

SCRRAP:

A new approach to
achieving world security and disarmament

Dan Plesch

Executive Summary

The SCRRAP proposal maps out a practical way to implement fully Article VI of the NPT, which covers the legal commitment of the nuclear powers to disarm and which is a critical deal at the heart of the global non-proliferation regime. The article reads: 'Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.' This is a legally binding commitment on all the nations that are party to the Treaty. It is the only legally binding commitment to nuclear disarmament. Traditionally, states and pressure groups favouring nuclear disarmament have emphasised this aspect of the article. Conversely, opponents have tended to focus on what they view as a necessary unsavoury link between nuclear and over-all disarmament. This linkage is usually regarded as creating a goal so utopian that it can safely be forgotten. In recent years, especially in the 'unequivocal commitment' made by all the states with nuclear weapons to nuclear disarmament, nuclear weapons have been regarded separately. States in favour of disarmament have usually balked at the huge challenge presented by the whole of Article VI; the SCRRAP proposal is designed to meet this challenge.

This paper is drawn from The Beauty Queen's Guide to World Peace, Politico's 2005. Please note that all references in this paper can be found in the book version of this paper.

Preface

"Peace on Earth" is a seasonal wish at this time of year. It also one of the themes in Stanley Kubrick's excoriating satire of militaristic madness, Dr Strangelove. But whether the message is taken sincerely or cynically, it is no fantasy. For peace on earth - in the form of world disarmament - is practical by 2020. This article suggests how.

Disarmament has virtually disappeared from the political agenda. In the west it has become the word that dare not speak its name. In particular, the media and establishment politics in the United States and the Britain ignore it. Yet disarmament is arguably as important to sustainable human survival than global warming or world poverty - in some ways even more so. The urgency of the problem of armaments is clear in almost every news bulletin: massacres in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the fear of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists, Star Wars deployments in Poland and Britain (and Vladimir Putin's warnings of their risks), the destruction caused by cluster-bombs and small arms - these are only a few of countless examples.

Between them, the United States and Russia possess 5,000 missiles that really are ready to fire in "forty-five minutes". Such a scale of threat would in any other period have placed disarmament at the centre of international politics - as it was since the end of the "great war" in 1918 until the mid-1990s. US presidents from John F Kennedy to Ronald Reagan were judged in large part on their achievements in the field of arms control and disarmament. In the last decade, however, the marginalisation of disarmament has been led by the same ultra-conservative forces in the US that propelled George W Bush into the presidency.

The United Nations summits in 2010 and 2012 should have the objective of completing these agreements. The UN can then focus on its vital work in realising a global plan to curb global climate change and meet the Millennium Development Goals. The bonus for citizens in every country, taxpayers, the poor and the global economy as a whole would be immense.

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Weapons Management and Threat Elimination

The major approach to WMD is arms control and disarmament or, to get away from the language of the Cold War, weapons regulation and removal. The control of armaments can be designed to produce a stable state between nations or as a step towards weapons elimination.

The last few years have seen a huge change in international relations on the control of armaments. There has been a general international consensus that the control of weapons through treaties is a good thing. There has also been continuing, albeit unsuccessful, pressure on the states with nuclear arms to get rid of them from those without them. The great lesson of 2003 was that weapons regulation and removal under international agreements worked in Iraq, Iran and Libya – all states that US conservatives had alleged were 'rogues' who would always fool the inspectors of the UN. The UN inspectors in Iraq got it right about Saddam's programmes and effectively demonstrated that containment can prevent proliferation. European negotiations succeeded in bringing Iran's covert programmes into the open and may yet secure its non-nuclear status.

One of the most widespread untruths spread about the failure of the UN inspectors in Iraq concerned the biological-weapons programme, as the then head of the programme, Rolf Ekeus, explained:

Take Iraq's biological weapons program, often cited as evidence of Baghdad's ability to deceive weapons inspectors. In his speech to the UN General Assembly on Thursday, President Bush attributed the successful uncovering of the bio weapons program to the fortuitous defection of a senior Iraqi weapons official in 1995 ... In fact, in April 1995, four months before the Iraqi official defected, UN inspectors disclosed to the Security Council that Iraq had a major biological weapons program, including a sizable production facility ... the inspection team, known as the UN Special Commission on Iraq, or UNSCOM, added details about Iraq's research into weapons that could spread anthrax, botulism, aflatoxin and gas gangrene. The discovery of Iraq's bio weapons program was the work of smart inspectors, not a god-send. UNSCOM searched normally innocent institutions such as hospitals, university labs, health centres and veterinary centres, and slowly a picture emerged of a major weapons program. UNSCOM profited from breakthroughs in genetic analysis to discover traces of biological weapons in samples obtained earlier at suspect facilities. If, in the face of Iraq's total denial and non-cooperation, the inspectors could find that kind of carefully concealed activity that should give us reason to trust a renewed UN inspection system.

