

# Between colonialism & community: Neutral & nonaligned nations in the making of a postcolonial nuclear order

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# Central research questions

- Why was the NPT drafted how it was?
- When and how did that particular NPT become a viable international treaty regime?
- What roles did neutralism, non-alignment, and postcolonial critiques of public international law play in making this “*leonine*” treaty?
  - “[A]n instrument of North American imperialism in the atomic domain.”
    - Ambassador João Augusto de Araújo Castro, quoted in Telegram to Paris, “Peruvian and Brazilian views on NPT after American pressure applied,” 19 April 1968, box 769, Cote 517INVA, AMAEF, 1-2.

# Liberal nuclear hegemony

- Liberal hegemony by means of security, markets, and voice.
- Aimed not at ‘nuclear inhibition’ but complemented two other strategies: anti-communist containment and liberal globalization. Anti-neutralism; pro-development.
- The specter of nuclear proliferation in postcolonial regions – the Middle East, South Asia, and East Asia, rather than Europe (i.e. the German question) loomed largest.
- Divide/conquer through regional nuclear superintendence
- Contingent triumph of developmental impulse and multilateralism from moderate Latin American bloc

# Two “Third World” Crises

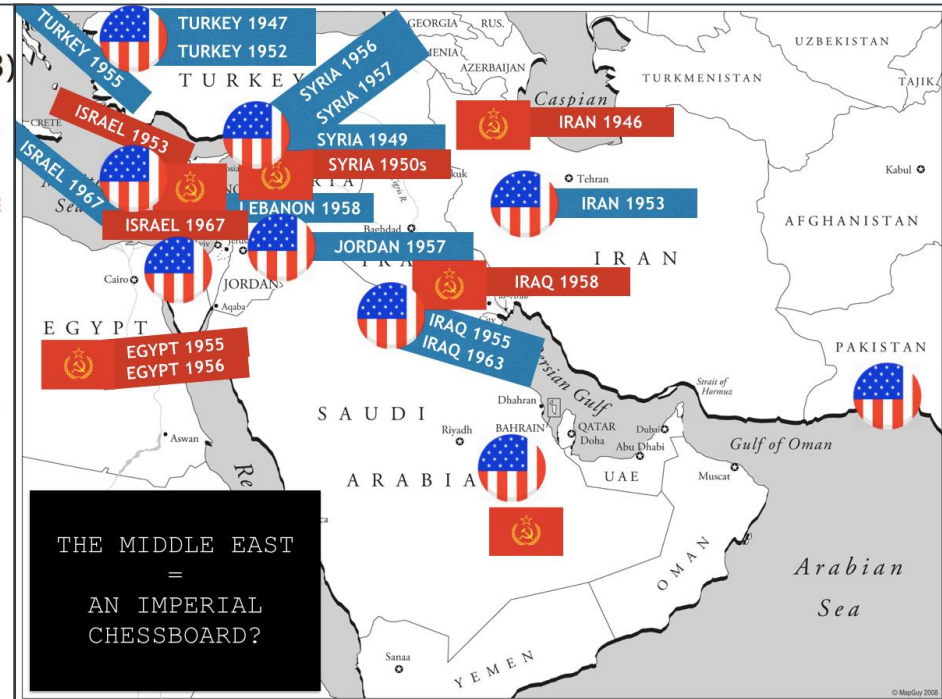


## 九三炮戰(1954/9/3)

第二次以130門火炮組成4個炮兵群，配置於廈門島、大嶼島和同安蓮河地區，於9月22日17時15分開始射擊，主要襲擊大、小金門島上的國民黨軍師、團指揮機關、軍事設施和壓制國民黨軍炮兵。

爾後間歇性炮戰不斷，解放軍炮擊落彈共約7萬餘枚，以9月22日的炮戰為此後炮戰中的最大一場。

以解放軍為攻擊一方的九三砲戰開啟國共兩方軍隊的互相中小規模砲擊，而該砲戰更是之後八二三砲戰衝突的起





Frank Aiken, Ireland's Minister for External Affairs, tabled a "nuclear restriction" proposal at the UN General Assembly in September 1958. Photo credit: UN.

