to impact nuclear weapons policy in both nuclear and non-nuclear armed states have nuclear responsibilities. The Programme on Nuclear Responsibilities looks to comprehensively map out these responsibilities for the first time (starting with states), and foster constructive dialogue between states to build empathic understanding, develop consensus where possible, and highlight areas of divergence for further discussion. It assumes that if states can better empathise with each others' security interests, and better understand how their own state's actions have contributed to fear and insecurity on the part of others (what has been called 'security dilemma sensibility' by Booth and Wheeler), then this will increase the likelihood of reaching common ground around states' shared nuclear responsibilities. It will also increase the prospects for better communication and understanding in crisis situations.

Drawing inspiration from a roundtable in Tokyo in January 2019 (see the BASIC-ICCS report *Common but Differentiated Nuclear Responsibilities*), the Programme proposes the idea that states have 'common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities' (CBDR-RC) around nuclear weapons.² This principle, borrowed from the climate change regime, suggests that although states are equal sovereigns in the eyes of international law, in reality they have very power and capabilities – military, financial, technical, political, and so on – to contribute to common goals like the reduction of nuclear risks and nuclear disarmament. This informs how they imagine their own responsibilities, and the responsibilities others expect of them. In practice, this suggests that all states share some 'common responsibilities' in relation to nuclear weapons and policy-making, but all nuclear possessor states have the greater 'special responsibilities,' especially in relation to the goal of nuclear disarmament by virtue of their possession of nuclear weapons. The Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS) have proportional or asymmetric responsibilities that reflect the fact that they are not nuclear possessors, both under the NPT regime and more generally.

Challenges to the Nuclear Responsibilities Framework

The language of nuclear responsibilities and the principle of ‘common but differentiated responsibilities’ came under challenge early in the discussion from a highly-respected civil society representative. Talking about nuclear responsibilities, they contended, sounds like an ‘apology’ for nuclear weapons possession. They argued that this distracts from their catastrophic and immoral humanitarian effects, by virtue of this fact there can be only one responsibility: immediate nuclear disarmament by all states. This position broadly might be summarised as this: giving attention to responsibilities *while disarming* obscures the responsibility *to disarm*, which is not only overriding, but also overwhelming. The view comes from an understandable lack of trust in the commitment of nuclear-armed states to engage in disarmament in good faith. Accordingly, the participant advocated immediate signature and ratification of the TPNW by all states. This intervention expressed two challenges to the responsibilities framing that deserve to be taken seriously, and the responses here are intended to stimulate debate on these issues.

Challenge 1 – Nuclear responsibilities language could be co-opted by the nuclear-armed states

The Programme on Nuclear Responsibilities runs the risk that its language will be co-opted by the nuclear-armed states (and perhaps even some allies) to legitimise indefinite nuclear possession. This risk has to be viewed against the backdrop of the NWS and the non-NPT nuclear-armed states regularly invoking in the past the language of responsibility to justify their nuclear weapon policies and strategies. The point then is that this was already happening before the Programme began and all nine nuclear-armed nations have at one time or another described themselves in some form as a ‘responsible nuclear state,’ and therefore legitimate. When the George W. Bush Administration’s decided to allow India civil nuclear cooperation it used the pretext that it was a ‘responsible’ nuclear state, a privilege that had hitherto been strategically denied them in order to protect the integrity of the NPT.³ If India could be ‘responsible,’ could we not encourage them to be even more so through engagement?

The Programme urges caution around this ‘responsible nuclear weapon state’ language.⁴ It may be possible to make general judgements about more or less responsible policies and behaviours, but to label states as responsible or irresponsible – even tacitly – knowingly invites frustration and argument, and may do harm at a practical level to trust and dialogue with those opposed to nuclear weapons, which would be directly contrary to the purpose of this work.

Nevertheless, the nuclear-armed states will continue to claim that they are responsible, and the Programme cannot control this or be held to account for it. What it can do is pick up on the claims and challenge states to explain them, point to the traps of this language, and stimulate discussion around how states can better explore more effective means to win favour. While a state might derive some short-term political gain by describing itself as a ‘responsible nuclear weapon state,’ particularly when signalling a domestic public, officials and commentators can usually detect thin rhetoric.⁵ Identifying those behaviours that are most ‘irresponsible’ however, through a process of dialogue and exchange, could be a fruitful exercise if it has the buy-in of those with power.

