# Pre-TC – Definitional Work

## Role – Additional Work

### NPR Currently Defines “Role”

#### The Nuclear Posture Review affirms 3 roles for nuke weapons

**National Defense Strategy,** 20**22** [US Department of Defense, October 27, 2022; <https://media.defense.gov/2022/Oct/27/2003103845/-1/-1/1/2022-NATIONAL-DEFENSE-STRATEGY-NPR-MDR.PDF>]

The Role of Nuclear Weapons. The NPR affirms the following roles for nuclear weapons:  
► Deter strategic attacks;  
► Assure Allies and partners; and  
► Achieve U.S. objectives if deterrence fails.  
These roles are interrelated and complementary and provide the basis for developing and assessing our nuclear strategies, policies, and capabilities. “Hedging against an uncertain future” is no longer a stated role for nuclear weapons. The United States will continue to carry out robust risk management strategies within the nuclear enterprise so that it is capable of delivering credible  
deterrence even in the face of significant uncertainties and unanticipated challenges. This requires sustaining a set of initiatives and actions in the nuclear enterprise that over time builds enduring advantage and resilience in our stockpile, production complex, and science and technology efforts. Our approach to mitigating programmatic, geopolitical, technological, and operational risk through a resilient and adaptive nuclear enterprise is discussed below.

### Principal Roles – US Nuclear Forces

#### There are 4 principal roles for US nuclear forces

**Nuclear Operations,** 20**19** [Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint - Publication 3-72, June 11, 2019; <https://irp.fas.org/doddir/dod/jp3_72.pdf>]

**2. Purpose of Nuclear Forces in United States Strategy**

US nuclear forces serve the national objective of maintaining peace through strength. The National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy are supported through four principal roles for US nuclear forces that guide the development of US force capabilities and prescribe the use of these capabilities. These roles are complementary and interrelated, and the adequacy of US nuclear forces is assessed against each role and the strategy designed to fulfill it:

a. Deter nuclear and nonnuclear attack.  
b. Assure allies and partners.  
c. If deterrence fails, achieve US objectives. d. Hedge against an uncertain future.

### Role – Nuclear Weapons

#### Nuclear weapons have 5 roles: coercion, deterrence, retaliation, preemption, and tactical use

Heidel 2005 [Andrew, School of Public Policy – University of Maryland, “U.S. Nuclear Force Levels: Using QDR Goals to Maximize U.S. Security”, May, http://www.publicpolicy.umd.edu/Fetter/students/Heidel.pdf]

For this reason, this paper will seek to answer three questions in an effort to determine what nuclear force level will maximize U.S. national security with regard to nuclear weapons. The three questions are: (1.) What are the possible roles for U.S. nuclear forces? (2.) How do these roles within the component nuclear forces promote or inhibit the achievement of the QDR goals? and (3.) What force level is capable of fulfilling all of the QDR goals to result in the greatest security for the United States? Possible Roles of U.S. Nuclear Forces Since their creation, nuclear weapons have played a variety of roles for policymakers. The roles of nuclear weapons have included: as a tool of coercion, as a deterrent, as a weapon of retaliation, as a weapon of preemption, and as a tactical weapon.

### Role = Function

#### “Role” means “function”

OED 9 (Compact Oxford English Dictionary, “Role”, http://www.askoxford.com/concise\_oed/role?view=uk)

role

  • noun 1 an actor’s part in a play, film, etc. 2 a person’s or thing’s function in a particular situation.

#### Specific function

Encarta 9 (World English Dictionary, “Role”, http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/dictionary/DictionaryResults.aspx?refid=1861705857)

role [ [rōl](http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/dictionary/Pronounce.aspx?search=role) ] (plural roles) or rôle [ [rōl](http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/dictionary/Pronounce.aspx?search=role) ] (plural rôles)

noun

Definition:

1. acting part: an individual part in a play, movie, opera, or other performance

2. specific function: the usual or expected function of somebody or something, or the part somebody or something plays in an action or event

#### Must be part of a specific process/operation

Webster’s 9 (Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary, “Role”, http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/role)

Main Entry: role

Variant(s): also rôle \ˈrōl\

Function: noun

Etymology: French rôle, literally, roll, from Old French rolle

Date: 1605

1 a (1): a character assigned or assumed <had to take on the role of both father and mother> (2): a socially expected behavior pattern usually determined by an individual's status in a particular society b: a part played by an actor or singer2: a function or part performed especially in a particular operation or process <played a major role in the negotiations>

## Role – Topic Paper

### “Role”

#### The “role” of nuclear weapons is the circumstances that justify nuclear use

Murdock et al 13 – Senior advisor at CSIS; PhD from the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Clark A. Murdock (Study Director), Stephanie Spies and John K. Warden (Authors), “Forging a Consensus for a Sustainable U.S. Nuclear Posture,” A Report of the CSIS Nuclear Consensus Working Group, *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, April 2013, pp. 49, https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy\_files/files/publication/130422\_Spies\_ForgingConsensus\_Web.pdf.

How could the “role” of nuclear weapons be defined? One measure of the role of nuclear weapons is the type and scale of threats that states claim would justify use of nuclear weapons. Where among the rungs of military capability and doctrine does nuclear use figure, and under what conditions?

#### It means removing the requirements for nukes to perform certain functions

Mount 21 – Senior Fellow and Director of the Defense Posture Project at the Federation of American Scientists. PhD and M.A. from Georgetown University.

Adam Mount, “What is the Sole Purpose of U.S. Nuclear Weapons,” *Federation of American Scientists*, 2021, pp. 15, http://uploads.fas.org/2021/08/25092950/FAS-SPNW.pdf.

Did President Biden intend sole purpose to affect the functions of nuclear weapons or only the types of attacks they might respond to? Without more information, it is not possible to know for certain. It is worth noting his emphasis on the need to “reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy” in the interim national security guidance and Secretary of State Blinken’s statement that the next nuclear policy review will “look at how we can continue to reduce reliance in the role of nuclear weapons in our strategy.”25 It is also worth noting Biden’s comment that W76-2 is a “bad idea” because a president might be “more inclined to use them,” which is a general statement about US reliance on a weapon designed to reduce reliance on nonnuclear response options, and not a statement about the need to respond to specific types of contingencies. The role of nuclear weapons is not primarily to deter chemical and biological weapons. In order to significantly reduce the role of nuclear weapons, or to reduce the country’s reliance on nuclear weapons, the president should have to remove the requirement for nuclear weapons to perform certain functions.

### Role = Deterrence

#### Role refers to the typical function performed by something

Oxford English Dictionary, 89 (online, at Emory)

role

**b.** The typical or characteristic function performed by someone or something; freq. in phr. ***to play a role***.

#### For nuclear weapons, this is deterrence

Alagappa, 07 - Distinguished Senior Fellow at East-West Center, Honolulu, HI (Muthiah, “Nuclear Weapons and Security in 21st Century Asia: Deterrence Dominance and Stability,” 10/24, http://aparc.stanford.edu/events/nuclear\_weapons\_and\_security\_in\_21st\_century\_asia\_deterrence\_dominance\_and\_stability/)

Nuclear weapons play a modest but significant role in the national security strategies of key states in the Asian security region. Relevant in a small number of situations and augmenting conventional forces, their role is frequently indirect. The primary role of nuclear weapons is basic or central deterrence.

#### Restricting the role requires restricting the range of weapons that nuclear weapons can be used to deter

Huntley et al, 04 **–** Program Director for the Simons Centre for Disarmament and Nonprolifertion Research at the University of British Columbia (Wade, Nuclear Disarmament in the Twenty-first Century, p. 381)

To restrict the role of nuclear weapons to deterrence against the use of nuclear weapons would decrease the political and military implications of nuclear weapons. This measure is very important as a first step to promote nuclear disarmament. Under the current nuclear doctrine of the U.S. and NATO, nuclear weapons have a function to deter the use of chemical and biological weapons as well as conventional weapons. In order to avoid the use of chemical and biological weapons, we should work hard to ensure the universality and effectiveness of the Chemical Weapon Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. Given that all five nuclear-weapon states are parties to both conventions, a no-first-use pledge should be made among the five states first and foremost.

Negative security assurances that ensure the non-use or the threat to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states have been discussed in connection with the NPT. Since the end of the 1970s, nuclear-weapon states have declared conditional negative security assurances as a political commitment. Just before the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, the U.S., the U.K., France and Russia announced a joint declaration on conditional negative security assurances and China declared unconditional negative security assurances.

It seems to be natural to promise not to use nuclear weapons to non-nuclear-weapon states that legally abandon the option of nuclear weapons. It cannot be denied that these political declarations have been playing an important role as an international norm. However, the nuclear-weapon states should move to adopt a legally binding document on negative security assurances.