## “Flash points”

The proposal for an international agreement on the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons remained strongly bound to parallel efforts to “control the incidence of flash points” where the superpowers might quarrel in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

Frank Aiken, Speech before the UNGA, “The Cold War, Decolonization, and the United Nations,” 6 October 1960, document 6269, FA, UCD, 2-4.



## “The privileged status”

“Today ... the question for us all is how in the shadow of the Atom Bomb to build a world order in which our disputes will be resolved by an accepted common authority whose decisions are implemented by an international force—in short, how to preserve a *Pax Atomica* while we build a *Pax Mundi*.”

“[I]f this Assembly is in present circumstances to recognise to certain Powers the privileged status of being the only countries entitled to possess nuclear weapons, these Powers should undertake not to supply such weapons to any other country. I would appeal to them in God’s name not to spread these weapons around the world.”

Frank Aiken, September 19, 1958

Speech delivered by the Delegate of Ireland, Mr. Frank Aiken, Minister of External Affairs, during the General Debate at the 751<sup>st</sup> meeting of the General Assembly (13<sup>th</sup> Session) on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September, 1958





Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, and Soong Ching-ling at the Moscow Conference in November 1957.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mao,\\_Soong\\_and\\_Deng\\_at\\_International\\_Meetings\\_of\\_Communist\\_and\\_Workers.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mao,_Soong_and_Deng_at_International_Meetings_of_Communist_and_Workers.jpg)

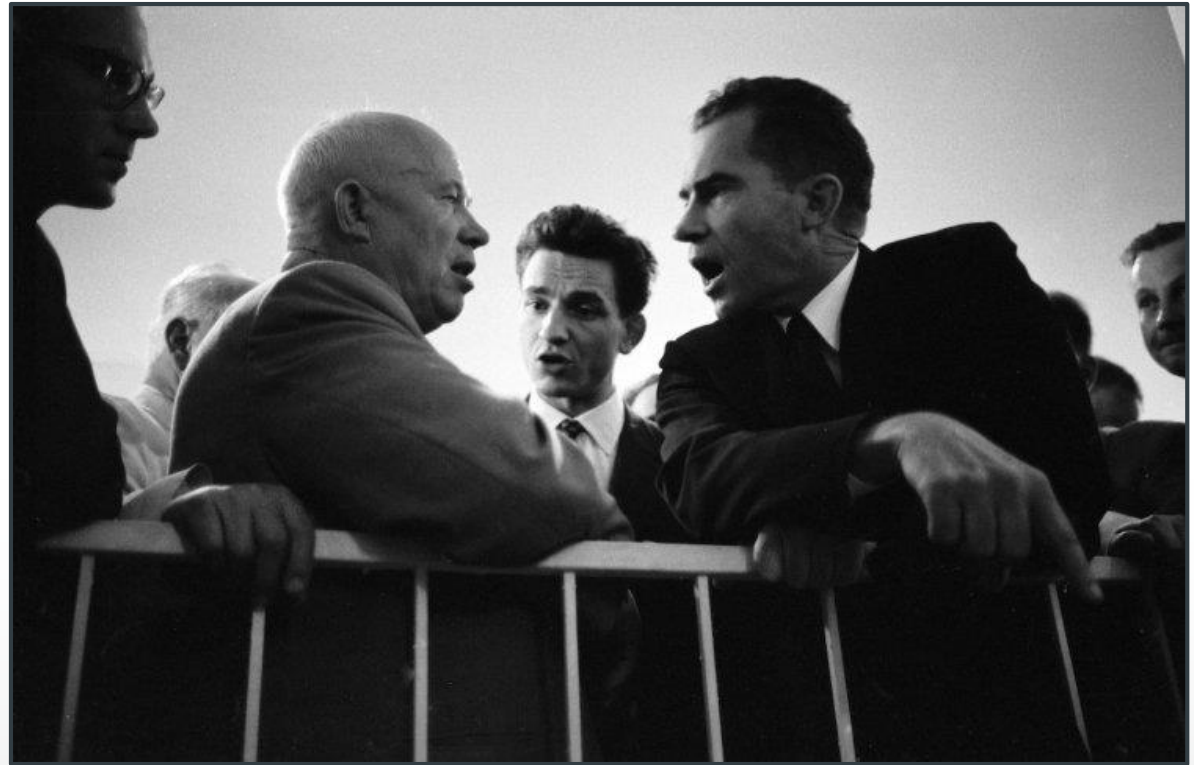
Mao Zedong, "American imperialism is a paper tiger," 1957 International Meeting of Communist and Workers Parties, 16-19 November 1957

