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Assessing the Impact of Low Nuclear Numbers on Strategic Stability: A Regional Analysis

Center on Contemporary Conflict
Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School
Assessing the Impact of Low Nuclear Numbers on Strategic Stability: A Regional Analysis

Performer: NPS
Project Lead: James Clay Moltz
Project Cost: $191,449
Fiscal Year(s): 2012-2013

Demand:
In Europe and East Asia there is growing concern regarding U.S. assertions to reduce our nuclear deterrent force. Thus, while U.S. rhetoric on “zero nuclear weapons” is appealing at a global level, considerably more work is required at the regional level to even begin to approach such conditions. Up until now deductive logic has been the only tool used to analyze reductions. An important requirement for further nuclear arms reductions is a more comprehensive understanding of regional nuclear dynamics, and how lower levels of U.S. nuclear weapons may affect regional strategic stability.

Objective:
Project lead James Moltz will identify the potential problems of low nuclear numbers on a region-by-region basis, and develop policy recommendations for decision makers faced with a goal of lowering nuclear numbers in various geographic regions.

Approach:
The report will analyze the impact of cuts in U.S. nuclear forces under conditions of scaled reductions to levels of 1,000, 500, and 100 deployed strategic weapons. It will rely on the expertise of experts in European, Northeast Asian, South Asian, and Middle Eastern regional nuclear dynamics. An internal workshop will be held at NPS for project experts to review and discuss findings, before a final workshop is held at the Pentagon and the report is published.