#### Restricting the role means limiting the scope of deterrence

Panofsky, 97 - Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (Emeritus) (Wolfgang, Post-Cold War Conflict Deterrence (1997), Commission on Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Applications (CPSMA), p. 112)

Restricting the role of U.S. nuclear forces to the core role would make the threat of U.S. nuclear retaliation against nuclear aggression by others more credible by not diluting the mission with other, less credible, deterrent roles. Thus under such a clear policy, U.S. forces would exert larger leverage against nuclear proliferation by making it clear that such proliferation would result in intolerable risks to the proliferant. • Restriction of U.S. nuclear weapons to the core function would go a long way to satisfy U.S. critics that the obligations under Article VI of the NPT are being met by decreasing the use of nuclear weapons as tools of international diplomacy and by permitting much more drastic reductions of nuclear forces than those inherent in present commitments. It could be viewed to meet obligations of Article VI as a step toward eventual elimination of nuclear weapons in a future era where possession of such weapons by other powers is no longer plausible. If the core function remains the only justifiable role of U.S. nuclear weapons, the question continues to resurface whether this fact should be recognized by declaratory policy or merely be implemented by such actions as reduced numbers of nuclear weapons, elimination of tactical nuclear forces, reduced quick response readiness, improved survivability, and more robust command and control. Restricting the nuclear role to respond to nuclear threats only is de facto equivalent to a "no first use" policy which used to be advocated by the then Soviet Union, but has been withdrawn recently by Russia but is still proclaimed by China. A declaratory no first use policy has been so much used and abused in past propaganda by various nations that a similar proclamation by the United States would lack credibility. Moreover such a restriction could not be binding in case of war at any rate and therefore has limited operational significance in itself. Therefore a pragmatic shift in nuclear weapons deployments corresponding to the core function only is superior to a proclaimed policy. The summary conclusion of these considerations is that the role of nuclear weapons to deter the use or threat of use of nuclear attack by other nations continues to have at least as much validity today as it had during the Cold War but that it should be their only mission. Although no strategy can assure that nuclear weapons will never by used again, such a highly limited role offers the maximum leverage toward avoidance of nuclear conflict and toward a worldwide decrease in nuclear weapons inventories. Deterrence of nonnuclear conflict should be separated as much as possible from the goal of deterrence of nuclear war.

#### The roles of Nuclear Arsenal are to deter WMD attacks, deter conventional attacks, and support deterrence

BODMAN & GATES 08 Secretary of Energy & Secretary of Defense for Bush

[Samuel W. Bodman & Robert M. Gates, National Security and Nuclear Weapons in the 21st Century, September, http://www.defenselink.mil/news/nuclearweaponspolicy.pdf]

Within this more flexible portfolio, nuclear weapons are less prominent, but the rolesthey play continue to be vital. The policies of successive U.S. administrations have shown a marked continuity in the purposes assigned to nuclear forces. U.S. nuclear forces have served, and continue to serve, to: 1) deter acts of aggression involving nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction; 2) help deter, in concert withgeneral-purpose forces, major conventional attacks; and 3) support deterrence by holdingat risk key targets that cannot be threatened effectively by non-nuclear weapons. Becauseof their immense destructive power, nuclear weapons, as recognized in the 2006 NationalSecurity Strategy, deter in a way that simply cannot be duplicated by other weapons.

#### the nuclear arsenal has three deterrent roles – counter a nuclear attack, a CBW attack, and defend against an overwhelming conventional attack

KIMBALL 09 ACA Director

[Daryl Kimball, What Are Nuclear Weapons For? Reassessing and Reducing the Role of Nuclear Weapons in 21st Century U.S. Security Policy, http://www.armscontrol.org/print/3779]

Unfortunately, even after two post-Cold War Nuclear Posture Reviews, the United States still has a nuclear force posture that calls for fewer operationally deployed strategic nuclear weapons but still essentially **retains the same basic roles** and retains all of the essential characteristics it had during the Cold War. Current doctrine calls for:

\* a nuclear arsenal and readiness posture capable of delivering a devastating counterforce attack against Russia, China, and other potential regional nuclear-armed foes.

\* the possible use of nuclear weapons to defend U.S. forces and allies against massive conventional military attacks; and

\* the possible use of nuclear weapons to counter suspected chemical or biological weapons threats.

#### The role of nuclear weapons is deterrence

Thakur, 02 – director of the Peace and Governance Program at United Nations University (Ramesh, “The role of nuclear weapons is deterrence” The Japan Times, May, http://update.unu.edu/archive/issue16\_9.htm)

The role of nuclear weapons is deterrence

How do we justify the paradox of using a weapon of mass destruction to stop others from acquiring them?

The United States has the largest and most powerful arsenal of nuclear weapons in the world. The Sept. 11 tragedy concentrated its mind on the dangers of terrorist attacks using biological, chemical and nuclear weapons, and on the need for pre-emptive strikes as a form of active defense if credible evidence exists that such attacks are planned.

America emerged from the Sept. 11 attacks a nation inflamed, a nation enraged, but also a nation aroused. The tragedy inflicted on the American body politic a pain that will not sleep, and aroused an anger in the Bush administration that will not easily be appeased.

The world grieved with America, understood its pain, shared its anger, and generally supported the ensuing "war on terrorism." This sympathy and goodwill is in danger of being dissipated due to two sets of anxieties.

On the one hand, it has been nothing short of a revelation to realize just how many governments have been engaged in waging their own wars on terrorism, rather than using the opportunity to suppress opponents, dissenters and other assorted troublemakers in their midst.

On the other hand, there is growing international unease that the Bush administration is changing the war's agenda in order to deal with unfinished business in Iraq and Somalia. This is made possible by the military successes in Afghanistan, which were based on long-distance, over-the-horizon warfare utilizing unmatched technological advances and local warrior allies. The U.S. can do today what was not within its grasp in earlier times. In the Persian Gulf, Kosovo and Afghanistan wars, it was the critics who turned out to be still fighting the last war; the generals had moved decisively and brilliantly to preparing for the next one.

The series of public policy speeches and pronouncements, combined with curiously timed leaks, reveal a pattern of preparing the political ground for a military offensive against Iraq in the foreseeable future. More worryingly, they suggest the possibility of nuclear weapons being used as a last resort, or even earlier as the weapon of choice to launch clinically effective strikes.

In his State of the Union address in January, President George W. Bush declared that an Iraq-Iran-North Korea "axis of evil" threatened the peace and welfare of the world. He insisted that the U.S. would not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to acquire the world's most destructive weapons. The language and the message was repeated during his East Asian tour in February. And now we have the leak of the Nuclear Posture Review, which identifies countries against whom contingency plans have been drawn for the use of nuclear weapons.

The constant reference in recent weeks to the risks posed to America from weapons of mass destruction, or WMD, may well comprise part of the political-psychological strategy of making the use of nuclear weapons more acceptable to American public opinion. Language is not always neutral, and often contains powerful codes of permissible and impermissible behavior. The fact that nuclear weapons have not been used since 1945 in itself contains one of the most powerful taboos against their use today.

The effort to expand the role of nuclear weapons as a counter to the development or acquisition of WMD by "rogue states" (or those comprising the axis of evil) is a threat to arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation. It is not clear that biological, chemical and nuclear weapons belong in one conceptual category.

Looking at the long-lasting and particularly traumatic conflicts in Africa and Asia (Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone), it is also clear that the real WMD are small arms and land mines. Light arms are the weapons of choice in these types of conflict because they are inexpensive, extremely user-friendly, easy to conceal and smuggle across borders, rugged and durable, easy to dismantle and reassemble -- and extremely lethal.

In a provocative essay (Foreign Affairs, May/June 1999), John Mueller and Karl Mueller argued that sanctions caused more deaths in the 20th century than all WMD throughout history.

The justification of nuclear weapons as the weapon to counter WMD, if accepted in one case, could be claimed by others interested in acquiring nuclear weapons -- especially if they had suffered the threat or use of biochemical weapons. Abolitionists never accepted the justification for nuclear weapons. In the past, even advocates for the utility of nuclear weapons restricted their role to deterring and countering only nuclear weapons. The language of WMD is designed to justify an expansion in the role of nuclear weapon doctrines from countering nuclear to biological and chemical weapons as well.

The legitimization of nuclear weapons as usable against biochemical threats would thus have grave consequences for nuclear nonproliferation. It would be contrary to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and its associated declarations and promises. It is hard to see how a dramatic deterioration of international security could contribute to an enhancement of any country's national security.

#### The only role is to threaten retaliation

The Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, 96 (“The Nuclear Weapon Debate,” http://www.dfat.gov.au/cc/cc\_report2.html

In the post-Cold War world the only conceivable residual role of nuclear weapons is to pose a threat of retaliation against nuclear aggression. It follows that a joint no-first use undertaking would be at no strategic cost to the nuclear weapon states. Indeed as a significant confidence building measure it would in fact enhance their security.  
As one of the immediate steps, the nuclear weapon states should agree and state that they would not be the first to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against each other and that they would not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons in any conflict with a non-nuclear weapon state. The Commission considers that such an agreement should be brought into operation as soon as possible.

#### 3 deterrent roles of the arsenal – preserve peace, specific military goals, and nuclear umbrella

BAILEY et al 07 Senior Associate at the National Institute for Public Policy and is a member of the U.S. Department of State International Security Advisory Board

[Kathleen C. Bailey, Robert G. Joseph, Gordon C. Oehler, Keith B. Payne, Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Charles S. Robb, C. Paul Robinson, James R. Schlesinger, William Schneider Jr., William Van Cleave, R. James Woolsey, “White Paper On The Necessity of the U.S. Nuclear Deterrent,” http://www.nipp.org/Publication/Downloads/Publication%20Archive%20PDF/Deterrence%20Paper%20-%20version%202.pdf]

The U.S. nuclear arsenal plays three distinct but interrelated roles that presently cannot be fulfilled by any other type of weapon. First, the fundamental purpose of U.S. nuclear forces is political: to preserve peace, prevent coercion, and achieve our national objectives without use of military force. U.S. nuclear weapons help deter attacks from adversaries using all types of weapons of mass destruction. In other words, our objective is to use nuclear weapons politically to prevent our having to use military force. To be effective politically, our weapons must be appropriate to the threat, and the United States must be perceived as having both the will and the capability to employ nuclear weapons.

