## re: Qs posed by other resolutions

### “NFU”

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-103hr2401eh/html/BILLS-103hr2401eh.htm>

(7) The term ``policy of no first use of nuclear weapons''

means a commitment not to initiate the use of nuclear weapons.

<https://psr.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Fact-Sheet-on-No-First-Use-of-Nuclear-Weapons.pdf>

No first use (NFU) refers to a pledge or a policy by a nuclear power not to use nuclear weapons in a conflict unless attacked first with nuclear weapons by an adversary.

<https://atthebrink.org/no-first-use-what-are-nuclear-weapons-for/>

What IS No First Use?

Simply put, a country that declares a policy of No First Use (NFU) is saying that it will not use a nuclear weapon unless it is attacked by nuclear weapons. Some countries expand that definition to include an attack by chemical or biological weapons. Sometimes the phrase “sole purpose” is used to mean essentially the same thing: that the sole purpose of nuclear weapons is to deter a nuclear attack.

### “Leg of the Nuclear Triad”

***\*I cut these into cards a few minutes ago and also added a couple more that speak directly to the ‘fourth leg’ style concern, but they got zapped in a Word crash. If this resurges as a point of contention/concern, I’ll re-find those.***

<https://armscontrolcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Nuclear-Triad.pdf>

The Nuclear Triad

The U.S. nuclear arsenal comprises thousands of nuclear weapons and three methods of delivery, sometimes called “legs.” Warheads can be launched from the air via strategic bombers carrying gravity bombs or cruise missiles, from the sea by submarines holding ballistic missiles, or from underground silos housing intercontinental ballistic missiles. Collectively, these delivery methods are referred to as “the Triad.” Currently all three legs of the Triad are being modernized at a cost of $494 billion, or about $50 billion every year from 2019 to 2028.

The United States has stated it must maintain all three legs of the Triad in order to support the policy of deterrence — the credible threat of retaliation if it or an ally is attacked. The argument is that the Triad enables a second-strike capability — the ability to retaliate in the event of a nuclear attack — as each leg is a hedge against the failure of another.

However, a debate has emerged among lawmakers and policy experts about whether the land-based leg of the Triad is still necessary or desirable. A recent survey found that many Americans support phasing out our land-based missiles because they are “outdated, destabilizing, and very expensive.”

https://www.britannica.com/topic/nuclear-triad

nuclear triad: a three-sided military-force structure consisting of land-launched nuclear missiles, nuclear-missile-armed submarines, and strategic aircraft with nuclear bombs and missiles.

http://columbia-class.com/SSBN.asp

The U.S. Strategic Nuclear Triad

The U.S. strategic nuclear deterrent is spread among three legs: Airborne, Ground-based, and Sea-based (as shown above). This triad of strategic deterrent sources, is meant to ensure that the U.S. can always respond to any nuclear threat.

### “De-Mate/De-Alert”

https://www.armscontrol.org/sites/default/files/files/Reports/Report\_2019July\_ReportCard\_1.pdf

De-alerting: De-alerting refers to steps taken by states to reduce the alert level of their nuclear forces, which extends the time it takes to launch a nuclear weapon.

De-mating: De-mating refers to the storage of nuclear warheads separately from their delivery systems. Some delivery systems, such as submarine-launched ballistic missiles and canister-based configurations require the mating of nuclear warheads to delivery vehicles. De-mating is an example of dealerting because it would extend the time it would take to launch a nuclear weapon.

## Nuke Posture / First-Use / Circumstances / Sole Purpose

### Proposed Wording

#### WORDING OPTION: TWO-PRONG, LIMIT THE POSTURE AND/OR WHEN WE WILL USE NUKES

A – The United States should limit its **nuclear forces**, at least substantially (curtailing/restricting)\* its **nuclear posture** and/or **the stated circumstances under which its nuclear weapons might be used.** → *this is currently my #1 rez overall, at least with ‘nuclear posture’ in the first prong*

B – The United States should substantially limit its **nuclear forces**, at least restricting its **nuclear posture\***\* and/orits **first use of nuclear weapons**.

