

Realism Impedes the Process of Arms Control and Disarmament: It's Time to Change the Theory and Strategy

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Abstract

Understanding the dictates of an age-old international theory of realism, this world is anarchic, and wars and conflicts are a natural outcome due to stakeholder's greed for power and security. In that case, the concept of disarmament does not go down well with the norms and practices of realism in its present form, because if a state that has armed itself to maximize its power and enhance security, is less likely to give up its arms and ammunition. Because, disarming is an act of taking the weapon away, that has been acquired to ensure security through the show of power. This article is aimed at reviewing the progress of arms control and disarmament over the past five decades through the lens of realism that is widely practiced by the states since the times of Sun Tzu, Chanakya Kautilya, Nicolo Machiavelli, Hans Morgenthau and other realists.

Keywords: Realism; Realizm; Arms control; Disarmament; Nuclear weapons; Non-combatants; Unequal Military Powers (UMPs)

Introduction

This century is only in its 23rd year and it has already seen a number of wars, starting from Second Afghan War, following the tragic events of 9/11, then the Second Iraq War, following the claims of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Upheaval in North Africa usually referred as Arab Spring, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and the Blockade of Qatar. In South Asia, continued tension and limited conflicts between the two nuclear neighbours: Pakistan and India, and China and India, and now in Europe, the Russia-Ukraine War. This means that in spite of lot of talks about the hybrid war and the non-kinetic warfare, kinetic application is still a very popular option with the global powers, particularly against the Unequal Military Powers (UMPs). In such a war-prone scenario, how it even thinkable is that global players would ever agree to total or general disarmament. Therefore, it was not surprising at all that Russia suspended Nuclear Treaty and announced placing of its Tactical Nuclear Weapons in Belorussia, perhaps as part of nuclear posturing to which President Biden could only say that world is facing a more dangerous situation then the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, and the world might be inching towards an Armageddon. The imaginative nature of human beings, as gifted by Allah Almighty,

surpasses the skies, and the old dicta that 'sky is the limit' does not hold grounds in today's technology intensive era. Since human thinking process cannot be controlled or limited, hence the research and development of weapons and the related inventions cannot be controlled. However, the only thing that the stakeholders must ensure is that these lethal weapons are not used against the non-combatants; men, women, and children.

Theoretical Precepts

In order to maintain originality and objectivity (O2), it is necessary to briefly explain the theoretical precepts, which forms the basis of this research.

Realism explained

Realism forms the basic theoretical construct of this research. Realism in its many shades; political, structural or neo-realism with further explanations by Waltz's defensive realism and Mearsheimer's offensive realism were helpful in contextualising the understanding about the complexities of the concepts related to arms control and disarmament.

Classical Realism

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The international realm is anarchic. It consists of independent political units called states, [1] which are the primary actors. All states maintain certain levels of offensive military capability which may be perceived as potentially dangerous by other states [2]. Hence, states remain unsure about the intentions of other states and continue to enhance their power base to remain sovereign. However, most states think rationally and consolidate themselves to survive in the anarchic environment [3]. Major international relations' theories are in agreement with the concept of a state, as a unitary actor pursuing its respective national interests to achieve their political objectives. Realism proffers that world affairs are governed by an anarchic system which survives on conflicts and interests [4]. There is continuous tension among the competing nations to increase their power base by grabbing the scarce resources.

Realism's focus on conflicts and state power aligns it with military strategic issues than anything else [5]. Realism has its roots to the era of Thucydides [6] and Kautilya, [7] ably proffered by Machiavelli [8] in the Middle Ages, Thomas Hobbes [9] in the seventeenth Century, and Hans Morgenthau [10] in the previous century. Thucydides, who studied the Peloponnesian Wars (431-404 BC), saw the international relations as competitive due to inherent conflicting nature of unequal powers acquired by the states. His distinction of placing the states into different categories as per their potential and actual strength makes him pioneer of classical realist theory, which dilates upon the "security and the survival are the primary values and war is the final arbiter" [11]. Machiavelli lays emphasis on the ability of the Ruler to ensure freedom and prosperity for his state and the people, for which he advocates acquisition of power by any means. He declares the world as a dangerous but opportune place and holds the Ruler responsible to take initiative and be prepared to pre-empt for the future events [12].