For this reason, the Programme has instead strongly advocated that states steer away from hazardous talk of states being called ‘responsible’ or ‘irresponsible,’ and instead focus on ‘responsibilities,’ in the plural,

from a place of honesty and humility. It also maintains that any person, organisation, or state has a legitimate right to propose responsibilities, which forms the basis of the roundtable consultations.

Challenge 2 – A nuclear responsibilities framework distracts from a more radical disarmament agenda

There is an ever-present existential risk of a nuclear war borne by all, which is unavoidable with nuclear weapons and could be precipitated by unpredictable escalation dynamics. Accordingly, some would say that the only strategy should be unwavering advocacy for a radical vision, and a nuclear responsibilities framework could set lower normative standards or distract from that goal.

The first response to this is that the Programme is not a campaign and has never sought to advocate particular predetermined responsibilities. Rather, a core objective is to gather and map the pluralistic views on this issue in order to promote respectful dialogue at the normative level, with the nuclear responsibilities framework providing a common vocabulary and forums for this to take place. This means that support for or opposition to a radical agenda like the TPNW are both legitimate perspectives within this debate, and neither cause needs to be seen as being in conflict with the framework. It is possible for all to see the framework as one that can be used to better engage with opposing views, by providing a shared vocabulary to better outline the values and conceptions of responsibility behind each initiative.

The second response is that the undeniable (and for many intolerable) existence of the risk of nuclear exchange ultimately tells us nothing about the strategy we should take to manage or eliminate that risk. The fact that the TPNW sets out a more radical disarmament *vision*, founded on a fundamentally transformed vision of the weapon, does not mean that advocating for it will logically lead to its *achievement* in the end. Indeed, to put all nuclear disarmament eggs into a single treaty basket seems inherently hazardous, and for this reason is not advocated by many within the ban treaty movement too. Far better for civil society and governments to work with a multidimensional and continuously evolving strategy that addresses the issue from several angles, monitor what works, and do more of it. Today, it is hard to see that states like Russia and China, which are more immune to transnational advocacy campaigns, will consider signing the TPNW owing to a popular pressure campaign, even if it succeeds in mobilising support within other states. The deep distrust between these states precludes a successful disarmament programme in the near future, and building trust over many years will require a different strategy.

Key Themes of Discussion

Like many NAM states, Malaysia is not involved in nuclear weapons issues day-to-day, and their principal engagement is within global nuclear diplomacy, rather than security and deterrence relationships. Although its Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other government departments demonstrate expertise of the overall issues, academia, think tanks, and civil society knowledge of the issue is not widespread and tends to be framed through the lens of regional security.

Having little material leverage, Malaysia approaches nuclear weapons politics at the multilateral level from a position of relatively little influence, which found expression in a number of ways throughout the day, and frames the state's thinking on nuclear responsibilities. Its thinking may be representative of other NAM NNWS states, and future Programme activities will seek to test this assumption.

1. Double Standards and Unreciprocated Nuclear Responsibilities

Officials and experts were open to a discussion of Malaysia's nuclear responsibilities, on the condition that the NWS are held to account for bad faith, double standards, and non-reciprocity. The perception of a lack of concerted NWS action on the disarmament pillar of the NPT and the failure to prevent a new arms race was held up in contrast to the perception that the NNWS have sought (on the whole) to remain in compliance with their (increasingly onerous) non-proliferation commitments. There was a belief that the NWS are deliberately or tacitly restricting access to nuclear knowledge and technology that should otherwise be permitted for transfer under the NPT's peaceful uses pillar. Moreover, there is a perception of double standards, in which NNWS allied to NWS are held to more relaxed proliferation standards, simply because the states are 'friends.' In other words, not only is the NPT discriminatory in nature, but the NWS are even undermining the bargain that is intended to offset that discrimination. This has been an evolving trend that may not be immediately apparent to the NWS, who could critically examine with a historical perspective whether such claims have any validity.

The exceptionalism displayed by the NWS on a number of issues has been particularly disappointing to many in Malaysia. The '13 Steps' agreed at 2000 NPT RevCon and the 64-Point Action Plan agreed in both 2000 and 2010 respectively are supposed to provide a set of principles for the fulfilment of the NPT's objectives, and the fact that the NWS have appeared to disregard these obligations has further harmed trust and atmospherics in the intervening years. The US decision in 2005 to bring India into a civil nuclear cooperation agreement, despite being outside the NPT, is another. Discussion of any additional NNWS responsibilities is therefore going to be softly contingent on demonstrations of good faith and stricter enforcement of existing commitments by the NWS.