The deterrent value of nuclear weapons may be affected by their potential for military use, which comprises the second role of U.S. nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons differ from all other types of weapons because of their overwhelming, immediate destructive power. No other existing single weapon can deliver such force. Today’s highly accurate, powerful conventional weapons can indeed threaten some, but not all, strategic military targets. Some targets—such as deeply buried targets where leadership, WMD, or other military targets might be bunkered—can be threatened with destruction only by nuclear weapons. Furthermore, conventional weapons have inherent limitations in their capability to threaten such targets. (See shaded box.) To help deter an aggressor from introducing WMD into a conflict, it may be important that the aggressor understand that there are no protected sanctuaries against potential U.S. retaliation.

The third role of the U.S. nuclear arsenal is to help prevent nuclear proliferation by extending our deterrent—the nuclear umbrella. There are several countries which could, with little effort and time, develop their own nuclear weapons but do not because they trust in and rely on the U.S. nuclear deterrent.

### Current “roles”

#### Here is our current policy as it relates to the role of nuclear weapons.

Hans M. Kristensen & Matt Korda 22, Director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, Associate Senior Fellow at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute; Senior Research Associate and Project Manager for the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, M.A. in International Peace and Security from King’s College London, “The 2022 Nuclear Posture Review: Arms Control Subdued By Military Rivalry,” Federation of American Scientists, 10-27-2022, https://fas.org/blogs/security/2022/10/2022-nuclear-posture-review

The NPR reaffirms long-standing U.S. policy about the role of nuclear weapons but with slightly modified language. The role is: 1) Deter strategic attacks, 2) Assure allies and partners, and 3) Achieve U.S. objectives if deterrence fails.

The NPR reiterates the language from the 2010 NPR that the “fundamental role” of U.S. nuclear weapons “is to deter nuclear attacks” and only in “extreme circumstances.” The strategy seeks to “maintain a very high bar for nuclear employment” and, if employment of nuclear weapons is necessary, “seek to end conflict at the lowest level of damage possible on the best achievable terms for the United States and its Allies and partners.”

Deterring “strategic” attacks is a different formulation than the “deterrence of nuclear and non-nuclear attack” language in the 2018 NPR, but the new NPR makes it clear that “strategic” also accounts for existing and emerging non-nuclear attacks: “nuclear weapons are required to deter not only nuclear attack, but also a narrow range of other high consequence, strategic-level attacks.”

Indeed, the NPR makes clear that U.S. nuclear weapons can be used against the full spectrum of threats: “While the United States maintains a very high bar for the employment of nuclear weapons, our nuclear posture is intended to complicate an adversary’s entire decision calculus, including whether to instigate a crisis, initiate armed conflict, conduct strategic attacks using non-nuclear capabilities, or escalate to the use of nuclear weapons on any scale.”

During his presidential campaign, Joe Biden spoke repeatedly in favor of a no-first-use and sole-purpose policy for U.S. nuclear weapons. But the NPR explicitly rejects both under current conditions. The public version of the NPR doesn’t explain why a no-first-use policy against nuclear attack is not possible, but it appears to trim somewhat the 2018 NPR language about an enhanced role of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear strategic attacks. And the stated goal is still “moving toward a sole purpose declaration” when possible in consultation with Allies and partners.

In that context the NPR reiterates previous “negative security assurances” that the United States “will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states that are party to the NPT [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty] and in compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations.”

“For all other states” the NPR warns, “there remains a narrow range of contingencies in which U.S. nuclear weapons may still play a role in deterring attacks that have strategic effect against the United States or its Allies and partners.” That potentially includes Iran, North Korea, and Pakistan.

Interestingly, the NPR states that “hedging against an uncertain future” is no longer a stated (formal) role of nuclear weapons. Hedging has been part of a strategy to be able to react to changes in the threat environment, for example by deploying more weapons or modifying capabilities. The change does not mean that the United States is no longer hedging, but that hedging is part of managing the arsenal, rather than acting as a role for nuclear weapons within US military strategy writ large.

The NPR reaffirms, consistent with the 2013 Nuclear Employment Strategy, that U.S. use of nuclear weapons must comply with the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC) and that it is U.S. policy “not to purposely threaten civilian populations or objects, and the United States will not intentionally target civilian populations or objects in violation of LOAC.” That means that U.S. nuclear forces cannot attack cities per se (unless they contain military targets).

#### Roles of nuclear weapons.

Hans M. Kristensen & Matt Korda 23, Director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, Associate Senior Fellow at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute; Senior Research Associate and Project Manager for the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, M.A. in International Peace and Security from King’s College London, “United States nuclear weapons, 2023,” Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Vol. 79, No. 1, 2023, https://doi.org/10.1080/00963402.2022.2156686

The 2022 NPR offers slightly modified language relative to the 2018 NPR on the role of nuclear weapons in US military strategy. The three stated roles are: 1) “Deter strategic attack;” 2) “Assure Allies and partners;” and 3) “Achieve U.S. objectives if deterrence fails” (US Department of Defense Citation2022b, 7). “Deterring strategic attacks” is a different formulation than the “deterrence of nuclear and non-nuclear attack” language in the 2018 NPR, but the new NPR makes it clear that “strategic” also accounts for existing and emerging non-nuclear attacks (US Department of Defense Citation2022b, 8).

Additionally, the 2022 NPR states: “ ‘Hedging against an uncertain future’ is no longer a stated role for nuclear weapons” (US Department of Defense Citation2022b, 7). This likely does not mean an actual reduction in the role of nuclear weapons but, rather, a roll-back of Trump administration language to that of the Obama administration. Rather than a role for nuclear weapons, “hedging against an uncertain future” is more about managing the weapons production complex. (For a detailed analysis of the 2022 NPR, see Kristensen and Korda Citation2022).

#### Here is how the NPR defines what the roles are and what each one does.

NPR 22, “2022 Nuclear Posture Review,” Federation of American Scientists, 2022, https://s3.amazonaws.com/uploads.fas.org/2022/10/27113658/2022-Nuclear-Posture-Review.pdf

The Role of Nuclear Weapons. The NPR affirms the following roles for nuclear weapons:

► Deter strategic attacks;

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These roles are interrelated and complementary and provide the basis for developing and assessing our nuclear strategies, policies, and capabilities. “Hedging against an uncertain future” is no longer a stated role for nuclear weapons. The United States will continue to carry out robust risk management strategies within the nuclear enterprise so that it is capable of delivering credible deterrence even in the face of significant uncertainties and unanticipated challenges. This requires sustaining a set of initiatives and actions in the nuclear enterprise that over time builds enduring advantage and resilience in our stockpile, production complex, and science and technology efforts. Our approach to mitigating programmatic, geopolitical, technological, and operational risk through a resilient and adaptive nuclear enterprise is discussed below.

Deter Strategic Attacks. The United States affirms that its nuclear forces deter all forms of strategic attack. They serve to deter nuclear employment of any scale directed against the U.S. homeland or the territory of Allies and partners, whether on the ground, in the air, at sea, or in space. Any adversary use of nuclear weapons, regardless of location or yield, would fundamentally alter the nature of a conflict, create the potential for uncontrolled escalation, and have strategic effects. We must therefore be able to deter both large-scale and limited nuclear attacks from a range of adversaries. The capability to deter limited nuclear attacks is critical given that some competitors have developed strategies for warfare that may rely on the threat of nuclear escalation in order to terminate a conflict on advantageous terms. The ability to deter limited nuclear use is thus key to deterring non-nuclear aggression. If we are not confident we can deter escalation, it will be more difficult for our leaders to make the decision to project conventional military power to protect vital national security interests – and far more dangerous to do so should that decision be made.

Consistent with prior reviews, our nuclear strategy accounts for existing and emerging non-nuclear threats with potential strategic effect for which nuclear weapons are necessary to deter. We concluded that nuclear weapons are required to deter not only nuclear attack, but also a narrow range of other high consequence, strategic-level attacks. This is a prudent approach given the current security environment and how it could further evolve.

Assure Allies and Partners. The NSS and NDS require strengthening security architectures in key regions in order to fully leverage the capabilities of Allies and partners to deter and, if necessary, defeat adversary aggression. The U.S. global alliance and partnership network is a military center of gravity. U.S. extended nuclear deterrence is foundational to this network. Thus, assuring Allies and partners that these commitments are credible is central to U.S. national security and defense strategy.

Allies must be confident that the United States is willing and able to deter the range of strategic threats they face, and mitigate the risks they will assume in a crisis or conflict. Modernizing U.S. nuclear forces is key to assuring Allies that the United States is committed and capable of deterring the range of threats U.S. nuclear strategy addresses. Extended nuclear deterrence contributes to U.S. non-proliferation goals by giving Allies and partners confidence that they can resist strategic threats and remain secure without acquiring nuclear weapons of their own. Part of our assurance to Allies and partners is a continued and strengthened commitment to arms control, nuclear nonproliferation, and nuclear risk reduction to improve collective security by reducing or constraining adversary capabilities.