Libya's long-standing attempt to negotiate with the West was finally responded to. Its chemical and nuclear capacity and missile capacities were handed over to the US and the UN authorities. The US official responsible for negotiations with Libya under President Clinton was Martin Indyk. He wrote in the Financial Times, after the Libyans had handed over their WMD materials that, 'in fact, Libya offered to surrender WMD programmes four years ago, at the outset of secret negotiations with US officials. In May 1999, the offer was formally conveyed to US officials – at the peak of the "12 years of diplomacy with Iraq"'. The Clinton administration had considered the Libyan programmes to be unimportant and concentrated instead on resolving the issue of Pan Am 103, the airliner blown up over Scotland. North Korea, Iran and Libya had all previously been engaged in dialogue. However, negotiations have always taken place in a context of hard political pressures. The key point is that getting a workable cooperative agreement is worth cutting deals because such agreements are essential to survival.

President Bush himself began a multilateral initiative in early 2003. He launched a set of initiatives to strengthen the UN Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the other existing biological and chemical treaties and the IAEA. The Proliferation Security Initiative seeks to interdict the transport and trade in WMD, their means of delivery and all related materials to countries of 'proliferation concern'. Similarly, UN Security Council resolution 1540 obliges states to enact and enforce a legal framework to prevent proliferation of WMD and addresses their possession by non-state actors.

Those opposed to all disarmament agreements are sweeping aside the achievements of the past and of the present day, ignoring the contribution of weapons regulation and removal have made to peace and stability. Too many others have forgotten they exist. The argument that these old-fashioned approaches do not tackle the contemporary problems of terrorism and rogue states is common and invalid. At the same time the sceptics of agreements argue that it is rogue states from which terrorists may obtain weapons. The focus is on the supposed rogue states at the expense of a universal system of controls. While terrorist weapons are undoubtedly a problem, so too are long-standing and re-emerging concerns over the behaviour of countries. The ownership of WMD by Britain, China, France, Russia and the US, along with the relative newcomers India, Israel and Pakistan, cannot rationally be regarded as no longer a problem. In reality, attempting to tackle WMD by focusing only on the small potential of third-world states and terrorists ignores the full extent of the crisis in human affairs. This wider problem includes the unfinished business of disarming the Cold War stockpiles and bringing the existing and potential nuclear states into a global security structure.

Disarming Cold War stockpiles also relates to the problem of potential terrorist acquisition of nuclear weapons and radioactive material. The huge stocks of surplus WMD and related materials in Russia are, despite major efforts by the US, still a huge problem. It is only because of the dedication of underpaid and under resourced Russian officials supported by the US 'threat-reduction' programmes that the country has not yet become a car boot sale of WMD.

A new overall approach is needed to assist the international community in developing concrete and comprehensive plans to re-energise the effort to regulate and remove weaponry. It can include measures to assist in implementing the key disarmament provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The approach suggested here draws upon existing global, regional and bilateral agreements to help develop international debate and policy.

The new approach proposed in this paper is intended to directly increase security through controls of the enormous amounts of weaponry in the world owned by states and consequently to build greater consensus for combined international actions against terrorists and states that truly hold out against the international community. This concept, detailed below, describes the existing successful agreements for the regulation and destruction of weaponry and enumerates how they can be used as building blocks for a comprehensive structure of weapons management and elimination. The concept encompasses space weapons, WMD, missiles, conventional weapons, small arms and light weapons. Such a concept is a tool that shows how to manage global disarmament. It is a policy equal to the task of achieving world peace. And a challenge to those who pay lip service to controlling WMD.

The SCRRAP Concept

This is not the first time the world has faced crises over WMD. They occurred during the Cold War with unpleasant frequency. Each crisis produced a positive backlash leading to concrete disarmament measures. These measures included the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963, and some stabilising US–Soviet agreements on nuclear arms in the 1970s, including the Strategic Arms Limitation Agreements, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. These achievements came in the wake of the Cuban missile crisis of 1961. This was a time when the US and USSR came close to nuclear war after the USSR based nuclear arms in Cuba.

Between 1987 and 1996 there was an unprecedented succession of agreements on almost all kinds of weapons. They are described below, but they include the Intermediate Nuclear Force and Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties, the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty and the Comprehensive (nuclear) Test Ban Treaty. These became law during a period of renewed confrontation between the US and the USSR. There is still profound disagreement over what happened and why.

