NON-PROLIFERATION OF 'WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION'

THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE?

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CORE QUESTIONS

- What are '*Weapons of Mass Destruction*'?
- What does '*proliferation*' mean?
- What does '*non-proliferation*' entail?
- Where is the '*ultimate challenge*'?
  - Case study: Why does 'disarmament' work in Syria?

WHAT IS A WMD?

- Used to be synonymous with NW
  - Since end Cold War, increasingly chemical, biological and radiological weapons too
  - Concept is still expanding (explosives, etc.)
- Very awkward term to use
  - No accepted international legal definition
  - Which weapon categories are included; which ones not?
- Very amorphous concept
  - Focusses on consequences of use
  - Hides specific characteristics of individual arms categories
  - Seems to blend the destructiveness of one category (NW) with the ease of acquisition of another (e.g., CW) in political discourse

NON-CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

- Term focusses on specific status, rather than consequences of use
  - Only highest political authorities release weapons for use
  - Authorisation for use not pre-delegated to military commanders (in contrast to ‘conventional’ weapons)
  - First task of arms control is prevention of ‘conventionalisation’
- Difference with ‘unconventional’ weapons
  - Weapons outside of legal regimes
  - Unusual weapons (e.g., designed for very specific role or operation)

ARMAMENT VERSUS PROLIFERATION

- Armament:
  - quantitative or qualitative enhancement of military capacity
  - essentially a domestic process

- Proliferation: transfer of technology from a possessor to a non-possessor
  - 'Horizontal proliferation': lateral spread
  - 'Vertical proliferation': weapon acquisition and improvement (= armament?)

VALUE JUDGEMENT

- *Technology diffusion* is a natural process
  - Archaeological evidence from Palaeolithic; Antiquity, …
  - Possibility of multiple original sources for same technology
- *Proliferation* includes judgment about desirability
  - Origin from cell biology: ‘rapid & repeated production’ (often with negative connotation, as in cancer)
  - Security policy:
    - Negative connotation reinforced from the nuclear field
    - Use of term limited to non-conventional weaponry
    - Compare with the more neutral ‘arms trade’

DISARMAMENT / NON-PROLIFERATION PARADIGM SHIFT — 1

- Focus shift from weapon elimination to prevention of capability building
  - Impact on BTWC (Protocol) and CWC
  - Technology itself becomes central concern

- ‘Proliferation’ redefines the threat in function of the dominant power
  - Lack of consensus over threat evaluation
  - Lack of consensus over measures to address threat
  - Tendency to move to national/plurilateral rather than multilateral measures

DISARMAMENT / NON-PROLIFERATION PARADIGM SHIFT — 2

- Objective goals vs. Subjective goals
  - Disarmament: goals specified in treaty and apply equally to all parties
  - Non-proliferation: Different approaches to different countries based on ***subjective*** judgement of intent (the so-called 'rogues' vs. rational, law-abiding actors)

- Lack of finality in non-proliferation
  - Resolution of one proliferation threat does not affect other ones
  - Even if all resolved today, there is tomorrow's threat

CONTEXTS FOR 'DUAL-USE' DEBATE

- **Dual-use issues** arise when the attempts to control a particular technology confront the non-military commercial and scientific interests in such technology
- **Disarmament**
  - Total ban on development, production and possession of a weapon and preparations for its use in warfare (BTWC, CWC)
  - 'Dual-use' issue emerges when
    - Civilian facilities and installations need to be verified
    - Need to prevent the (inadvertent) assistance to development of banned weapon by another state or non-state entity
  - Ban of weapon (= single-use technology) is central; control of dual-use technology supports that central goal
- **Non-proliferation**
  - Control of access to technologies that may contribute to undesired weapon development in another state or non-state entity
  - Primary policy tool for weapon categories whose use in war or possession has not been wholly delegitimised (e.g., nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles)

