

U.S.- India Nuclear Deal: *why
disarmament needs to be on the
agenda?*

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Discussion Topics

- Historical background
- Salient features of the deal
- Current status
- Disconnect between opponents in the U.S. and India
- Potential for Common ground
- Disarmament
 - Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan



Historical Background

- 1968 – Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT)
 - 187 countries have joined
 - India, Pakistan and Israel have not

- 1974 – India conducts its first underground nuclear test
 - Nuclear Suppliers Group is established

- 1978 – U.S. Nuclear Non-proliferation Act
 - Restrictions on nuclear trade with India. U.S. fuel supply to Tarapur nuclear plant terminated.

- 1996 - Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)

- 1998 - India and Pakistan conduct multiple nuclear tests.
 - More sanctions are imposed on both countries.

- 2001 – Major sanctions are lifted after the 9/11 attacks

- 2005 – U.S. and India announces signing of the nuclear deal

The deal will provide energy security for India: a bogus argument!

- Current capacity for electricity generation in India is about 120 GW
 - Only about 3.0 GW is nuclear
- Assuming present growth rates, electricity generation in 2030 will be about 800 GW
- Even under the most aggressive scenario, nuclear capacity might grow to 40 GW by 2030
 - Will account for 5% or less of the total capacity at a huge cost – nearly \$2 billion for a 1 GW power plant

Components of the deal

- A separation plan for nuclear facilities in India into civilian and military parts
- An India-specific safeguards agreement with the Int'l Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) waiver allowing trade with a non-NPT state without full-scope safeguards
- The U.S. Hyde Act (2006) allowing U.S. to negotiate a nuclear cooperation agreement with India, with certain conditions
- "123 Agreement" amending section 123 of the U.S. Atomic Energy Act of 1954

Heart of the deal

“The 123 Agreement”

- Waives prohibition on U.S. trade with countries that do not allow full-scope safeguards
- Permits India to reprocess spent fuel from U.S. supplied fuel in safeguarded facilities

Salient features– *India's gains*

- *De facto* recognition as a nuclear weapon state without signing the NPT
- “Guaranteed” fuel supply in the future
- License to reprocess spent fuel under safeguards
- Potential ability to expand its nuclear weapons arsenal with indigenous fissile material
- End of nuclear-related sanctions by USA and NSG
 - Open up transfer of technology for space, defense, etc.

U.S. gains

- Removal of the so-called “nuclear irritant” from the relationship
- Liberalized trade laws and penetration of the Indian market by U.S. corporations
- Potential “strategic alliance” with India as a hedge against China
- Arguably brings India under the non-proliferation regime

Separation Plan

- 14 out of 22 facilities to be placed under safeguards
- Eight facilities outside safeguards include reprocessing, enrichment, and breeder plants
- Enrichment facilities may be offered in the future

“India-specific” Safeguards agreement

- Basically follows the standard INFCIRC-66 safeguards guidelines with certain exceptions
- Exceptions:
 - India’s concurrence subject to India’s ability to obtain uninterrupted fuel supply for its civilian reactors
 - India’s ability to take unspecified “corrective measures” to ensure uninterrupted fuel supply in the event of disruption in foreign fuel supplies

Milestones

Completed

- August 2007, U.S.A. and India negotiated the 123 Agreement
- July 22, 2008, Indian Parliament gave its controversial consent
- August 1, 2008, IAEA approved an India-specific safeguards agreement

Next

- August 21, 2008, Nuclear Suppliers Group to meet for an extraordinary meeting
- 123 Agreement might be submitted to Congress in September

Will Congress have time to ratify the agreement this year?

Prognosis

- NSG special plenary meeting on August 21
 - Approval is expected despite strong misgivings from countries like New Zealand, Germany, Canada, South Africa, and Japan
- Congress
 - Bipartisan majority is in favor of completing the deal
 - However, concerns remain
 - Both Presidential candidates are supporting the deal
- The best hope is to delay it until after the Bush administration leaves office

U.S. Campaign to stop the deal

- “Campaign for Responsibility in Nuclear Trade”
 - www.responsiblenucleartrade.com
- Diverse Coalition - 23 organizations
 - Includes arms control, non-proliferation, environmental and consumer protection groups
- Target NSG member states and members of Congress

The scene on Capitol Hill

- Initial skepticism faded under intense push by the Administration and paid lobbyists
 - Reported role of the Israeli lobby in the turn-around
- Usual liberal voices championing non-proliferation are now in favor of the deal
 - Senators Joe Biden, Richard Lugar, John Kerry, Dianne Feinstein
 - Opposition in the House led by Ed Markey, Howard Berman, and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
- Strong anti-Pakistan sentiment helping India
 - Legacy of A.Q. Khan

Disconnect between opponents in the U.S. and India

➤ *In the U.S.*

- Primary concern is non-proliferation
- General agreement in enlisting India in support of U.S. foreign policy goals, specifically punishing Iran
- Some discussion of the potential for arms race
- Little discussion of disarmament

➤ *In India*

- Focus on national sovereignty
- Right to develop more weapons (Hindu Nationalists)
- Preserving an “independent” foreign policy
- Historical Emphasis on the need for disarmament (Left parties)

Broad-based political support in India for universal disarmament

- Positive reaction to the *WSJ* articles by Kissinger, Schultz, et al
 - *“Personalities such as Henry Kissinger, George Schultz, Sam Nunn and William Perry who were at the center of crafting nuclear policy and who thought that nuclear weapons were essential to the security of their state are having a rethink today.”*
 - *“We welcome this development and hope it leads, as envisaged in the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan, to a commitment by all states to a nuclear weapon-free world.”*
 - *Pranab Mukherjee, India’s foreign minister, February 5, 2008*

1988 Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan: *A binding commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons*

- Elimination of all nuclear weapons in three stages over twenty two years (by 2010) at the latest
 - Stage one
 - a 50% cut in Soviet and US strategic arsenals
 - Immediate cessation of production of nuclear weapons and weapons-grade fissile material
 - Begin negotiation of a comprehensive test ban treaty
 - All countries should be part of the process
 - Negotiate an international convention outlawing the threat or use of nuclear weapons

Concluding thoughts

- The deal will further deepen the crisis facing the NPT given that a discussion of disarmament (part of the NPT bargain) has been completely missing
- A combination of expanded nuclear trade, armaments build-up and deployment of missile defense systems in South and East Asia is a recipe for further proliferation
- Regardless of the fate of the deal, a renewed campaign for abolition of nuclear weapons would greatly resonate with people in Asia
- It should be urgently on the agenda

Further Reading

- Author: Leonard Weiss
- U.S.-INDIA NUCLEAR COOPERATION: Better Later than Sooner
- Published in: The Nonproliferation Review, Volume 14, Issue 3
November 2007

- Author: Subrata Ghoshroy
- U.S.- India Nuclear Deal: Triumph of the Business Lobby
- Published in: Audits of Conventional Wisdom, MIT, September
2006. http://mit.edu/CIS/acw_h.html

- Author: Subrata Ghoshroy
- U.S.- India Nuclear Deal – a Time for Reckoning
- Published in: Pragoti on-line, June 23, 2008
<http://www.pragoti.org/node/1529>

- Arms Control Association: <http://www.armscontrol.org/>