"If we fight the war, atomic and hydrogen bombs will be used. I personally believe that the whole of mankind will suffer from such a disaster, one-half of the population would be lost, maybe more than half. I have asked Comrade Khrushchev for his view of this. He is much more pessimistic than I am. I told him that if half of mankind dies, the other half would remain while imperialism would be destroyed. Only socialism would remain in the world. In another half a century, the population would increase, maybe by more than half."



“The idea of peaceful coexistence coincides with the five principles advanced jointly by the Chinese People's Republic and the Republic of India and with the program adopted by the Bandung Conference of African-Asian countries.”

*Complete text of the Declaration of the Twelve Communist and Workers Parties, Meeting in Moscow, USSR, Nov. 14-16, 1957, New Century Publishers, December 1957.*



Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and U.S. Vice President Richard Nixon debates the quality of capitalist versus communist kitchenware in Moscow on July 24, 1959. Photo credit. *Time Magazine*.

<https://time.com/3961121/khrushchev-nixon-kitchen-debate/>







# Gilpatric Committee on Nuclear Proliferation

‘The bargaining power of backward nations would be increased [...] since they would no longer feel the restraints of great power influence in local disputes. It would also be increased if in an effort to acquire nuclear weapons they were able to play off the United States, the USSR, China and other nuclear powers against each other. And any major trend of nuclear capabilities among the populous, non-white nations of the earth would greatly strengthen their hand in attempting to obtain an ever greater share of the earth’s wealth and opportunity. Some or all of this may be desirable or inevitable; but accession to nuclear weapons would bring it about much more quickly and in a more disruptive fashion’.

Draft, “Summary, President’s Committee on Nuclear Proliferation – A report to the president,” undated, box 10, Gilpatric papers, JFKL. Underlining in the original.



# Nonaligned Unaligned



Delegates to the 1964 Conference of Nonaligned Nations in Cairo.

<http://www.mfa.gov.rs/en/diplomatic-tradition/historical-diplomatic-papers/38-nesvrstani-1961>

