

How Relevant is Nuclear Deterrence Today?

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Abstract

The relevance of nuclear deterrence continues to be questioned in Western countries. However, there are good grounds to say that it continues to be a valid answer to the question of major conflict prevention as well as avoidance of proliferation and WMD use. Nuclear weapons have been effective war-prevention tools: alternative explanations are not satisfying. They have contributed to the reduction of proliferation risks. The costs of nuclear weapons and deterrence remain acceptable. Alternative options are not credible either technically or politically. Finally, nuclear deterrence is a legitimate answer to some of the 21st century's most pressing strategic challenges.

Resumo

Quão Relevante é Hoje a Dissuasão Nuclear?

A relevância da dissuasão nuclear continua a ser questionada nos países ocidentais. No entanto, existem boas razões para dizer que esta continua a ser uma resposta válida à questão de prevenção de grandes conflitos assim como de prevenção da proliferação e uso de Armas de Destruição em Massa (ADM). As armas nucleares têm sido ferramentas eficazes de prevenção de guerras: explicações alternativas não são satisfatórias. Acresce que estas contribuíram para a redução dos riscos de proliferação. Os custos das armas nucleares e a sua dissuasão continua a ser aceitável e as opções alternativas não são nem tecnicamente nem politicamente credíveis. Por fim, a dissuasão nuclear continua a ser uma resposta válida para alguns dos desafios estratégicos mais prementes do século XXI.