Some argue that a strong policy by the US forced Soviet concessions and collapse. Others argue that the great public fear felt around the world over nuclear war forced both sides to a more reasonable course of action and that the Soviet Union was, in any case, far weaker than portrayed by US conservatives. Unfortunately, today the achievements that came out of these crises have mostly been forgotten. They are no longer part of public political discussion and anyone becoming interested in international affairs today would have to look long and hard to find out about them. National officials and NGOs who have spent a life-time working to these ends have found themselves in retreat.

People who seek a better response to present problems than the 'war on terror' are not being offered a unified approach to either the problems of proliferation or those posed by the advocates of the war on terror, by politicians, arms control academics or by pressure groups. Indeed, few people are even aware that weapons can be, and have already been, controlled with great success and that there-fore more can be done in the future.

Ironically, the world has already created the components and prototypes of a comprehensive, global system to manage and eliminate weapons of all kinds. Such an approach has crucial advantages. A comprehensive approach would close loopholes through which it would be possible to pursue some other type of weapons. For example, some states see Western concern over WMD as merely a way of preserving Western supremacy in conventional armaments. The late Les Aspin, who served as President Clinton's first Secretary of Defence, remarked on this. He was one of the first to say that third-world countries wanted WMD to counter US conventional supremacy, much as NATO had used them to counter Soviet superiority in tanks. An approach that covered both conventional weapons and WMD would offer something to both the weak and the strong.

Another, historical, example makes the point that without a comprehensive approach, new technologies can allow one state or another to sidestep the terms of an agreement to seek an advantage. Back in 1972 the first US-Soviet Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty limited missiles, but not the nuclear warheads on them. At the time the US believed it had scored a diplomatic coup, for in secret it had built a missile (the Poseidon) that carried a dozen nuclear weapons, each able to attack a separate target. But in the end, as Henry Kissinger admits, this achievement was a disaster as the Soviet Union built the same technology and there were then far more nuclear weapons on missiles than ever.

It is tempting to start from scratch with a new set of procedures unencumbered with the history and bias of past agreements. However, this would be to continue to ignore the significant existing achievements in the area of weapons control. This concept considers the existing measures for the regulation and removal of weaponry and demonstrates that these measures contain the models, prototypes and building blocks of a comprehensive structure of weapons management. In outline the STRATEGIC CONCEPT FOR REGULATION AND REMOVAL OF ARMS AND PROLIFERATION (SCRRAP) would arrange for the universal application of the core provisions of the following agreements:

- Biological Weapons Convention, draft verification protocol
- Chemical Weapons Convention
- Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and related IAEA safeguards
- Regional Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaties
- Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) Treaty
- Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty
- Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
- Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)'s Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty
- OSCE's Open Skies Treaty and Confidence and Security Building Measures
- UN and various international organisations' programmes on small arms and light weapons
- The proposed Arms Trade Treaty

- Informal export control regimes including the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Wassenaar agreement, the Australia group, the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zangger Committee.

Most of SCRRAP can be demonstrated to have been effectively implemented in some part of the world. Almost all nations support the bans on biological and chemical weapons and nuclear weapons test explosions. Over fifty nations, including the US and Russia, allow each other to carry out airborne inspections of one another's countries under the Open Skies Treaty. Around fifty countries in Europe have their armies and air forces controlled under the CFE Treaty, which scrapped more than fifty thousand weapons. The US and Russia destroyed thousand of missiles under the START and INF treaties. UN inspections and government export controls have limited proliferation. In Africa several countries have rounded up and crushed thousands of guns such as AK-47s.

Many of these agreements were made quite recently, between 1987 and 1996. Before this period they seemed too difficult to make. Indeed earlier efforts had been much less ambitious. For example, the comprehensive ban on testing came more than thirty years after the agreement of a partial ban. The Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty came after years of less ambitious yet fruitless talks on mutual and balanced force reductions. And START achieved reductions after previous agreements had only managed limitations in future build-up!

At the time that these ambitious agreements were made many people were sceptical that the practical and political difficulties could be overcome. Yet they were. Nevertheless, one cannot simply print off the existing treaty documents, stack them up and demand that they be implemented globally. Building a new security structure based upon existing achievements will leave some large gaps to be filled, notably in the areas of space warfare and new technologies.

It would be silly to dismiss the huge political obstacles to disarmament that exist in international politics at present. But the historical record of the agreements made between the Soviet Union and the West should be taken as a sign that what seems impossible can become possible. It is also worth remembering that some of the key elements of the Reagan administration's policies were criticised by arms control groups as too far-reaching to be achievable. These included the 'zero option' of eliminating the entire class of INF land-based missiles. Similarly, there were those who argued that some partial limit on nuclear testing was all that was realistic. In fact, a comprehensive ban was achieved, and has so far been maintained.

