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NON-CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS,
MILITARY DOCTRINES & PRECONDITIONS FOR
DISARMAMENT AND ARMS CONTROL
MORE THAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS

- ‘A zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMD’
  - Disarmament initiative comes from the 2010 NPT Review Conference

- Poses major additional problems:
  - Covers different weapon categories
    - Nuclear, Biological, Chemical + Delivery systems (missiles)
  - Different weapon categories with similar doctrinal functions
    - e.g., strategic deterrence with NW in Israel vs. CW in Syria

- Historical baggage as sources for continuing uncertainty
  - CW were used or threatened in wars among Arabs since WW2
    - Egypt in Yemen (1960s)
    - Iraq in 1990-91 Gulf War
  - CW by Arabs against non-Arabs
    - Iraq against Iran and own Kurdish population in 1980-88 Gulf War
  - Israel: known to have pursued / pursue offensive non-conventional weaponry since 1948
    - CW armament in late 1940s and 1950s
    - CW used in assassination operations
    - El Al plane crash near Amsterdam (1992): 3 of 4 sarin precursors on board
    - Uncertainty of BW activities
    - Nuclear armed for several decades, but not used to coerce neighbours.
  - Syria: large CW programme, but strategic rational appears similar to that of Israel’s NW
Impact on the pursuit of absolute and relative gains

Functional equivalence
Weaponry in functional equivalence is characterised 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 or no response from an adversary.

A class of weaponry in functional equivalence between the major political entities concerned can be isolated as a security issue.
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, because

... States respond to attempts to change the status quo with respect to the weaponry under consideration

... This response pattern increases the opportunity costs for all parties concerned to maintain the increased capability without necessarily increasing relative security
MANIFESTATION OF FE

- Presence
- Non-existence
- Irrelevance
- Formalised condition of functional equivalence
PRESENCE OF FE

“Ability to isolate the weaponry as a security issue

“No further relative gains in terms of the function of the weaponry is possible

“All parties can obtain absolute gains through cooperation in arms control or disarmament

“However, security environment must be conducive to such cooperation
NON-EXISTENCE OF FE

“Weaponry enters security equation
  ... Only some political entities possess it
  ... Adversaries assigned it a different function in their respective military doctrines

“Relative gains calculations; fear of relative losses
“Impossibility to isolate the weaponry as a security issue
“Preconditions for arms control or disarmament do not materialise
IRRELEVANCE OF FE

“ The weaponry under consideration does not enter the security equation because no state possesses it or fears it use.

“ No significant gains

“ However, no losses either

“ Importance of non-security clauses in arms control and disarmament treaties
FORMALISED CONDITION OF FE

- Uncertainty about the presence of the weapons category
- Uncertainty about the doctrinal function of such weapons

- A **regional subset of states** can conclude a formal agreement renouncing use, possession and acquisition of these weapons
- Risks for joining the arms control or disarmament treaty is equal for all
EFFECT OF A DISARMAMENT TREATY

“ Condition of existence → irrelevance
  ... (Arms control: existence → existence!)
“ Condition of non-existence → non-existence
  ... Hence importance of positive security guarantees if a state joins nonetheless
    - e.g., Jordan’s accession to CWC (1997)
“ Condition of irrelevance → irrelevance
  ... Hence importance of non-security clauses
“ Formalised FE → irrelevance
MANIFESTATION OF FE IN MIDDLE EAST

"Several many-to-one security relationships
... Consequence of lack of single Arab security institution
(GCC being an exception on sub-regional level)

"Problem:
... NW in Israel; status of CBW programmes not 100% transparent
... CW in Syria
... Nuclear ambitions in Iran suspect in Israel and many Arab states
CORE QUESTIONS FOR THE NEW ME PROCESS

“Can the different non-conventional weapon categories be separated from each other?
   ... If so, how does the regional manifestation of functional equivalence affect opportunities for discussion?
   ... At what stage must the different weapon categories be politically brought together again?

“Can discussions be organised around weapon arsenals in a functionally equivalent relationship (e.g., NW-CW)?
   ... What about the one-to-many and many-to-many security relationships?
   ... To what extent do security actors and their weaponry from outside the Middle East affect regional security perceptions and expectations?

“How do we address specific questions of their delivery systems?
   ... ballistic missiles, but also the current proliferation of anti-ballistic missile defences
   ... other delivery systems, such as planes & rocket, that other doctrinal functions?
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