2. Regret for the NPT Extension

More than once, participants stated their regret that indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995 had effectively removed leverage for disarmament. Although indefinite extension of the treaty does not and should not mean indefinite possession of nuclear weapons, it is difficult to disentangle the two politically. There is a view that the parties should instead have extended the treaty for a further 25 years, as before, rather than locking in the NPT's inherent discrimination. NNWS have since sought to reacquire leverage through the TPNW.

Many people believe the extension has provided essential stability. To begin with, the world looked quite different in 1995. The uncertainty of the Cold War was still fresh in the mind of the international community, and five of the eleven countries then in possession of nuclear weapons – Belarus, China, France,



The misty skyline of Kuala Lumpur as seen from KL Tower. Photo CC 2.0 Ishan @seefromthesky

Kazakhstan, and Ukraine – only joined between 1992 and 1994. It is easy to see why states would have wanted to lock in gains. Moreover, with all of the strategic uncertainties the world is experiencing today, the world would no doubt be feeling more anxious without the certainty that the NPT will continue to be in force beyond 2020. Perhaps the best that can be said is that the extension has embedded the disarmament norm in principle, if not fully in practice.

3. Export Controls as a Core NNWS Nuclear Responsibility

What are Malaysia's nuclear responsibilities at a practical level? Conversation often returned to export controls, which (outside diplomacy) are the most concrete example of Malaysia's responsibilities around nuclear weapons, as it is for many other NNWS.

Historically, Malaysia has often been accused of not taking its non-proliferation trade control commitments seriously. In 2003/04 a Malaysian company was at the centre of a proliferation controversy linked to the AQ Khan smuggling network.⁶ According to Daniel Salisbury:

the country has seen significant proliferation-related activity over the past two decades through the Khan network, and Iranian and North Korean illicit trade, with many details about these activities in the public domain. Cases considered below include transfer of nuclear and missile technologies, as well as military goods and US origin technologies covered by the Iranian embargo.⁷

Since 2010, just before the Nuclear Security Summit, it has enacted an act to restrict the export or transshipment of proliferation sensitive materials through a comprehensive export control system. Some gaps still remain, but participants representing these agencies evidently took their roles seriously and the controversies of the past look unlikely to be repeated. Further to this, Malaysia has been involved recently in regional trainings and producing a toolkit with 12 other states to improve best practices, which demonstrates further evidence of its commitment to this nuclear responsibility.⁸

Export control regimes entail significant regulatory costs to governments and commercial entities, especially when ships are held in port for extended periods of time while their cargoes are inspected. To an extent, these costs must be borne by the host state as a result of NPT membership; the same might be said of counterproliferation financing activities or the implementation of safeguards agreements. However, the group was encouraged to think creatively about ways in which a reimbursement scheme might be built into the trade system. What if, for example, the routine costs of inspection were integrated into the global shipping insurance industry as 'standard' cost of doing business? Might this reduce the financial barriers to NNWS that have yet to set up effective export control regimes and help tackle some of the 'weak links' in the global illicit trade of proliferation sensitive technologies?

4. Lack of Respect Among the NWS for the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone

Malaysia and its Southeast Asian neighbours feel frustration that no NWS has yet signed the protocol to the Bangkok Treaty (1995), which created the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ). The Protocol would legally prohibit the NWS from threatening to use nuclear weapons against any state in the zone, or from contributing to any violation of the Treaty. The standard, simplified narrative is that the United States – which has a policy of neither confirming nor denying that nuclear weapons are aboard any of its vessels – is unable to sign the Protocol because its ships dock in Singapore; the other NWS have so far refused without a US commitment. They add that all five states have already issued negative security assurances to the Southeast Asian nations (alongside all other NNWS) in 1995, which have no obvious reasons to feel threatened.

The Southeast Asian states counter that they simply do not feel respected, and that even if the NWS will not sign the Treaty's protocol, they should respect the wishes of the Treaty Parties to be confident of keeping the zone free of nuclear weapons nevertheless. Western legal positivist tradition puts almost absolute emphasis on the legality or illegality of actions in determining whether they are right or wrong, which perhaps obscures the force of these feelings. Almost a quarter of a century since the Treaty was agreed, and with a need to demonstrate concrete action at the NPT Review Conference, it is time for the NWS to revisit this outstanding issue. Participants advocated for these states to think hard about the strategic costs to signature, and either to sign the Protocol or find an alternative means to demonstrate good faith to the wishes of the states of the region.

