

## Non-Proliferation and Disarmament: Interview with Patricia Lewis



Dr Patricia Lewis is research director for International Security at Chatham House. Previously, she served as deputy director and scientist-in-residence at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies; director of the UN Institute for Disarmament Research; and director of the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre in London. She was on Hans Blix's 2004-06 WMD Commission; the 2010-11 advisory panel on the future priorities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons; and was an adviser to the 2008-10 International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament.

Chatham House is widely recognised as a leading institute in the security field. What are your main lines of research and initiatives related to non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament?

In the field of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament Chatham House focuses on several strands of research. First is the political and diplomatic aspect, which includes the major treaties and agreements on nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their delivery systems. For example, we have a multi-year project conducted jointly by the International Security Department and the Global Health Security Centre that works with urban, local and national authorities on preparedness and resilience to bio events (whether deliberate or natural outbreaks) in urban environments. In the nuclear realm, we have been focusing on the legal obligations of states in respect of disarmament - this work includes the NPT, TPNW, CTBTO and the US-Russia bilateral treaties. We have also been studying the cyber vulnerabilities of strategic systems - focusing on space, C3I, nuclear, conventional and decision-making processes - and we are looking at how new technologies will impact the nuclear field. We are particularly keen on connecting different communities - technology, policy, military, civilian, men and women - and on using new methodologies to address these issues. We use Chatham House's renowned convening power to do so. Chatham House also combines the in-depth regional and country-specific expertise of its Middle East and Asia Programmes with the work of the International Security department to bring a wide-set of knowledge on Iran, North Korea and South Asia to bear in the discussion on regional security and weapons of mass

destruction including on the progress toward a WMD Free Zone in the Middle East.

What should be, in your view, the main priorities of European governments in this field of work?

European governments - both inside and outside the EU and NATO - should work together to increase their understanding of these issues and act collectively to increase their influence. Europe places much emphasis on the rule of law, multilateralism and compliance with international treaties. All these require to be strengthened and supported, and Europe is well-positioned to assist significantly in this regard.

Regarding specifically nuclear non-proliferation, how can the EU contribute to reducing the drift between nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states ahead of the upcoming 2020 NPT RevCon?

The EU could focus on what unites more than what divides. Members of the NPT should be aware of the damage that is being done to the treaty by the drift away from multilateralism and the support for treaties and institutions. The EU, in making this a central focus, would gain significant support from a wide range of State Parties globally. The TPNW, rather than being cast as an irritant, should be understood as a step towards implementing Article VI of the NPT. Now that the Treaty is negotiated and about to enter into force, it would be sensible for those EU states which have yet to join to observe the TPNW and engage with its members in a constructive spirit of understanding, multilateralism and promotion of the principles of the non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament.

## OPEN SKIES AT RISK

President Donald Trump has reportedly expressed the intent to withdraw from the Open Skies Treaty, a major arms control agreement. The treaty, negotiated in 1990-92 and in force since 2002, allows the 34 State parties to fly unarmed reconnaissance planes over one another's territory for collecting data on military forces and activities.

The treaty covers nearly the whole of Europe (Belarus, Russia and Turkey included) as well as Canada, Greenland and the United States. It is of unlimited duration and foresees review conferences.

Under the Treaty, nearly 1500 observation flights have taken place, including 71 Russian ones over the United States and 196 US ones over Russia. Delicate missions have been conducted after the Russian occupation of Crimea and following the Russian attack (November 2018) on Ukrainian naval vessels in the Black Sea.

Like any treaty, Open Skies is not perfect and, as a result of the deteriorating relations between Russia and Western countries, its effectiveness has been eroded. For example, since 2010 Russia has been preventing flights over the territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and Georgia has opposed Russian flights over its territory. Moscow has also limited US' overflights of its heavily militarized enclave of Kaliningrad since 2014. The United States has responded by blocking proposed Russian flights over its Pacific fleet in Hawaii and missile defense interceptor sites in Alaska. Recently, Russia has also denied a request to fly over its massive Center-2019 military exercise, which consequently went unobserved.