C – The United States should limit its **nuclear forces** by at least substantially restricting its **nuclear posture** and/or **clarifying that the sole purpose of its nuclear arsenal is to deter nuclear attacks.**

D – The United States should limit its **nuclear forces** by at least substantially (reducing/restricting) its **nuclear capabilities** and/or (establishing/defining) a **sole purpose for its nuclear weapons arsenal.**

***\* Exact verb choices require additional comparative vetting, the focus here is on the objects (hence the bolding).***

***\*\* May substitute “nuclear capabilities” for nuclear posture in any of these resolutions, if there is a consensus in favor of doing so. Ev on each below.***

### “Nuclear Forces” as stem/ceiling

#### 2023 study by LLNL (working govt defn)

<https://cgsr.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/CGSR_Two_Peer_230314.pdf>

The term “nuclear forces” refers here to the delivery platforms (bombers and ballistic missile submarines), weapons (warheads and bombs) mated to delivery systems (e.g., SLBMs and ICBMs), support systems (e.g., tankers), command and control assets, and associated military infrastructure necessary to conduct nuclear combat operations. The platforms and weapons can conceptually be split into two components: those that are operationally deployed and those that are not operationally deployed. The operationally-deployed component is readily available (immediately or within a few days), while the non-deployed component may take weeks to years to become operational.

#### 2023 U.S. Code (legal defn)

<https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml;jsessionid=8704D27672D9BB57626E5EC4ACBEDD81?req=10+USC&f=treesort&fq=true&num=8038&hl=true&edition=prelim&granuleId=USC-prelim-title16-section519>

(d) Nuclear Forces Defined.-In this section, the term "nuclear forces" includes, at a minimum-

(1) nuclear weapons;

(2) the delivery platforms and systems for nuclear weapons;

(3) nuclear command, control, and communications systems; and

(4) the infrastructure and facilities of the Department of Defense and the National Nuclear Security Administration that support nuclear weapons, the delivery platforms and systems for nuclear weapons, and nuclear command, control, and communications systems, including with respect to personnel, construction, operation, and maintenance.

### For prong 1 (the “hardware”), use “Nuclear Posture”

#### What it means

NATO and Russia 07 – North Atlantic Treaty Organization + the Russian Federation

“NATO-Russia Glossary of Nuclear Terms and Definitions,” NATO-Russia Council compilation, 2007, <https://www.nato.int/docu/glossary/eng-nuclear/nuc_glos-e.pdf>

nuclear posture

A term commonly used in NATO to refer to nuclear forces and related subjects such as numbers, types, locations of nuclear weapons and their associated delivery systems, as well as their operational status, including delivery-system readiness levels and weapon-storage locations. See also deterrent force (CP&MT).

Vipin Narang, “Introduction,” Nuclear Strategy in the Modern Era: Regional Powers and International Conflict, Princeton University Press 2014, non-paginated epub

I fill this vacuum in the first part of the book by analyzing the experiences of the regional nuclear powers, or the non-superpower states that have developed independent nuclear forces: China, India, Pakistan, Israel, South Africa, and France.3 I discuss these states’ choices about nuclear strategy in terms of nuclear posture. Nuclear posture is the incorporation of some number and type of nuclear warheads and delivery vehicles into a state’s overall military structure, the rules and procedures governing how those weapons are deployed, when and under what conditions they might be used, against what targets, and who has the authority to make those decisions.4 Nuclear posture is best thought of as the operational, rather than the declaratory, nuclear doctrine of a country; while the two can overlap, it is the operational doctrine that generates deterrent power against an opponent. To put it bluntly, states care more about what an adversary can credibly do with its nuclear weapons than what it says about them. I thus use the term “nuclear posture” to refer to the capabilities (actual nuclear forces), employment doctrine (under what conditions they might be used), and command-and-control procedures (how they are managed, deployed, and potentially released) a state establishes to operationalize its nuclear weapons capability. This can also be thought of as “nuclear strategy,” and I use these terms interchangeably with both referring to the preceding definition. As Tara Kartha colorfully put it, without a nuclear posture or strategy, “a much vaunted [nuclear] test remains simply a loud bang in the ground.”5

Vipin Narang 9, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy, Professor of Political Science at MIT, “Posturing for Peace? Pakistan’s Nuclear Postures and South Asian Stability,” International Security, vol. 34, no. 3, The MIT Press, 2009, pp. 38–78

In this article I use the term “nuclear posture” to refer to the capabilities, deployment patterns, and command and control procedures a state uses to manage and operationalize its nuclear weapons capability.