Whereas, Hobbes is of the view that

International state of nature is a condition of actual or potential war; there can be no permanent or guaranteed peace between sovereign states. War is necessary, as a last resort, for resolving disputes between states that cannot agree and will not acquiesce [13]. The views proffered by these classical realists serve as reference while analysing the state behaviour in the context of arms control and disarmament, even in contemporary times. Realism remained dominant during the Cold War [14] era because it provided logic for wars and alliances' non-cooperation and competition among the rivals [15]. During the middle of twentieth century, Morgenthau believed that states do have an intrinsic desire to dominate others, which makes wars and conflicts inevitable [16]. Realism proffers that opposing interests and conflict among states inevitable. Realists' precepts remain focused on power instead of morality. They maintain that universal moral principles cannot be

applied to the actions of states, and they must be filtered through the concrete circumstances of time and place [17]. The views proffered by these classical realists compliment this author's argument that in the prevalent realist's international system, the concepts such as arms control and disarmament are utopian, and hence not practicable or preferable, particularly for the relative stronger nations.

Neorealism

Kenneth Waltz proposed that states seek to survive within an anarchical system [18]. Although states may seek survival through power balancing, but that is not their only aim. Since the international system is anarchic, the most powerful units shape the environment to serve their interests. These powerful states may be referred as unipolar, bipolar or multipolar at certain point in time. However, Waltz emphasized on the structure of the international system instead of only on human nature. Waltz insisted that states do not operate in isolation and within the larger international system states seek to survive. Waltz was of the view that bipolarity was more stable than multipolarity. Hence, defensive realism focused on the need of state's survival, which was the main cause of states acquiring power either individually or by joining the alliances [19].

Defensive Realism

Theoretical assumptions related to defensive realism are built upon Robert Jervis's writings on the security dilemma, and Kenneth Waltz's balance-of-power (BoP) [20]. The concept of BoP rests on maintaining equilibrium in the international system. The BoP system works most effectively when alliances are fluid and they can be easily formed or broken on the basis of expediency, regardless of values, religion, history, or form of government. A single state may play a balancer's role; however, it is difficult to measure this balance [21]. Defensive realists view that anarchy creates situations where one state's increase in its security apparatus is perceived as a security risk of the other state. This security dilemma causes states to worry about each other's future intentions and relative power. States at times, may pursue expansionist policies thinking that aggression is the only way to enhance its state's security. Examples of defensive realism include: offense-defence theory by Robert Jervis, [22] and Stephen Van Evera, [23] balance-of-power theory by Barry Posen, [24] and balance-of-threat theory by Stephen Walt, [25] along side the security dilemma theory [26].

All of the above quoted theories are supportive of this author's argument that states do not acquire power to give it away under the arms control and disarmament agreements, and hence these concepts may have some relevance if seen through the lens of

liberalism or idealism, and not realism, which is prevalent in the international system since the time it was introduced.

Offensive Realism

Offensive realism gives analytical primacy to the hostile and unforgiving nature of the international system as the cause of conflict. Offensive realists view that anarchy provides strong incentives for expansion. The states make efforts to maximize their relative power because only the strongest states can guarantee their survival. They pursue expansionist policies when and where the benefits of doing so outweigh the costs [27]. States feel compelled to improve their relative national power to pursue their desired objectives, and hence become a regional hegemon [28]. Offensive realists however, “disagree over the historical prevalence of hegemonic regional systems and the likely responses of weaker states to would-be regional hegemonies; like balancing, buck-passing, or band-wagoning” [29]. However, Mearsheimer argues that, “The international system competes until the great powers achieve the status of a regional hegemon the best state for any great power. This is done through aggressive behavior” [30].

The above arguments from the realist school helped in understanding and explaining the behaviour of the relatively stronger nations to their commitments for the arms control and disarmament agreements, under the guise of ‘interests.’ The entire debate among the realists in different era supports this author’s argument that the concepts related to arms control and disarmament are a non-starter, theoretically as well practically.

Arms Control explained

In order to maintain objectivity, let’s first see the literal meaning of the term ‘arms control.’ According to Britannica, the term arms control reflects, any international control or limitation of the development, testing, production, deployment, or use of weapons based on the premise that the continued existence of certain national military establishments is inevitable. The concept implies some form of collaboration between generally competitive or antagonistic states in areas of military policy to diminish the likelihood of war or, should war occur, to limit its destructiveness” [31].