Achieve U.S. Objectives if Deterrence Fails. We will maintain a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent and flexible nuclear capabilities to achieve our objectives should the President conclude that the employment of nuclear weapons is necessary. In such a circumstance, the United States would seek to end any conflict at the lowest level of damage possible on the best achievable terms for the United States and its Allies and partners. As part of NPR implementation, the United States will update nuclear weapons employment guidance in accordance with the policy and strategy established by the President following publication of this report.

United States nuclear weapons employment guidance is approved by the President, and all nuclear plans are reviewed and approved by the Secretary of Defense. These plans are prepared with advice from the Chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff, among other senior officials. Legal advice is integral to the preparation of these documents and includes review of their consistency with the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC), which is authoritatively stated for DoD personnel in the DoD Law of War Manual. Longstanding DoD policy is to comply with LOAC in all armed conflicts, however characterized, and the DoD Law of War Manual recognizes that “[t]he law of war governs the use of nuclear weapons, just as it governs the use of conventional weapons.” In addition, longstanding U.S. policy is to not purposely threaten civilian populations or objects, and the United States will not intentionally target civilian populations or objects in violation of LOAC.

### NPR Defines “Role”

#### The Nuclear Posture Review defines the role of nuclear weapons

FAS, 02 – Federation of American Scientists (SECRECY NEWS, from the FAS Project on Government Secrecy, Volume 2002, Issue No. 4, January 10, 2002, “NUCLEAR POSTURE REVIEW MAY NOT COMPLY WITH LAW,” http://fas.org/sgp/news/secrecy/2002/01/011002.html)

Contrary to an explicit legal requirement, the Pentagon has still not produced an unclassified report on its Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), which defines the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. military strategy.

The Pentagon held a press briefing yesterday outlining the conclusions of the Review, and released a three-page Foreword from the otherwise classified report.

#### The NPR sets out 4 goals for nuclear forces – assurance, dissuasion, deterrence or defeat

OELRICH 05Acting President of FAS, PhD – Princeton, BS – U. Chicago both in Chemistry, Research Associate at Lawrence Livermore National Labs. [Ivan Oelrich, Missions for Nuclear Weapons after the Cold War,” FEDERATION of AMERICAN SCIENTISTS, Occasional Paper No. 3 January 2005, http://www.fas.org/programs/ssp/nukes/armscontrol/missionsaftercwrptfull.pdf]

Specifically, this study starts with the Administration's four goals for the nuclear force (as part of a new "triad" of nuclear offensive forces, defenses, and a responsive infrastructure) as laid out in the most recent Nuclear Posture Review (NPR). The purpose of nuclear weapons, according to the Administration, is either to assure, dissuade, deter, or defeat.

The NPR states that nuclear weapons are meant to assure, primarily our allies but also ourselves. Simply possessing a nuclear force gives the United States the confidence to protect itself and its allies against all enemies but especially enemies armed with nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons. The argument is that United States does not even have to contemplate the use of nuclear weapons: just having them provides a solid security foundation for U.S. engagement in the world. Having a U.S. nuclear umbrella large enough to cover allies also reduces their incentive to develop their own nuclear arsenals, the NPR argues, thereby reducing proliferation.

Nuclear weapons should dissuade enemies from attempting certain types of military competition. If the United States maintains, for example, a large intercontinental- range nuclear arsenal, now over a hundred times China's, then China will be content with a small force, it is argued. But if the United States reduces substantially, the Chinese will believe that competition is possible and productive and will respond to U.S. reductions with their own buildup.

Of course, nuclear weapons should deter. This means primarily, but not exclusively, deterrence of *nuclear* attack on the United States or its allies. By threatening retaliation, the United States can make any attack more costly than any possible military, political, or economic gain. To effectively deter, one should be able to threaten something the enemy values.

Finally, the NPR argues that nuclear weapons should be able to defeat, that is, they should be able to engage military targets for military advantage. Of particular importance are targets that may resist attack by conventional weapons, for example, hardened intercontinental-range missile silos.

### Role Defined by Congress

#### Role is statutorily defined by Congress

Pollmiller et al, 08 - Lt Col, USAF (David, “Enough Already: JCA belongs in the Air Force! ,” A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty In Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements for Air War College, January,by David E. Pollmiller, https://www.afresearch.org/skins/rims/q\_mod\_be0e99f3-fc56-4ccb-8dfe-670c0822a153/q\_act\_downloadpaper/q\_obj\_99275839-3fd3-47e6-9829-5cb922828480/display.aspx?rs=enginespage)

Functions are the appropriate or assigned duties, responsibilities, missions, or tasks of an individual, office, or organization; as defined in the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, the term "function" includes functions, powers, and duties.3 The US Congress House Committee on Armed Services further offers that a function is a “specific responsibility assigned by the President or the Secretary of Defense to a Service.”4 Simply, assigned functions enable a specific Service to legally fulfill their congressionally established role.

A mission is instead a task, together with the purpose, that clearly indicates the action to be taken and the reason therefore.5 Furthermore, missions are not performed by Services but are performed by combatant commanders.6

A role on the other hand is a “broad enduring purpose” assigned by Congress and given to a specific Service.7 It is established in legislation and is legally binding. A role basically defines why a specific Service exists.

#### “Role” is codified by Congress in law – if the plan changes a role, it has to be through Congress

Powell, 93 **-** Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Colin, “Roles, Missions, and Functions of the Armed Forces of the United States” http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA266034&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf)

The terms roles, missions, and functions are often used interchangeably, but the distinctions among them are important. ROLES are the broad and enduring purposes for which the services were established by Congress in law. MISSIONS are the tasks assigned by the President or the Secretary of Defense to the combatant commanders in chief (CINCs). FUNCTIONS are specific responsibilities assigned by the President and the Secretary of Defense to enable the services to fulfill their legally established roles. Simply stated, the primary function of theservices is to provide forces that are organized, trained, and equipped to perform a role--to be employed by a CINC in the accomplishment of a mission.

#### Role means it is created or changed by the Congress – only missions allow the aff the flexibility to use the President

Powell, 93 **-** Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Colin, “Roles, Missions, and Functions of the Armed Forces of the United States” http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA266034&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf)

After World War II, the Joint Chiefs of Staff were established as a permanent, formal body, with a joint staff; thc Air Force was established as a separate Service; the Department of Defense was created; and the Armed Forces were unified by the National Security Act of 1947. The Commanders in Chief (CINCs) retained their Service identities, and the Chief of Naval Operations and Chief of Staff of the Army, respectively, continued to act as executive agents for the Pacific and European theaters.

In 1958, however, the Secretary of Defense was given direction authority over the CINCs. Services retained their roles, as established by law, but midssion were assigned, on a geographical or functional basis, to the CINCs.

In 1987, the distinctions between roles and missions were further modified when Congress established, in law, a new combatant command, the US Special Specal Operations Command (USSOCOM), and gave it a role.

Today, ROLES are the broad and enduring purposes for which the Services, and USSOCOM, were established by Congress in law. In broadest terms, the role of the Services today is to organize, train, and equip forces, the Army for prompt and sustained combat incident to operations on land; the Navy for prompt and sustained combat incident to operations on and from the sea; the Air Force for prompt and sustained offensive and defensive air operations; the Marine Core for service with the fleet in the seizure or defense of advanced naval bases, and the conduct of such land operations as may be essential to the prosecution of a naval campaign; and Special Operations Command for special operations activities or missions.

MISSIONS are the tasks assigned by the President or Secretary of Defense to the CINCs of combatant commands. The responsibilities of the combatant CINCs are spelled out in the Unified Command Plan, a document prepared by the Joint Staff, reviewed by the JCS and the Secretary of Defense, and approved by the President.

#### Role is codified by Congress – only missions are done by the President or the military

Leland, 93 – general, and the Director for Strategic, Plans and Policy of the Joint Staff, for the Joint Chiefs (1993 Report on the Roles, Missions and Functions of the Armed Forces Submitted by Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2/12, http://www.fas.org/man/docs/corm93/brief.htm)

I'm going to talk a minute or two about process because the terms, roles, missions and functions, are commonly used and interchanged within the building, often as if they mean the same thing, and they don't. So there's some help in understanding what we did and why we concluded what we did by understanding the terminology.

Very simply, a role is a broad and enduring purpose, and it is provided to a service. So the Army, as an example, as you see on the left there, the role is to man, train, and equip forces for operations on land. The Navy does that on the sea. The Marine Corps for land operations essential to naval campaigns. Then you can see here for the Air Force, for offensive and defensive air campaigns. So that's a role. The roles are provided by the Congress to the Services. A function is something where the president or the Secretary of Defense tell a service to do something in particular. An example would be to provide forces. So an example of a function is the President says, "I want you, Army, to provide forces to do that role -- operations on land."

Finally, missions are done by combatant commanders. Missions are not done by services. So services provide forces; combatant commanders do missions.

This other diagram just gives you the same information in a little bit different form. Congress gives the roles to the Services. The President and the Secretary of Defense assign specific functions. The Services then provide the forces and the forces must be capable of performing the functions that were given to them by the President and the Secretary of Defense. The commanders, the combatant commanders, when they have those forces, they get missions from the President and they conduct operations. The ones listed there are some you're very familiar with -- Desert Storm, of course Southwest Asia; Just Cause, the operation in Panama; Restore Hope is the ongoing operation in Somalia.