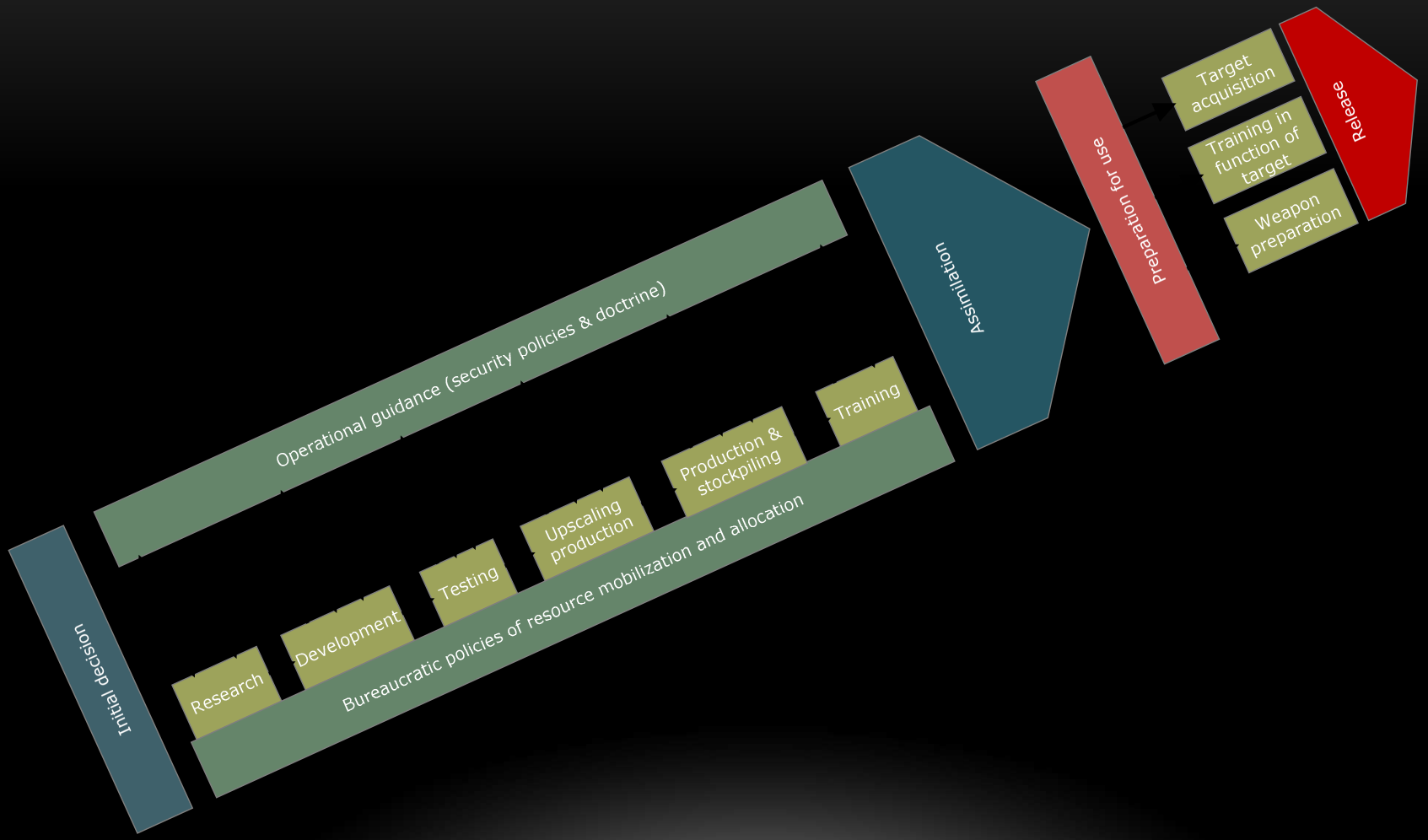
SUPPLY-SIDE PERSPECTIVE

- Is the traditional focus of proliferation studies
- Focus traditionally on objects (e.g., weapons, equipment)
  - The fact that the objects exist defines an important part of the threat
- Influence of *regressive* analysis of armament dynamic
  - Possession or determination to possess weapon is assumed
  - 'Rogueness' is presumed and proliferation assumption confirms 'rogueness'
  - All other elements are interpreted in function of the certainty of the final goal