Each word of this credible definition, if viewed from the lens of realism, supports this author’s argument that arms control is not practicable. A careful analysis reflects that any control or limitation on the development, testing, production, deployment, or use of weapons could cause a large-scale destruction in case of wars and conflicts. Realism insists on having a strong presence of military power to ensure security and expand influence. In such a scenario, one might challenge the wisdom of chasing the mirage of arms control, and that too of the weapons on the inventory of the

powerful states, which are the primary developers, users, and exporters of these weapons.

Whereas, the sincerity of purpose cannot be challenged of the originators of the concept of arms control, because it was aimed at creating “transparency and predictability around the world’s most dangerous weapons and decrease the likelihood and potential costs of conflict” [32]. However, questions must be raised on the practicability, prefer ability, and viability of the concept of arms control in the prevalent anarchic world, under the realist’s paradigm. Neither the quantitative agreements signed between the Cold War rivals: United States and the Soviet Union, could achieve the envisaged and agreed targets, nor the qualitative agreements could convince the two super powers of the time to put an effective ban on lethal weapons. However, arms control may have done a little better than disarmament in the domain of chemical weapons. Because, under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) of 1993, the use of chemical weapons in war is prohibited, as is all development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, and transfer of such weapons. Nevertheless, while the aim of the CWC is complete elimination of most types of chemical weapons, not all countries have abandoned their chemical warfare capabilities [33]. Since chemical weapons also fall in the category of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), some of the relatively weaker states have acquired it and project them as a deterrent capability against relatively stronger nations as well as against near-equal state and non-state actors within and beyond their borders.

Disarmament explained

Going back to Britannica for an accurate and credible definition, the term disarmament is explained under four distinct domains. Firstly, “the penal destruction or reduction of the armament of a country defeated in war” [34]. Secondly, “bilateral disarmament agreements applying to specific geographic areas” [35]. Thirdly, “the complete abolition of all armaments, as advocated by utopian thinkers and occasionally by governments” [36]. Fourthly, “the reduction and limitation of national armament by general international agreement through such international forums as the League of Nations, in the past, and the United Nations” [37]. The human history is replete with wars and conflict between individuals leading to communities that have led to violence between states at varied levels. Hence the development, production, and acquisition of arms, equipment, and munitions, offensive and defensive, have continued uninterrupted. Concurrently, the saner elements, present in every society, also remained active to limit, control, and ultimately eliminate the dangerous weapons to reduce the probabilities of human and material losses. For the same purpose, international organizations like the United Nations (UN) have played an active but non-assertive role, unfortunately though, in limiting, controlling, and eliminating the dangerous weapons.

According to the UN and rightly so, “the nuclear weapons are the most dangerous weapons on earth. One can destroy a whole city, potentially killing millions, through its long-term catastrophic effects. The dangers from such weapons arise from their very existence” [38]. Therefore, the UN invested its maximum efforts in limiting and controlling the nuclear weapons, and concluded these treaties and agreements: the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests In The Atmosphere, in Outer Space And Under Water, also known as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). However, this author still considers that this effort is not enough, perhaps due the prevalence of realists control over the global affairs. The concept of disarmament whether partial or general, are at best reflective of liberal precepts, because, even the partial disarmament stands for the reduction of special types of weapons, which are developed usually by stronger nations for their own security, as well projection of power. Whereas the complete disarmament would remain a dream for the liberal thinkers as long as realists are in control of global affairs.

Major Arms Control and Disarmament Agreements & Treaties

Soon after the events of October 1962, usually referred as Cuban Missile Crisis (CMC), the two super powers of the time: The United States and The Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR), realized that the world was perilously close to an Armageddon, and an all-out nuclear war was perhaps only minutes away. Therefore, some sanity prevailed and the two global powers decided to discuss the new rules of the game, so that they do not end up destroying each other. The agreements and treaties signed after the CMC were referred as Arms Control and Disarmament Agreements and Treaties. While discussing the arms control and disarmament, it is necessary to have a brief but closer look at major arms control and disarmament agreements and treaties, which have had some impact on the core concepts. However, the regional treaties are not be discussed in this article.

Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT): 1963

The Test Ban Treaty of 1963, which was Signed at Moscow on August 5, and entered into force on October 10, is considered as a game-changer, because it “prohibits nuclear weapons tests "or any other nuclear explosion" in the atmosphere, in outer space, and under water, and in any other environment if the explosions cause radioactive debris to be present outside the territory of a responsible state” [39]. However, this treaty did not ban underground tests at the time.

