



THE THREAT OF NUCLEAR TERRORISM: NUCLEAR WEAPONS OR OTHER NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICES

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Conventional weaponry and tactics are likely to remain the primary terrorist means for a definitive majority of sub-national groups. No non-state actors have ever deployed or used a nuclear device. However, recent developments in international terrorism may point in the direction of future terrorist uses of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear devices. Some terrorist groups with a high international profile have showed disturbing interests in acquiring nuclear weapon capabilities. As the “terrorist nuclear weapon standards” are likely to be lower than the strict requirements for traditional state nuclear weapons, technical barriers should not be considered sufficient to avoid future nuclear terrorist violence. Preventing any extremist group from achieving their goals of large-scale nuclear killing is likely best done by preventing the access to fissile materials through state compliances to rigorous standards of Material Protection, Control and Accountability (MPC&A).