A New Farewell to Arms: Basic Concepts and Understandings

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Basic goal

n Understand disarmament and non-proliferation in the present security context

n Challenge:
  n Cold war concepts, tools and processes
  n Think out of the box!

n What is the ‘box’?
Definitions

n Disarmament
  n Total elimination of a discrete category of weaponry
    n No residual capability
  n Core goal: elimination of weaponry from military doctrine
    n Loss of skills on how to use the weaponry over time
    n May be most important impediment to future armament

n Arms control
  n Management of agreed quantitative or qualitative levels of weaponry
  n Residual (or increased!) capacity
  n Weaponry remains integrated in military doctrine
The fundamentals of disarmament and arms control

- Limitations on weaponry with the potential to destabilise international security relations
  - Impact of science, technology and industrialisation on war-fighting capabilities
- Quantitative and qualitative limitations on certain types of weaponry
  - Introduction of transparency-enhancing mechanisms, including confidence-building measures (CBMs) and off-site and on-site verification.
  - Adoption of tools and procedures to communicate intent
- Explicit decision by a state to reverse an armament dynamic
- Security must be ensured through alternative, non-prohibited means
- Voluntary engagement
- Parties are committed individually to the treaty
Why arms control; why disarmament?

- Legitimacy of use of a weapon in war
  - CBW: basically delegitimized in 1925 (Geneva Protocol)
  - Nuclear weapons:
    - 5 possessor states
    - Advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (1996)
  - Conventional weapons
  - ‘Inhumane weapons’

- Humanitarian arguments
  - Macro versus micro-level of appraisal

- Emergence of non-proliferation approach
  - Different perceptions of proliferation before and after World War 2
  - Relevancy in areas where there is no total prohibition on weapons

- Impact of perception of technology
  - Value neutral → ‘use’ of technology needs to be controlled
  - Having impact on society → technology itself is viewed as problematic
The bipolar world

- Global security dominated by the rivalry between the USA and the USSR + respective allies
  - Strong domestic pressures and pressures in allies to reduce risks of war
  - Limitations on armaments was an important aspect of enhancing stability
  - Interest in primarily in arms limitation and reductions
  - Bilateral, regional and global negotiations

- States outside the East-West confrontation
  - Feared the consequences of major war between East & West
  - Realisation that armaments consumed resources that could not be used for development
  - Primary interest in global arms control and disarmament and application of resources savings to development and assistance
  - Development of regional initiatives to prevent the deployment of (nuclear) weapons
  - Pressure on the superpowers and their allies via resolutions in the UN General Assembly
Unipolar, multipolar world

- Dominance of the United States as global actor
  - Few incentives for the USA to reduce armaments
  - Second-tier powers seek to offset US dominance
  - Challenges to the US position by emergence of China and re-emergence of Russia => new pressures for armament

- Predominance of regional security
  - Power realignment in many regions
  - Not conducive to (global) arms control & disarmament

- Most of the arms control / disarmament dynamics are understood in the (bi-polar) cold war security context; the understanding of their contribution in a uni- or multipolar world is still poor
Evolution of negotiations

- Arms control and disarmament became very technical
  - Verification: weapons control began to reach deep into civil society (e.g., chemical and biotechnological industry; scientific research)
  - Started to have serious implications for economic and scientific competition between states

- With the end of the cold war, the security imperative disappeared and economic considerations began to dominate the negotiations

- Return to humanitarian issues (landmines, small arms, cluster munitions, etc.)
Nature of arms control and disarmament agreements

- **Global (multilateral)**
  - Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT, 1963)
  - Outer Space Treaty (1967)
  - Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT, 1968)
  - Seabed Treaty (1971)
  - Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC, 1972)
  - Moon and Other Celestial Bodies Agreement (1979)
  - Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC, 1993)
  - Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT, 1996)
  - Mine Ban Convention (1997)
  - Cluster Munitions Convention (2008)

- **Regional (multilateral)**
  - Antarctic Treaty (1959)
  - Nuclear Weapon Free Zones: Tlatelolco (1967)
  - Rarotonga (1985)
  - Bangkok (1995)
  - Pelindaba (1996)
  - Semipalatinsk (2006)

- **Bilateral**
  - Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM Treaty, 1972)
  - Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty I (SALT I, 1972)
  - Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty II (SALT II, 1979)
  - Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty I (START I, 1991)
  - Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty II (START II, 1993)
  - Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT, 2002)
Future options

- Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT)
- Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space (PPWT)
- Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC)
- BTWC Protocol
- Follow-on to START 1
- Geographical expansion of the INF - treaty
The non-proliferation paradigm

- Prevention of the diffusion of certain (weapon-related) technologies
- **Goals**
  - Countering destabilisation on regional or global level
  - In support of existing arms control and disarmament agreements
  - Prevention of weapon acquisition by non-state actors
  - Preservation of one’s military-technological advantage in a particular area
- Became the dominant paradigm at the end of the cold war
  - 1989 Canberra Conference: ‘Australia Group pending the entry-into-force of the CWC’
Moving into a post-non-proliferation phase?