It is necessary to carry out considerable research and policy development involving governmental and non-governmental representatives to develop SCRRAP. Fortunately, there now exists in many countries considerable expertise in weapons management and elimination, not least in the nations of Europe and North America and in South Africa. It is here that the hard work of helping manage the end of the Cold War was carried out with great success. This experience can be drawn upon for further bilateral, regional and global agreements.

It would be a tragedy if once again an opportunity for disarmament arose and was lost because the best advocates of disarmament were too fragmented and demoralised to take that opportunity, and because a new generation were simply unaware of the practical relevance of the treaties made by their predecessors in the 1960s and 1980s. Of the three types of WMD, chemical weapons have a system of global verification in place; biological weapons have a system that has been tested in trials but is not in force; and nuclear weapons in the hands of the states with them should be subject to controls that are presently used to stop new states from getting them. Missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometres are subject to US and Russian treaties that can serve as models for international application. In essence, the countries with nuclear weapons will need to agree to something very like the provisions in the START and INF Treaties – with a timetable leading to zero, while their bomb factories and stores will be subjected to the same scrutiny so conveniently practised in Iraq, Iran, Libya and a few years ago in South Africa.

The regulations on conventional army and air force weapons in the CFE Treaty already apply to a quarter of the nations on earth.

Building SCRRAP from the Existing Treaties

So far this paper has outlined the different approaches to managing weapons and proposes a new and far-reaching concept to regulate and remove weapons of all kinds. Numerous treaties have been mentioned.

They involve a great deal of technical detail and required considerable political pressure. To help fill in some of the background of the SCRRAP proposal I have itemised below the major existing agreements and pointed to ways that their achievements can contribute to a broader system of regulation and removal.

Nuclear Weapons

- The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

The NPT promises an end to the arms race; contains the only legally binding commitment to nuclear disarmament, and the goal of “general and complete disarmament”. The NPT includes the existing International Atomic Energy Agency safeguard agreements that provide a verification system for nuclear materials which could be applied universally, not only, as it is at present, to the non-nuclear weapon countries in the NPT with different levels, and in a limited form, to the nuclear weapons states in the Treaty (Britain, China, France, Russia and the US).

- Nuclear Weapons Free Zones (NWFZ)

The treaties in Latin America, the South Pacific and South East Asia effectively ban nuclear weapons from large parts of the globe. An African NWFZ Treaty has been signed by forty-nine states but has yet to come into force. The states that have agreed to them are all signatories of the NPT as well, and the NWFZ Treaties serve to underpin the NPT. Some of the NWFZ Treaties also contain under-takings by states not to allow other countries to base nuclear weapons in their countries. The NWFZ Treaties act as political indicators of public rejection of nuclear weapons and as a system of mutual reassurance between the states concerned and could, moreover, act as the foundation for building other agreements for regional arms regulation and removal, using some of the agreements made in Europe on conventional weapons as models. New agreements in Africa and central Asia have been agreed in principle recently but have yet to come into effect.

- The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)

The CTBT has banned states from carrying out test explosions since it was agreed in 1996, and five countries that used to test have stopped. They are Britain, China, France, Russia and the US. These five have each made the political decision to stop testing and Britain, France and Russia have made this commitment formal by completing the process of making the Treaty national law in their countries. India and Pakistan tried a few nuclear weapons out in 1998 but none have been exploded since. China and the US have signed the Treaty and are abiding by it, but have refused to ratify it, a process necessary for it to pass it into national law. The verification system involves many nations around the world and is an excellent way of providing assurance that no weapons have been exploded. Previously, Russia and the US had carried out thousands of test explosions, the others far fewer.

The test ban has prevented new types of weapons from being developed. However, there are continuing political pressures from weapons advocates to try out new and old weapons (to see if they still work). These pressures are mainly in China and the US. There are some concerns over the effectiveness of the Treaty. As long ago as 1945, the US developed and used the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki with only one test. In France, the UK and the US, billions of dollars are being spent trying to use computer modelling as a substitute for explosive testing. It is noteworthy that those who argue that stopping testing has achieved little can often be found arguing to start exploding them again. Nevertheless, the CTBT has put a stop to half a century of explosions and put great limitations on the ability of nations to build weapons. This international norm contributed to the small scale of these

countries' tests by institutionalising a taboo against nuclear explosions. It is a key part of a global structure for reducing and removing weaponry.

