

# UNIT 11 – UPSC -World History and World wars

A world war is a war that involve some of the most influential and populated countries of the world. World wars span multiple countries on multiple continents, with battles fought in multiple zones.

The term world war is typically applied to the two conflicts that happened during the 20th century:

1. World War I, or First World War (1914-1918)
2. World War II, or Second World War (1939-1945)

It is also sometimes applied to other wars such as the War of the Spanish Succession, the Seven Years' War, the Cold War and Cold War II, a hypothetical World War III and even the Napoleonic Wars, if the United States is counted as a belligerent, as it was in the War of 1812 with Great Britain.



The world wars:

## World War I

World War-1 was the first mass global war of the industrialized age, a demo of the remarkable strength, resilience and massacre power of modern states. It was often called as "The Great War".

The war was also fought at a high point of nationalism and faith in the existing social hierarchy, beliefs that the war itself helped destroy, and that the modern world finds very hard to understand.

This war began on July 28, 1914, when Austria-Hungary confirmed war on Serbia. This apparently small conflict between two countries spread rapidly. Soon, Germany, Russia, Great Britain, and France were all drawn into the war, largely because they were involved in treaties that obligated them to protect certain other nations. Western and eastern fronts rapidly opened along the borders of Germany and Austria-Hungary.

The Western and Eastern Fronts: The first month of battle consisted of brave outbreaks and rapid troop movements on both fronts. In the west, Germany attacked first Belgium and then France. In the east, Russia attacked both Germany and Austria-Hungary. In the south, Austria-Hungary

attacked Serbia. Following the Battle of the Marne (September 5-9, 1914), the western front became entrenched in central France and remained that way for the rest of the war. The fronts in the east also slowly locked into place.

**The Ottoman Empire:** In the end of 1914, the Ottoman Empire was brought into the fight as well, after Germany deceived Russia into thinking that Turkey had attacked it. As a result, much of 1915 was subjugated by Allied actions against the Ottomans in the Mediterranean. First, Britain and France launched an unsuccessful attack on the Dardanelles. This campaign was followed by the British attack of the Gallipoli Peninsula. Britain also launched a separate campaign against the Turks in Mesopotamia. Although the British had some successes in Mesopotamia, the Gallipoli campaign and the attacks on the Dardanelles resulted in British defeats.

**Trench Warfare:** The middle part of the war which was between 1916 and 1917, dominated by continuous ditch fighting in both the east and the west. Soldiers fought from dug-in positions, striking at each other with machine guns, heavy artillery, and chemical weapons. Though soldiers died by the millions in brutal conditions, neither side had any substantive success or gained any benefit.

**The United States' Entrance and Russia's Exit:** Regardless of the stalemate on both fronts in Europe, two important developments in the war happened in 1917. In early April, the United States, infuriated by attacks upon its ships in the Atlantic, declared war on Germany. Then, in November, the Bolshevik Revolution prompted Russia to draw out of the war.

Attacks in World War 1 (Source: Dennis Cove, 2002):

