

Trump's Nuclear Posture Review: Plan Makes Nuclear War More Likely

The Trump Administration Nuclear Posture Review released today calls for the development of new, more usable nuclear weapons, and expanding the number of scenarios when the first use of nuclear weapons would be considered.

By [Global Zero](#)

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The Trump Administration Nuclear Posture Review released today calls for the development of new, more usable nuclear weapons, and expanding the number of scenarios when the first use of nuclear weapons would be considered, including in response to a non-nuclear attack. The plan renews the calls for massive spending to replace all legs of the nuclear triad, including new strategic bombers, new ballistic missile submarines and new land-based ballistic missile systems. The proposed approach will make America poorer and less secure, and could greatly increase the risk of nuclear war.

In reaction to the Trump Administration's Nuclear Posture Review, Derek Johnson, executive director of Global Zero, the international movement for the elimination of nuclear weapons, issued the following statement:

"Trump's Nuclear Posture Review marks a dramatic departure from decades of bipartisan efforts to reduce nuclear risks, especially Ronald Reagan's maxim that 'a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.' It's a radical plan written by extreme elements and nuclear ideologues in Trump's inner circle who believe nuclear weapons are a wonder drug that can solve our national security challenges. They aren't and they can't.

"The disturbing vision laid out in this final document looks nearly identical to the draft Nuclear Posture Review leaked last month, and justifies the alarmed consensus among the vast majority of nuclear security experts. Developing so-called 'low-yield' nuclear weapons and loosening restrictions on their use only increases the risk of miscalculation and escalation. This plan increases the likelihood of nuclear conflict and makes America less safe.

"Let's be clear: 'Low yield' is a misnomer — there is no such thing as a 'small' nuclear weapon. Nobody on the receiving end of a nuclear attack is going to stop to measure the mushroom cloud before retaliating. As Reagan's Secretary of State George Shultz told Congress in January, 'a nuclear weapon is a nuclear weapon.'

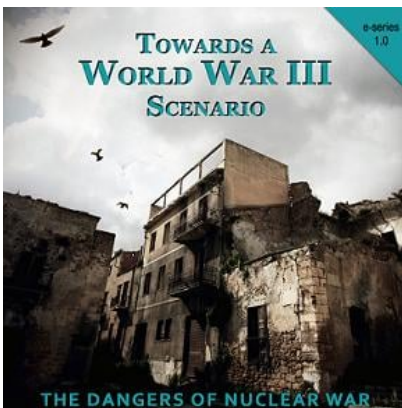
"With 4,000 weapons, including almost a thousand lower yield weapons, the U.S. nuclear arsenal is already the second largest on the planet, and easily the most sophisticated and most devastating. For context, that's 15 times larger than the Chinese nuclear arsenal, which consists of approximately 270

weapons kept in central storage. Trump's insistence that we need more and better weapons is already spurring countries to follow in his footsteps. Nuclear arms-racing is a steep and slippery slope; we'd do well to learn the lessons of the former Soviet Union, whose collapse was accelerated by its unsustainable nuclear ambitions.

"The top national security priority of the United States should be to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used. Trump's plan fails on that score in almost every respect. Worse, it contains the seeds of self-fulfilling prophecy: by actively planning for conflicts in which our nuclear weapons are used first, we bring ourselves closer to that point of no return.

"This plan would be troubling under any Administration, but given this President's consistent and unabashed displays of ignorance, ballistic tendencies and dehumanizing world views, we should all be on red alert. In light of this plan, every effort should be directed to support legislation that reins in executive power to use these weapons, including the 'Restricting the First Use of Nuclear Weapons Act' and the No-First-Use bill currently before Congress.

"Congress's power of the purse could also be a powerful tool to resist Trump's dangerous nuclear agenda. Fiscal reality is going to hit this nuclear fantasy like a freight train. The price tag to replace our Cold War weapons systems has already ballooned to \$1.7 trillion, and the recommendations contained in the Nuclear Posture Review will only push that number higher. Congress must intervene and starve this plan of the bank-breaking taxpayer funds it requires."



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