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News: International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

- The **International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons** is celebrated on **September 26th** every year to raise awareness about the threat of nuclear weapons and to promote their elimination. It was declared by the **UN General Assembly (UNGA)** in 2013.
- The **first Special Session of the UNGA devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, reaffirmed the preeminence of nuclear disarmament.**
- The **Atomic Energy Commission (1946)** to propose measures for controlling nuclear energy and eliminating weapons of mass destruction.

Other Initiatives of UNGA

- **Comprehensive disarmament in 1959**
- **Special Session on Disarmament in 1978**
- **Supported the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)**

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

- Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is an international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of nuclear disarmament.
- The treaty was signed in 1st July 1968 and came into force in 5th March 1970.
- There are 190 signatories to the NNPT and are subject to the inspection of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).
- Non-parties to NNPT are India, Israel, Pakistan (Never signed), North Korea (earlier signed) and South Sudan (formed in 2011).
- NNPT defines nuclear weapons states as those states who have possessed nuclear weapons before 1st January 1967.
- These countries are US, UK, China, Russia and France.
- India have not signed the treaty as the treaty divides countries as nuclear haves and nuclear have not's.
- It also focuses on horizontal proliferation and not vertical proliferation.

Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) / London Club

- The Nuclear Suppliers Group is a **voluntary group of nuclear supplier countries that seeks to prevent the nuclear proliferation by controlling the export of materials, equipment and technology.**
- It wasn't created as a result of any treaty, but as a response to the **Indian Nuclear test in May 1974** and first met in **November 1975.**
- NSG has got **48 members.**
- **India's application for membership has been consistently rejected by China** citing that India is not a member of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)

- Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was negotiated at the **Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and adopted by UNGA** in 1996.
- Its headquarters is in **Vienna.** The **treaty intends to ban all nuclear explosions everywhere, by everyone.**
- The CTBT is the last barrier on the way to develop nuclear weapons. It curbs the development of new nuclear weapons and the improvement of existing nuclear weapons. When the treaty enters into force it provides a **legally binding**

norm against nuclear testing. The treaty also prevents human suffering and environmental damages caused by nuclear testing.

- 184 countries have signed it since its opening for signature in 1996 and ratified by 168 countries.
- Still this treaty is not in force as it will only be in force after the completion of 180 days after the ratification by all 44 Annex 2 countries (China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and US has to ratify) whereas India, North Korea and Pakistan has not yet signed the treaty.
- India walked out of CTBT negotiations citing that this treaty only prohibits the testing of Nuclear weapons and not the clear disarmament of Nuclear weapons.
- Annex 1 states are agreed upon by conference and currently comprise all 193 United Nations member states, the Cook Islands, Holy See and Niue.
- Annex 2 states are those that formally participated in the 1996 Conference on Disarmament and possessed nuclear power or research reactors at the time.

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

- The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), or the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty, is the first legally binding international agreement to

comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons with the ultimate goal being their total elimination.

- It was adopted on 7 July 2017, opened for signature on 20 September 2017, and entered into force on 22 January 2021.
- For those nations that are party to it, the treaty prohibits the development, testing, production, stockpiling, stationing, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons, as well as assistance and encouragement to the prohibited activities.
- For nuclear armed states joining the treaty, it provides for a time-bound framework for negotiations leading to the verified and irreversible elimination of its nuclear weapons programme.
- As of 22 January 2021, 86 states have signed the Treaty and 52 states have ratified or acceded to it.
- USA, Russia, China, France, United Kingdom, India, Israel, Pakistan and North Korea are yet to sign it.
- NATO also has refused to support the treaty. Japan, the only state to actually suffer a nuclear weapons attack, also disassociated from the treaty, though it remains committed to full disarmament.