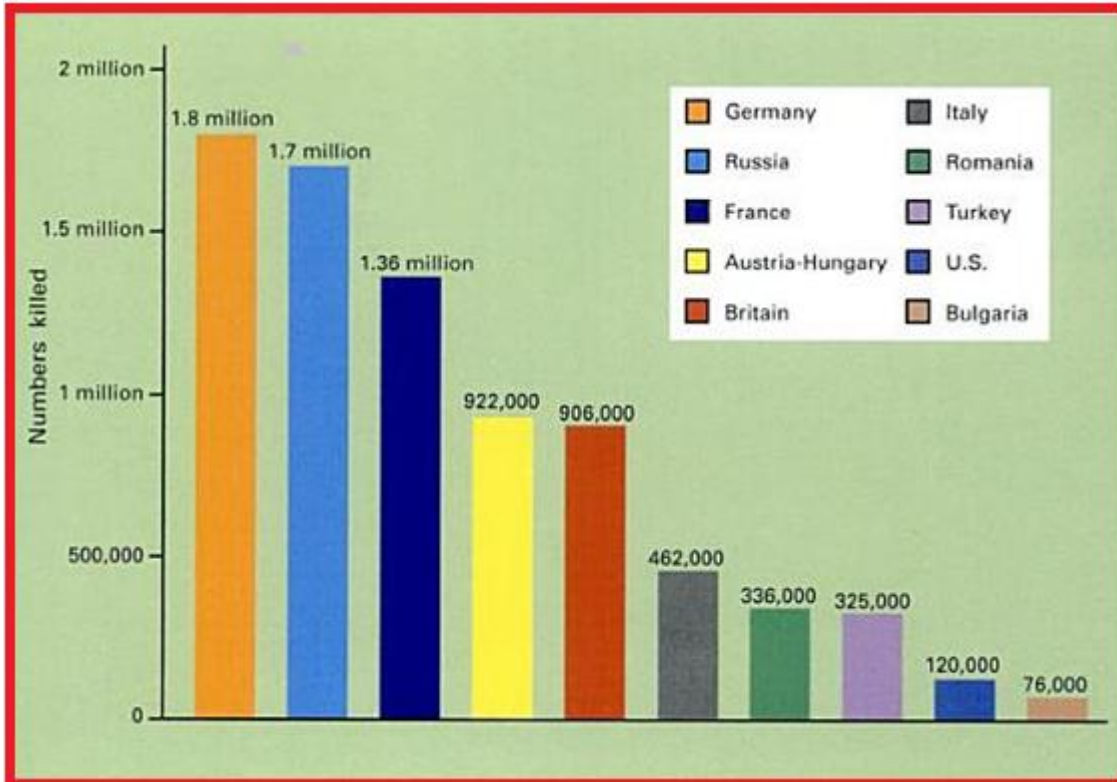


### Prime causes of World War 1:

1. Mutual Defence Alliances
2. Imperialism
3. Militarism
4. Nationalism
5. Immediate Cause- Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand

Among the harmful technological developments that were used for the first time (or in some cases used for the first time in a major conflict) during the Great War were the machine gun, poisonous gas, flamethrowers, tanks and aircraft. Artillery increased dramatically in size, range and killing power compared to its 19th-century counterparts. In the war at sea, submarines could attack hidden from under the waves, using torpedoes to send combat the merchant ships to the bottom. The End of the War and Armistice: Although both sides launched renewed assaults in 1918 in an all-or-nothing effort to win the war, both efforts were futile. The fighting between exhausted, disheartened troops continued to plod along until the Germans lost a number of individual battles and very gradually began to fall back. A lethal outbreak of influenza, meanwhile, took heavy tolls on soldiers of both sides. Ultimately, the governments of both Germany and Austria-Hungary began to lose control as both countries experienced multiple rebellions from within their military structures.

Chart: Depiction of loss of life suffered in the combat of World War 1 (Source: Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 2004)



After the announcement of ending World War I, it had been observed that there were considerable effects echoed in the world for decades such as changing politics, economics and public attitude. Many countries began to implement more liberal forms of government, and a hostile Germany was forced to pay for a large deal of war reparations.

As a consequence of World War I, socialistic ideas experienced successful as they spread not only in Germany and the Austrian realm but also made improvements in Britain (1923) and France (1924). However, the most popular type of government to gain power after World War I was the republic. Before the war, Europe contained 19 monarchies and 3 republics, yet only a few years afterward, had 13 monarchies, 14 republics and 2 regencies. Evidently, revolution was in the air and people began to more ardently express their desires for a better way of life (Dennis Cove, 2002).