To get the Treaty we have today it was necessary to get agreement amongst the most heavily armed and economically powerful nations in the world as well as from scores of smaller states. The problems associated with getting states out-side the Treaty to come into it are considerable but they are far less than those overcome by the international community in agreeing to the Treaty as it exists at present.

The CTBT is a powerful agreement with near-universal acceptance at present, even though it is under threat from a possible US resumption of testing. It provides a crucial building block in the strategic concept of regulating and removing armaments. It includes effective verification of the testing of the world's most dangerous weapons of mass destruction and an agreement that they should never be tested again.

Chemical Weapons

- The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)

Almost all countries in the world have agreed this convention. The CWC is an organisation for checking up on activities going on in particular countries. It is unique in the way it requires intrusive inspections to ferret about looking for suspect activities. It is served by an international secretariat based in The Hague, and has an Executive Committee charged with implementing the Treaty and adjudicating on problems. Both Russia and the US have found that technical and resource issues have so far prevented them from completing the destruction of the enormous stocks they built up between 1945 and 1990.

The verification provisions of the CWC provide a major contribution to the process of checking up on other types of WMD.

Biological Weapons

- The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)

The BWC has been agreed by most countries in the world, but it has no verification component. An extensive negotiation on a verification protocol produced an agreement that many nations thought would be effective in preventing the development of these weapons. The Bush administration vetoed the agreement and the negotiations themselves.

Nevertheless, the draft agreement could be brought into effect without waiting on Washington. One way would be for a state to introduce it as a resolution at the UN General Assembly. This tactic was used by Australia to bring in the CTBT when India was blocking consensus in the regular negotiating committee in Geneva. Another alternative would be for a regional organisation such as the EU to put the BWC verification process into effect and then encourage other groups of countries to join in.

Missiles

- The Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF)

The INF Treaty applies to the US and Russia. It requires that these states have no ballistic or cruise missiles that can be fired from the ground to targets more than 500km, and less than 5,500km, away. The INF Treaty does not govern missiles fired from warplanes, ships and submarines. Uniquely, it eliminated a whole class of missiles.

The INF Treaty contains very detailed requirements for checking that there are no such missiles and for checking that the 2,692 missiles that existed at that time were destroyed. The Treaty contains the vital technical provisions that would be needed for a global treaty banning all intermediate-range cruise and ballistic missiles. The verification procedures were completed and closed in 1992. The US eliminated its last ground-launched cruise missile on 1 May 1991. The last Pershing II was destroyed on 6 May 1991. The Soviet Union destroyed the last of eighty SSC-X-4 non-deployed cruise missiles on 5 October 1988 and the last of six SS-5s on 16 August 1989. With the destruction of the last declared SS-4 on 22 May 1990, the only remaining Soviet intermediate-range system enumerated in the Treaty was the SS-20 until its final elimination on 12 May 1991. Continuous portal-monitoring operations began in both countries in July 1988. At Magna, Utah and Votkinsk, Russia, permanent communities of up to thirty inspectors each are located outside the gates of former INF missile production and

final assembly plants to check exiting vehicles for Treaty-limited items. Continuous portal-monitoring operations at Votkinsk and Magna are proceeding with rotations of portal inspectors occurring at three-week and monthly intervals, respectively.

As for destruction of the missiles affected by the INF Treaty, Soviet officials indicated they would burn most of their weapons in pits but also may launch some for disintegration in the upper atmosphere. The US Air Force planned to fly its cruise missiles, deployed in Europe, to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, and cut them apart with chain saws. The Army decided to transport its Pershing II missiles, deployed in Europe and stored in the US, to two Army installations located in the US for destruction – the Pueblo Depot Activity and the Longhorn Ammunition Plant cited above. It will destroy all of the Pershing 1a models at their present location, the Pueblo Depot Activity. The destruction procedure calls for burning the solid fuel propellant and crushing the motors and other portions of the missiles with bulldozers. In both Russia and the US some experts believe that the Treaty stops them from having weapons necessary for fighting other nations and propose scrapping it all-together.

To globalise the INF, the necessary amendments would include adding additional manufacturers and brands of missile to the existing lists, and including those that could be fired from warplanes and naval vessels. It would be advisable to lower the range limit from 500km to 0km in order to be comprehensive. Technical arrangements on the shortest-range missiles would need to be slotted into provisions on conventional forces in the CFE Treaty.

– The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty I (START I)

START I governs US and Russian ballistic missiles with ranges over 5,500 km, and long-range bombers. It provides for checks that certain missiles were destroyed and that those that remain conform to certain technical specifications. Its provisions built on the achievements of earlier treaties. These were the first and second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaties (SALT). Because START allows thousands of weapons to remain it contains many details to prevent cheating and, in common with other treaties of the same historical period, was made in such a way as to ensure support from the most diehard US sceptics of the reliability of verification. Consequently, it provides a very reliable model that can be applied globally.