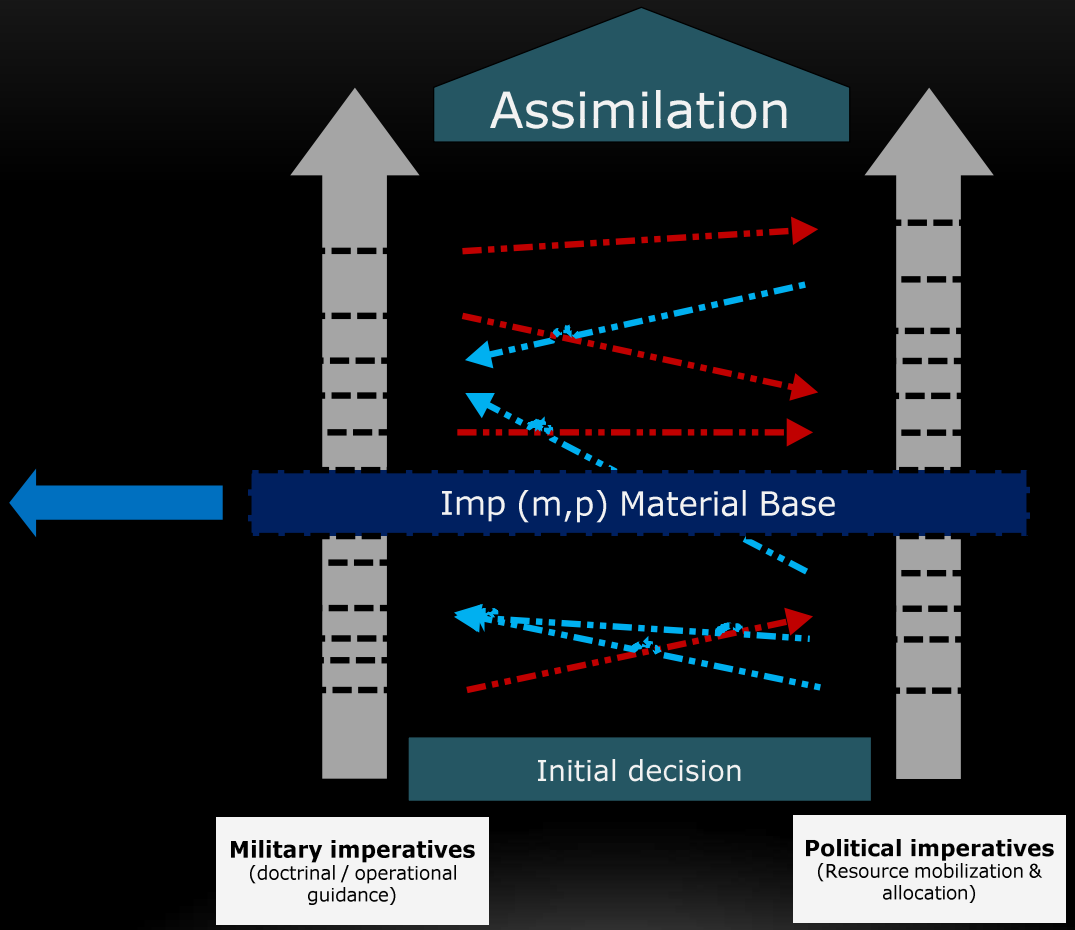
DEMAND-SIDE PERSPECTIVE

- Focus on internal decision-making processes
  - **Problem**: often little known about these processes
- Appreciation of the complexity of the decision-making process (opportunity costs)
  - Failures
  - Reversals of decisions
  - Importance of the material base
- *Progression* analysis of the armament dynamic is required
  - *i.e.*, starting with initial decision and ending with weapon deployment