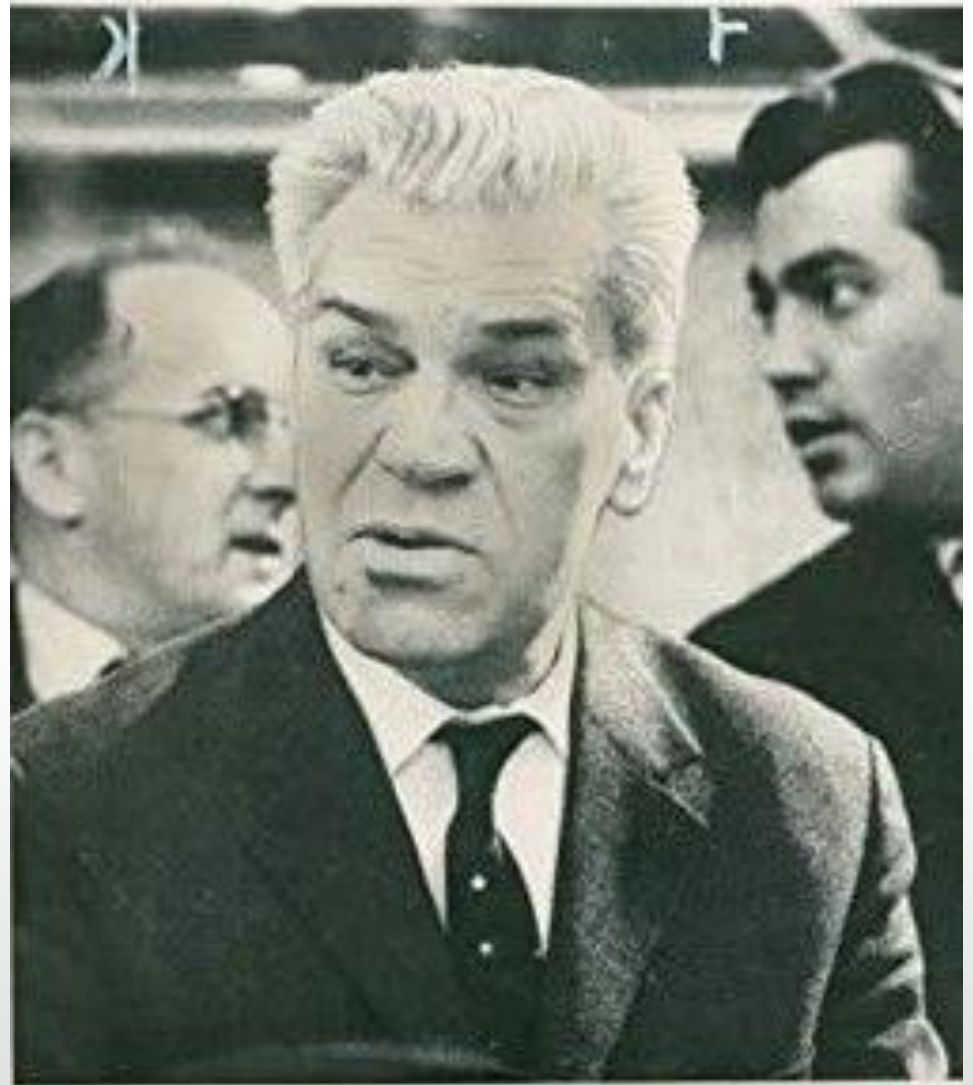
The Conference requests the Great Powers to abstain from all policies conducive to the dissemination of nuclear weapons and their by-products among those States which do not at present possess them. It underlines the great danger in the dissemination of nuclear weapons and urges all States, particularly those possessing nuclear weapons, to conclude non-dissemination agreements and to agree on measures providing for the gradual liquidation of the existing; stock-piles of nuclear weapons.

Cairo Declaration, 10  
October 1964

## Visions of condominium

‘[Soviet co-chair Semyon Tsarapkin] took [the] line that all other countries including France, China, India, UAR, . . . even [the] G.D.R., were playing [the] U.S. and U.S.S.R. against each other and were trying to obtain advantage from differences and contradictions between them; they could do it in present circumstances but if [the] U.S. and U.S.S.R. were to agree with each other everybody else would have no choice but to fall in line’.

William Foster to Dean Rusk,  
“Memorandum of Conversation  
with Semyon Tsarapkin [2 of 2],”  
February 11, 1964



Soviet Ambassador to the ENDC Semyon Tsarapkin

# UNGA Resolution 2028

UNGA Resolution 2028 (XX) laid out five cardinal principles for a nonproliferation treaty: it should be “void of any loop-holes; “embody an acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations of the nuclear and non-nuclear Powers;” assure general and complete and, “more particularly, nuclear disarmament;” enable “acceptable and workable” implementation; and complement nuclear-weapon-free zones. The resolution’s easy passage on November 19 attested to how pivotal neutral opinion had become for an international consensus to come together, threatening superpower prerogatives by inserting their aggrieved postcolonial nationalisms and resurgent regional rivalries into the state of play.



# Soviet collaboration



ENDC joke about US-Soviet comity:  
“the only thing they didn’t do was  
hold hands”

‘[Dobrynin] also said that the Soviet  
Union had instructed its embassies in  
most countries where they had such to  
attempt to enlist the support of those  
countries’.