#### The Nuclear Mission Management Plan establishes the role of nuclear weapons

US Code, 09 (Current as of 8/19/09, TITLE 10. ARMED FORCES, SUBTITLE A. GENERAL MILITARY LAW, PART I. ORGANIZATION AND GENERAL MILITARY POWERS, CHAPTER 2. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, 10 USCS § 113, lexis congressional universe)

 Nuclear mission management plan**.** Act Oct. 5, 1999, P.L. 106-65, Div C, Title XXXI, Subtitle E, § 3163(d), 113 Stat. 945, provides:  
   "(1) The Secretary of Defense shall develop and implement a plan to ensure the continued reliability of the capability of the Department of Defense to carry out its nuclear deterrent mission.  
   "(2) The plan shall do the following:  
      "(A) Articulate the current policy of the United States on the role of nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence in the conduct of defense and foreign relations matters.  
      "(B) Establish stockpile viability and capability requirements with respect to that mission, including the number and variety of warheads required.  
      "(C) Establish requirements relating to the contractor industrial base, support infrastructure, and surveillance, testing, assessment, and certification of nuclear weapons necessary to support that mission.  
   "(3) The plan shall take into account the following:  
      "(A) Requirements for the critical skills, readiness, training, exercise, and testing of personnel necessary to meet that mission.  
      "(B) The relevant programs and plans of the military departments and the Defense Agencies with respect to readiness, sustainment (including research and development), and modernization of the strategic deterrent forces.".

### Role Includes Warfighting

#### The role has shifted from deterrence to include warfighting

Jingmei, 03 - associate professor at the Arms Control Research Division of the Institute of Applied Physics and Computational Mathematics (IAPCM) in Beijing (Tian, “The Bush Administration’s Nuclear Strategy and Its Implications for China’s Security,” March, http://iis-db.stanford.edu/pubs/20188/tian.pdf)

During the Cold War, nuclear weapons had a dual role in American military strategy. One role was to deter a Soviet nuclear attack on the United States and to deter a Warsaw Pact conventional attack on European allies by convincing the Soviet Union that doing so would result in unacceptable consequences. The other role of nuclear weapons was war-fighting. The resolution to use nuclear forces—that is, nuclear war-fighting—is also an important element of nuclear deterrence.4 In essence, the goal of America’s nuclear strategy was to avoid the use of nuclear weapons and the breakout of nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union, because both sides had nuclear forces whose use would result in mutually assured destruction. Under that condition, the United States and the Soviet Union were unlikely to really reduce their nuclear weapons. Instead, the total number of nuclear weapons grew and grew, reaching a vastly excessive level. The world was in the shadow of nuclear war.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War significantly changed the international security environment. Accordingly, the Clinton administration reassessed U.S. nuclear strategy. The Nuclear Posture Review approved by President Bill Clinton on September 18, 1994, concluded that nuclear weapons were playing a smaller role in U.S. security than at any other time in the nuclear age, and thus the United States required a much smaller nuclear arsenal.5 Subsequently, President Clinton endorsed the Presidential Decision Directive PDD/NSC 60 in November 1997, formally abandoning the nuclear guidelines issued by the Reagan administration in 1981, which said that the United States must be prepared to fight and win a protracted nuclear war. The PDD operated from the premise that the primary role of nuclear weapons in the post–Cold War era was deterrence.6 As a result, the United States reduced its nuclear arsenal on a large scale and pushed the process of international nuclear arms control.

However, the Bush administration plans to change the former administration’s policy on nuclear weapons, emphasizing their war-fighting role. According to the classified Nuclear Posture Review, which was leaked to the media, the United States could use nuclear weapons first against China, Russia, Iraq, North Korea, Iran, Libya, and Syria; in an Arab-Israeli conflict; in a war between China and Taiwan; and in an attack by North Korea on South Korea. And it could use nuclear weapons in three types of situations: against targets able to withstand non-nuclear attack; in retaliation for attack with nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons; and in the event of surprising military development.7 Later, President Bush in a speech at West Point stressed, “We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plan, and confront the worst threats before they emerge.”8 This implies that President Bush may be willing to use nuclear weapons not only in retaliation for an attack by weapons of mass destruction but also to preempt such attacks.

These situations show that the Bush administration has expanded the range of use of nuclear weapons from nuclear weapon states to non-nuclear weapon states and has shifted the main role of nuclear weapons from deterrence to war-fighting. This breaks a decadeslong taboo against the use of nuclear weapons except as a last resort, and it lowers the threshold for using nuclear weapons. Although increasing the war-fighting role of nuclear weapons would further strengthen the credibility and effectiveness of U.S. nuclear deterrence, it also would provoke other countries to pursue nuclear weapons because of their military value. This would increase the risk of nuclear weapons proliferation, thereby destabilizing regions and the world.

#### The role includes offensive warfighting

Cabasso, 08 - Executive Director Western States Legal Foundation (Jacqueline, “StratCom in Context: The Hidden Architecture of U.S. Militarism,” http://www.afterdowningstreet.org/militarism

The Pentagon’s December 2001 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) – contemporaneous with the establishment of the new StratCom - underlines the fundamental policy and technological underpinnings for the Bush administration’s aggressive “preventive war” doctrine, and has served as the primary justification for each subsequent annual nuclear weapons budget request as well as the current “Complex Transformation” plan to modernize the nuclear weapons laboratories and manufacturing plants.

The NPR expanded the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. national security policy, including the possible use of nuclear weapons in “immediate, potential, or unexpected contingencies” against a seven named countries including Iraq, Iran, and North Korea, and called for indefinite retention of a large, modern, and diverse nuclear force. Significantly, the NPR also elevated the weapons research and development infrastructure – including the nuclear weapons laboratories – to one leg of the “New Strategic Triad,” intended to support both “offensive” and “defensive” nuclear and non-nuclear high-tech weapons systems that will enable the U.S. to project overwhelming global military power.

#### Nuclear Roles: Deter WMD, Prevent Catastrophic Loss, Target Unique Areas, enhance US influence

N.I.P.P. 01 National Institute for Public Policy – Executive Report

["Rationale and Requirements for U.S. Nuclear Forces and Arms Control,” Volume I Executive Report January 2001, NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY, http://www.nipp.org/National%20Institute%20Press/Archives/Publication%20Archive%20PDF/volume%201%20complete.pdf

· Possible current/future deterrence and wartime roles for nuclear weapons may include:

– Deterring weapons of mass destruction (WMD) use by regional powers.

– Deterring WMD or massive conventional aggression by an emerging global competitor.

– Preventing catastrophic losses in conventional war.

– Providing unique targeting capabilities (deep underground/biological weapons targets).

– Enhancing U.S. influence in crises.

### Role = Alert Status

#### De-alerting, demating, deep cuts and ending testing all reduce the role of nuclear weapons

The Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, 96 (“The Nuclear Weapon Debate,” http://www.dfat.gov.au/cc/cc\_report2.html

There are a number of such steps that can be taken immediately. They would significantly reduce the risk of nuclear war and thus enhance the security of all states, but particularly that of the nuclear weapon states. Their implementation would provide clear confirmation of the intent of the nuclear weapon states to further reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their security postures. These steps would also signal that the nuclear weapon states were unequivocally of the view that continued possession of nuclear weapons was incommensurate with the risks they pose.  
The recommended steps are:

Taking nuclear forces off alert

Removal of warheads from delivery vehicles

Ending deployment of non-strategic nuclear weapons

Ending nuclear testing

Initiating negotiations to further reduce US and Russian nuclear arsenals

Agreement among the nuclear weapon states of reciprocal no first use undertakings, and of a non-use undertaking by them in relation to the non-nuclear weapon states.

#### Alert postures reinforce the nuclear weapons role

The Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, 96 (“The Nuclear Weapon Debate,” http://www.dfat.gov.au/cc/cc\_report2.html

The continuing practice of maintaining nuclear-tipped missiles on alert, whether on land-based or sea-based platforms, is a highly regrettable perpetuation of Cold War attitudes and assumptions. It needlessly sustains the risk of hair-trigger postures. It retards the critical process of normalising United States-Russian relations. It sends the unmistakable and, from an arms control perspective, severely damaging message that nuclear weapons serve a vital security role. It is entirely inappropriate to the extraordinary transformation in the international security environment achieved at such staggering cost. Taking these missiles off alert is a natural counterpart to the stand-down of bombers from nuclear alert which was implemented in late 1991.

### Role – Caselist

#### No First Use, De-Alert, Numeric Reductions, and tactical consolidation are all role reductions

Støre 08 Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs

[Jonas Gahr Støre, A Global Effort to Achieve a World Free of Nuclear Weapons, Minister’s summary and preliminary recommendations, http://www.carnegieendowment.org/static/npp/chair\_writtensummary.pdf]

What further steps could nuclear weapon states take to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their national security policies?

There are compelling reasons for renewed efforts by nuclear weapon states to reduce the size of their nuclear arsenals and the role of their nuclear weapons. Participants discussed no-first use pledges, the de-alerting of nuclear weapons, the importance of numerical reductions and proposals to consolidate tactical nuclear weapons. Some participants argued that the priority should be those steps agreed at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences.

