

“Arms Control and Missile Proliferation in the Middle East”

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- The study is a timely track II effort that explores the means of addressing missiles as a frequently overlooked issue in the discourse over security in the Middle East. It puts the missile issue back on the radar screen of the international community.
- It offers a sober but realistic assessment of the myriad of complicating factors in advancing any arms control and disarmament process in the region. These factors include, differing threat perceptions, asymmetrical distribution of military capabilities, the large role of external political actors and foreign military deployments, lack of normal relations amongst key regional states, the role of non-state actors in the region, and ongoing political disputes.
- It makes a case for treating the issue of missiles as a specific issue to be considered apart from the broader consideration of establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. However, steps to advance both issues clearly need to be taken in parallel.
- The report sees a central role for the MTCR and HCOC in achieving missile control in the Middle East. It is true that certain transparency measures in the HCOC could indeed play a role as CSBMs.
- The notion of eliminating WMD-capable delivery systems is an explicit feature of the 1995 NPT Resolution on the Middle East. The treatment of *missiles* per se in the context of the 1995 Resolution is narrower than the approach to missiles advocated in the book, as the 1995 Resolution suggests a focus only on those delivery systems that could carry weapons of mass destruction. This approach may offer more simple solutions, in comparison to the objectives of tackling all types of missiles at once (this is understood to include all categories of rockets, ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, anti-missile systems and unmanned aerial vehicles). On a different note, it is clear that the notion of delivery systems in the context of the 1995 Resolution is broader than only missiles.
- At same time, it must be acknowledged that there is interest from some States of the region in addressing non-WMD related military capabilities in connection with the establishment of the zone. In this connection, controls on non-WMD missile systems

may have a place in any process to establish a zone, particularly in the context of confidence and security building measures.

- The study could make a valuable contribution to any efforts that emerge from the Helsinki Conference.
- Ideally, the Helsinki Conference should be considered the beginning of a process whereby the specific requirements of the zone, and indeed a number of the issues raised in the study, would/could be addressed over some indeterminate period of time.
- It is important to bear in mind that any consideration of specific arms control and transparency measures could likely be contemplated only in a follow-on process to the Helsinki Conference.