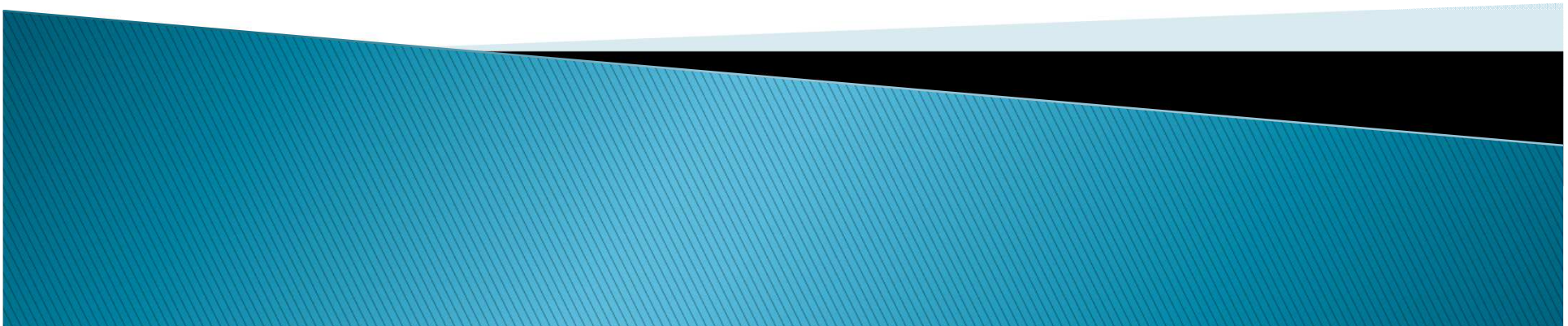


A NWFZ for the Middle East

Fitting the Building Blocks

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Non-conventional weapon-free zones

- ▶ NWFZs have been established
 - In clearly demarcated geographical areas
 - In spaces in which NW weapons had not yet been introduced
 - Antarctica; Outer space, Moon and other celestial bodies; Seabed
 - After removal of NW or termination of NW programme
 - e.g., Africa; Central Asia; Latin America
- ▶ Regional weapon-free zones have been created prior to opening for signature of global treaties
 - Wyoming agreement (1989) → CWC
 - Mendoza & Cartagena agreements (1991) → CWC
 - India – Pakistan Joint Declaration (1992) → CWC
 - Oceania declaration (1992) → CWC
 - 2002 Lima Commitment → BTWC (Additional protocol)
 - **Purpose:** equalise risks in a region with active security interactions prior to joining global disarmament treaty collectively
- ▶ CWFZ for Europe (mid-1980s) failed, but opened new channels of dialogue and common understandings between West and East European political elites



Challenges for the Middle East

- ▶ Geographical boundaries:
 - Who belongs to the Middle East?
 - Overlapping security complexes (e.g., Turkey-NATO; Iran-Pakistan)
- ▶ Many sub-regional security complexes; intra-regional fissures
 - Absence of dedicated security institutions (except for GCC)
 - Rich history of setting preconditions for any type of negotiations
- ▶ Weapons or political interest in their acquisition exist:
 - Israel is widely believed to possess NW
 - Iran pursues a nuclear programme, which many believe has a major military dimension, causing a lot of regional unease
 - USA is a major extra-regional security actor in relation to Israel and Iran driving regional security dynamics
- ▶ Middle East (particularly Suez Canal) is major transit area for commerce and regional & global military powers
 - Challenge of how to guarantee / enforce the integrity of the ME NWFZ
- ▶ Political upheaval in many key states, where the 'street' and 'officialdom' have different opinions about interstate relations (particularly Arab - Israeli)



More than nuclear weapons

- ▶ ‘A zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMD’
- ▶ Poses major additional problems:
 - Different weapon categories with similar doctrinal functions
 - e.g., strategic deterrence with NW in Israel vs. CW in Syria
- ▶ Initiative comes from the 2010 NPT Review Conference, but sets up an independent weapon control process



Bounding the issue areas

- ▶ Geographical space
 - Present thinking: IAEA definition of essential countries (Libya to Iran; Syria to Yemen)
- ▶ Weapons systems to be considered
 - Nuclear
 - Chemical
 - Biological
 - Missiles and other delivery systems
- ▶ Clear demarcation of weapon systems required to avoid issues other than disarmament creep in
 - e.g. question of White Phosphorus → not in CWC definition of CW
 - e.g., missiles and rockets: lower boundaries for payload type and weight, range?
 - Apply weapon definitions in existing arms control / disarmament treaties (BTWC / CWC)
 - e.g., CWC: CW = toxic chemical agent + delivery system + specific equipment (e.g., for filling munitions) together or separately
- ▶ Do not 'over-egg the pudding'*

* Quote from Patricia Lewis, Chatham House



Firebreaks needed

- ▶ Initiative comes from the 2010 NPT RevCon, but sets up an independent weapon control process
- ▶ Participants in the ME process are not all party to the NPT
- ▶ What roles for the 3 NPT Depositary States (Russia, UK, USA)?
 - How will their deteriorating relationship affect the process (BMD, Libya, Syria)?
- ▶ NPT process could become a scene of recriminations
 - 2015 NPT RevCon + 3 PrepComs starting in 2012
 - ME process will not be able to develop its own tempo → will annual reviews at NPT gatherings mortgage outcome of the 2015 RevCon?
- ▶ ME process is not just about NW
 - What role for other multilateral treaties & arrangements and their organisations?
 - e.g., BTWC/ISU, CWC/OPCW, HCOC, ...
 - Each of them have specific expertise and experience with building confidence and security, enhancing transparency, and fostering transnational cooperation



Some final thoughts

- ▶ Discussions often in terms of ‘finalities’
 - avoid pre-set end goals
 - allow for a general course, seeking *‘enabling platforms’* → intermediate achievements that create options not previously thought of, or previously considered impossible
 - regional ‘no use’ agreement (≠ no 1st use)
 - non-aggression pact between negotiating partners
 - exploit existing cross-border initiatives (civil society, industry, science) that contribute to trust & confidence building, transparency enhancement
 - e.g., disease surveillance, vaccine development, ...
- ▶ Think of the initiative to ban non-conventional weapons from the Middle East as a longer-term process
 - Helsinki conference in December 2012 = 1st step



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