

American Physical Society Urges Public Debate of Potential Nuclear Weapons Use

The issue of nuclear use has not been the subject of serious public debate since the fall of the Soviet Union. The American Physical Society calls upon policy makers and opinion makers to engage in a dialog with scientists and the public to address this serious issue.

The text of the APS statement follows.

APS Statement: Use of Nuclear Weapons

Adopted by APS Council on April 21, 2006

The American Physical Society is deeply concerned about the possible use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states and for pre-emptive counter-proliferation purposes.

Nuclear weapons have not been used for more than 60 years, reflecting a widespread appreciation of the grave human costs and political and moral consequences of crossing the nuclear threshold. The American Physical Society urges a prompt, full and informed public debate about the circumstances under which the United States might use or threaten to use nuclear weapons, and the consequences for the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Background Information:

The American Physical Society notes that any policy by the United States to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states threatens to undermine the Non-Proliferation Treaty regime. The current U.S. nuclear-use policy, stated in 1995, and reiterated in 2002, reads:

“The United States reaffirms that it will not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon state-parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, except in the case of an invasion or any other attack on the United States, its territories, its armed forces or other troops, its allies, or on a state toward which it has a security commitment carried out, or sustained by such a non-nuclear-weapon state in association or alliance with a nuclear-weapon state.”

Source: APS

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