Effects of a harsh Peace: Another political outcome of World War I centres merely on the treatment of Germany in the Treaty of Versailles of 1919. The Germans were enforced to sign an embarrassing treaty accepting responsibility for causing the war, as well as dispense large amount of money in order to compensate for war costs. Additionally, the size of the German state was reduced, while that of Italy and France was engorged. The Weimar government set up in Germany in 1918 was not preferred by most of the citizens and maintained little power to control the German state. Rising hostilities toward the rest of Europe grew, and many German soldiers rejected to give up fighting, even though Germany's military was ordered to be considerably reduced. Given such orders, numerous German ex-soldiers joined the Freikorps, an establishment of mercenaries available for street-fighting. The open aggression and rumbling feelings of retaliation showed by Germany foreshadowed the beginning of World War II.

Economic Change: There were many economic changes after World War 1. Technology advancement were experienced after the war, as the production of automobiles, airplanes, radios

and even certain chemicals, rise steeply. The advantages of mass production and the use of technology to perform former human labour tasks, along with the enactment of the eight hour work day, demonstrated to motivate the economy, especially in the United States. Even much of Europe experienced major losses of physical property and landscape as well as finances. By 1914, Europe had won the respect of the world as a reliable money-lender, yet just four years later was greatly in debt to her allies for their generous financial contributions toward the war effort, owing them as much as \$10 billion. In an effort to pay back their allies, the governments of many European countries began to quickly print more and more money, only to subject their countries to a period of inflation. Members of the middle class who had been living reasonably comfortably on investments began to experience unsteady financial period. Germany was hit the hardest in terms of struggling with war reparations, and inflation significantly lowered the value of the German mark. In a period of no more than three months in 1923, the German mark jumped from 4.6 million marks to the dollar to 4.2 trillion marks to the dollar (Dennis Cove, 2002).

**Disillusionment:** In psychological terms, World War I had effects related to those of a revolution. A growing sense of cynicism of political leaders and government officials transfused the minds of people who had observed the fear and destruction due to the war. Many citizens were annoyed that peacemakers had not conveyed their principles passionately enough, and people were shocked to experience that why warfare happened. It had been observed that a feeling of disillusionment spread across the world as people intensely decided that their governments had not taken action in favour of citizens. The loss of close relatives on the battlefield was highly upsetting, for in some parts of Western Europe, one of four young men had lost his life in battle. Overall, the war killed 10 to 13 million people, with nearly a third of them inhabitants. The future certainly did not look optimistic for the families of those killed in the war.

**Consequences of World War 1:** The outcome of World War I saw extreme political, cultural, and social revolution across Europe, Asia, Africa, and even in areas outside those that were directly involved. Four territories malformed due to the war, old countries were abolished, new ones were formed, boundaries were redrawn, international organizations were established, and many new and old ideologies took a firm hold in people's minds. World War I also had the effect of bringing political change to Germany and the United Kingdom by bringing near-universal suffrage to these two European powers, turning them into mass electoral democracies for the first time in history (Dennis Cove, 2002).

## World War II

It was the most destructive war observed by the world. This had impacted at global scale. The conflagration was not confined to Europe alone, but surrounded the entire world. It occurred in the period from 1939 to 1945. The Second World War was debatably the most significant period of the 20th century (Dennis Cove, 2002). The war in Europe started in earnest on September 1, 1939 with the attack of Poland by Nazi Germany, and concluded on September 2, 1945, with the official surrender of the last Axis nation, Japan. Nonetheless, in Asia the war began earlier with Japanese interventions in China, and in Europe, the war ended earlier with the unconditional surrender of Germany on May 8, 1945. The battle spilled over into Africa, included a trickle of incidents in the Americas, and a series of major naval battles. It brought about major hikes in technology and laid the foundation that permitted post-war social changes including the end of

European colonialism, the civil rights movement in the United States, and the modern women's rights movement, as well as the programs for exploring outer space.

The main fighters were the Axis nations (Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, Imperial Japan and their smaller allies) and the Allied nations, led by Britain (and its Commonwealth nations), the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America. The Allies were the victors. Two world power, the USA and USSR, arisen from World War II to instigate a Cold War with each other that would define much of the rest of the century.