From a NNWS perspective, there may be opportunities for the different NWFZ depository states, organisations and OPANAL (the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean) to work together to promote ratification of their protocols and embed the norm that states have a responsibility to respect the wishes of regional states, protocol or no protocol.

5. The Leadership Role of Middle Powers

The 'Middle Powers' category represents a spectrum of states, but might generally refer to states between the NWS and NAM: allied powers such as NATO members or nuclear umbrella states. BASIC's report *Common but Differentiated Nuclear Responsibilities* (February 2019) suggested that the United Kingdom might also be considered a Middle Power, depending on the qualities they are thought to possess, despite having nuclear weapons.⁹ Participants expressed that these powers have a responsibility to demonstrate particular leadership in the non-proliferation regime. At one end of the larger spectrum of views, the NWS are too attached to their power and caught up in security dilemmas to be able to think creatively about next steps. At the other, the NAM states are collectively strong but still lack influence over the NWS or the financial or technical means to implement change.

Canada's ownership of the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) issue over the last 25 years, culminating last year in the report of the Expert Preparatory Group, is a good example of national leadership among the

Middle Powers, and others might consider adopting issues over long periods in the same way. Japan's national responsibility to educate globally on the effects of nuclear weapons was put under the spotlight. While participants agreed that this was Japan's role, they expressed some dismay that – in their perception – the Japanese Government itself had not done much more beyond setting up the Eminent Persons Group, in their perception largely leaving this work to civil society organisations. This might be an avenue for greater dialogue between NNWS, not to admonish but to receive feedback.

6. Greater Southeast Asian Regional Cooperation to Advance Nuclear Responsibilities

States in the Southeast Asian region could coordinate more to advance their disarmament objectives. At present, although states are generally of the same view on the issues, the activity of each state depends largely on the forum or personality of the diplomats involved. ASEAN and ARF outcome documents usually contain one or two paragraphs on disarmament and non-proliferation and there are regional safeguards networks, but this feels like an afterthought and does not necessarily translate into cooperation in the NPT and other fora. For instance, Malaysia is showing leadership through the NPT Prep Com 2019 and within the TPNW. Thailand chaired the Open-Ended Working Group during the TPNW negotiations and was the first in the region to become a state party. The Philippines is active within the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) coordinated through Geneva, while Indonesia has shown particular leadership in New York. Working cooperatively and strategically through the various fora, the states of the region may be able to have more impact than they do presently on conceptions of nuclear responsibilities and the NPT's disarmament pillar.

Conclusion

The nuclear responsibilities framework can be a tool for the less powerful to engage with those holding most of the cards within the international community. It provides a language for the NNWS to talk about their values and needs, and for the nuclear possessors to acknowledge their responsibilities to the wider community, to listen with greater empathy, and receive critical feedback on their posture in a manner that will encourage cooperation not entrenchment.

Today, there is no lack of policy recommendations in the field of non-proliferation and disarmament; what is needed is a renewed commitment and political will behind a cooperative approach in which states acknowledge their responsibilities to one another, existing institutions set up to pursue common goals, and renewed effort to implement existing obligations. For that, diverse actors with nuclear responsibilities need to find ways to talk to each other in a manner that heals grievances, builds trust, and fosters cooperation. Discussing their shared responsibilities is a means to that end, as well as an end in itself.

Proposed Common Responsibilities of all states:

The responsibilities listed in boxes like this were proposed by roundtable participants throughout the day. They are given in full, in no particular order, and without implied support, to promote debate and discussion.

- Common responsibility to challenge the global reliance on nuclear weapons and achieve nuclear abolition.
- Common responsibility to advocate that use or threat of use is never acceptable.
- Common responsibility to respect the rule of law and not to practice exceptionalism.
- Common responsibility not to rely on the NPT Review Process as the venue to make advances on nuclear disarmament, and to recognise that greater steps in recent years have often been taken outside the NPT altogether.
- Common responsibility to obey agreed guidelines on export controls of dual-use technologies.
- Common responsibility to recognise the importance of existing disarmament architecture and instruments and to maintain them.
- Common responsibility to reaffirm past commitments, such as negative security assurances, as well as strengthen standards.

Proposed Special Responsibilities of the Nuclear Weapon States

In the global nuclear order, 'special responsibilities' are generally assigned and claimed by the five Nuclear Weapon States, with the United States and Russia typically said to have the greatest responsibilities due to the size of their stockpiles and their historic roles in driving the nuclear arms race. However, their special responsibilities are only defined in broad brush strokes today.