#### ---Specifically distinguished from doctrine/declaratory policy

32 Narang is careful to note that his use of “nuclear posture” refers to operational rather than declared nuclear doctrine: “states care more about what an adversary can credibly do with its nuclear weapons than what it says about them” (Narang 2014: 4). The methodology employed here is adept at ferreting out important statements, documents, and other artifacts that credibly construct nuclear strategy, rather than those that repeat propaganda. However, since propaganda about nuclear weapons is policy—but not strategy—my research will sometimes, as in Eisnehower’s Atoms for Peace speech, consider its source and function

### —why not “Nuclear Capabilities”?

#### Less clean of a fit with the caselists we’ve discussed. Relatedly: if we DO use capabilities instead, we must say something like ‘restrict’ rather than ‘reduce’ so that triad is cleanly included, and should not say “size”.

#### But,

#### I share Bankey’s conclusion that it *feels* like it should be viable, but that the cards are meh.

#### Here’s the best one that I’ve found by far—BUT it’s from a dissertion. ☹

<https://d-scholarship.pitt.edu/38565/1/TAB%200%20-%20Ruscoe_EDTThesis_FINAL.pdf>

The independent variable (IV) used throughout my research is nuclear capabilities. Nuclear capabilities are defined as a composite term of reference that describes the various components of nuclear weaponry, including nuclear warheads, delivery methods, and payload capacity.106 The nuclear triad is the ability of the state to deliver nuclear capabilities from the land, sea, and air. For the work outlined in this research, these three methods are the only delivery mechanisms of nuclear capabilities for state actors.

### For prong 2 (the “software”)—Several ways to describe it

#### Partly depending on the contours of what we do and do not want to be topical:

… establishing/defining **a sole purpose for its nuclear weapons arsenal.**

… restricting its **first use of nuclear weapons**.

… restricting **the stated circumstances under which its nuclear weapons might be used.**

… clarifying that **the sole purpose of its nuclear arsenal is to deter nuclear attacks.**

***\*Sorry these are a mess: finished processing all the ‘circumstances/sole purpose’ stuff over lunch but then it got zapped in a Word crash. Including some key representative snippets now.***

#### --“Sole Purpose” would include a variety of major restrictions on “the circumstances in which the United States (says we) would consider nuclear weapons use”

http://uploads.fas.org.s3.amazonaws.com/2021/08/25092950/FAS-SPNW.pdf

Definitions of sole purpose

• A sole *type* declaration would state that the United States would only consider nuclear employment in response to a certain type of attack. This could affect planning for specific contingencies of chemical, biological, cyber, or conventional attack.

• A sole *function* declaration would define deterrence as requiring some missions but not others, which could affect planning for a wider range of contingencies at the strategic and nonstrategic level, and potentially force structure requirements.

The Biden administration has considerable latitude in defining sole purpose. How that definition is crafted, communicated, and implemented will determine the effects of sole purpose on US deterrence credibility, strategic stability, operational plans and force structure, and allied assurance. Depending on the definition, sole purpose could have transformational or modest effects.

The practical task of crafting a sole purpose declaration depends on two steps. First, what is the format of the declaration? A definition of sole purpose might take the form of a simple sentence or several paragraphs of text to define its terms, explicitly discuss specific types of contingencies when the United States would or would not consider nuclear employment, or introduce the definition as part of an integrated deterrence strategy that includes associated nonnuclear measures. The language Biden has already presented is succinct and does not connect or contrast sole purpose with other related policies. The existing language would permit a wide range of divergent interpretations among allies and adversaries. So while it is suitable as a placeholder for the administration, it should be further defined and clarified before it is issued.

The second step in defining sole purpose is to determine how and to what extent to define the terms involved. A definition could choose to articulate or not to articulate a range of features about the circumstances in which the United States would consider nuclear weapons use: before or after an attack has occurred, the severity or effects of an attack, the type of weapons used in an attack, and a variety of other considerations. For example, the language that Biden has used could imply a range of consequences for US nuclear weapons policy, depending on how to the administration defines “deterrence,” “allies,” and “attack.” Does a nonlethal nuclear demonstration blast qualify as an “attack”? A nuclear airburst over a forward operating base designed to produce an EMP? Does the statement refer to treaty allies, or should it follow past practice and refer to “allies and partners” to accommodate Israel, Taiwan, and Middle East partners? If so, which countries qualify and is the United States prepared to extend deterrence to each of them? If not, does a “sole purpose” statement decrease ambiguity surrounding which partners qualify and should the change entail a modification of the pertinent regional campaign plans? In some of these definitional questions, it will be helpful for US policy to maintain ambiguity—but sole purpose may change how allies or adversaries interpret this ambiguity, so each decision should be deliberately and carefully assessed to ensure it does not have dangerous unintended consequences.

