

China's military supply to Vietnam, 1964-75

	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975
GUNS	80 500	220 767	141 531	146 600	219 899	139 900	101 800	143 100	189 000	233 500	164 500	141 800
ARTILLERY	1 205	4 439	3 362	3 984	7 087	3 906	2 212	7 898	9 238	9 912	16 406	4 880
BULLETS (1000s)	25 240	114 010	178 120	147 000	247 920	119 170	29 010	57 190	40 000	40 000	30 000	20 060
ARTILLERY SHELLS (1000s)	335	1 800	1 066	1 363	2 082	1 357	397	1 899	2 210	2 210	1 390	965
RADIO TRANSMITTERS	426	2 779	1 568	2 464	1 854	2 210	950	2 464	4 370	4 335	5 148	2 240
TELEPHONES	1 941	9 502	2 235	2 289	3 315	3 453	1 600	2 724	5 905	6 447	7 065	2 160
TANKS	16	-	-	26	18	-	-	80	220	120	80	-
NAVAL VESSELS	-	7	14	25	-	-	-	24	71	5	6	-
PLANES	18	2	-	70	-	-	-	4	14	36	-	20
AUTOS	25	114	96	435	454	162	-	4 011	8 756	1 210	506	-
UNIFORMS (1000 sets)	-	-	400	800	1 000	1 200	1 200	1 400	1 400	1 400	1 400	-

Arms race, proliferation and limitation: the role of détente in the Cold War

The nuclear arms race was at its height during the Cuban Missile Crisis at the point in which the superpowers showed the world that they were unwilling to use nuclear armaments against one another for fear of massive retaliation. In theory, and in military strategies planned by generals and admirals, nuclear weapons were seen as an instrument to be used in war. But Truman decided early on that the use of nuclear weapons should be a political decision, not a military one. His very public conflict with MacArthur sprang from precisely this change; never before had political leaders made what could be seen as military decisions. It was up to the politicians to make decisions about war and peace, and then it was up to the military leaders to decide how to implement the decisions made.

Truman was followed by Eisenhower, a military man who in some respects reversed Truman's approach. He saw the use of nuclear weapons as an instrument of both policy and war, and encouraged his Joint Chiefs of Staff to integrate their use into military strategy. Despite the fact that Eisenhower's Joint Chiefs of Staff planned extensively for total war, including the use of nuclear weapons, his tenure (1953-60) saw the longest period of stability.

The United States had an atomic monopoly for only a very brief period; this ended in 1949 with the Soviet development of nuclear

technology, followed by that of the UK, France and China in 1964. The proliferation of weapons was not simply the stockpiles of weapons but also the expansion of the number of countries that counted as nuclear powers. This proliferation led to necessary negotiations about the spread—and limitations—of these weapons. The USA and the USSR found themselves on the same side in this particular endeavor: neither sought to increase the number of countries that had nuclear weapons; both wanted to keep the technology up to the discretion of the main powers that could be trusted to be rational actors. Even in the midst of conflicts in Vietnam, the Congo and Latin America the USA, the UK and the USSR brokered and signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in July 1968. This was an amendment to the 1963 Test Ban Treaty, in which the USA and the USSR agreed to cease underwater, space and atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons.

Although Brezhnev proved to be a hardliner, he was also a realist, and in 1967 accepted President Johnson's invitation to begin bilateral talks regarding arms limitations. They were hindered somewhat by US domestic politics but eventually evolved into the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT). Formal negotiations took place, beginning in 1969 under President Nixon and Brezhnev. SALT I, as it was later called, was implemented in 1972. According to the terms of the treaties signed, the USA and the USSR agreed to freeze the number of ballistic (flying) missile launchers and would only allow the use of new submarine ballistic missile launchers as these and older intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launchers were removed from use. They also signed the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which limited the number of ABM systems that would defend areas from nuclear attack.

This was followed by SALT II, brokered through a series of talks that took place between 1972 and 1979. The main difference is that SALT II involved negotiations to reduce the number of nuclear warheads possessed by each side to 2250 and banned new weapons programs from coming into existence. The treaty was never ratified by the US Senate, arguably due to Soviet actions in Cuba and in Afghanistan, but both sides honoured the terms of the agreement until 1986, when US president Reagan accused the Soviets of violating the pact and withdrew from the agreement. In 1983 he had announced the decision of his administration to pursue the Strategic Defensive Initiative (SDI) or Star Wars programme, which it was hoped would put a shield over the USA against nuclear attack.

