



STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL  
PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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## MODERNIZATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS CONTINUES; NUMBER OF PEACEKEEPERS DECLINES; NEW SIPRI YEARBOOK OUT NOW

(Stockholm, 18 June 2018) The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) today launches the findings of *SIPRI Yearbook 2018*, which assesses the current state of armaments, disarmament and international security. Key findings include the following: all the nuclear weapon-possessing states are developing new nuclear weapon systems and modernizing their existing systems; and the number of personnel deployed with peace operations worldwide continues to fall while the demand is increasing.

### World nuclear forces: reductions remain slow as modernization continues

At the start of 2018 nine states—the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea)—possessed approximately **14 465 nuclear weapons**. This marked a decrease from the approximately 14 935 nuclear weapons that SIPRI estimated these states possessed at the beginning of 2017.

The decrease in the overall number of nuclear weapons in the world is due mainly to **Russia** and the **USA**—which together still account for nearly 92 per cent of all nuclear weapons—further reducing their strategic nuclear forces pursuant to the implementation of the 2010 Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START).

Despite making limited reductions to their nuclear forces, both Russia and the USA have long-term programmes under way to replace and modernize their nuclear warheads, missile and aircraft delivery systems, and nuclear weapon production facilities. The USA’s most recent Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), published in February 2018, reaffirmed the modernization programmes and approved the development of new nuclear weapons. The NPR also emphasized expanding nuclear options to deter and, if necessary, defeat both nuclear and ‘non-nuclear strategic attacks’.

‘The renewed focus on the strategic importance of nuclear deterrence and capacity is a very worrying trend,’ says Ambassador Jan Eliasson, Chair of the SIPRI Governing Board. ‘The world needs a clear commitment from the nuclear weapon states to an effective, legally binding process towards nuclear disarmament.’

The nuclear arsenals of the other nuclear-armed states are considerably smaller, but all are either developing or deploying new nuclear weapon systems or have announced their intention to do so. **India** and **Pakistan** are both expanding their nuclear weapon stockpiles as well as developing new land-, sea- and air-based missile delivery systems. **China** continues to modernize its nuclear weapon delivery systems and is slowly increasing the size of its nuclear arsenal.

In 2017 **North Korea** continued to make technical progress in developing its nuclear weapon capabilities, including the test of—what was claimed to be—a thermonuclear weapon, in September. North Korea also demonstrated unexpected rapid progress in the testing of two new types of long-range ballistic missile delivery systems.

‘Despite the clear international interest in nuclear disarmament reflected in the conclusion in 2017 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the modernization programmes under way in the nuclear weapon-possessing states indicate that genuine progress towards



nuclear disarmament will remain a distant goal,' says Shannon Kile, Senior Researcher with the SIPRI Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-proliferation Programme.

### World nuclear forces, January 2018

Country	Deployed warheads*	Other warheads**	Total 2018	Total 2017
USA	1 750	4 700	6 450	6 800
Russia	1 600	5 250	6 850	7 000
UK	120	95	215	215
France	280	20	300	300
China		280	280	270
India		130-140	130-140	120-130
Pakistan		140-150	140-150	130-140
Israel		80	80	80
North Korea	..	..	(10-20)	(10-20)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 750</b>	<b>10 715</b>	<b>14 465</b>	<b>14 935</b>

Source: SIPRI Yearbook 2018

\* 'Deployed warheads' refers to warheads placed on missiles or located on bases with operational forces. \*\* 'Other warheads' refers to stored or reserve warheads and retired warheads awaiting dismantlement.  
Total figures include the highest estimate when a range is given. Figures for North Korea are uncertain and are not included in total figures.  
All estimates are approximate.

### Number of peacekeepers falls globally, despite increasing demand

There were 63 multilateral peace operations active during 2017 (one more than in 2016): 25 operations were deployed in Africa, 18 in Europe, 9 in the Middle East, 6 in Asia and Oceania, and 5 in the Americas.

The total number of personnel deployed in multilateral peace operations decreased by 4.5 per cent during 2017, from 152 822 to 145 911. Nearly three-quarters of all personnel were based in Africa. The decrease in the number of personnel is explained by the fall, by 7.6 per cent, in deployments by the United Nations, whereas the number of personnel in non-UN operations increased by 2.3 per cent to 47 557.

Although the UN clearly remains the principal actor in peace operations, African actors are claiming an increasing role in African peace and security matters. This is reflected in the establishment in February 2017 of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G5 Sahel) Joint Force (Force Conjointe des Etats du G5 Sahel, FC-G5S).

UN peacekeeping reform remained high on the international agenda in 2017. However, these discussions were overshadowed by two other significant developments during the year: the greater insecurity of personnel deployed in UN peace operations; and the efforts—particularly by the US administration—to drastically reduce the UN peacekeeping budget.

In 2017, UN missions witnessed a dramatic escalation in fatalities linked to hostile acts—in both absolute terms (from 34 in 2016 to 61 in 2017) and as a ratio of the number of uniformed personnel deployed (from 0.31 to 0.61 per 1000 uniformed personnel). Whereas in preceding years most fatalities occurred in the UN mission in Mali, in 2017 the UN operations in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo also faced substantial losses.

'An independent review into the security of peacekeepers released in 2017 (2017 Cruz Report), suggested that UN peacekeeping operations should adopt a more robust and less risk-averse force posture,' says Timo Smit, Researcher with the SIPRI Peace Operations and Conflict Management Programme. 'However, this raises the question, which was not addressed by the Cruz Report, as to how the UN should generate sufficient forces that are both willing and capable of adopting such a posture.'



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In 2017, UN peace operations—like African peace operations—could no longer be certain of predictable and sustainable funding. The budget cuts and related troop reductions meant that the UN had to rethink its strategy in many operations. ‘Is it realistic to expect the UN to continue to do more with less, and is it worth taking the risk?’ says Dr Jair van der Lijn, Director of SIPRI’s Peace Operations and Conflict Management Programme.

‘A number of finance-contributing countries hoped that budget cuts might be used pragmatically to strengthen peacekeeping reform. However, the actual effects of resource reduction on some operations might put peacekeepers at further risk and leave populations more vulnerable,’ says Van der Lijn.

### **For editors**

*The SIPRI Yearbook is a compendium of cutting-edge information and analysis on developments in armaments, disarmament and international security. Three major SIPRI Yearbook 2018 data sets were pre-launched in 2017–18: the top 100 arms-producing companies (11 December 2017), international arms transfers (12 March 2018) and world military expenditure (2 May 2018). The earlier releases are available at [www.sipri.org/media/pressreleases](http://www.sipri.org/media/pressreleases). The SIPRI Yearbook is published by Oxford University Press. Learn more at [www.sipriyearbook.org](http://www.sipriyearbook.org).*

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## **STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

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