#### --it continues,

Deterring a sole type of attack

In one sense, Biden’s sole purpose language has a clear implication: if the sole purpose of nuclear

weapons is to deter or respond to nuclear attacks, nuclear weapons are not intended to deter or respond to

nonnuclear attacks. […]

A sole type statement would also eliminate any ambiguity about whether the United States retains

the option to respond to a major cyberattack with nuclear weapons. […]

#### --it continues,

To take one example, an administration could accommodate no first use in sole purpose by stating that “the sole purpose of our nuclear arsenal is to deter a nuclear attack by credibly threatening a nuclear response,” and could clarify that this means that the United States does not regard the ability to preempt a nuclear attack as necessary to deter that attack. In this context, deterrence by denial would be a function of conventional counterforce, missile defense, and resiliency of targeted assets, while nuclear weapons would be available for deterrence by punishment subsequent to an attack. Alternatively, the administration could state that “the sole purpose of nuclear weapons is to deter a nuclear attack on the United States or its allies by credibly threatening to preempt or respond to a nuclear attack” or that “the sole purpose of nuclear weapons is to prevent a nuclear attack through deterrence or, if necessary, preemption.” This diction, and an accompanying statement, could clarify that the United States reserved the right to employ nuclear weapons to preempt adversary first use and could be combined with other statements to place further restrictions on the circumstances in which nuclear employment would be considered. The preemption question could be left ambiguous, thereby preserving the option, or it could be omitted from the NPR text but asserted in subsequent statements.

#### --and,

Sole purpose could be more than a statement that nuclear weapons pertain to a sole type of attack.

The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review and the Pentagon’s increased focus on the risk of conventional conflict

between nuclear-armed adversaries has shifted the country’s understanding of the mission of nuclear

weapons away from means of preventing nonnuclear attacks from rogue nations and toward escalation

management in limited conflicts. Nuclear weapons could play a variety of roles in a managing escalation

in a limited conflict and they each qualify as “purposes” of nuclear weapons. If sole purpose constrains

the reasons a president might employ nuclear weapons, rather than just the types of attacks they might

respond to, it could affect US strategy for how to manage escalation in a range of contingencies, from a

limited theater conflict all the way up to a strategic exchange.

#### --other options for sole purpose Affs

Other options for sole purpose

In defining a sole purpose formulation, the administration should also consider how to define the object

of deterrence. While most proposals for a sole purpose statement identify a nuclear attack as the sole case in

which the United States would consider a nuclear response, other formulations are possible. For example, an

administration could state that the sole purpose of nuclear weapons is to “deter WMD attacks,” which might

create a sole function but not a sole type statement, permitting preemption or response to nuclear, chemical,

or biological attacks. Stating that the sole purpose of the nuclear arsenal is to deter strategic attacks could

in principle cast an even broader net, though in this case the administration should avoid the mistakes of its

predecessor and provide a clearer definition of the term “strategic” in this context.

The officials drafting the statement might also choose to modify the object of deterrence with a

qualifier that would specify the scope, target type, or potential consequences of an attack. For example,

George Perkovich and Pranay Vaddi have suggested that the sole purpose of the nuclear arsenal is to

deter an “existential” nuclear attack on the United States and its allies.27 This statement would imply

that the United States would consider nuclear use not in response to all nuclear attacks but only those

that threaten its existence or the existence of its allies. An existential threat statement could also leave out

the word “nuclear” to specify the object of deterrence as any attack that threatens the existence of the

United States or an ally. While it is certainly possible that there are some types of nuclear first use that the

president would not order a nuclear response to, it is another matter to imply that the president would not

consider nuclear use to respond to nuclear attacks below a certain threshold.28

Specifying that nuclear weapons deter “existential” attacks would probably lead to interminable

debates about what qualifies as an “existential” attack and what does not. The statement would probably

lead allies to wonder about US resolve to confront limited nuclear attacks against their territory and could

permit adversaries to wonder the same thing. In short, this option would incur many of the costs and risks

of sole purpose and few of the benefits. If the administration does decide to include a qualifier about the

severity of an attack, it should consider alternative or additional language to clarify what represents a

threat to the existence of a state.

