

EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Consortium

Promoting the European network of independent non-proliferation and disarmament think tanks

E-newsletter of the European Network of Independent Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Think Tanks

EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND ARMS CONTROL - AN INTERVIEW WITH OSCAR PRUST, MARTIN LUTHER UNIVERSITY HALLE-WITTENBERG



Oscar Laurenz Prust is a doctoral candidate at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. He studied political science as part of a Bachelor's degree programme at the Philipps University of Marburg. He obtained his Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree in September 2016. Immediately afterwards, he began the Master's degree programme in Political Science at the Université Catholique de Lille and the Philipps-Universität Marburg, where he worked as a student assistant at the Institute of Political Science and completed his studies in February 2019. He interned at the Federal Foreign Office (2018), the German Bundestag (2017) and the European Parliament (2015). Oscar Prust has been studying law at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz and Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg since April 2019. From October 2019 to April 2021, he was employed as a research assistant at an interdisciplinary DFG Research Training Group at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. Since April 2021, he has been a research assistant and doctoral candidate at the Chair of International Relations and European Politics of Prof Dr Johannes Varwark at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg.

What main issues does your institution address in the field of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament?

We are mainly concerned with arms control from a multifaceted perspective. First and foremost, we are concerned with (preventive) arms control of emerging technologies, i.e. monitoring international and domestic regulatory efforts related to artificial intelligence (AI), cyber capabilities and autonomy in weapon systems. Our research emphasises the domestic governance of emerging technologies, in particular how national constraints affect arms control policies. We pay particular attention to the research, development and deployment as well as the inherent dual-use nature of emerging technologies, and seek to provide knowledge transfer and capacity building to decision-makers in both the executive and legislative branches.

What is your assessment on the work done so far by the GGE on LAWS and cyber? Is there a realistic prospect of significant progress?

In our view, the Groups of Governmental Experts (GGEs) play an important role in shaping norms and rules for AI with respect to autonomy and cyberspace. Apart from the modest impact of the GGE on cybersecurity, we are closely following the progress of the GGE on Lethal Autonomous Weapons (LAWS). However, with respect to the remaining challenges of definition, ethics, accountability and preventing unintended escalation, we believe that the scope of international regulation is likely to be limited. Rather, we see domestic governance as an essential but undervalued aspect.

The GGE on LAWS itself emphasised the utility of greater transparency through national policies and practices to avoid risks and unintended consequences, as national rather than international regimes provide a comprehensive regulatory approach. However, voices in favour of more national regulatory approaches remain muted. While progress is evident, consensus on binding norms remains elusive. Realistic prospects depend on sustained dialogue and commitment, fostered by national policies and practices.

How do you assess the initiatives undertaken by arms control institutions of EU countries to cope with emerging technologies?

The European Union (EU) and its Member States are increasingly aware of the security implications of emerging technologies. We appreciate that the EU is seeking to increase its leverage by promoting stakeholder engagement as well as indigenous capabilities and cooperation in R&D through co-funding of projects under the European Defence Fund (EDF) and its predecessors, such as the Preparatory Action on Defence Research (PADR). At the same time, the development of these technologies in security and defence requires caution, as it implies a certain geopolitical and military vision of innovation that may not be compatible with the EU's broader promotion of a responsible, trustworthy and human-centred approach. Moreover, Member States sometimes have diverging positions on LAWS in the GGE. They should seek to develop a common position embedded in a broader EU strategy, e.g. coordinated by the EEAS. A coherent approach is needed, to which our research aims to contribute.

INDIA'S DETERRENT HOLDS CHINESE CITIES AT RISK

The recent test conducted by India involving an Agni-V missile equipped with a multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle (MIRV) marks a significant advancement in India's pursuit of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) capable of posing a credible threat to Chinese cities.

On March 11, 2024, India successfully launched its first MIRV-equipped missile, utilizing the Agni-V ICBM as the delivery mechanism. This achievement signifies the transition of the Agni-V into its final development phase, integrating the proven missile with a reliable set of warheads.

The test launch, conducted from India's primary missile-testing facility at Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha, was deemed successful by the Ministry of Defence. It demonstrated India's capability to deploy MIRV technology, enhancing its strategic deterrent posture.

Analysis of the test reveals that the missile carried a payload larger than a single warhead, with the possibility of accommodating two to three dummy warheads. India likely will conduct more flight tests to refine its MIRV technology before the Agni-V becomes operational under the Strategic Forces Command.