#### Restricting the role includes limiting deterrence missions and increasing operational safety

Pippenger, 97 - Media Relations Associate at the National Academy of Sciences (Ellen, “Changes in U.S. Policy Needed to Reduce Risks Posed by Nuclear Weapons”, 6/17, http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=5796  
To address these and other concerns, the United States should adopt an explicit policy restricting the role of nuclear weapons to deterring or responding to nuclear attacks or threats, the committee said. This country should no longer threaten to respond with nuclear weapons against attacks by conventional, chemical, or biological weapons. In addition, United States and Russia should negotiate further reductions in nuclear arms, adopt practices that provide higher levels of operational safety for the remaining weapons, and work to prevent theft or unauthorized use of nuclear arms.

#### NFU & De-Alert reduce the nuclear posture

OELRICH 08 Vice President for Strategic Security Programs at the Federation of American Scientists. He received his BS from the University of Chicago and a PhD from Princeton University, both in chemistry

[Ivan Oelrich, “What Are Nuclear Weapons For?,” http://www.americanphysicalsociety.org/units/fps/newsletters/200804/oelrich.cfm]

The nuclear “posture” we have today, the combination of weapons, their number and characteristics, that we keep them on hair-trigger alert, constantly deployed, many on submarines forward deployed off the coasts of Russia and China just minutes from their targets, demonstrates that the United States maintains nuclear war fighting options including disarming first strikes. Reserving nuclear weapons solely for the mission of responding to nuclear attack, thereby deterring such an attach in the first place, implies a decisive no-first-use posture, weapons off alert, perhaps even stored separately from their delivery systems. And since the pain that must be inflicted today should be proportionate to the stakes in play, not a potential enemy’s arsenal, the number of weapons needed is almost certainly only in the double digits.

#### No First use is a major change in our arsenal’s role

SAGAN 09  Professor of Political Science at Stanford University and Co-Director of Stanford’s Center for International Security and Cooperation.

[Scott D. Sagan, “The Case for No First Use,” Survival: Global Politics and Strategy, vol. 51, no. 3, June–July 2009, pp. 163–182 ]

In his 5 April 2009 speech in Prague, US President Barack Obama promised that ‘to put an end to Cold War thinking, we will reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy and urge others to do the same’. The forthcoming Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), mandated by Congress, provides the administration an opportunity to honour that commitment. To reduce the role of nuclear weapons in national security strategy, however, the next NPR must abandon the long-standing US policy of threatening to use its nuclear weapons first in a variety of military scenarios. This basic step was not taken in the George W. Bush administration’s 2001 NPR, despite its claim to institute ‘a major change in our approach to the role of nuclear offensive forces in our deterrent strategy’ and call to ‘both reduce our dependence on nuclear weapons and improve our ability to deter attack in the face of proliferating [weapons of mass destruction (WMD)] capabilities’. Indeed, the 2001 NPR contradicted these stated ambitions by maintaining that nuclear weapons were still necessary to ‘provide credible military options to deter a wide range of threats, including WMD and large-scale conventional military

## Missions – Additional Work

### General – Three Core Missions (Same as Roles)

#### There are 3 central “missions” of US nuclear forces – deterrence, assurance, and mitigation

**Lieber and Press,** 20**23** [Keir, Professor in the Center for Security Studies at Georgetown University Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service and Nonresident Senior Fellow in the Forward Defense practice of the Atlantic Council’s Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security; Daryl, Professor of Government at Dartmouth College and Nonresident Senior Fellow in the Forward Defense practice of the Atlantic Council’s Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security; “US strategy and force posture for an era of nuclear tripolarity, Atlantic Council Issue Brief, May 1, 2023; <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/us-strategy-and-force-posture-for-an-era-of-nuclear-tripolarity/>]

The Foundations of US Nuclear Requirements: Missions and Guidelines

The United States requires its nuclear forces to execute three central missions: (1) deter nuclear attacks against the United States and its allies; (2) assure US allies that their nuclear deterrence needs will be met; and (3) mitigate the consequences if nuclear deterrence fails.11

The first mission, the core of US nuclear policy, is broader than it appears because it requires deterring attacks from a diverse set of adversaries in a wide range of circumstances. The US arsenal must reliably deter powerful rivals that themselves are armed with large and diverse nuclear forces, as well as regional adversaries that field small and potentially vulnerable nuclear arsenals. US strategists must also posture US nuclear forces to deter a wide range of nuclear attacks, from large-scale strikes on the US home- land, such as an attack on US cities or a disarming strike aimed at the US nuclear arsenal, to smaller nuclear attacks, including battlefield strikes or instances of coercive nuclear escalation. Recognizing the breadth of the core mission to deter nu- clear attack is important because the targets the United States threatens to retaliate against in each case, and the forces available to execute those retaliatory strikes, would vary across those circumstances. Retaliation against a battlefield nuclear attack by a weak, poorly armed enemy might entail low-yield, highly accurate nuclear forces—either to punish or disarm the enemy. By contrast, retaliation after a strategic attack on the US homeland by a major nuclear rival might involve dozens of high-yield weapons drawn from whatever US forces survived the initial enemy strike. The key point is that an arsenal designed to deter nuclear attacks across a wide range of circumstances will require a range of capabilities.

The second mission for US nuclear forces—assurance—is principally an effort to convince allies that the US nuclear umbrella will succeed at the core deterrence mission. If allies lose faith that US deterrent efforts will succeed, they may pursue nuclear capabilities of their own or change their geopolitical alignment to reduce their exposure to nu- clear attack. Viewed in this way, the assurance mission is important, but it does not create force structure requirements beyond the core deterrence mission. In some cases, allies may disagree with US planners about the nuclear capabilities (or posture or declaratory policy) that are needed to reliably deter nuclear attack. However, as long as the US nuclear force structure is well suited for the deterrence mission, assurance principally involves reaching agreement with US partners that US force structure, posture, and declaratory policies will in fact deter adversaries.12

Similarly, the requirements for the third mission—mitigating the consequences if deterrence fails—are roughly the same as the requirements for the first mission. For example, if North Korea uses nuclear weapons during a war on the Korean Peninsula, the United States may decide to “mitigate” the impact by conducting conventional and low- yield nuclear disarming strikes against Pyongyang’s remaining arsenal. The most relevant US nuclear capabilities for such strikes—such as B-61 bombs, low-yield warheads on Trident II submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and air-launched cruise missiles—are also, by definition, the weapons on which the United States implicitly relies to deter North Korean attacks in the first place. The most demanding counterforce mission (in terms of force structure) is likely the requirement to conduct effective counterforce strikes after absorbing a major Russian nuclear attack. Some important scenarios may create niche requirements for the third mission (i.e., “mitigate consequences”), but because of the way the United States limits its target selection (“counterforce-only”), the deterrence mission and the mitigation mission largely call on the same forces.

To some extent, US force requirements follow logically from the three missions described above—and principally from mission one. In reality, however, the missions merely shape the force. The actual requirements (that is, the precise numbers of weapons and their operational requirements) depend substantially on three additional planning principles.

### General – Old List

#### There are 15 current “missions” – these are clearly defined by official U.S. reports

Oelrich 5 [Ivan, Vice President for Strategic Security Programs – Federation of American Scientists, “Missions for Nuclear Weapons after the Cold War”, FAS Occasional Paper 3, January, http://www.fas.org/resource/01282005175922.pdf]

This study examines currently proposed missions for nuclear weapons, evaluating their net contribution to our security. The missions were compiled from reports by the Administration, Congress, the military, the national laboratories, and outside analysts. It examines fifteen missions in all, but some are grouped together. The abbreviated list is below. Many past missions, such as air defense, are not included because no one is proposing them today. The analysis distinguishes between "missions" and "goals." For example, deterrence is not a nuclear mission. The ability to survive a nuclear attack and strike back at the attacker is the nuclear mission. Deterrence is the goal of that mission. The Administration has declared four goals for nuclear weapons: assurance, dissuasion, deterrence, and target destruction. This study evaluates nuclear weapons by how well they meet each goal for each mission. That nuclear weapons can destroy most targets proposed for them is not in question. But they must be compared to alternatives, and benefits must be weighed against costs. For most missions, recent advances in precision guidance leave little or no relative advantage for nuclear weapons. The costs of using nuclear weapons, however, are large compared to conventional weapons. Some of these costs, such as radioactive fallout, are incurred on the battlefield. Other costs, such as proliferation incentives, are incurred even if the nuclear weapons are never actually used. This net assessment of costs and benefits finds few missions for which nuclear weapons are the weapon of choice. In other words, if we search for missions for nuclear weapons, we can always find them; but if we search for weapons to fulfill military missions, then we will only rarely light upon nuclear weapons as the best solution.

Missions for U.S. Nuclear Forces

􀂄Survive a nuclear attack on the U.S. or its allies and strike back (for retaliation/deterrence)

􀂄Survive a chemical/biological attack on the U.S. or its allies and strike back (for retaliation/deterrence)

􀂄Increase enemy vulnerability (to discourage proliferation)

􀂄Damage limiting strikes in theater

􀂄Damage limiting strikes against Russian central nuclear forces

􀂄Strike back after regional conventional attack (for retaliation/deterrence)

􀂄Overawe

􀂄Provide virtual power

􀂄Fight/terminate regional wars

### Generic

#### “Missions” means tasks

JCS 89 [Joint Chiefs of Staff Pub 1-02 ―The Military Dictionary]

Mission (NATO) 1. A clear, concise statement of the task of the command and its purpose. 2. One or more aircraft ordered to accomplish one particular task.

