



Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the major reservations of India with respect to the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

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Approach

- Start the answer by briefly introducing the objectives of the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty
- Discuss the issues why India considers the NPT as discriminatory and had refused to sign it.
- Conclude Suitably.

Introduction

Nuclear Proliferation Treaty is an international treaty, signed in 1968, which envisages three objectives of non-proliferation, disarmament, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. However, India criticized this treaty for having structural flaws and viewed it as an imbalanced instrument.

Body

India is one of the only five countries that either did not sign the NPT and due to the following issues India considers the NPT as discriminatory and had refused to sign it.

- **Failure of Disarmament Process:** The NPT proposes no tangible disarmament roadmap, no reference to testing ban or to the freezing of production of either fissile materials or nuclear weapons, and omitted provisions for reductions and elimination.
- **Nuclear 'Haves' and 'Have-Nots':** India criticizes the treaty to be discriminatory as it focuses on preventing only horizontal proliferation while there is no limit for vertical proliferation.
 - In this context, India demands that the Nuclear Weapon State (NWS) should renounce its arsenals and further production in return for the commitment of Non- NWS not to produce them.
- **Discriminating Safeguards:** Under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) protocols of nuclear safety, the NWS allowed maintaining 'voluntary' safeguards while the rest were subjected to comprehensive safeguards, which seemed intrusive and discriminatory to the NNWS.
- **Emergence of Non-state Actors:** The emergence of non-state actors with declared intent to access weapons of mass destruction and the detection of a global nuclear black-market, has raised concerns on the limitations of the NPT.

Conclusion

India has opposed the international treaties aimed at non-proliferation since they were selectively applicable to the non-nuclear powers and legitimized the monopoly of the five nuclear weapons powers. Thus, all nations should engage to carve out a multilateral framework for the peaceful use of nuclear energy and global peace.