One challenge India faces is ensuring that its nuclear warhead designs have sufficiently reduced in size since their initial testing in 1998 to fit multiple warheads onto the missile effectively. Despite this, India may proceed with developing a single-warhead version of the missile while continuing to refine the MIRV design.

The Agni-V missile program is part of India's Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP), which has led the development of various missile systems since 1983. The recent test underscores India's progress in indigenously developing critical subsystems for its missile programs, reducing reliance on foreign technology.

Even if the test occurred almost five months after that of Pakistan's Ababeel medium-range ballistic missile, the timing of India's April test highlights New Delhi's strategic focus on China. Once operational, the Agni-V will enable India to target population centers across China, enhancing its deterrence capabilities.

Despite the development of an ICBM, India views its sea-based nuclear deterrent, centered around its Arihant-class nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarines, as the most credible second-strike capability. However, the Agni-V's eventual deployment could contribute to strategic stability by providing a potent second-strike option, discouraging preemptive strikes and reinforcing India's commitment to a no-first-use policy.

Overall, India's successful test of the Agni-V with MIRV technology represents a significant milestone in its pursuit of a robust nuclear deterrent capable of holding Chinese cities at risk. It may contribute to regional stability.

Antoine Levesques is a Research Fellow for South and Central Asian Defence, Strategy and Diplomacy at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). ©2024, IISS. This is a shortened version of the piece originally published [here](#), (reproduced with permission).

Latest Publications

[Algorithmic Aversion? Experimental Evidence on the Elasticity of Public Attitudes to “Killer Robots”](#). Ondřej Rosendorf, Michal Smetana & Marek Vranka. Security Studies. Volume 33, 2024 - Issue 1

[Rethinking the Relevance of Self-Deterrence](#). Jeffrey H. Michaels. The US Army War College Quarterly, Parameters. Volume 54, Issue 1.

[The Australia Group and the prevention of the re-emergence of chemical and biological weapons – Ongoing challenges](#). Jean-Pascal Zanders, Elisande Nexon, Mónica Chinchilla, and Esmée de Bruin. Recherches & Documents n°04/2024. Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (FRS)

[The Impact of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons: The Crucial Role of the European NATO Allies](#). Tom Sauer. Peace Review

EU NEWS

G7: STATEMENT OF THE NON-PROLIFERATION DIRECTORS GROUP

THE STATEMENT OF THE G7 NON-PROLIFERATION DIRECTORS GROUP REFLECTS THE RENEWED COMMITMENT OF THE G7 COUNTRIES TO THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT), CONSIDERED THE CENTRAL PILLAR OF THE GLOBAL NON-PROLIFERATION REGIME. THE NPT, WHICH ENTERED INTO FORCE IN 1970, AIMS TO PREVENT THE PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, TO PROMOTE COOPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY AND TO MAKE PROGRESS TOWARDS NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT.

THE GROUP RECOGNISES THE FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE OF THE NPT AND UNDERLINES THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL WMD NON-PROLIFERATION REGIMES TO ADDRESS EMERGING CHALLENGES. THESE INCLUDE THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION, AS WELL AS CYBER THREATS AND TERRORISM.

IN THE STATEMENT, CONCERN IS EXPRESSED ABOUT THE NON-COMPLIANCE OF CERTAIN STATES WITH THEIR OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE NPT, AS WELL AS ABOUT INCREASED TENSION IN REGIONS CRITICAL TO INTERNATIONAL SECURITY. THE GROUP REITERATES THE IMPORTANCE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN ADDRESSING THESE CONCERNS AND PROMOTING GLOBAL PEACE AND STABILITY.

FURTHERMORE, IT STRESSES THE IMPORTANCE OF ARMS CONTROL AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY MEASURES TO PREVENT THE PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION. IT REAFFIRMS THE COMMITMENT TO THE JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION (JCPOA) ON IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAMME AS A CRUCIAL AGREEMENT FOR NON-PROLIFERATION AND REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY.

IN SUMMARY, THE G7 NON-PROLIFERATION DIRECTORS GROUP STATEMENT REAFFIRMS THE COMMITMENT OF ITS MEMBERS TO THE NPT AND THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL NON-PROLIFERATION REGIMES. IT ALSO STRESSES THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, DIPLOMACY AND ARMS CONTROL IN ADDRESSING NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION CHALLENGES AND PROMOTING GLOBAL PEACE AND SECURITY.