In combination with the INF Treaty, START I contains the key provisions for a global treaty that could regulate and remove all missiles.

– The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM)

The ABM Treaty used to apply to the US and Russia. It prevented either country from building large numbers of missiles designed to shoot down other missiles of the types controlled under the START and SALT agreements. Its purpose was to stop the action-reaction cycle of building missiles, and anti-missile missiles. President George W. Bush withdrew the US from the Treaty and it is no longer in effect. The Bush administration believes that it is necessary to have a missile de-fence against rogue states and that the old idea of a balance of terror, the famous Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) or deterrence theory, amounts at best to being blackmailed. At worst, they argue, deterrence can result in being left de-fenceless in face of a madman who is not deterred by the threat of being hit back. Nevertheless, for decades, the US, Russia, the countries of NATO and the entire UN referred to the ABM Treaty as essential to global stability because strategists believed that the stand-off inherent in MAD provided the best security available. It was not until Ronald Reagan denounced deterrence as vulnerable to accident and amounting to accepting a permanent Russian roulette that the arguments long made by anti-nuclear campaigners hit the mainstream.

The ABM Treaty contains most of the necessary technical details for a global ban on anti-ballistic missiles. In a missile-free world it would have less importance. However, it is important to note that missiles made to shoot down other missiles are very good at shooting down satellites. This is because satellites have a much more predictable flight path, and like ducks in a fairground shooting gallery, if you miss, you can have another try when they come back the next time.

Informal international agreements on WMD

There are a host of secret intergovernmental bureaucracies involving mostly Western states that are designed to stop the bad guys getting hold of weapons. Appropriately enough they all

have names that would sell well on the cover of an airport thriller. The London Club seeks to place export controls on items which could be turned to military purposes in the nuclear area. The Wassenaar agreement, the Australia Group, the Zangger Committee, the Proliferation Security Initiative and the Missile Technology Control Regime are all agreements to control detailed lists of materials that might be used to make nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and missiles. At present these agreements tend mostly to involve Western countries agreeing not to sell to some nations that are considered potentially threatening. Many developing states complain at the UN that the agreements prevent them from buying equipment for normal commercial activity that the Western states are continuing to supply to each other.

These agreements can form the basis for a comprehensive set of global controls on WMD formalised as part of an international treaty. As part of a system of regulation and prevention of WMD-related international technology transfers, the lists of technology would form part of a system of international controls rather than the present selective and secret system.

Conventional weapons

– The Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE)

The CFE Treaty sets limits on the numbers of warplanes, helicopters, tanks, armoured vehicles and artillery guns owned by more than forty countries in Europe, including US forces stationed in Europe, Russian forces and the nations of the Caucasus. The Treaty sets out in intricate detail the definitions of the different types of military equipment, the procedures for checking who has what, and the procedures for destroying weapons in excess of specified limits. Although originally structured as a NATO–Warsaw Pact treaty it still remains a force for peace.

Robert Cooper has explained the revolutionary nature of the CFE Treaty. Cooper is a senior official of the EU's foreign affairs section and was a senior adviser to Tony Blair. In describing how Europe has evolved into what he calls a 'post-modern' condition in which states abandon old ideas of balance and secrecy in favour of sharing their security in common, he says: It is important to realise what an extraordinary revolution this is. The normal, logical behaviour of armed forces is to conceal their strength and hide their equipment from their enemies. Treaties to regulate such matters are an absurdity in strategic logic. By the end of the 40-month reduction period prescribed by the Treaty, the 30 CFE States Parties completed and verified by inspection the destruction or conversion to other uses of more than 50,000 battle tanks, armoured combat vehicles, artillery pieces, combat aircraft and attack helicopters as required by the Treaty. In addition, the States Parties conducted and accepted some 2,300 intrusive on-site inspections.

Tens of thousands of weapons were destroyed under the provisions of the Treaty. The CFE Treaty provides a highly developed political, technical and bureaucratic basis from which to create a global treaty regulating and removing all these types of weapon. CFE is more than a model, a prototype or a foundation stone. It is a structure of control that encompasses the armed forces across the continent of Europe. CFE has already been used as a basis for one additional agreement. This is the arms control section of the 1995 Dayton accords. The Dayton accords settled the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the western Balkans. They provide for detailed checks on the weapons held by the Serb, Croat and Bosnian forces engaged in that civil war.