Outer Space Treaty: 1967

Though the negotiations and Subcommittee level ground work started in 1966, The Outer Space Treaty it entered into force in October 1967. “This prevented states from placing nuclear weapons or other WMD’s into Earth’s orbit, and prohibited states from installing such weapons on the Moon or celestial bodies or stationing them in outer space in any other manner” [40]. While the sincerity of the purpose of the negotiators cannot be doubted, this particular treaty is likely to face tremendous pressure from the nations that are vigorously pursuing development and deployment of space-ware as part of the militarization or perhaps the weaponization of space.

Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT): 1968

Since the signing of LTBT in 1963, the two super powers continued to engage themselves in years-long negotiations, primarily in search in common grounds where the two do not end up eliminating the other. By 1968, once all the major powers: US, USSR, UK, France, and China, had completed their necessary nuclear tests, and declared as members of an exclusive nuclear club (P5), they reached a treaty that is perhaps the most significant and widely discussed treaty: Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). “This treaty is the basis of international cooperation on stopping the spread of nuclear weapons by promoting disarmament, non-proliferation, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy” [41]. NPT continues to remain a focus of nearly entire arms control effort, yet it has failed in its primary responsibility: non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, either horizontally or vertically. Briefly, the horizontal restrictions dealt with restricting non-P5 nations to only peaceful uses of nuclear weapons, instead of venturing into developing or acquiring nuclear weapons, whereas, vertical agreements posed certain limitations with regard to numbers and yields of the weapons. The NPT remains under strict surveillance due to its failure to ensure non-proliferation of the nuclear weapons, yet it remains a major tool of cooperation between the P5 and non-nuclear weapon states. In fact, the major violators of NPT, even if they are not the signatories, are India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea. For the purpose of keeping NPT effective, a review conference takes place every five year, and since 1970, at least ten review conferences have taken place, but with limited success.

Seabed Arms Control Treaty: 1971

The focus of parley between the two super powers of the Cold War: US and USSR, remained on the restrictions to newer tests of WMDs at different atmospheric levels. Seabed Arms Control Treaty was signed at all the three major Capitals: Washington, London, and Moscow on February 11, 1971. However, it entered into force on May 18, 1972. The treaty “sought to prevent the introduction of international conflict and nuclear weapons into an

area hitherto free of them” [42]. This particular treaty remains enforce in letter and spirit, as of now.

Biological Weapons Convention (BWC): 1972 [43]

The negotiations started immediately after the NPT in 1969, however, it was open to signatures on April 10, 1972, and took another three years to enter into force on March 26, 1975. In fact, “this was the first multilateral disarmament treaty that banned the development, production, and stockpiling of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction” [44]. This treaty also remains intact, with few violations, however, it is regularly reviewed and its last review was held in February 2022.

Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I): 1972

Signed on May 26, 1972, “The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) were a series of bilateral conferences and international treaties signed between the United States and the Soviet Union. These treaties had the goal of reducing the number of long-range ballistic missiles (strategic arms) that each side could possess and manufacture” [45]. The expiry date for SALT-I was in October 1977, however, the two rivals were keen to extend the Treaty after renegotiating the terms. The process culminated in the form of SALT-II, signed in 1979.

Strategic Arms Limitation Talks II (SALT II): 1979 [46]

Signed on June 18, 1979, SALT-II between the Cold War rivals: US and USSR, was more comprehensive, because it was aimed at limiting the Strategic Offensive Weapon Systems. However, this particular remained under stress due Soviet’s invasion of Afghanistan on December 1979, until it expired in December 1985.

Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty

Signed on May 26, 1972, “The US and the Soviet Union agreed to each have only two ABM deployment areas so restricted and located that the ABM areas cannot provide a nationwide defense or become the basis for developing one [47]. Experts declared President Bush’s decision to withdraw from the Treaty in June 2002, an epic mistake, because it opened the floodgates of developing the systems by Russia and China [48].

Threshold Test Ban Treaty (TTBT): 1974

Though this Treaty opened for signatures on July 3, 1974, but came into force on December 11, 1990, perhaps due to Soviet’s presence in Afghanistan. “This treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union established a nuclear threshold through the prohibition of the testing of new or existing nuclear weapons with a yield exceeding 150 kilotons.... The threshold prevents the

testing of new or existing nuclear weapons that exceed the fractional-megaton range” [49].

Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty (PNET): 1976

This treaty was orchestrated to supplement TTBT, and it was opened for signature on May 28, 1976, however, it entered into force on December 11, 1990. “This treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union prohibits peaceful nuclear explosions not covered by the Threshold Test Ban Treaty, and verifies all data exchanges and visits to sites of explosions through national technical means” [50].

Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR): 1987

Not a treaty or agreement, but a political understanding, and does not impose any legally binding obligations on Partners (members). This regime was formed by G-7 countries: (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK, and the United States). “The Regime places particular focus on rockets and unmanned aerial vehicles capable of delivering a payload of at least 500 kg to a range of at least 300 km and on equipment, software, and technology for such systems” [51].

Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty: 1987

Signed on December 8, 1987, in Washington D.C. “This treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union requires destruction of ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with certain ranges, and associated equipment within three years of the Treaty entering into force” [52]. This was perhaps the only treaty that actually achieved its objectives within the defined timeline.

Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty I (START I): 1991

Signed towards the end of Cold War on July 31, 1991, and came into force well after the formal culmination of the Cold War in 1994, “This treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union/Russian Federation was the first to call for reductions of U.S. and Soviet/Russian strategic nuclear weapons and served as a framework for future, more severe reductions” [53]. This treaty, which eventually expired in 2009, is still considered a success in arms control efforts.

Open Skies Treaty: 1992

This treaty was signed on March 24, 1992, but entered into force on January 1, 2002. The Open Skies Treaty permits each state-party to conduct short-notice, unarmed, reconnaissance flights over the others’ entire territories to collect data on military forces and activities. However, the US withdrew from the treaty in November 2020, and Russia withdrew in December 2021, leaving some 32 state-parties remaining in the accord [54].

Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty II (START II): 1993

This treaty was signed on January 3, 1993. In fact, the START-I and START-II, agreements were aimed at reducing the numbers of long-range nuclear weapons from the inventories of the US and the erstwhile Soviet Union. The execution of START-II actually halved the numbers in nuclear weapons, thereby limiting the arch rivals to keep between 3,000 and 3,500 strategic weapons, only [55].

Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC): 1993

Signed on January 13, 1993, this multilateral treaty, “aims to eliminate an entire category of weapons of mass destruction by prohibiting the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer or use of chemical weapons by States Parties” [56]. Though some violations were reported in the wars in Middle East, but this is a success story to quiet an extent.

Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT): 1996

This treaty was opened for signatures on September 24, 1996. It prohibits any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion anywhere in the world” [57]. So far, 186 nations have signed and 176 have ratified also. However, “the treaty cannot formally enter into force until it is ratified by 44 specific nations, eight of which have yet to do so: China, India, Pakistan, North Korea, Israel, Iran, Egypt, and the United States” [58].

Mine Ban Treaty: 1997

Signed on December 3, 1997, “The Mine Ban Treaty prohibits the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of antipersonnel mines. It is the most comprehensive international instrument for eradicating landmines and deals with everything from mine use, production and trade, to victim assistance, mine clearance and stockpile destruction” [59]. This is a significant treaty, especially protecting the non-combatants who might lose limbs and lives in accidental explosions. However, some of the important states that are not party to this treaty include: China, Egypt, India, Israel, Pakistan, Russia and the United States.

Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT): 2002

The SORT between the US and Russian Federation, also referred as the Moscow Treaty, was signed by Presidents George W. Bush and Vladimir Putin on 24 May 2002. However, it came into force June 1, 2003, after the US Senate and Russian State Duma ratified it. “The Treaty’s principal stipulation was that both countries would reduce their operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200 over the following decade. It would have expired on 31 December 2012 had it not been replaced by New START in 2011” [60].

Convention on Cluster Munitions: 2008

Signed on December 3, 2008, the Article 1 of the convention imposes binding on the state parties that they are not to: “Use cluster munitions; Develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile, retain or transfer to anyone, directly or indirectly, cluster munitions; - Assist, encourage or induce anyone to engage in any prohibited activity under the Convention” [61]. In fact, the treaty is an attempt to protect the civilians and non-combatants, on the humanitarian grounds.