At the same time, the USA was engaged in another set of talks, the ~~Strategic Arms Limitations Talks, or SALT~~. Initiated in Geneva in 1982, these sought to put into place yet another set of limits on nuclear weapons. A limit would be placed not on weapons but on the number of warheads, which would be capped at 5000 plus 2500 on ICBMs. Since both sides had been placing more than one warhead on each ICBM, it was also proposed to limit the number of ICBMs to 850. This proposal was weighted heavily in favor of the United States, as it appeared to be an attempt at parity when really the USA had tremendous superiority, especially with ICBMs. As the talks dragged on through the 1980s, both sides continued to develop and produce

START: Strategic Arms
Reduction Talks

more nuclear weapons, rather than less. In the end, the Treaty that was signed in 1991 allowed for both sides to possess over 10 000 warheads, while limiting the number of fighter planes, attack helicopters, tanks and artillery pieces. Its implementation, however, was hindered by the collapse of the Soviet Union six months later. Subsequently, the United States had to sign separate treaties with Russia and other former Soviet states that possessed nuclear weapons. The USA signed treaties with Russia (which remains a nuclear power), Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, all of whom voluntarily dismantled their nuclear weapons and sent them to Russia for disposal.

The nuclear arms agreements were the most high-profile areas of *détente*, but there were other treaties that signalled a willingness to change entrenched Cold War policies on both sides. In 1970, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) signed a treaty with the USSR recognizing the borders of Germany, including the Oder–Neisse line that delineated the border of Poland and the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Shortly thereafter, a quadripartite agreement was signed in which it was decided that Berlin would be represented by the FRG in international matters but it would not become part of the FRG. Lastly with regard to Germany, 1972 saw the normalization of relations between the two German states, including the establishment of permanent missions and the admission of both states into the UN. This complemented the West German policy of *Ostpolitik*, a distinct shift toward Eastern Europe in an attempt to improve relations with the GDR that, it hoped, would eventually lead to reunification.

The most wide-ranging aspect of *détente* was finalized in Helsinki in 1975 with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The Final Act contained three “baskets”: security in Europe, in which post-war frontiers were accepted; co-operation in science, technology and environmental concerns; and human rights. The improvement of relations between East and West seemed to be at its high point, yet five years later, Soviet actions in Poland and Afghanistan renewed Cold War tensions.

TOK link

Natural sciences and areas of knowledge: ethics and psychology

One of the main reasons for the disarmament talks was the fear of mutual assured destruction (MAD).

MAD is the military strategy whereby the development of nuclear weapons gives all nuclear powers the capability to destroy their opponents. Once there were enough weapons on both sides, it was thought that there would be enough firepower to destroy the world.

In 1967, the US Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, wrote:

It is important to understand that assured destruction is the very essence of the whole deterrence concept. We must possess an actual assured-destruction capability, and that capability also must be credible. The point is that a potential aggressor must believe that our assured-destruction capability is in fact actual, and that our will to use it in retaliation to an attack is in fact unwavering. The conclusion, then, is clear: if the United States is to deter a nuclear attack in itself or its allies, it must possess an actual and a credible assured-destruction capability.

Source: McNamara, R. “Mutual Deterrence” speech. 18 September 1967.
<http://www.atomicarchive.com/Docs/Deterrence/Deterrence.shtml>

The concept of MAD remains a theory, as it has not been tested. There have been two “tests” of the atom bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the effects of nuclear contamination have been demonstrated in accidents such as the Chernobyl disaster. But, for obvious reasons, there has never been an attempt to prove the hypothesis underlying MAD.



How, then, do we know that MAD is a valid theory?

Would MAD pass the coherence or correspondence tests?

Why or why not?

Does the validity of the theory really matter if people believe in it?

Détente The easing of tensions between the USA and the USSR in the 1970s.

Ostpolitik (Eastern politics, German) A policy that sought to improve relations with West and East Germany through collaboration and assistance to bring about eventual reunification. Willy Brandt, the West German chancellor, championed this policy that was maintained until the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe in 1989.