MemCon, Dobrynin and Foster, “NPT,” 4 April 1968, ACDA,  
box 9, 71, 1.

‘Gromyko told Afro-Asians USSR  
would not sign NPT unless it  
constituted liability for FRG’.

“Talking points for visit of Baron Guttenberg,” 26 March  
1968, ACDA, box 8, 14



## Peace-loving superpowers

“In conclusion, I want to emphasize the important side of our party’s position in the government in connection with the Vietnamese issue: we consider it our duty to act in such a way as to prevent the development of the Vietnamese conflict into a world war. We definitely stated this to the Vietnamese comrades. They replied that they treated this position of the CPSU with understanding and completely shared it.”

Roll 137, Delo 49-1, December 12-13 1966, Plenum of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU



## The German question

“Allow me, comrades, to particularly dwell on the negotiations on the conclusion of an international agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and in this connection on the position of the United States.

The point of view of the Soviet Union on this issue is well known. If it is possible to conclude such a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, which would block West German revanchists from having access to any form of nuclear weapons, it would be a big gain for our future and for the ages of peace-loving peoples of the world.”

Roll 137, Delo 49-1, December 12-13 1966, Plenum of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU



# Winning the Third World

Relations with the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America are a very complicated and, in many ways, new problem for us.

[...] President Nasser and other Egyptian leaders began to regularly consult with us on the fundamental issues of their foreign and domestic policy, and they were ready to listen to the Soviet point of view. Recently, military cooperation between the USSR and the United Arab Republic has been developing more and more.

[...] Under these conditions, we considered it necessary during the stay in Moscow of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Chairman of the Indian National Congress Party, K. Kamaraj, to openly express our concern about the trends emerging in Indian politics. We told them that this kind of tendency poses a threat to the independence of the country. I cannot but harm the Soviet-Indian relations.

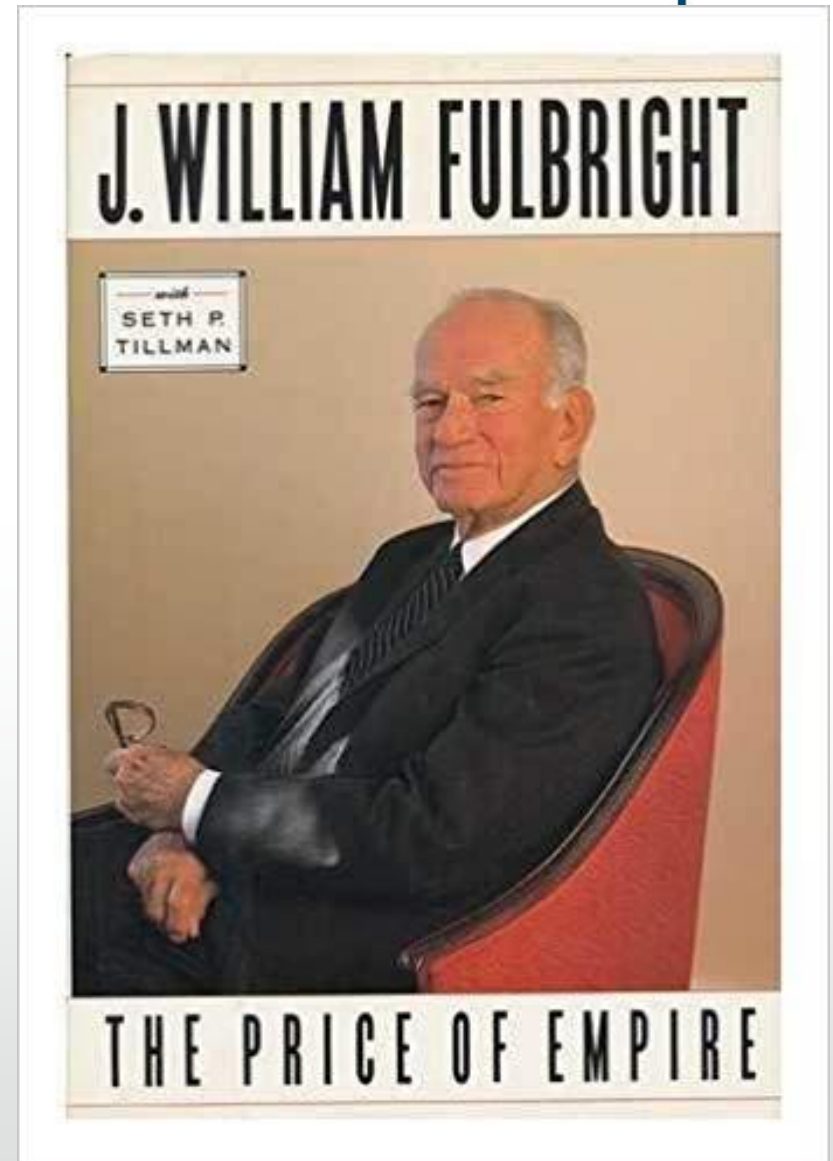
Roll 137, Delo 49-1, December 12-13 1966,  
Plenum of the Presidium of the Central  
Committee of the CPSU