The following were proposed by roundtable participants throughout the day. They are given in full and in no particular order, to promote debate and discussion, and without implied support.

- Special responsibility of the NWS to think genuinely and deeply about the needs of states other than themselves, and not to fall into the conceit that only they matter.
- Special responsibility to listen and respond respectfully and in good faith to alternative perspectives.
- Special responsibility to maintain and develop the global nuclear architecture – and not to pull it apart.
- Special responsibility to work with NNWS to co-develop a sustainable assistance or financing model to develop and help cover costs associated with export control regimes.
- Special responsibility to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons without delay.
- Special responsibility to stick strictly to their own conventions to set an example to others.
- Special responsibility to respect the aspirations of regional conventions such as the SEANWFZ and meaningfully look for opportunities to bring NWFZ protocols into international law.
- Special responsibility to voluntarily limit the use of 'neither confirm nor deny' policies.
- Special responsibility to provide detailed reasons for the failure to disarm.
- Special responsibility to explain nuclear doctrines in detail, giving NNWS the opportunity to engage and ask questions.
- Special responsibility to ensure full and equal access to nuclear technology and knowledge for peaceful uses.
- Special responsibility to provide stronger assurances that NATO nuclear sharing does not pose a proliferation risk.

Proposed Nuclear Responsibilities of Malaysia

The following were proposed by participants throughout the day and are given here in full and in no particular order, to promote debate and discussion, without implied support.

- Responsibility to advocate nuclear disarmament consistently.
- Responsibility to reaffirm commitment not to engage in proliferation and develop or use nuclear weapons.
- Responsibility to advocate that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is never acceptable.
- Responsibility to demonstrate a commitment to the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies through words and deeds.
- Responsibility to engage in trust-building at the regional and international levels.
- Responsibility to call out behaviours by both NWS and NNWS that are not consistent with established laws and norms.
- Responsibility to contribute to the maintenance of a civil atmosphere as Chair of the NPT Prep Com 2019.

Endnotes

[1] New Straits Times, 'Malaysia takes firm stand for nuclear disarmament at the UN,' New Straits Times, 21 September 2017,

[2] Sebastian Brixey-Williams, *Common but Differentiated Nuclear Responsibilities: Perspectives from Tokyo* (London: BASIC and Birmingham: ICCS, 2019), p. 7.

[3] Karthika Sasikumar, 'India's Emergence as a "Responsible" Nuclear Power,' *International Journal* 62:4 (2007), p. 825.

[4] Sebastian Brixey-Williams, 'Phase 2.0 of the Programme on Nuclear Responsibilities' BASIC, 21 December 2018, <<https://www.basicint.org/the-programme-on-nuclear-responsibilities-phase-2-0/>>.

[5] All this considered, official statements backed up by reasons why the state should be considered 'responsible' can be useful to a discerning eye. For instance, when the United Kingdom listed in 2017 numerous reasons why it considers itself a responsible nuclear weapon state, it gave in greater detail than ever before the reasons behind its nuclear weapons policies: the whys behind the whats. [5] These included its policy of minimum credible deterrence, twenty years of de-targeting, a voluntary moratorium on fissile material production, transparency around stockpiles, strict accountancy and control measures for military nuclear materials, and strong support for Nuclear Weapon Free Zones. This should be considered a form of doctrinal transparency, both to domestic taxpayers and to the international community, a positive end in itself and the opposite of which is an exercise of arbitrary power. In today's unstable global situation, in which greater empathic understanding is needed from all sides, the United Kingdom's willingness to explain itself – to a point – to those with whom it disagrees opens the door to two-way dialogue on those values and beliefs, in a way that simply (re)stating its deterrence policy does not.

[6] Stephanie Lieggi and Richard Sabatini, 'Malaysia's Export Control Law: A Step Forward, But How Big?' NTI, 10 May 2010, <<https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/malysias-export-control-law/>>.

[7] Daniel Salisbury, 'Exploring the use of 'third countries' in proliferation networks: the case of Malaysia,' *European Journal of International Security* 4:1 (2019), p. 105.

[8] Saferworld, The Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation (CAITEC), and University at Albany (SUNY), "Ensuring enforcement and compliance for effective export controls", Workshop report (21-22 June 2018, Vienna), < <https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources/publications/1184-ensuring-enforcement-and-compliance-for-effective-export-controls>>.

[9] Sebastian Brixey-Williams, "Common but Differentiated Nuclear Responsibilities: Perspectives from Tokyo" (London: BASIC and Birmingham: ICCS, 2019), p. 7.

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