READ THE FULL STATEMENT: [HERE](#)

NETWORK NEWS

CZECH SECURITY FORUM 2024

THE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PRAGUE (IIR) AND PEACE RESEARCH CENTER PRAGUE (PRCP) WILL, ORGANISE THE CZECH SECURITY FORUM 2024, WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE ON OCTOBER 24 TO 25 2024. THE FORUM AIMS TO BRING TOGETHER LEADING SCHOLARS, POLICYMAKERS, AND PRACTITIONERS TO ENGAGE IN-DEPTH DISCUSSIONS ON CRITICAL ISSUES SHAPING THE GLOBAL AND EUROPEAN SECURITY. THIS YEAR, THE THEME REVOLVES AROUND THE COMPLEXITIES OF GREAT POWER RIVALRY AND THE QUEST FOR PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY.

MORE INFO: [HERE](#)

CALL FOR PAPERS: “GREAT POWER RIVALRY OR PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE? INTERNATIONAL ORDER IN THE 21ST CENTURY”

CONTRIBUTIONS MAY EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY AND DESIRABILITY OF REVIVING THE NOTION OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO ESCALATORY TRAJECTORIES, RELEVANCE OF THIS CONCEPT IN TODAY'S COMPLEX SECURITY ENVIRONMENT, AND OTHER POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVES FOR MAINTAINING INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY.

SUBMISSION DETAILS:

- PROPOSALS SHOULD INCLUDE A PRESENTATION TITLE, AN ABSTRACT (MAX. 200 WORDS), AND A SHORT BIO (MAX. 100 WORDS).
- SELECTED PRESENTATIONS MAY BE CONSIDERED FOR PUBLICATION IN A SPECIAL ISSUE OF AN IR SCHOLARLY JOURNAL.
- DUE DATE FOR PROPOSALS: MAY 20, 2024.

PLEASE SEND PROPOSALS TO: ZAKIR.RAZADE@FSV.CUNI.CZ

THE ATOMIC LEGACY 2024 - ENERGY, DETERRENCE, NON-PROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT

THE KONRAD ADENAUER FOUNDATION VIENNA, TOGETHER WITH ATOMIC REPORTERS, ARE INVITING TO TAKE PART IN THE THIRD EDITION OF THE THREE-DAY STUDY PROGRAMME IN VIENNA FROM JULY 2ND TO 6TH 2024

PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS, ENERGY, NONPROLIFERATION, AND DISARMAMENT IN A NUCLEAR-ARMED WORLD WITH AN OUTLOOK INTO THE FUTURE IN A LIVELY GROUP SETTING. UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF RENOWNED PROFESSIONALS, RESEARCHERS, AND INTERNATIONAL OFFICIALS, PARTICIPANTS WILL ACQUIRE EXPERTISE IN:

- CURRENT NUCLEAR ISSUES AND RISKS
- BASIC CONCEPTS AND NOTIONS IN THE NUCLEAR REALM
- THE HISTORY OF NUCLEAR ARMAMENT AND DISARMAMENT
- THE HISTORY AND ROLE OF THE NUCLEAR ENERGY INDUSTRY
- CORE RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS
- LEGAL BACKGROUND

ADDITIONALLY, PARTICIPANTS WILL PARTICIPATE IN TECHNICAL VISITS TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN VIENNA

MORE INFO: INFO.VIENNA@KAS.DE

Network Calls

The Open Nuclear Network (ONN) seeks a Senior Analyst to enhance its team's capacity to address global security challenges. Candidates should possess an advanced degree in political science, public policy, international relations, or a related field, with at least seven years of experience, preferably within think-tank, NGO, or governmental settings. Ideal applicants will have a strong background in qualitative or quantitative analysis of international security issues and advanced proficiency in open-source information analysis techniques. Exceptional communication skills and technical proficiency are crucial.

More info: [Here](#)

The Open Nuclear network (ONN) seeks an Analyst. This person will gather and interpret complex data using diverse methods such as satellite imagery and trade data, applying advanced OSINT techniques to draw insights, and producing detailed analytical reports that provide clear, actionable information for internal and external stakeholders. Deal candidates should hold an advanced degree in fields relevant to international relations or data science, with a minimum of three years' experience, preferably in think-tank, NGO, or government settings. Strong analytical skills, proven OSINT expertise, and experience in nuclear proliferation or regional security issues related to the former Soviet Union are highly valued.

More info: [Here](#)

The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) is seeking to appoint an Assistant Research Manager to work as part of the Director-General's team in the Executive Office of the IISS located in London. This is an exciting opportunity to work closely with the Director-General in a small, collaborative team on a wide variety of tasks. The job holder will gain a broad understanding of the Institute's priorities and will work across our international offices.

More info: [Here](#)

