

The model of ukrainian denuclearization article review

[Law](#), [Security](#)



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This article done by Sherman Garnet focuses on the issue regarding denuclearization of Ukraine. Ukraine reached an agreement with Russia and United States stating that they would give up nuclear weapons within four and a half years. Despite signing this agreement and giving assurance that she would cooperate in doing so, this process of denuclearizing Ukraine was a hard task due the below listed issues that complicated the process as is evident from the article.

- Ukraine was a center for nuclear weapons even before she had gained the status of a fully independent country. She had well established Centre for nuclear weapons before even setting up other infrastructure.
- Despite the great fear by United States and Russia about the fatal weapons in the hands of Ukraine, she concentrated less on the issue since she was preoccupied with matters of state building. The issue of weapons was considered much less important compared to sovereignty.
- Intermingling of nuclear and other political, security and economic issues made the United States to make rules that compelled her officers go beyond the confines of the policy agenda to ensure adequate coverage and enhancement of denuclearization.

- The Ukrainian nuclear status was inherited from Russia . There was, therefore, a tough challenge since the arms agreements had been signed by the former Soviet Union. There was a complication in deciding whether the union's successors were still bound to abide by the agreements made by their mother union.

- The ambiguous state of these nuclear weapons and untested assumptions made some observers to wonder whether the weapons were an issue.

Following the fact that Ukraine needed to build good relations with other countries especially Russia, the perspective of Ukrainian leaders to the issue of nuclear weapons was completely changed. Ukrainian domestic forces shaped the nuclear debate and the negotiation of security assurances in three ways namely: encouraging moderation, giving first consideration to economic issues, and by making state building a priority. According to polls conducted, a majority of Ukraine citizens did not support the issue of nuclear weapons arguing that it would be destabilizing internally. There were only a third of the population that supported retention of nuclear weapons.

The deepening economic crisis in Ukraine forced her cooperate in the disarmament process since she seriously needed assistance from countries such as Russia and the United States. Her leaders knew very well that no one country would come to their help if they continued retaining nuclear weapons. Denuclearization in this case was compulsory . During this period, Ukraine citizens and leaders were very busy with matters of nation building and the issues that mainly constituted the economy, domestic struggle for power, and institutional stability were the most pressing compared to the issue of nuclear weapons. When it came to the foreign policy, Russia was the

key factor here since she regarded Ukraine as a state that ought to be her partner and which lay within a primary zone of its interests. However, Ukraine did all it could to resist Russian imposed solutions, which triggered the entry of The United States to play the role of the third party balancer, and the chief mediator between these two countries but on a condition that Ukraine was ready to drop her nuclear power. This was definitely not a point of discussion when it came to the United States.

On September 1993, a summit was held at Massandra where the differences between the two countries came to broad light. However, Russian president Boris Yeltsin and his top officials put a lot of pressure on the Ukrainian president Leonid Kravchuk to agree on a comprehensive deal of the Black Sea Fleet, nuclear disarmament and debt relief. Kravchuk's experience at Massandra played a key role in accelerating negotiations with the United States and in seeking a trilateral framework for nuclear and security issues. The nuclear issue in Ukraine took place in three main phases. The first phase started from pro-independence in mid-1992 whereby the Ukrainian parliament had pledged to be a nuclear free state. This phase ended in a period when many thought the nuclear issue was over. The second phase followed when the key Ukrainian leaders looked at their country's security and economic needs, and concluded that the nuclear weapons could be used as a potential bargaining chip. During this period, the United States had learned of the Ukrainian leaders' intentions, and therefore, it put clear conditions for financial assistance and security guarantees solely meant to lock out Ukraine from getting her assistance. The move was aimed at compelling the leaders to drop their policies. This phase lasted from mid

1992 until the conclusion of the trilateral agreement in January 1994. The third phase lasted from January 1994 to 2001 after Ukraine became fully compliant with START 2.

After the disarmament process commenced, Ukraine started looking for ways of surviving after they fully dropped the nuclear weapons. The parliament passed a law that required Ukraine to seek security guarantee as a condition for dropping nuclear weapons and the government responded by conveying the same information to Washington. Washington responded by saying that they had intentions of giving Ukraine specific assurances beyond NPT. The same issue was also brought to table between Russia and Ukraine talks. Moscow gave some assurances but on certain conditions including Ukraine continued membership of CIS of which she had started to distance from. In August 1993, Ukraine's top officials visited Washington and claimed that they would not continue with the disarmament policy if the security issue of their country would not be put into consideration. There would be no divisions among the members of Rada the issue of what constituted acceptable security assurances, and the senior leadership of Rada wanted the US involvement in a negotiated package that reflected Ukraine's condition.

On January 1993, Rada declared that Ukraine was not bound by section five of the Lisbon protocol which bound Ukraine to become a member of the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state in the shortest time possible. Kravuch and other officials were quick to assure the US that Rada's decision was not in any way vital in Ukraine, and it did not mean that was the final stand. He further told the US and Russia that Rada's vote reflects what is widely held

there that nuclear weapons were a means of protecting her territory. The United States would however never accept Rada's idea but could only have reconsideration for the part five of the Lisbon Protocol that was of content to Rada. Finally, the US, following negotiations and the conclusion of the trilateral agreements interpreted Rada's action as something that could be dealt with comfortably.

Diplomatic Negotiations

The Trilateral Agreement was signed on January 14 1994 in Moscow by presidents Clinton, Yeltsin and Kravchuk. The agreement committed Ukraine to complete elimination of all nuclear weapons including strategic offensive arms located in its territory in the seven year period as stipulated by the START 1 Treaty. Ukraine agreed that all nuclear warheads would be transferred to Russia and that all SS-24s would be deactivated within ten months. Ukraine was in return guaranteed compensation for highly enriched Uranium with low enriched uranium from Russia for use in nuclear power plants. In addition, Russia promised to cancel some of Ukraine's debt while the United States promised to extend economic and technical aid to Ukraine. Ukraine on the other hand promised to transfer all remaining nuclear warheads to Russia within three years. This agreement unlike the previous agreements provided security assurances to Ukraine.

Security Assurances

Britain joined hands with Russia and the United states to provide security to Ukraine. Ukraine was promised to seek UN security council on behalf of Ukraine in case she is a victim of nuclear threats . They in addition promised

not to use nuclear weapons against Ukraine whatsoever unless she also does the same to the . All these promises would only come into effect on the condition that Ukraine would join the NPT as a non-nuclear state.

References

Garnet, Sherman W. " The " Model" of Ukrainian Denuclearization." From Wary Collaboration to Wary Competition, n. d.: 246-271.