#### Task + purpose

DOD 9 [Department of Defense Dictionary of Military Terms, 3-17, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/data/m/5569.html]

mission

Definitions:  
(DOD) 1. The task, together with the purpose, that clearly indicates the action to be taken and the reason therefore.

## Missions – Topic Paper

### Missions = Currently Existing

#### “Missions” of the nuclear arsenal include only specific tasks that currently exist

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Defining Nuclear Missions

This study does not set out to promote new nuclear missions but to evaluate the set of missions currently under some level of consideration. The set is shown in Table 2 and is a composite from several sources, including a report from the National Institute for Public Policy (NIPP), the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), studies from the National Laboratories, and Congressional reports.[7]

Before proceeding, we need two definitions: *mission* is used here to mean a specific type of task such as destroying a particular type of target. *Why* one might want to destroy the target, the effect, is the objective or, using the Administration's terminology, the *goal*.

The distinction between missions and goals is important but is often muddled in discussions of nuclear weapons. In the following discussion, deterrence, for example, is not a mission of nuclear weapons. A mission for a nuclear system might be to be able to survive a first strike and then launch against the striker, destroying its cities. The goal of this mission would be deterrence. Damage limitation seems to be an uncontroversial goal in general; but the specific mission of a surprise first strike, necessary to effect that goal, is much less appealing. Many discussions of nuclear weapons do not maintain the distinction between missions and goals. They assume or assert that nuclear weapons will achieve the desired goal, so some of the missions are only implied. It is easy to lose sight of the task nuclear weapons would actually be asked to perform. Maintaining this perspective is one benefit of maintaining the distinction between specific missions and general goals.

Table 2

Nuclear Missions

1 Survive and fire back after nuclear attack against homeland (for retaliation/deterrence)

2 Survive and fire back after nuclear attack against allies (for retaliation/deterrence/assurance)

3 Survive and fire back after chem/bio attack against homeland (for retaliation/deterrence)

4 Survive and fire back after chem/bio attack against allies (for assurance/retaliation/deterrence)

5 Survive and fire back after CBW use in military theater

6 Deploying nuclear weapons to attack enemy nuclear weapons to increase their vulnerability, decreasing their value (to discourage their development in the first place)

7 Deploying nuclear weapons to attack enemy chem/bio weapons to increase their vulnerability, decreasing their value (to discourage their development in the first place)

8 Damage limitation attacks against nuclear weapons in military theater

9 Damage limitation attacks against CB weapons in military theater

10 Damage limitation attacks against Russian/Chinese central systems

11 Ready to inflict damage after regional conventional attacks (or to deter such attacks)

12 Overawe potential rivals

13 Provide virtual power

14 Fight regional wars

15 Apply shock to terminate a regional conventional war

Nuclear Weapons Missions

We have tried to make the list complete. However, some possible nuclear missions, in fact some actual past missions, **are excluded because they are not currently proposed.** For example, the Nike and Safeguard systems deployed nuclear warheads for strategic defense against bombers and missiles respectively, but we can find almost no serious consideration at this time of arming ballistic missile interceptors with nuclear warheads. Indeed, the Congress has even considered banning the option. Nuclear explosives have been proposed as propulsion systems for space launchers (the Orion project, for example) that could have military application but this idea is not currently on the table. We included a mission for discouraging the build-up of nuclear arsenals by making the competition seem hopeless (a mission we call "overawe," that is usually mentioned with respect to China). We do not, however, list a comparable "overawing" mission with respect to discouraging other nations from developing chemical or biological weapons because we cannot find any proposal for it. The list inTable 2 runs roughly in order of more to less widely accepted missions.

### Mission = Specific Tasks

#### “Missions” of the nuclear arsenal are specific jobs assigned to the military

Carr, 93 - US Navy Commander (Roberta, “THE GREENING OF GLOBAL SECURITY: THE U.S. MILITARY AND INTERNATIONAL

ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY” http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA277754&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf)

In this thesis, the term role is used as a deed or action the U.S. military is capable of performing. Roles in this thesis are action verbs, that is, something that is performed.

The Roles and Missions document also defines missions as "the tasks assigned by the President or Secretary of Defense to the Commanders-in-Chief (CINCs) of combatant commands."[Ref. 1 :p. 1-3] Similarly, mission in this thesis is used to describe a specific job assigned to the military, where the military employs a specific role toward achieving that mission. In other words, the U.S. military performs a role to accomplish a mission.

#### “Missions” refers to specific tasks of weapons – not capabilities generally

Rohling, 80 – in the Polemologisch Instituut at Groningen University in the Netherlands (Bert, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist, November, “The Sin of Silence”, ebsco)

Up to now, restrictions on this sovereign right to possess arms have forbidden some quality or quantity of specific categories of weapons. But technological innovations have made this approach difficult if not useless. Hence the need for a new approach which does not rely on qualitative or quantitative restrictions on weapons but considers instead the ”missions” or “functions” of national armed power. These terms would be used to describe the specific tasks to which military capabilities can be put, and it is these missions or functions that should be made the primary focus of agreement.4 Some capabilities should be forbidden: the capability of launching a pre-emptive first strike or a successful surprise attack. As a general rule a state should not have the right to possess arms capable of performing functions that are forbidden by international law. The logical consequence of the ban on the use of force, except to resist armed attack, is a further ban on the right to possess arms capable of supportive aggressive designs.

#### Missions refers to the specific tasks that weapons are capable of being put toward

Miller, 84(Arthur, Nuclear Weapons and Law, p. 197-198)

Up to now, negotiations have been conducted on the basis of special categories of weapons and arms power. However, technology presents ever more confusing novelties. Bertram directed our attention to “the erosion of the existing weapons categories” which was partly a result of “multi-mission weapons.” 85 Hence his plea for “new units of account, missions instead of weapons.” 86 The term “mission” is used to describe specific tasks to which military capabilities can be put. Such functions should be the subject of negotiations and agreed-upon prescriptions.

### Missions Includes Targeting

#### Limiting Targeting is a restriction of the mission

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[Hans M. Kristensen, Robert S. Norris, Ivan Oelrich, “From Counterforce to Minimal Deterrence: A New Nuclear Policy on the Path Toward Eliminating Nuclear Weapons,” http://www.fas.org/pubs/\_docs/OccasionalPaper7.pdf]

Proponents of counterforce targeting often claim that it is the only morally justifiable nuclear targeting because anything else means “city busting” and targeting of civilians. But that argument ignores that existing counterforce targeting accepts tens of millions of civilian casualties. We believe that nuclear targeting decisions should place a very high value on avoiding collateral threat to populations, and explicitly prohibit city attacks, keeping in mind that important military targets in cities can always be attacked, simply not with nuclear weapons. Of course, huge fatalities will occur in any nuclear attack but many fewer in a minimal deterrence posture than would occur with today’s targeting choices. Note that this approach actually restricts the mission of nuclear weapons to just deterrence, which is what most discussions of nuclear weapons claim the mission to be. This is not war fighting, it is not preemption to limit damage, it is not vengeance. It is only deterrence in its simplest form: guaranteed pain if an adversary unwisely attacks the United States or its allies with nuclear weapons.

### Missions Includes Counterforce

#### Counterforce is a mission

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[Hans M. Kristensen, Robert S. Norris, Ivan Oelrich, “From Counterforce to Minimal Deterrence: A New Nuclear Policy on the Path Toward Eliminating Nuclear Weapons,” http://www.fas.org/pubs/\_docs/OccasionalPaper7.pdf]

The counterforce mission, and all that goes with it, should be explicitly and publicly abandoned and replaced with a much less ambitious and qualitativelydifferent doctrine. A new “minimal deterrence” mission will make retaliationafter nuclear attack the sole mission for nuclear weapons. We believe thatadopting this doctrine is an important step on the path to nuclear abolitionbecause nuclear retaliation is the one mission for nuclear weapons that reducesthe salience of nuclear weapons; it is the self-canceling mission. With just thisone mission, the United States can have far fewer nuclear forces to use againsta different set of targets. Almost all of the “requirements” for nuclear weapons’performance were established during the Cold War and derive from the counterforcemission. Under a minimal deterrence doctrine, appropriate needs forreliability, accuracy, response time, and all other performance characteristics,can be reevaluated and loosened.

### Missions Includes First Use

#### NFU restricts the deterrence mission of nuclear weapons

Panofsky, 07 - Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (Emeritus) (Wolfgang, “Peace talk: My life negotiating science and policy ,” Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist, Nov/Dec, ebsco)

Prior to possible prohibition, it seems feasible to me to drive for consensus that the only justifiable remaining role of nuclear weapons is deterrence of the use of nuclear weapons by others. Retaining, or even searching for, other missions for nuclear weapons is shortsighted and prolongs or even exacerbates the nuclear dangers. Such a restriction on the mission of nuclear weapons is equivalent to a universal declaration of “no-first-use” of nuclear weapons, a declaration that has been embraced only by China, and by none of the other nuclear weapons states. But most important, such a restricted view of the mission of nuclear weapons should enable drastic reductions of the existing nuclear weapons stockpiles, in particular those held by the United States and Russia. Such a limit imposed on the role of nuclear weapons can be used to revitalize the nuclear weapons arms control drive, which lately has suffered a series of setbacks. This has been a personal disappointment to me because some of the achievements in nuclear weapons arms control that were enacted during the Cold War, some of which I participated in developing, have now fallen on hard times.