# Hegemony not Empire

“In considering this treaty, I ask Members to contemplate the potential horrors of a world in which pigmy nuclear weapons powers abound; a World Where Middle Eastern crises are compounded by the introduction of nuclear weapons; a world where an African or Asian breakaway state close to suppression resorts to nuclear weapons to bring the temple down on both friend and enemy; a world where a small state can trigger a “Small nuclear war” which may bring the major powers to a confrontation involving nuclear weapons [...]





# U.S. carrots and sticks

## **Nuclear umbrellas & voice**

Reaffirmation of NATO commitments declared and repeated during Senate ratification debate.

Reaffirmation of US-Japanese Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and coverage of nuclear threats.

‘The dependence of our non-nuclear allies on our nuclear arsenal has just been copper-bottomed ... and their sense of involvement in our negotiations about nuclear missiles can only become more acute ...’

Letter from Cleveland to Rusk, “NAC & SALT,” 12 July 1968, ACDA, box 8, 1.

## **Uranium control**

IAEA-Euratom safeguards agreement.

‘There is no question in my mind that the Euratom member states party to the NPT will put forth good-faith efforts to negotiate a satisfactory arrangement with the IAEA. I think you can have equal confidence that the United States will meet its commitments to supply nuclear fuel’.

John J. McCloy, Letter to Birrenbach, “Euratom, NPT & enriched-uranium supply,” 8 March 1968, ACDA, box 1, 42

# Nonaligned, non-nuclear states

## Mexico

Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Mexican amendments: Articles IV, V, VI, VII.

‘Latin American countries are observing US actions on Protocol II closely ... An early public announcement, prior to signature of the Protocol, would be highly desirable in order to encourage ratification of the Treaty by additional Latin American nations and to obtain their support in the NPT negotiations’.

Adrian Fisher, Memorandum for Rusk, ‘The treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America’, 10 Feb 1968, ACDA, box 9, 9-13

