Background

The US and the Soviet Union developed nuclear weapons in the 1940s, and by the 1960s had integrated these with long-range ballistic missiles. Both sides proceeded to amass great arsenals of these terrible weapons. In order to control this “arms race” and limit the spread of nuclear weapons, the superpowers of that bipolar world negotiated comprehensive arms control treaties: the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty of 1972, the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) of 1972, and later SALT treaties. The ABM Treaty codified “Mutually Assured Destruction” (MAD) – the concept that stability could be achieved if neither side had an effective national defense against a strike by the opponent, because the certainty of catastrophic reprisal would deter either side from striking first. The SALT I treaty then outlined procedures to reduce the number of warheads in a verifiable way. However, since these treaties, a number of key events have occurred, which change this security framework:

1. The Soviet Union has collapsed and practically vanished.
2. Other potentially hostile countries (such as China) have arisen.
3. Ballistic missile technology (at least medium range) has become widely available.
4. Several unfriendly or neutral countries have tried to acquire nuclear weapons: Iraq (known), North Korea (suspected), Iran (suspected).
5. India and Pakistan have built and tested nuclear weapons. These two countries have fought at least three wars.

Conclusion: We now live in a multi-polar world with at least some spreading of nuclear weapons and with widespread ballistic missile knowledge. Furthermore, a limited national missile defense (NMD) is now technologically possible with non-nuclear means.

Assignment

The next class (Oct. 24) will be devoted to an international NMD role-playing game. The structure of the game is described below. **Your assignment is to briefly research the positions of the six participating nations, before the game, so you will be prepared to represent whichever nation you are assigned in class.**

A great deal of information is available on the web. It is therefore recommended that you use the web to search for recent news articles about the positions of various nations on NMD. If you are not sure where to start, a couple of sites you may wish to check out are:

- [http://www.policy.com](http://www.policy.com)
International NMD Role-Playing Game

You will be randomly assigned to a team representing one of six nations:

- US
- Russia
- China
- Japan
- United Kingdom
- Rest of NATO Europe

Each team will meet for fifteen minutes to formulate a brief policy position on NMD on the basis of its country's interests. Next, a representative from each team will be given five minutes to articulate their position.

The teams may then negotiate and attempt to form alliances. After another fifteen minutes, each team will again have five minutes for a representative to articulate its final position, which can be different from their initial position. The emphasis in the second presentation should be on how/why the group’s positions have/have not changed.

Note: Each team must argue from the historical interests and policies of the country it represents (e.g., the US may display an interest in being able to act unilaterally; the Rest of Europe may be dependent on NATO, but have no desire to antagonize Russia; etc.).