STEPS IN THE ARMAMENT DYNAMIC



PROLIFERATION IN THE ARMAMENT DYNAMIC

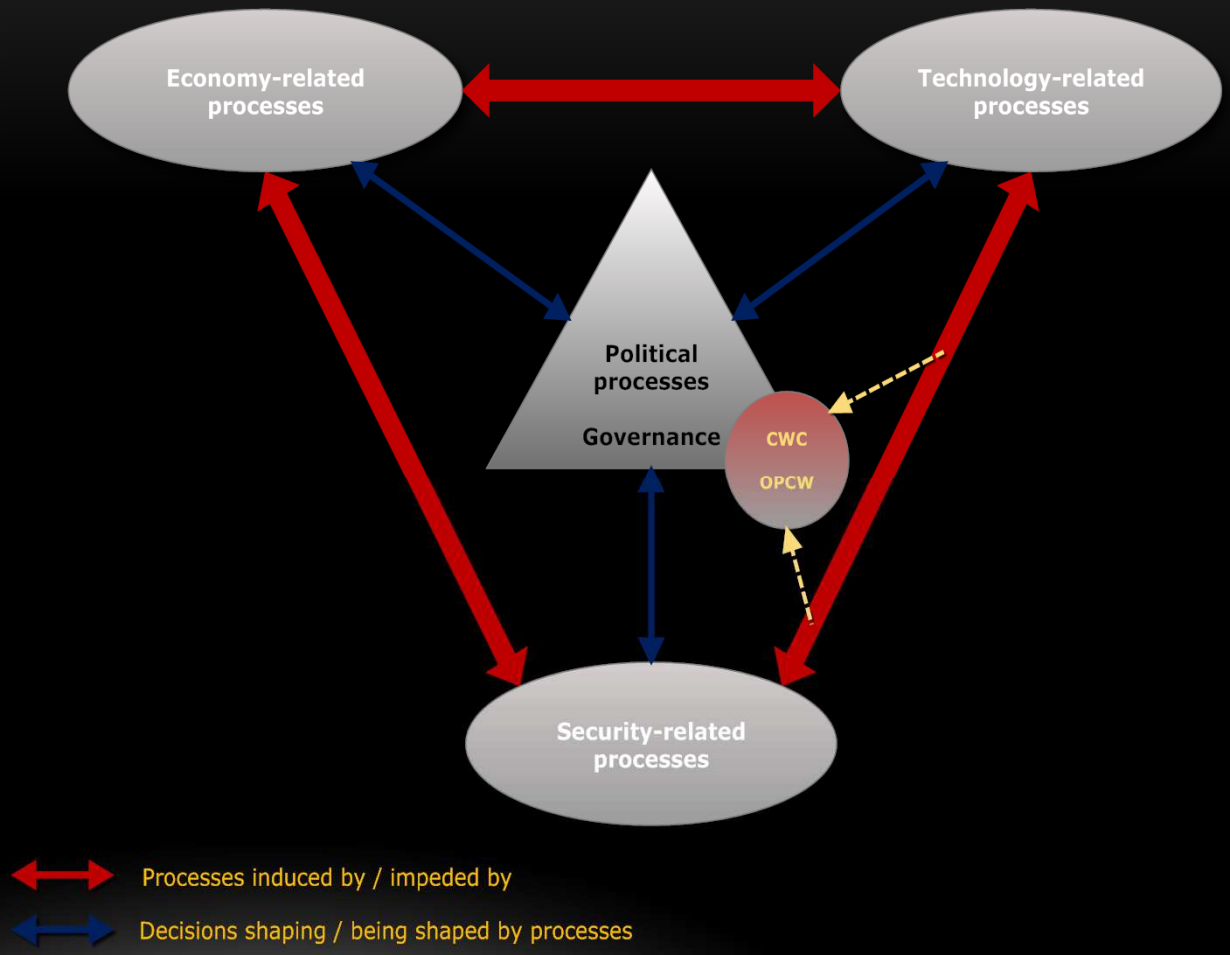


ENTRANCE OF THE *POST-PROLIFERATION ERA*?

- **Nuclear:**
  - Global warming and growing interest in nuclear energy
  - Commercial pressure to access new markets
    - e.g., US-India & US-UAE bilateral agreement; Saudi Arabia forthcoming
- **Biological:**
  - Biology and biotechnology critical to development & health
  - Many developing countries conduct leading-edge research
  - Education expanding everywhere: spread of knowledge to manipulate pathogens, including genetics
  - Biotechnology is essentially information: no physical goods to cross borders
  - Corporate acquisition and sell-offs
- **Chemical:**
  - Similar to biological
  - Many production facilities with potential for CW manufacture now located in developing world

The post-proliferation governance challenge

- No unified model for governance of weapon control anymore
- States do not drive the processes anymore; they can steer in a limited way
- New stakeholders and security actors
- Increased role of non-state national & transnational actors
- Declining role of states in shaping developments
- Shifting relative balances of powers (economy, politics, military) and multiple power centres
- Geographical decentralisation of business and industry activities
- South-south trade patterns and impact on technology diffusion
- Etc.



SYRIA: WHY IS DISARMAMENT WORKING?

- Focus on the weapon technology (CW)
- All parties to the discussions are considered equal
  - Personalities and nature of political systems are not the focus
    - No value judgements about partners
    - No talk anymore of regime change (cf. Saddam Hussein & UNSCOM; Iran & nuclear programme)
    - Consensus in Security Council
  - Russia and USA can talk business again; Syrian government is equal partner; Role for Iran
- Clear vision of point of departure and end goal
  - Cooperation is prerequisite
  - Agency of an international organisation (OPCW) as verifier and neutral arbiter of compliance
- Enter *Realpolitik*: what about justice?
  - Eliminates likelihood of a 2nd Ghouta
  - Possibility of ending conflict
  - Possibility of of regional disarmament in the Middle East

THE TRENCH

Recalling where science, industry and military art converged
Challenging entrenched positions

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