



Iowa High Model United Nations

Disarmament Committee

Establishment of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East region

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Background

The idea of a nuclear weapon free zone or NWFZ in the Middle East region has always been important to multiple countries especially the United States. The idea of a NWFZ is reinforced through the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty which requires states to be checked for nuclear weapons. However, Israel and Pakistan have not signed this treaty so they are not subjected to these checks. One of the main reasons for the UN and the world wanting the Middle East to be a NWFZ is because of its history of violence and constant wars. There has been a constant problem with the Middle East because Israel is known to have nuclear weapons and has not been reprimanded for it because they are not a signing member of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. However, Iran who is a member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty has had sanctions threatened upon them because of their uranium enrichment programs. Many fear that the double standard of the United States in regard to these two countries will end in a breakdown of the treaty unless the United States or another power country decided to put sanctions on Israel or some other form of punishment for their possession of nuclear weapons.

Countries need to take a look at the areas of Latin America, South Pacific, Southeast Asia, and Africa as they have successfully become Nuclear weapon free zone and have successfully come to peace in terms of nuclear weapons. They have also successfully avoided a regional nuclear arms race which has a danger of occurring in the Middle East.

What Has Been Done/Past U.N. Actions

The most important action taken by the UN is definitely the Non-Proliferation Treaty or the NPT which was signed by 190 countries originally, but since then the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has withdrawn. Part of the treaty discussed the Middle East and worked to mandate a zone banning all weapons of mass destruction including biological, chemical, and nuclear. This treaty has helped to make all countries aware of the UN's stance on nuclear weapons, but has done little to actually stop the production of nuclear weapons in states that have signed the NPT.

There are also many organizations that may or may not be linked to the UN that has worked tirelessly to form a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East. One of these organizations is the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. The UN has been working to make a NWFZ in the Middle East, but they are limited on what they can actually accomplish.

Possible Solutions

Some possible solutions include creating higher sanctions for those countries in the Middle East that refuse to have nuclear facilities checked by a United Nations peace keeper. Another solution would be to rewrite the Non-Proliferation Treaty and make some necessary changes so all parties agree and another country won't withdraw following the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's lead. Another possible solution would be to write an entirely new treaty that may include some sort of positive reinforcement for those countries that give up their nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

Questions to Consider

1. *How much can the United Nations actually do to stop the production of nuclear weapons?*
2. *Should all member of the Security Council be allowed to have nuclear weapons if those in the Middle East cannot?*
3. *What sort of punishment should be in place for those who do not follow the Non-Proliferation Treaty?*
4. *Should a new treaty be written all together? Or should we work to fix the current treaty?*
5. *How can we get the Middle East including Israel to agree to a non-nuclear Middle East?*

Consulted/Recommended Sources

http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2009/06/11_krieger_mideast_nwfz.php

http://www.un.org/disarmament/content/speeches/oda-ny/rydell/2011-03-22_RR_Peace_Boat_Toward_a_Middle_East_Nuclear.pdf?version=1

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