One particularly appealing option for sole purpose is that it could subsume the “nuclear necessity

principle,” a requirement proposed most recently by Jeffrey Lewis and Scott Sagan that “nuclear weapons

never be used against any legitimate military target that could be reliably destroyed by other means.”29 To

include this principle, a sole purpose statement might clarify that “the sole purpose of our nuclear arsenal

is to deter a nuclear attack in circumstances where we have no other reliable option.” The proposal could

bring US nuclear planning into compliance with a more expansive understanding of the law of armed

conflict and could represent important and realistic guidance for planners: no president is likely to employ

a nuclear weapons when they have a reliable conventional option available.30 It could also lead to a

significant reduction in the number of targets in the nuclear war plan and, consequently, requirements on

the number and types of nuclear weapons in the arsenal.

This discussion makes clear that sole purpose is not a single discrete policy option but can only be

defined by assessing and choosing whether to adopt a range of potential shifts in US policy. The reason

is that a sole purpose declaration would define the role of the US nuclear arsenal, which will be read to

encompass not only that narrow range of contingencies pertaining to chemical or biological weapons use,

or the broader range of contingencies pertaining to major conventional attack, but the complete range

of functions that the weapons are expected to perform. In other words, sole purpose will likely be read as

a general statement of nuclear weapons policy rather than a qualification of that policy as it pertains to

a specific range of contingencies. In addition, it will be read for indications of what it entails for the role,

requirements, and posture of US nonnuclear forces. This means that it is not only a nuclear weapons

policy but a broader statement about US defense strategy.

#### --And another

<https://fas.org/publication/sole-purpose/>

A sole type definition would state that the United States would consider nuclear use in response to a certain type of attack, having modest effects on a narrow set of plans but few effects on force structure.

A sole function definition would define what is and what is not a requirement of deterrence, potentially removing certain strategic or nonstrategic roles of nuclear weapons.

#### What is sole purpose?

<https://nipp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/OP-7-for-web-final.pdf>

In the context of U.S. nuclear policy, what is the difference between “No First Use,” “sole authority” and “sole purpose?”

A “No First Use” (NFU) policy is a commitment to not use nuclear weapons first. An NFU policy would restrict when a president could consider using nuclear weapons, and would help signal that the United States believes that nuclear weapons are for deterrence—not warfighting.

[...]

“Sole purpose” refers to a commitment only to use nuclear weapons to deter nuclear attacks. This means that U.S. nuclear forces would not be used to deter conventional, chemical, biological, or cyber attacks. Current policy as set out in this Administration’s Nuclear Posture Review would allow the United States to use nuclear weapons in “…extreme circumstances to defend the United States, its allies, and partners.” Declaring sole purpose would clarify what nuclear weapons are for.

#### What is “first-use”? (vs. “first strike”)

<https://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-case-retaining-the-first-use-doctrine-nuclear-weapons-17865>

Imagine that the United States detected an imminent conventional attack on South Korea. The United States might decide to launch a first strike on North Korea’s nuclear facilities to prevent it from using its nuclear weapons against South Korea. (A “first strike” usually refers to a nuclear strike like this one, in which one state launches a nuclear attack designed to eliminate the opponent’s nuclear arsenal. “First use” describes the use of nuclear weapons before the opponent has done so and could entail the use of smaller tactical nuclear weapons on the battlefield. In these terms, all first strikes constitute a first use of nuclear weapons, but not all cases of first use would be considered a first strike.) This would protect both South Korea and American troops on the peninsula from a nuclear attack. North Korea does not yet have a missile capable of delivering a nuclear weapon to the continental United States, so the immediate risk to the American homeland would be minimal in the event that the first strike failed to eliminate all of North Korea’s nuclear weapons.

#### --This is a decades-old distinction

<https://www.nytimes.com/1975/08/25/archives/first-use-first-strike.html>

There is a good deal of unnecessary contusion in this debate, particularly over the phrases “first use” and “first strike.” The former refers primarily to longstanding plans for employing tactical nuclear weapons against an overwhelming conventional attack as, for example, by Soviet forces in Central Europe. “First Strike” refers to an all‐out surprise attack by strategic nuclear forces—a kind of “nuclear Pearl Harbor.”

#### NSAs

<https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/resources/fact-sheets/critical-issues/5442-negative-security-assurances>

A negative security assurance is a guarantee by a nuclear weapon state (a state that possess nuclear weapons) that it will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states (states that do not possess nuclear weapons).

### NEXT STEPS

#### More vetting of the following:

1pecific verbs (e.g. limit vs. restrict vs. curtail; establish vs. define vs. clarify)

-The exact (combination of) terms used in the phrase: “the stated circumstances under which its nuclear weapons might be used.” (for example, should it be “conditions” rather than “circumstances”? etc.)