

Moving Beyond Missile Defense (MBMD)

Summary of the INESAP project (2001-2006), by Jürgen Scheffran

Nearly two decades ago, the project "Moving Beyond Missile Defense" (MBMD) was launched by the International Network of Engineers and Scientists Against Proliferation (INESAP) in collaboration with the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, to develop alternatives to the emerging missile, missile defense and space race. It was based on the premise that missile defense is not an effective tool against missile proliferation, that it would be counterproductive by increasing the dangers of missile proliferation, and that it could lead to a new arms race posing serious problems for international security and stability, arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament.

Because of technical difficulties and the lengthy development periods for both ballistic missiles, missile defenses and space weapons, the project recognized a chance for political initiatives to contain the risks. Instead of rushing to join a non-existing missile shield, the international community would be better advised to take joint action and collaborate on preventing a new

arms race by strengthening and extending the international control regime for nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles and space weapons.

Issues and questions

Since the assessment of the problems and the development of solutions are inherently linked, the project centered around the following issues and questions:

- What is the status of the missile threat? Which factors drive ballistic missile development and proliferation?
- Is missile defense a realistic instrument to prevent the missile threat, in terms of feasibility, effectiveness, costs and implications with regard to international security and stability, arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament?
- What are the likely political, technical and arms-related implications of ballistic missile defenses in key regions?
- How efficient have previous missile control and disarmament efforts been? Are there alternative ways to deal with ballistic missile proliferation and threats?
- How can the international control of ballistic missiles, missile de-

fenses, nuclear weapons and space weapons be strengthened to prevent a missile race on earth and in space?

- Which means to verify missile control and missile disarmament do exist and how can the dual-use problem of missile and space technologies be dealt with?
- How can cooperative regional initiatives and security frameworks to prevent a missile race be strengthened?

Objectives and goals

The project's main objective was to develop and introduce science-based proposals, developed by an international team of experts, into the international debate and the political decision-making process on missile defense, and to promote concepts and initiatives that enhance international stability and cooperation on governmental and non-governmental levels. Main project aims were:

- Serve as a nucleus for improved ballistic missile control and an international norm against ballistic missiles, nuclear weapons and space weapons.
- Raise public awareness and understanding of the problems of missile pro-

liferation and missile defense, allowing citizen groups to voice their concerns about the dangers of missile proliferation and missile defense

- Utilize findings of the international Study Group to lobby political decision-makers for alternatives.

Tasks pursued in the MBMD project

- Develop creative, policy-relevant, scientifically and technically sound proposals that undermine the quest for missile defense.
- Support Diplomacy-First initiatives to deal with the missile threat by strengthening their scientific and technical basis.
- Evaluate arms control and disarmament alternatives to the missile race.
- Evaluate the possibilities and limitations of technical verification measures and their integration into comprehensive missile monitoring schemes.
- Study options to deal with the dual-use of ballistic missile and space technologies.
- Focus on the regional specialties and support regional initiatives on mis-

sile control (North-East Asia, South-Asia, Middle East, Europe, Russia).

- Support Europe as a key player in promoting political and diplomatic responses.
- Link the project with existing studies and projects to provide a comprehensive analysis that includes the relevant aspects of feasible alternatives; enhance networking with experts from critical regions.

Activities and results

A number of activities were conducted in the project period (2001-2006):

- An international group of experts was gathered around various activities to assess political and technical links between missile proliferation and missile defense, and develop a science-based framework for feasible and adequate responses to the missile threat. International expert teams were formed and proposals were discussed at meetings in their global and regional context.
- Exploration and promotion of innovative ideas to address the problem by political and diplomatic initiatives, and concrete arms control and disarmament proposals: improving international missile control, limiting ballistic missile testing, ballistic missile free zones, missile disarmament (global INF Treaty, Zero Ballistic Missile regime), regionally extended Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, nuclear-weapon-free world concepts (e.g. Nuclear Weapons Convention), space weapons ban, regional security frameworks.
- Technical issues, such as monitoring and verification, and the dual-use of relevant technologies, played a prominent role.
- Results and recommendations were integrated into an international policy-oriented process and the decision-making of relevant countries by means of media work, conferences, briefings, and lobby meetings.
- In order to strengthen the science-policy link, political decisionmakers, diplomats, the media, and NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) were involved in regional activities (North-East Asia, South Asia, Middle East, Europe, Russia), with Europe as a key player.
- Findings of the Study Group were presented and disseminated to media and political representatives, using INESAP publications (Study Group Reports, Briefing Papers, INESAP Informa-

tion Bulletin) as well as in other publications and via electronic communication channels.

Selected activities and results

- 19.-21.3.2001, Santa Barbara/USA: Founding workshop of Moving Beyond Missile Defense (MBMD) project
- 16.11.2001, Berlin: Workshop on prerequisites and possibilities to ban weapons in space, together with Federation of German Scientists, Pugwash Germany and German Scientists Initiative for Peace
- 30.11. – 2.12.2001, Shanghai/China: Regional conference on "Missile Defense, Missile Control, and North-East Asian Security" with the Program on Arms Control and Regional Security at Fudan University's Center for American Studies.
- 10.-11.6.2002, Berlin: Expert Briefing "Space Weapons Ban: How Can It Be Achieved?", together with VDW and ACDIS University of Illinois/USA
- 24.-26.1.2003, Berlin: Conference "Arms Control, Transparency and Verification in a European-Russian Framework of Cooperative Security"
- 30.11.-2.12.2003,

Shanghai: INESAP Conference "Moving Beyond Missile Defense", Fudan University.

- 9.-11.10.2004, Hiroshima: Conference "The Challenge of Hiroshima", with Mayors for Peace and Mayor of Hiroshima
- Participation in various related panels, hearings and workshops, e.g. in Ottawa/Canada, Bradford/UK, Manchester/UK, UN at Geneva/Switzerland, annual NPT Prep-Coms.

Related Publications

INESAP Information Bulletin

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INESAP (2002A) THE AXE OF EVIL AGAINST ARMS CONTROL. INESAP INFORMATION BULLETIN 19, MARCH 2002.

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INESAP (2003B) NETWORKING TO CATCH THE BOMB: THE ROLE OF SCIENTISTS IN INTERNATIONAL SECURITY. INESAP INFORMATION BULLETIN 22., DECEMBER 2003.

INESAP (2004A) TARGETING THE LAW: (NON-)PROLIFERATION IN REVIEW. INESAP INFORMATION BULLETIN 23, APRIL 2004.

INESAP (2004B) THE CHALLENGE OF HIROSHIMA: PROLIFERATION AND SECURITY IN NORTHEAST ASIA. INESAP INFORMATION BULLETIN 24, DECEMBER 2004.

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INESAP Briefing Papers

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