New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty: 2010

Signed on April 8, 2010, and entered into force on February 5, 2011, for a duration of ten years, but extended for another five years on February 3, 2021, between the Russian Federation and the US, is aimed at further reduction of deployed strategic warheads to 1550. “Warheads actually deployed on ICBMs and SLBMs count toward this limit The Treaty also includes an aggregate limit of 800 deployed and non-deployed ICBM launchers, SLBM launchers, and heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments. Within that limit, the number of deployed ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers cannot exceed 700” [62]. In fact, the SORT was terminated when the New START Treaty entered into force on 5 February 2011. Interestingly, this “Treaty does not place any constraints on the testing, development or deployment of current or planned U.S. missile defense programs or U.S. long-range conventional strike capabilities” [63].

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons: 2017

This treaty was signed on September 20, 2017, to which 91 states have signed so far, and 68 have ratified. The Article 1 states that, “States-parties are prohibited to use, threaten to use, develop, produce, manufacture, acquire, possess, stockpile, transfer, station, or install nuclear weapons or assist with any prohibited activities [64].

Paradoxical linkage between realism and disarmament

Now, this is paradoxical and needs to be delinked. The word “Disarm” is a non-starter in the realist paradigm. This author is fully cognizant of the fact that a number of highly qualified and distinguished individuals and groups have put in a lot of efforts in that direction over the past 75 years. However, unfortunately though, it is not working as per peoples’ aspiration and imagination. Most of the wars in 21st century have been unnecessary, because they took place between Unequal Military Powers (UMPS). Moreover, the politico-military outcomes of all these wars reveal that the aggressors did not gain much; lost huge number of resources, and the recipient was totally destroyed and suffered great numbers of human losses. And, at the end the attackers made Agreements and left in haste. The process of

disarmament started with the resolution 502 (VI), presented in the General Assembly in January 1952, and created the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) under the Security Council, with a mandate to prepare proposals for a treaty for the regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments. There is little doubt that UNDC played an important role as the sole multilateral disarmament deliberative body, with great efforts by individuals, organizations, and states. Over the years, the UNDC has put forward many valuable recommendations in promoting the international arms control and disarmament processes, and some norms it set up have become guiding documents in this field. However, it is also a fact that the UNDC has not yet achieved substantial progress in its work, which reflects the divergent views of various parties concerning relevant arms control and disarmament issues.

Perhaps, it is for the same reason that this author is of the view that disarmament is a nonstarter in a realist paradigm that is widely practiced by most of the global stakeholders. How can one expect people who believe in using kinetic application to resolve their disputes or otherwise, even against the UMPs, to give up their arms and ammunition voluntarily? Even by definition, it is not neither possible nor practicable to disarm totally the powerful states who are thriving on development, production, and sale of these weapons to the relatively smaller and weaker states by encouraging them to engage them in wars and conflicts. And, even if some of the proposals under arms control and disarmament are doable, these may not be preferable, hence would either remain a non-starter, or unsustainable. Therefore, one was not surprised if President Bush pulled out of ABM Treaty in 1992, and President Putin suspended further talks on nuclear treaty.

Counter proposal

At the outset, one should admit that the social scientists are stuck with traditional theories of realism, liberalism, constructivism, deterrence, compellence, etc., and have miserably failed to bring out any notable theory that could have prevented conflicts and wars across the globe. On the other hand, natural scientists and technologists continue to surprise mankind and have done more for the socio-economic and socio-cultural development of humanity. Contemporary social scientists are plagued with the disease of Google Search, Wikipedia and now the disease of Chat-GPT, and other easy way-outs, not to mention the cut-and-paste facility that has put the real work of research to rest. There is a dire need to inject a fresh air of Originality & Objectivity (O2) into Social Sciences if the social scientists are sincere in contributing towards academic literature and the betterment of humanity. This proposal is not meant, by any means, to show disrespect to teachers, scholars, and researchers, but only to remind them of their core responsibility. This author is of the opinion that the primary objective of a social scientist's research should be to explore ways

and means for the benefit of society by ensuring that their life, property, and future generation is safe from the impact of climate change, and adverse effects of the use of lethal weapons during wars and conflicts. They must not assume that nothing will change, because game-changers do emerge out of such writings and ideas. There are numerous study centres, think tanks, and departments in every university all over the world, teaching about conflict management, resolution, crisis management, prevention, etc., without any worthwhile contribution as to how to avoid modern wars. Nearly 40 per cent of the world's population is facing conflicts, wars, or war-like situation with no solution in sight. The stronger nations do not think twice before initiating a war against an Unequal Military Powers (UMPs), and at times, without any consideration of the outcome. The Iraq War (2003-11) and the war in Afghanistan (2001-21) are examples of 21st Century wars, which were grossly mismanaged and continued for decades without any logic.

