UNSC joint statement on nuclear weapons

Why in news?

Recently, P5 members of the UNSC released a joint statement on preventing a nuclear war and avoiding the ongoing global arms race.

What the joint statement on Nuclear weapons says?

- **Preventing Nuclear war -** The P5 statement reaffirmed that a "nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought" because of its far-reaching consequences.
- **Avoiding global arms race -** However they upheld the necessity of nuclear weapons for defensive purposes to deter aggression and prevent war.
- The statement further
    - Reaffirmed that nuclear threats must be addressed.
    - Emphasised on the importance of "preserving and complying with the bilateral and multilateral non-proliferation, disarmament, and arms control agreements and commitments".
- The statement also expressed a commitment to
    - obligations of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).
    - prevent the unauthorised or unintended use of nuclear weapons.

What did they propose to accomplish?

- The P5 have undertaken to
    1. "work with all states to create a secure environment more conducive to progress on disarmament. The ultimate goal would be "a world without nuclear weapons" with undiminished security for all"
    2. "continue to seek bilateral and multilateral diplomatic approaches to avoid military confrontations, strengthen stability and predictability, increase mutual understanding and confidence"
    3. pursue "constructive dialogue with mutual respect and acknowledgement of each other's security interests and concerns".
- The statement is not a binding resolution
- It only reiterates some of the core obligations of the NPT
- The review of the NPT remains postponed till August due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

How significant is the statement?

It did not diminish

- the urgency and the political significance of the statement
- unimaginable danger posed by the 13,000 nuclear weapons currently held by a handful of countries
- growing spectre of loose nukes, which may be deployed by armed terrorist groups for

nefarious purposes.

What was the warning from UN Secretary-General?

- UN Secretary-General warned that nuclear annihilation is “just one misunderstanding or miscalculation away”.
- He suggested that bold action on six fronts was necessary. Member states
  - should chart a path forward on nuclear disarmament
  - should agree to new measures of “transparency and dialogue”
  - should address the “simmering” nuclear crises in the Middle East and Asia
  - should strengthen the existing global bodies that support non-proliferation, including IAEA
  - should promote the peaceful use of nuclear technology
  - should remind the world’s people – especially the young that eliminating nuclear weapons is the only way to guarantee that they will never be used.

What needs to be done?

- Assurance about from the PF members for
  - avoiding an arms race
  - not targeting each other or any other state
  - preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Reference

https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/why-unsc-joint-statement-on-nuclear-weapons-is-important-7750339/