In general there are few complaints from any side over the provisions of the CFE Treaty or the way it has been implemented. The main breach of the Treaty was Russia's build-up of forces in Chechnya during the civil war of the early 1990s. In addition some analysts have criticised the way excess stocks of equipment were 'cascaded' to less well-equipped nations in Europe and on to the international arms market. The existing challenge is to bring in the Baltic States, who were part of the Soviet Union when the Treaty was signed but are now independent and part of NATO.

– Land mines and inhumane weapons

Formally known as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (APL Ban Treaty) and the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCWC), these two agreements regulate some of the most brutal forms of killing.

The APL Ban Treaty controls anti-personnel landmines. Most countries in the world support it. It appears to have brought a halt to the production and use of these weapons by most states. Some critics argue it endangers their security and they, including the US, have not agreed to it. From a different perspective some NGOs argue that its loopholes permit cluster bombs and anti-vehicle landmines. The CCWC is without any verification regime and yet has been quite effective in pre-venting the introduction of some weapons, notably bullets that explode on contact with the body rather than 'merely' passing through. The Convention has been used to ban using blinding lasers and is an important framework for banning new technologies.

Confidence- and Security-Building Measures

– The Open Skies Treaty

The Open Skies Treaty applies in Europe. It allows for unarmed over flight of the entire territory of participating states using a variety of sensors. The Treaty aims to promote transparency in military activities and to enhance confidence- and security-building whilst facilitating monitoring of compliance with other arms control agreements.

The Open Skies Treaty specifically allows any country to join in the system. As it covers the borders of areas of tension such as the Middle East and central Asia, the countries in these areas could be brought into an international system. The Treaty is, like the others described here, tried and tested and should become a global treaty or could serve as a model for regional agreements in other parts of the world.

The 1999 Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Vienna Document

This agreement under the auspices of the OSCE provides for information-sharing about military policies and practices. It is not an agreement about hardware; however, it is one of the ways states can start to build and sustain confidence between one another.

It is important to recognise that much valuable security can be achieved with even partial measures. For example, the process of exchanging information can build confidence. In addition, merely freezing levels of weapons under effective verification can do a great deal. The actual process of reduction and removal to destruction can be phased in over a longer period of time.

A dialogue now needs to begin about adopting a comprehensive approach to weapons management regionally and globally. There should be a leading role for the European security institutions of the EU, NATO and the OSCE in these matters. This is for two reasons. First of all, a significant part of the global pool of expertise in implementing weapons regulation and removal exists within the staff of European governments. In addition, a key region of tension, the Middle East, is Europe's neighbour. In addition to treaties, great progress can be made nations deciding on their own to scrap weapons – the first President Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev removed all the thousands of battlefield nuclear weapons from their ships and armies in this way.

Filling the Gaps in the Existing Treaty Structure

The previous discussion of existing regulations covering weaponry shows that there are working examples in some parts of the world of the effective regulation and removal of almost all kinds of weaponry.

The two largest gaps are weapons in space and small arms. These categories are at the top and bottom of the scale of weapons, both geographically and technologically. Small arms are generally low tech, involved in low-level violence from gun crime and civil wars to infantry fighting, while space weapons use the highest technology, would be used in high level global

conflict and are, as some Americans say, up on the High Frontier. The other area without any control at present is weapons at sea.

- Naval Vessels

Compared to land-based weapons governed by the CFE and INF Treaties, naval ships and submarines are large and hard to hide, few in number and based in only a few ports. These factors make verification of their numbers, location and weaponry a far easier task than is the case for land-based conventional arms, which are already governed successfully in international treaties. Ironically, despite the ease of the verification task, there is total refusal by the dominant naval power, the US, to contemplate any limitations. A far-reaching intermediate step would be achieved merely by controlling missiles and aircraft aboard ships. The relevant provisions of the CFE and INF Treaties could be used as models.

Naval arms control has something of a bad name, because of ill-fated naval agreements before the Second World War. The US and UK were at a disadvantage when Japan broke out of the agreements; however, it is worth recalling that the mere fact of its breaking out provided some warning of aggressive intent, as did Hitler's decision to break controls established on Germany after the First World War. Agreements can provide an early warning, even when they break down, that is clearer than would exist if there were no controls in place.

- Small Arms

On the world's ground floor and scattered around the back garden, so to speak, are small arms and light weapons. These exist in the hundreds of millions and are easy and cheap to make. They are being used to kill people all the time. The enormous quantities involved, the low technology needed and the ease of hiding them make regulation the necessary first stage. There is a draft agreement at the UN on controlling unauthorised use and trade in these weapons. In addition Amnesty International, Oxfam and an international coalition have written a proposed text for an arms trade treaty and are now campaigning to have it adopted by the nations of the UN. The UK's Department for International Development has committed considerable funding to supporting efforts to control small arms in conjunction with its European partners and recipient countries. Prior to the UN conference on small arms in 2001 a number of states in Africa conducted symbolic destruction activities.