- Is there a non-proliferation norm?
  - If so, definitely challenged: transfer of all technologies (commodities, knowledge, skills) becomes securitised
  - Non-inclusive standard (select membership) & unequal obligations
  - Subjective in addressing security threats
  - No finality

- Non-proliferation arrangements work as long as there are no alternative sources for technology

- Today: growing distribution of technological capabilities
  - Codes of conduct, norms and rules often emerged among non-possessors.
  - Possessors of technology usually aware of advantage; few rules emerged from them
  - **Today:** certain non-possessors try to offset technological superiority of the dominant power(s)

- Consequences: shift to unilateral / plurilateral measures (e.g., non- and counter-proliferation)
New challenges

- New security actors intent on harm
  - Criminals & terrorists
  - Have potential interest in CBRN materials

- Economic imperatives have replaced security imperatives
  - Sub-state economic units.
    - Industry, shipping agencies, etc.
    - Research institutes
    - Researchers, students, etc.
  - Transnational economic units
    - Multi-national corporations
  - State (agencies)
  - International organisations
Conclusions

- Complex set of factors to be taken into consideration
- Is there clarity about the security goals?
  - New search for global stability and parity
  - Regional jockeying for strategic pre-eminence
- How does one deal with new security actors
  - Threats by terrorist and criminal entities
  - Integration of new actors in the disarmament / arms control regimes (e.g., industry, scientific communities)
- Is it possible to reconcile security and economic imperatives?
  - Is there still a (clear) linkage between disarmament and development?
  - What are its consequences for cooperation under disarmament and arms control treaties
- Economic crisis
  - What resources are states willing to commit to complex disarmament and arms control treaties?
  - Which challenges do they pose for existing treaties
Disarmament and gains

- Absolute and relative gain consequences

- Removal of all relative gains *in terms of the function of the weapon category* under consideration
Functional equivalence

Functional equivalence of a particular class of weaponry between two or more political entities is attained when these political entities assign this class of weaponry a similar function in their respective military doctrines.
Importance of FE for disarmament

- Necessary catalyst if the security environment is conducive to arms control or disarmament
- Enables the isolation of a security issue
- Creates the context for an absolute gain, enabling cooperation
  - States will respond to attempts to change the status quo with respect to the weaponry under consideration
  - This increases the opportunity costs for all to maintain the increased capability
Impact of functional equivalence

- Weaponry in functional equivalence is characterized by the fact that any change in its constitution in one political entity would be countered by a similar change in an adversarial political entity. Otherwise: relative gain for first political entity.

- Conversely, changes in the constitution of weaponry not in functional equivalence in one political entity would elicit an asymmetrical (in terms of the weapon category) or no response from an adversary.

- A class of weaponry in functional equivalence between the major political entities concerned can be factored out as a security issue.
Effect of a disarmament treaty

- Condition of presence → irrelevance
  - Weapon no longer part of security equation
    - (Arms control: existence → existence!)
- Condition of irrelevance → irrelevance
  - Weapon not part of the security equations
  - Importance of non-security clauses
- Condition of non-existence → non-existence
  - Hence importance of *positive* security guarantees if a state joins nonetheless
- Formalized functional equivalence
  - Formal acceptance of presence → irrelevance
Regional security perspective

- Global disarmament treaty views all states as equal units
- Regional security interactions may be very intensive
  - Greater relative security concerns
- Complex calculations about the regional and local security impact of a global disarmament treaty
- Absence of functional equivalence: importance of non-security clauses to achieve universality
Long-term implications

- The existence of functional equivalence may be transitionary.
- Changes in the international security environment may occasion a shift from the condition of presence to non-existence.
- Such a shift will place a great strain on existing arms control and disarmament treaties.
  - New opportunities for relative gains or new fears of relative losses.
  - E.g., BTWC, ABM treaty.