## Sweden

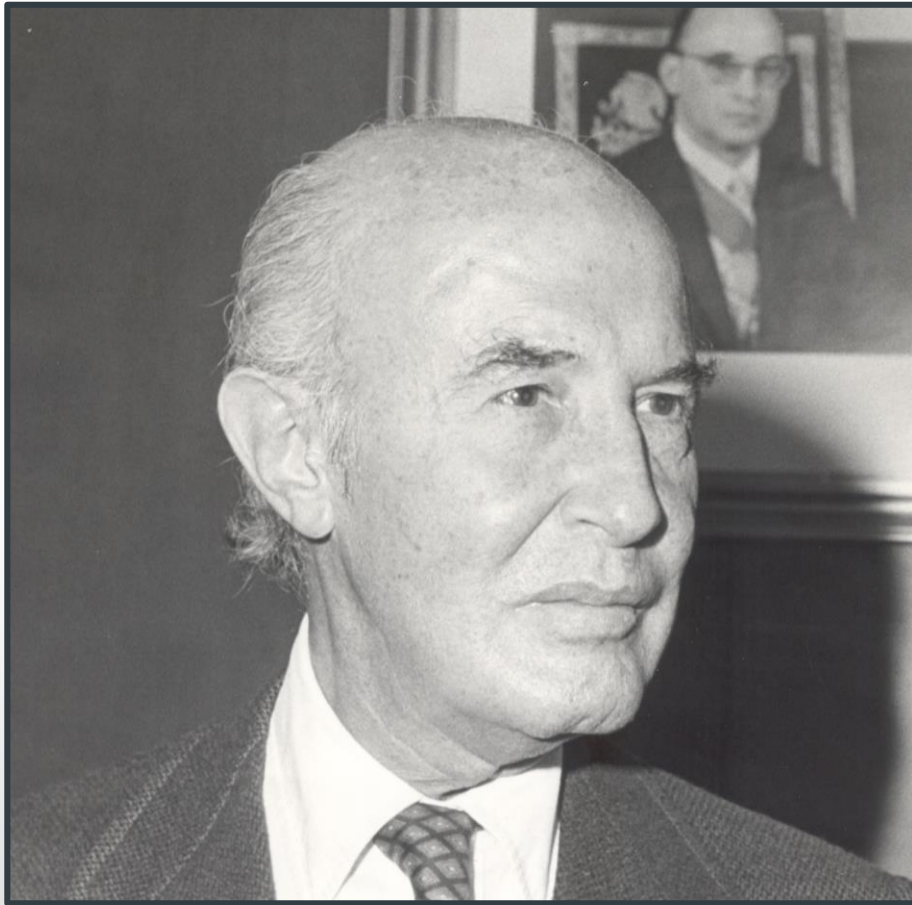
CTBT

Article VI a ‘promissory note’.

How can we—the non-nuclear-weapon States—be expected to enter into an interminable obligation to remain non-nuclear if the nuclear-weapon States are engaged in an interminable nuclear escalation?

Final Verbatim Record of the 363<sup>rd</sup>  
Meeting of the Conference of the ENDC, 8  
February 1968, Geneva, Switzerland,  
ENDC/PV.363, 4-12.

# Resource nationalism under global law



Mexican Deputy Secretary of State Alfonso García Robles.  
Photo from the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Photographic Archives

“Another conclusion to be drawn from a comparison of the Treaty of Tlatelolco with the draft treaty on nonproliferation, and one of special importance to Mexico and, we believe, to all the other States signatories of the Treaty of Tlatelolco—is that the special conditions of the region have made it possible to work out a multilateral instrument which, from the standpoint of disarmament and treaty law is undeniably far superior to the draft before us, and much more complete than the latter. To prove the validity of this statement, it suffices to examine some of the main aspects of both instruments side by side.”

# Robles's eleventh-hour revisions

1. a preambular reference to the prohibition on wars of aggression in the UN Charter;
2. the “right of access to scientific and technological information [...] and to participate in the fullest possible exchange of such information” in the Atoms for Peace language of Article IV;
3. and the creation of the international PNE service that Article V promised “as soon as possible.”
4. Most dramatically, the arms control and disarmament language in Article VI should call for an end to the “manufacture and perfection” of the existing nuclear arsenals.



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# UNGA Special Session

‘One objective of these efforts should be to separate few near-nuclears from overwhelming majority countries having no prospect of developing nuclear weapons and whose basic objective should be enhanced international stability promised by NPT’.

ACDA et al, Cable to New York et al, “NPT and Resume GA, 3 April 1968

‘LAs and Africans hold balance – waiting to see how wind blows – will probably agree to endorse NPT draft without major changes if faced with determined US-Soviet cooperation plus assurance NNC can take place’.

Memorandum for Rusk, “NPT Status,” 23 April 1968, ACDA, box 8, 110



Political Committee on June  
10: 92 for, 4 against

UNGA plenary on June 12: 94  
for, 4 nays, 21 abstentions