It involved most of the world's major countries divided into two opposite forces: the Allies and the Axis. Engagements were fought in the Pacific, in the jungles of South-East Asia, in the plains of Russia and in the deserts of Africa, in addition to Europe. In total, more than 100 million military personnel were mobilized during the war.

**Causes of war:** Major causes of World War II were as follows:

1. German Invasion of Poland
2. German Invasion of Soviet Union
3. The Holocaust
4. Japanese Imperialism
5. Attack on Pearl Harbour
6. Normandy Landings in Europe
7. Dropping of Atomic Bombs on Japan

The instant cause for the occurrence of war was Germany's assault of Poland. Hitler had established one of his key aims as leader of the Nazi party to be supremacy of Europe, which he clearly sought by force. In early 1939, Britain and France cautioned Germany that an attack of Poland would cause them to declare war, so when, in September 1939, Hitler occupied Poland, war broke out in Europe. There were other tensions brewing under the surface which many historians believe contributed to the outbreak of war, but the invasion of Poland is certainly a crucial trigger-cause of the battle.

Another long-term causes definitely helped to create a situation in which Hitler could rise to power as he did. These include disappointment with the Treaty of Versailles. Germany having surrendered in 1918 and were forced to sign a treaty which included Germany taking the blame for World War One, reducing regions, agreeing to disarm and significantly diminish the military, and agreeing to pay roughly 6.6 billion pounds in reparations. The German people felt this was excessively harsh, and developed a deep-set resentment of the Allied victors of WW1 for dealing them this intense punishment. As the economic depression of the 1920s affected most of Western Europe, the League of Nation agreed to reduce some of the limitations of the Treaty of Versailles, but this did little to quell the resentment of the German people. When the Nazis resumed power, some of the terms of the treaty were outright disobeyed, whereas others were easy to plan using loopholes. Hitler was able to systematically increase the military in Nazi Germany during the 1930s due to the treaty being insufficient in its rules regarding military growth. Nonetheless, a harsher set of terms in the initial treaty may have led to an even stronger bitterness in the German people. As such, though the treaty was not sufficient to prevent further outburst of war, it is hard to understand how a balance could have been struck.

**Consequences of World War II:**

Major upshots of this war were:

1. The End of the European Age.
2. The rise of the US to superpower status.
3. The expansion of the Soviet Union and its rise to superpower status.
4. The emergence of the Cold War.
5. The beginning of the nuclear age.
6. The rise of nationalism and independence movements in Asia and Africa.
7. A renewed effort to secure lasting peace through international organizations.

World War II is the most vicious war in all of history. There were massive casualties of human lives. It was estimated that casualties in World War II may have approximately 50 million service personnel and civilians. Nations suffering the highest losses, military and civilian, in descending order, are:

USSR:	42,000,000
Germany:	9,000,000
China:	4,000,000
Japan:	3,000,000

Germany was totally beaten, and the Nazi regime brought down. Its leaders were tried for crimes against humanity at Nuremberg, the former site of Nazi propaganda triumphs. Hitler escaped trial and execution by committing suicide in his Berlin bunker at the end of the war. German cities were in wrecks from a massive bombing campaign. Germany was divided into 4 zones of occupation by the victorious powers, pending a more permanent political settlement.

Japan also was in wrecked from excessive bombing. Prominent military leaders were tried and convicted of war crimes, but the emperor was allowed to maintain his position. Japan was temporarily placed under U.S. military rule.

England was devastated by the war, having experienced extensive bombing during the 1940 blitz by the Germans. The economy depended for recovery upon assistance from the United States. England quickly phased out most of its remaining imperial holdings in the years immediately following the war.

