

# Nuclear Non-proliferation: an analysis of the international system in view of nuclear weapons

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# Introduction

- War developments in the 20th century;
- It can be argued nuclear weapons have changed the way war itself is waged;
- Definition of war vs diplomacy
- Development and deployment of nuclear weapon;
- Cold war and nuclear tests;
- Development of a legal framework.

# Methodology

- Definition of paradigms and concepts;
- Analysis on a systemic level and of the structural links between states through the concept of international regimes, with the nuclear non-proliferation regime as the object of study;
- Theoretical and conceptual framework based on the work of Raymond Aron for the insertion of nuclear weapons into war and the theory of international regimes, as well as a bibliographic search using the Web of Science database.

# Results and Discussion

## Essential concepts and premises

- International Relations as a field of study;
- There is no major force that governs states - the international system is considered anarchic;
- Legal frameworks in the international system and international regimes;
- Interdependence between actors - it's not equal or balanced since certain actors have greater level of power and influence.

## The Non-Proliferation Regime

- Legally binding multilateral treaties, verification of compliance and some supplier control mechanisms - the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), complemented by other international and bilateral treaties and inspection bodies;
- Arms control agreements ignore non-strategic and non-deployed warheads - thus, although the total number of nuclear warheads in the world has decreased, this masks two situations:
  - a) the nations that possess nuclear weapons continue to modernize their arsenals;
  - b) nuclear weapons continue to be part of the concept of national security.

## Nuclear weapons and the concept of war

- The cost of total war - today, there is the possibility of the destruction of a state and the eradication of populations;
- Weapons of mass destruction have changed aspects of the relationships between states, but not their nature;
- The effectiveness of deterrence depends on three factors: psychological, technical, and political
- During the cold war, the two nuclear powers had the same main interests: mutual non-destruction and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons;
- These interests still prevail today, which in practice maintains the arsenals of the current powers and tries to prevent other countries from developing their own;

- The nonproliferation regime can be seen as biased, as it keeps the status-quo; on the other hand, nuclear disarmament is unlikely;
- The way radiation threats are brought up in the context of conflict is in constant development, as well: the targeting of nuclear facilities and the emergence of smaller-scale radiological weapons, such as "dirty bombs" adds an extra level of complexity, bringing in non-state actors as possible threats and requiring cooperation between states to control the production and transportation of radiological materials.

# Conclusions

- Complexity in building an effective legal framework
- Sovereignty - the level of a state's participation in an international regime can only be determined by itself;
- The greatest impediment to a nuclear war is the possibility of retaliation by the other parties; the emergence of nuclear weapons changed the way war is waged and the scale of destruction, but the nature of the relationships between actors continues the same.



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