



De-Alerting Initiatives and Their Implications for Crisis Management and Stability

Thursday, May 14

13:15—14:30

Conference Room D

Dr. David Wright

Co-director and Senior Scientist,
Global Security Program
Union of Concerned Scientists

Hans Kristensen

Director, Nuclear Information Project
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Dr. Gregory Kulacki

China Project Manager & Senior Analyst,
Global Security Program
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**NPT Review Conference
Side Event**

Nuclear risk reduction will be a major theme at the 2015 NPT Review Conference and many are calling on nuclear weapons states to take steps to decrease the operational readiness of their nuclear weapons systems and remove them from high alert status—thus reducing the risk of an accidental or mistaken launch. However, there are differing views on the effects of de-alerting during a crisis and whether it would increase or decrease stability. Join a panel of experts to examine these questions.

Dr. Wright will give an overview of current nuclear alert levels and launch-on-warning policies, including a discussion of de-alerting options and international security benefits, with a review of some historical incidents that increased the risk of inadvertent nuclear launches.

Hans Kristensen will discuss deterrence and crisis stability in the nuclear age, looking at the details of current force structures, an analysis of nuclear alert scenarios, and the dangers of tightly coupled systems in a complex security environment.

Dr. Kulacki will use China as a case-study in considering the question of de-alerting. Chinese military strategists are considering raising the alert level in response to the development of highly accurate nuclear and conventional missiles, hypersonic weapons, and other advanced military technologies. China's concerns make clear that additional arms control measures are needed to reduce risks in the current geo-political climate. Steps that lead the nuclear weapon states to keep their forces de-alerted are critical.

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