Therefore, it is recommended that the age-old 'International Relations Theory of Realism' is modified with another 'Realism with Z,' which denotes 'Realization' by the global stakeholders. The world only needs a few game-changers who would realize the gravity of the situation, and save the world from the impending Armageddon, through their understanding of the importance of saving the humanity, for the future generations. This author is therefore, proposing a rephrased alternate approach; realism which may help in minimizing the wars and conflicts between UMPs, leading to a more even regional development than a particular state. The global peace is considered possible through equitable regional development, which may help reduce the migrations of the people from the developing countries toward the developed world. The very purpose of introducing this new political theory of realism is to minimize the probabilities of wars and conflicts between UMPs so that the people in the weaker states, do not suffer the way we have seen in the recent past. This author is of the view that a handful of realizers can prove to be game-changers, and alter the course of history for the betterment of humanity [65].

Also, it is necessary to split Arms Control from Disarmament affairs, because some of the Arms Control efforts mentioned above have been very successful and remain promising. In fact, the successful Treaties related to Chemical Weapons and Test Ban are more of an Arms Control efforts than Disarmament Affairs. Perhaps, it is time to change, not only the theory of realism to realism, but also formulate the new strategy to reduce the probabilities of all-out conventional wars that have the potential to expand horizontally and vertically, leading to possible nuclear exchange. Therefore, this author is proposing that a process of 'De-Arming' may be contemplated instead of 'Disarmament,' because it may still be possible to convince nations to De-Arm where the offensive weapons would be placed in safe condition and not in a state of readiness. This author is cognizant of the fact that it may

be extremely unconvincing to ask the warring parties to Disarm, but perhaps relatively easier to convince them to De-Arm, while the International Organizations are striving for a Peaceful Dispute Resolution. Even if De-Arming of total inventory is not doable, a hybrid approach may be adopted, and a certain percentage of offensive weaponry may be De-Armed in the beginning to reduce the probabilities of Conflict Expansion or Escalation.

This proposal may be seen as an Idealist's or a liberalist's dream, and may sound impractical, but it is necessary that academia and practitioners deliberate upon it, perhaps to avert the next war. It is necessary to reiterate that the 'First Step' is always very difficult, and that is the beauty of social sciences that opinions and proposal offered today, for peace can only be proven right or wrong by the history, and not by the opponents. Perhaps, De-Arming may lead to partial or general Disarmament, may be in a phased manner and adopting a hybrid approach, because there will be a lot of resistance from the Military Industrial Complex (MICs). However, the efforts must continue with more vigour and without the fear of failure.

Conclusion

However, arms control and disarmament treaties as conceived, if executed in its letter and spirit, could reduce the impact of wars and conflict on human sufferings. But this could only be possible if the, "Disarmament must recognize peace as the goal and the basis for political action" [66]. Otherwise, this author's assertions that disarmament is a non-starter due to inherently oppose to the realist paradigm. To impress upon the argument that global peace and stability is possible through cooperation, compassion, and prudence; this new theory of realism is proposed for the discussion by academia and experts on the subject. The purpose is to avert the next war or conflict between UMPs, following the proposed precepts under the realized paradigm [67]. Concurrently, a fresh look is required at the strategy part of the entire process of arms control and disarmament, because de-arming may be a little more convincing than disarmament in the realist's world. The entire purpose of this paper is to avoid the next war, especially between the UMPs, because the relatively smaller power gets totally destroyed, and its people are made to suffer for the decades to come. Moreover, the initiator also does not gain anything and loses its moral authority, resources, and is often forced to leave the occupied land in haste.

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42. Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Seabed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof. Bureau Of International Security And Nonproliferation. 1972.
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44. The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) At A Glance.
45. Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT).
46. A ban on the construction of new land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs); each country would be limited to 2,400 strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (SNDVs), including ICBMs and heavy bombers; each country would be limited to 1,320 multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs), which made it possible to attach multiple warheads to a single missile.
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