### Missions Includes Global Strike

#### Preemption through Global Strike is a nuclear mission

Kristensen, 06 - Director, Nuclear Information Project, Federation of American Scientists (Hans, “Global Strike: A Chronology of the Pentagon’s New Offensive Strike Plan,” 3/15, http://www.nukestrat.com/pubs/GlobalStrikeReport.pdf)

One year after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, the Bush administration published the National Security Strategy of the United States of America. Building on the events of 9/11 – and a decade of gradual expansion of nuclear doctrine focused on Russian and China to one aimed increasingly at regional aggressors armed with weapons of mass destruction – the new strategy wove together terrorism and weapons of mass destruction proliferation in a plan for a more offensive U.S. military posture.

"We must be prepared to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and friends....We must adapt the concept of imminent threat to the capabilities and objectives of today’s adversaries….The greater the threat, the greater the risk of inaction – and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of our enemy’s attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively....To support preemptive actions, we will…continue to transform out military forces to ensure our ability to conduct rapid and precise operations to achieve decisive results."2

Three and a half years later, the military product of that strategy is operational: Global Strike. The operational embodiment of the Global Strike mission is Contingency Plan (CONPLAN) 8022, a new strike plan developed by STRATCOM in coordination with the Air Force and Navy to provide a prompt global strike options to the President with nuclear, conventional, space, and information warfare capabilities.

It is important to understand that the Global Strike mission and CONPLAN 8022 are different than previous missions and plans both in their intent and capabilities. Although promoted as a way of increasing the President’s options for deterring lesser adversaries, Global Strike is first and foremost offensive and preemptive in nature and deeply rooted in the expectation that deterrence will fail sooner or later. Rather than waiting for the mushroom cloud to appear, a phrase used several times by the Bush administration, the Global Strike mission is focused on defeating the threat before it is unleashed. In its most extreme sense, Global Strike seeks to create near-invulnerability for the United States by forcing utter vulnerability upon any potential adversary. As a result, Global Strike is principally about warfighting rather than deterrence.

From Policy to Capability

Because of its unique duty to save America from damage inflicted by weapons of mass destruction, Global Strike is an important new focus for the Pentagon’s offensive planning in the post-9/11 era: It is the basis for the implementation of the New Triad described in the 2001 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR); the core of the transformation of U.S. Strategic Command into the center of U.S. military planning; and the embodiment of the doctrinal and political shift in how the United States views the role of its military forces after 9/11. Global Strike has emerged in response to specific guidance issued by the While House and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) since 2001:

• Nuclear Posture Review (December 2001): Lays the foundation by articulating requirements for forces and planning tools that reemphasized operations against regional adversaries armed with weapons mass destruction.

• National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 14 (June 2002): Promulgates new Nuclear Weapons Planning Guidance in accordance with the Nuclear Posture Review.

• National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 17 (September 2002): Communicates a new National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction as a comprehensive approach to counter nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. Reaffirms that United States will use nuclear weapons – even preemptively – against anyone using weapons of mass destruction against the United States, its forces abroad, and friends and allies. Calls for a mix of nuclear and conventional forces.

• National Security Strategy of the United States (September 2002): Publicly articulates a preemption doctrine against weapons of mass destruction that requires transformation of military forces to rapidly and precisely “stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and friends.”

• Unified Command Plan, Change 2 (January 2003): Assigns four new missions to STRATCOM: Global Strike, missile defense, information operations, and global C4ISR. The directive defines global strike as "a capability to deliver rapid, extended range, precision kinetic (nuclear and conventional) and non-kinetic (elements of space and information operations) effects in support of theater and national objectives." • Nuclear Posture Review Implementation Plan (March 2003): A 26-page list of specific items from the 2001 Nuclear Posture Review that the military Services are ordered to implement.

• Nuclear Weapons Employment Policy (NUWEP) (April 2004): A detailed outline of the countries that U.S. nuclear planning shall be directed against, including a breakdown of the individual strike options (plans) and their target categories and objectives. The document states in part: "U.S. nuclear forces must be capable of, and be seen to be capable of, destroying those critical war-making and war-supporting assets and capabilities that a potential enemy leadership values most and that it would rely on to achieve its own objectives in a post-war world."

• Unified Command Plan 2004 (March 2005): Assigns to STRATCOM the mission of coordinating the Pentagon’s efforts to combating Weapons of Mass Destruction.

In response to this (and probably other) guidance, STRATCOM planners went to work on a new strike plan that could be used to implement Global Strike if ordered to do so. Only four months after being assigned the Global Strike by Unified Command Plan (Change 2) in January 2003, a strategic concept for CONPLAN 8022 had been developed. A second concept was readied in June (CONPLAN 8022-02) and completed in November 2003.

As a concept plan, CONPLAN 8022 was not operational at this point but available for implementation if so ordered by the Secretary of Defense. That happened in June 2004, when Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld ordered the military to implement CONPLAN 8022 “which provides the President a prompt, global strike capability." In response, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Richard Myers signed the Global Strike Alert Order (ALERTORD) on June 30, 2004, which ordered STRATCOM to put CONPLAN 8022 into effect in coordination with the Air Force and Navy. Six weeks later, on August 17, STRATCOM published Global Strike Interim Capability Operations Order (OPORD) which changed the nature of CONPLAN 8022 from a concept plan to a contingency plan. In response, selected bombers, ICBMs, SSBNs, and information warfare units were tasked against specific high-value targets in adversary countries. Finally, on November 18, 2005, Joint Functional Component Command Space and Global Strike achieved Initial Operational capability after being thoroughly tested in the nuclear strike exercise Global Lightning 06.

The Nuclear Option

Although Global Strike is primarily a non-nuclear mission based on advanced conventional capabilities, space, and information warfare capabilities, this chronology illustrates that nuclear weapons are surprisingly prominent in both the planning and command structure of Global Strike.3

What makes the nuclear option in CONPLAN 8022 particularly surprising is that Global Strike is one of the pillars of the Bush administration’s vision of a “New Triad” where advanced conventional weapons were supposed to permit a reduction of the number and role of nuclear weapons. Instead, one of the first acts of the Pentagon appears to have been to include nuclear weapons in the very plan that was supposed to reduce the nuclear role. Overall, the number of nuclear weapons in the stockpile may be declining because there are simply too many of them. But the nuclear option in CONPLAN 8022 suggests that the planners simultaneously have created a new mission that reaffirms the importance and broadens the role of nuclear weapons further by changing or lowering the perceived threshold or timing for when nuclear weapons may be used in a conflict. That threshold must be different than in the past, otherwise why include a nuclear option in CONPLAN 8022?

In contrast with the Bush administration’s claim to be reducing the role of nuclear weapons, consider these remarks by JCS Chairman Gen. Richard Myers at the July 2004 retirement ceremony of Adm. Ellis as STRATCOM commander in Omaha:

You reshaped “the roles and missions of that old command to better posture our military forces to defeat existing and future threats against our nation [after 9/11]….You did this by expanding the options available to the President, both from a strong nuclear deterrence standpoint and conventional and non-kinetic response options.”4

The following year, General Myers repeated his description of the expansion of the options, this time in his testimony before Congress:

“Within DOD, the SecDef has tasked the US Strategic Command to synchronize our efforts to counter WMD and ensure the force structure and the resources are in place to help all combatant commands defeat WMD.… STRATCOM has revised our strategic deterrence and response plan that became effective in the fall of 2004. This revised, detailed plan provides more flexible options to assure allies, and dissuade, deter, and if necessary, defeat adversaries in a wider range of contingencies.”5

The expansion of nuclear options to the President includes CONPLAN 8022. The new and different nature of that plan is further underscored by the fact that STRATCOM for more than a decade has maintained and modernized a robust nuclear posture directed against Russia and China and, increasingly, also regional adversaries armed with weapons of mass destruction. STRATCOM told the Clinton administration’s Nuclear Posture Review in 1993: “Within the context of a regional single or few warhead detonation, classical deterrence already allows for adaptively planned missions to counter any use of WMD.”6 If STRATCOM has had the capability to counter any use of weapons of mass destruction for more than a decade, then why include a nuclear option in CONPLAN 8022?

The “New Triad” is frequently portrayed as an alternative to the Cold War strategy of nuclear Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD). Yet CONPLAN 8022 is premised on the preservation and improvement of an assured destruction capability for nuclear weapons. The international nuclear situation may be less “mutual” today compared with the Cold War, but “assured destruction” very much continues to be is a key requirement for U.S. nuclear planning. In CONPLAN 8022 this assured destruction capability is intended not just in retaliation but in preemption.

## Alternate Wording – Nuclear Operations

#### Nuke operations are activities that include deterrence, crisis response, strike, assessment and return to stability

**Nuclear Operations,** 20**19** [Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint - Publication 3-72, June 11, 2019; https://irp.fas.org/doddir/dod/jp3\_72.pdf]

**Nuclear Operations**

Nuclear weapon capabilities constitute a vital element of national defense. Nuclear operations are those activities within the range of military operations, to include deterrence, crisis response, strike, assessment, and return to stability.

Nuclear operations include unique requirements and processes within policy and plans. Any proposed nuclear strike option requires a presidential decision and has far-ranging diplomatic, strategic, operational, and legal implications.