- Space Weapons

Up on the roof of the world are space weapons. These are future weapons, very expensive, few in number and using very advanced technology such as lasers. There is no evidence that any state has yet put them in space. However, the US in particular has an official policy of dominating space, regarding it as a future battlefield comparable to the great ocean spaces that influenced politics in years gone by. Other states, including China, also regard space as a potential future battleground. There is a discussion at the UN (Conference on Disarmament) on this matter and China has proposed a treaty banning weapons in space. Fortunately, checking up on space weapons would be quite easy. It would involve checking space launch missiles on the ground. There are very few space launch sites in the world and the capsules and satellites they launch are very small and so full of kit that it would be easy to spot an illicit weapon.

SCRRAP Around the World

The Middle East stands out as a region of high tension and military rivalry. There have long been private discussions between Arabs and Israelis about a WMD-free zone in the Middle East. Recent progress in the Arab world and in Iran presents an opportunity to develop such a proposal that might include the states from Egypt to Iran. A key factor would be prohibitions on Western states bringing forces into the region. An early start might be made by extending the Open Skies Treaty to the region and looking at way of bringing new states into the CFE Treaty. There is rising interest in the Middle East in solving the problems presented today by Iran and Israel with a comprehensive approach to arms control. European nations should meet the challenge by offering their expertise and political will to make such a process work

through producing a synthesis of key provisions of the existing treaties described above as a ready-made package that can be used in other regions.

In Europe there remains an abundance of armaments and no conceivable threat. As long ago as 1990 I argued for rapid further reductions in a Washington Post article I wrote with former Director of Central Intelligence William Colby. Little did we realise how soon the West would lose interest in controlling weapons once the Soviets had disappeared. A leaner European defence force should be of considerable interest to European tax payers and finance ministries, who are now paying to keep up a Cold War arsenal of warships, submarines, fighter jets and tanks when there is no one to fight, and when even a newly angry Russia would have first to rebuild its army and then travel hundreds of miles even to reach Poland. The one possible exception to this positive picture is the Russian border with the new NATO members in the Baltic States.

South Asian security is characterised by the India–Pakistan confrontation. Each country's armed force owes much to UK influence and today each draws on Western ideas for its nuclear policy. The new attempts at a settlement of long-standing arguments over Kashmir present an excellent opportunity to draw on the lessons of the OSCE CFE, Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Open Skies agreements to manage the regulation and removal of armaments along their common border. In East Asia the growing tensions between the Koreans, China, Japan and the US present a good opportunity to introduce preventive diplomacy in the region with a strong emphasis on confidence-building measures and the regulation of weapons.

The SCRRAP proposal also maps out a practical way to implement fully Article VI of the NPT, which covers the legal commitment of the nuclear powers to disarm and which is a critical deal at the heart of the global non-proliferation regime. The article reads: 'Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.' This is a legally binding commitment on all the nations that are party to the Treaty. It is the only legally binding commitment to nuclear disarmament. Traditionally, states and pressure groups favouring nuclear disarmament have emphasised this aspect of the article. Conversely, opponents have tended to focus on what they view as a necessary unsavoury link between nuclear and over-all disarmament. This linkage is usually regarded as creating a goal so utopian that it can safely be forgotten. In recent years, especially in the 'unequivocal commitment' made by all the states with nuclear weapons to nuclear disarmament, nuclear weapons have been regarded separately. States in favour of disarmament have usually balked at the huge challenge presented by the whole of Article VI; the SCRRAP proposal is designed to meet this challenge.

What sort of timescale should be set as a target?

One useful consideration is how fast agreements can be made when the political will exists to get the job done. The most complex of the existing treaties are the CFE and CWC agreements covering conventional arms and chemical weapons. The first involved all the nations of NATO and the then Warsaw Pact and governs tens of thousands of weapons. The second had to get to grips with inspecting normal chemical factories around the world. Each of them involved decades of fruitless discussions followed by two to five years of real hard political and technical work. On this basis a target of five years to agree to a global SCRRAP treaty seems appropriately ambitious.

What might be agreed at that five-year point?

The first phase would involve: the exchange of data on weapons systems, which should be completed within a year; the final date for ordering new equipment in the specified categories of weapons; continuing mutual observation of military activity. The second phase would involve a period of verification lasting an additional twelve months. The third phase would entail the progressive regulation through destruction of weapons in each type down to zero or some specified new maximum. This could be done in stages over, say, a total of ten years. The overall programme of negotiation and reductions should have a target date for completion of fifteen years.