

The Scenario: Assessing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

The Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which takes place every five years, is coming up in May 2010.

Some 130 States Party to the NPT are expected to attend the two-week meeting at the Austria Center. They will address substantive and procedural issues related to strengthening the authority and implementation of the *Treaty* and making recommendations in this regard for adoption by the *Review Conference*.

There are currently 189 countries party to the treaty, five of which have nuclear weapons: the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, China and France (also permanent members of the UN Security Council). Only four recognized sovereign states are not parties to the treaty: India, Israel, Pakistan and North Korea. India, Pakistan and North Korea have openly tested and declared that they possess nuclear weapons. The fact that these states have not signed the Treaty and have manufactured nuclear weapons since its ratification is of great concern to other states, and international peace and security.

Despite being a signatory of the NPT, Iran has continually been accused by the United States of violating the NPT. Iran claims that the only purpose of their nuclear program is energy. However, since the last Review Conference which took place in 2005, Iran has threatened to withdraw from the treaty if their right to peaceful use of nuclear technology was not protected.

In the past few weeks news reports have claimed that Iran conducted tests of what is believed to be nuclear missiles. This turn of events calls for all member states of the General Assembly to re-evaluate the effectiveness of the NPT. Further it will be of utmost importance at the upcoming Review Conference to determine the future course of action against these member states that have not signed on to the NPT, as well as against those that are, or have been claimed to be, in violation of the Treaty.