France had not experienced the huge human losses sustained in the First World War, but would have to recover from the effects of Nazi occupation. Retribution was taken upon collaborators. Like England, France would be forced to dismantle its colonial empire in the years following the war. This was a particularly disturbing and drawn out process for the French, in Algeria and in Vietnam where they fought prolonged and bitter wars in an attempt to maintain their colonial control.

England and France no longer held a status of power comparable either to the United States or the Soviet Union.

The Russian people had suffered immensely during the war, and western Russia was shattered by the land fighting which was primarily on Russian territory. But, in the process of defeating the Germans, the Russians had built a large and powerful army, which occupied most of Eastern Europe at the end of the war. The great resources and population of Russia guaranteed that the Soviet Union would be, along with the United States, one of two super-powers.

The economy of United States was greatly motivated by the war, even more so than in World War I. The depression was brought definitively to an end, and new industrial complexes were built all over the United States. Spared the physical destruction of war, the U.S. economy dominated the world economy. After 4 years of military build-up, the U.S. had also become the primary military power. The United States emerged as world leader.

The eastern conquerors claimed payment of war reparations from the overpowered nations, and in the Paris Peace Treaty, the Soviet Union's enemies-Hungary, Finland and Romania were required to pay \$300,000,000 each to the Soviet Union. Italy was required to pay \$360,000,000, shared chiefly between Greece, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union. The much larger reparations from occupied Germany to Russia were to be paid not by goods or money but by the transfer of capital goods, such as dismantled manufacturing plants.

**Social Impacts of WW II:** The Second World War caused a series of rapid and extensive social changes in Newfoundland and Labrador. The establishment of foreign bases provided the Commission of Government with an unexpected amount of wealth, which it used to develop social services. Improvements were made in health care, education, transportation, communication, and other fields. The presence of thousands of visiting Canadian and American troops also changed values and attitudes previously engrained in Newfoundland and Labrador society. Standards of living enhanced, styles of dress transformed, new friendships both romantic and platonic were forged, and the introduction of American radio and other forms of entertainment did much to integrate Newfoundland and Labrador into North American culture and distance it from Great Britain's. Eventually, the social changes of the 1940s helped shape the country's constitutional future, which cumulated in Confederation. Following the war, the American and Canadian Armed Forces turned many of their facilities and structures over to the Commission of Government for civilian use. As a result, the country inherited various modern hospitals, airports, communication systems, paved roads, sewers, recreational centres, and other assets it would not have otherwise been able to afford. Many of these amenities are still in use today, including the airports at Stephenville and Torbay (today the St. John's International Airport). Perhaps of more profound and sweeping significance, however, was the war exposure of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to North American culture.

## Cold War

The Soviet-American battle is termed as the "Cold War" hung heavy over global matters for more than forty long years; configuring the world with wide-ranging military build-ups, an constant nuclear arms competition, concentrated surveillance, and persistent technological imitations. This threatening quarrel can be further expounded as the causes and consequences drawn upon the world by the two giants namely, the United States of America and the Soviet Union.

The Cold War was a consequence of the emergence of the US and the USSR as two giants which were opponent to each other, it was also entrenched in the understanding that the destruction caused by the use of atom bombs is very expensive for any country to bear. When two opposing powers are in possession of nuclear weapons, capable of causing death and destruction intolerable to each other, a full-fledged war is improbable. In spite of provocations, neither side would want to risk war since no political gains would justify the destruction of their societies. The Cold War started in Europe after World War II. The Soviet Union gained control of Eastern Europe. It



controlled half of Germany and half of Germany's capital, Berlin. The United States, Britain, and France controlled western Germany and West Berlin. In June 1948, the Soviet Union jammed roads and railroads that led to West Berlin. The United States, Great Britain, and France flew in supplies. This was called the Berlin Airlift. When the World War II ended, Korea split into North and South Korea. North Korea became communist. South Korea followed the ideology of capitalist. North Korean army occupied South Korea. The United Nations sent soldiers to help South Korea. China sent soldiers to help North Korea. The war ended in 1953. Neither side won. Korea is still divided.

