



The 50th Anniversary of Global Nuclear Non-proliferation Regime : Achievements of NPT Review Conferences and Limitations

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Abstract

This paper takes the NPT (Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons) as a central piece of global nuclear non-proliferation regime and analyzes its achievements and limitations. Furthermore, this article forecasts future 50 years of this regime. As for the methodology, the author focused on the United Nation's NPT review conference, which is in fact the only operation mechanism of the treaty. A review conference is being held every five years among the member states parties based on the article VIII, paragraph 3 of the NPT.

This paper comprises 6 chapters. Chapter 2 summarizes history, objectives and regulations (1950s-1960s) of global non-proliferation regime. Chapter 3 analyzes a series of nine NPT review conferences that were held throughout the Cold War period and beyond (1970-2020) and assesses changes within the regime order, issues for debate and results of meetings for each operation cycle. Chapter 4 delves into agenda and implications of the 3rd Session of the Preparatory Committee (2019) for the 10th NPT Review Conference, which was originally scheduled for this year but now has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Chapter 5 compares and contrasts theories of international politics such as liberalism, institutionalism, realism and constructivism as explanatory models of nuclear non-proliferation regime and attempts actual application of each model. Chapter 6 concludes the paper by presenting overall

assessment of global non-proliferation regime including positive sides and remaining challenges, and suggests future prospects.

Possibly this paper may aid in (i) nuclear diplomacy of South Korea as a middle power country by checking current address of global nuclear non-proliferation regime and evaluating ongoing issues and challenges, (ii) the effectiveness of regime theory as an international political theory and (iii) a shift in the focus of North Korean nuclear issues from two Koreas and four regional powers to a global-level effort towards non-proliferation. ❖

※ Translator's note: This is a summarized unofficial translation of the original paper which was written in Korean. All references should be made to the original paper.

※ This article is written based on the author's personal opinions and does not reflect the views of the Sejong Institute.