On 13 August 2018, Trump suspended funding for the Treaty until Russia is in "complete compliance with [its] obligations". Tellingly, a similar motivation was used by the White House to justify previous withdrawals from other international agreements.

Open skies has played a crucial role in promoting security for all European countries through openness, transparency and confidence building, and in facilitating verification of arms control agreements. Its primary value lies in the promotion of international cooperation, rather than in data collection. It is one of the last international instruments of arms control and its end could deal a fatal blow to the disarmament process.

**Alessandro Pascolini**

Unione Scienziati per il Disarmo/ EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Network



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## EU News

[Chemical weapons: Council renews EU sanctions regime for one year](#)

[EU Statements at the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons \(CCW\)](#)

## Latest Publications

[The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Strategic Stability and Nuclear Risk](#), Volume II, Lora Saalman, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 2019

[Lessons from the Cyberattack on India's Largest Nuclear Power Plant](#), Alexander Campbell, Vickram Singh, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 2019

[Will Europe Get Its Own Bomb?](#), Bruno Tertrais, Fondation Pour La Recherche Stratégique (FRS), 2019

## Network Calls

### 59th ISODARCO COURSE

Applications are now open for the 59<sup>th</sup> ISODARCO Course on “Emerging technologies, evolving nuclear postures, and deteriorating norms: is the global nuclear order eroding?”

The course will be held in Andalo (Trento), Italy, 8 - 15 January 2020  
Further information [here](#)

### PROGRAMME ADMINISTRATOR

The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) is seeking to appoint a Programme Administrator to contribute to the work of the Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Policy Programme (NPNP). The successful candidate will be expected to start in January 2020

Location: London

## EU INSTITUTIONAL NEWS

### The Council of the European Union adopts conclusions and a new decision updating the EU's common rules and user's guide on the Control of Arms Export

On 16 September 2019, the Council of the European Union adopted a decision amending the [Council Common Position of 8 December 2008 on the control of arms exports](#), as well as the [user's guide](#) on the position. The Council also adopted a series of [conclusions on the review of the Common Position](#).

The adoption of such measures came following a number of important developments, new obligations and renewed commitments in the field of export control, both at the European Union and the international level. Among others is the entry into force in December 2014 of the [Arms Trade Treaty \(ATT\)](#), which regulates the international trade of conventional arms and aims at preventing and eradicating the arms' illicit trade and diversion.

In its conclusions, the Council reaffirmed high common standards for the management of transfers of military technology and equipment by all member states, reiterating that military equipment and technology should be traded in a responsible and accountable way and should not be used for internal repression or international aggression.

For more information:

[Full text of the Council Conclusions](#)

[Council decision amending Common Position 2008/944/CFSP defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment](#)

## NETWORK NEWS

### The EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Papers Series

As part of its mandate, defined in [Council Decision \(CFSP\) 2018/299 of 26 February 2018](#), the EU Non-Proliferation Consortium publishes a new series of Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Policy Papers. The latest paper is authored by Mirko Himmel, from the Centre for Science and Peace Research, University of Hamburg, Germany.

*Emerging Dual-Use Technologies in the Life Sciences: Challenges and Policy Recommendations on Export Control*, by Mirko Himmel

Summary:

This policy paper addresses the challenges of regulating emerging dual-use technologies in the life sciences. Export control measures can be used as a key governance instrument to prevent the unwanted proliferation of dual-use technologies. However, emerging technologies present certain challenges for conventional export control mechanisms due to the rapid development of various technologies and uncertainties about their potential use. The paper describes key elements of the European Union export control system and provides examples of select dual-use technologies in the life sciences that challenge this system. Recommendations are made in order to improve current EU strategic export control.

Read the full paper [here](#)

Previous papers can be found [here](#)

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