

Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)

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In news: While inaugurating two new facilities at Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Missile Complex in Hyderabad, Vice President referred to the limitations faced by India in having access to high end missile technology of developed countries prior to the signing of MTCR in 2018, Vice President of India said that DRDO turned this crisis into an opportunity by developing a range of indigenous missile systems.

What is the MTCR?

- The Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) is an informal political understanding among states that seek to limit the proliferation of missiles and missile technology.
- The MTCR was created in order to curb the spread of unmanned delivery systems for nuclear weapons, specifically delivery systems that could carry a payload of 500 kg for a distance of 300 km.
- The MTCR applies to exports to other members as well as exports to non-members.

When was the MTCR established?

The regime was formed in 1987 by the G-7 industrialized countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK, and the United States).

The main objectives of the MTCR

The MTCR seeks to limit the risks of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) by controlling exports of goods and technologies that could make a contribution to delivery systems (other than manned aircraft) for such weapons. In this

context, the Regime places particular focus on rockets and unmanned aerial vehicles capable of delivering a payload of at least 500 kg to a range of at least 300 km and on equipment, software, and technology for such systems.

What is the purpose of the MTCR?

- The MTCR was initiated by like-minded countries to address the increasing proliferation of nuclear weapons by addressing the most destabilizing delivery system for such weapons.
- In 1992, the MTCR's original focus on missiles for nuclear weapons delivery was extended to a focus on the proliferation of missiles for the delivery of all types of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), i.e., nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.
- Such proliferation has been identified as a threat to international peace and security.
- One way to counter this threat is to maintain vigilance over the transfer of missile equipment, material, and related technologies usable for systems capable of delivering WMD.

How does the MTCR achieve its objectives?

- **Export Controls:** The Regime rests on adherence to common export policy (the Guidelines) applied to an integral common list of items (the MTCR Equipment, Software, and Technology Annex.)
- **Meetings:** MTCR Partners regularly exchange information about relevant missile non-proliferation issues in the context of the Regime's overall aims.
- **Dialogue and Outreach:** The MTCR Chair and MTCR Partners undertake outreach activities to non-Partners in order to keep them informed about the group's activities and to provide practical assistance regarding efforts to prevent the proliferation of WMD delivery systems.

Are the MTCR's Guidelines binding?

- No – the MTCR is not a treaty and does not impose any legally binding obligations on Partners.
- Rather, it is an informal political understanding among states that seek to limit the proliferation of missiles and missile technology.
- The only activity prohibited absolutely by the Guidelines, to which all 34 Partner countries voluntarily subscribe, is the export of production facilities for Category I MTCR Annex items.

Is there a central administrative body for the MTCR?

The MTCR has no formal secretariat. France serves as the Regime's Point of Contact (POC). The POC receives and distributes all Regime documents. The POC also participates in outreach activities and hosts intersessional meetings.

Member countries

- There are currently 35 countries that are members (Partners) of the MTCR
- India is also a member of MTCR
- The MTCR Chairmanship rotates on an ad hoc basis. Normally the country that hosts the Plenary then serves as Chair for the ensuing year.
- All MTCR decisions including decisions on membership require a consensus decision by all current Regime members.

Relationship between the MTCR and the UN

While there is no formal linkage, the activities of the MTCR are consistent with the UN's non-proliferation and export control efforts. For example, applying the MTCR Guidelines and Annex on a national basis helps countries to meet their export control obligations under UN Security Council Resolution 1540.

India and Nuclear related treaties

Barring NSG, India is part of all other export control regimes- Australia Group, Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and Wassenaar Arrangement (WA)