The United States and the Soviet Union were in a nuclear arms competition. In 1959, Cuba became a communist country and the Soviets clandestinely put missiles there. President Kennedy was worried that the Soviet Union would attack the United States. Therefore, he sent warships to surround Cuba. He hoped a blockade would force the Soviet Union to remove its missiles. This conflict was called the Cuban Missile Crisis. For six days, nuclear war seemed possible. Then the Soviet Union removed the missiles.

The Cold War subjugated the second half of the 20th century, resulting in the downfall of communism. The Cold War was a period of tension and unfriendliness between the United States of America and the Soviet Union from the period of mid-40s to the late 80s. It began with the end of the Second World War. Free society named it as World War III, but instead, used an unusual name pertaining to no direct military conflict between the two nations, fearing nuclear acceleration assured mutual devastation. However, both the nations indulged in indirect conflicts and proxy wars by supporting associated nations in places like Korea and Vietnam. Cuban missile crisis in 1962 was the closest the world ever came to a nuclear war; when an American U2 spy plane took photographs of Soviet intermediate ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear payloads, sending a total of 42 medium range missiles and 24 intermediate range missiles to Cuba. The US, then threatened to invade Cuba over the issue forcing the Soviets to remove the missiles on America's assurance of not invading Cuba.

In the occurrence of a nuclear war, both sides would be so seriously harmed that it would be impossible to declare one side or the other as the conqueror. Even if one of them tries to attack and incapacitate the nuclear weapons of its rival, the other would still be left with enough nuclear weapons to cause unacceptable destruction. This is called the logic of 'deterrence': both sides have the capacity to react against an attack and to cause so much annihilation that neither can afford to initiate war. Therefore, the Cold War in spite of being an intense form of competition between super powers remained a 'cold' and not hot or gunfire war. The deterrence relationship averts war but not the competitiveness between giant powers. The two superpowers and the countries in the rival blocs led by the superpowers were anticipated to behave as balanced and responsible players. Because they understood the dangers in fighting wars that might involve the two world power.

**Causes of cold war: Major causes of cold war was as under:**

1. The Soviet Union wanted to spread its philosophy of communism worldwide, which alarmed the Americans who followed democracy.
2. The acquisition of atomic weapons by America caused fear in the Soviets.
3. Both countries feared an attack from each other adhering to mutual mass destruction.
4. The Soviet Union's action of taking control over Eastern Europe was a major factor for US suspicions.

5. The US President had a personal dislike of the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin.
6. America was annoyed by the Soviet Union's actions in the part of Germany it had occupied.
7. The Soviets feared that America would use Western Europe as a base to attack it.

**Effects of cold war:** The Cold War had considerable impact on civilisation, both today and in the past. In Russia, military spending was cut intensely and rapidly. The effects of this were very large, visualizing as the military-industrial sector had previously employed one of every five Soviet adults and its dismantling left hundreds of millions throughout the former Soviet Union jobless. These effects can be analysed as follows:

1. Both the United States of America and the Soviet Union built up huge collections of atomic weapons and airborne missiles.
2. The military blocs, NATO and the Warsaw Pact were formed.
3. Cold war led to damaging conflicts like the Vietnam War and the Korean War.
4. The Soviet Union collapsed due to economic flaws.
5. The Berlin Wall was destroyed and the two German nations were unified.
6. The Warsaw Pact collapsed.
7. The Baltic States and some former Soviet Republics achieved independence.
8. America became the single giant power of the world.
9. Communism collapsed worldwide.

After Russia embarked on capitalist economic improvements in the 1990s, it suffered a financial catastrophe and a recession more severe than the United States and Germany had experienced during the Great Depression. The living standard of Russian have deteriorated overall in the post-Cold War years, although the economy has resumed growth since 1999.

The inheritance of the Cold War continues to influence world activities. After the closure of the Soviet Union, the post-Cold War world is broadly considered as unipolar, with the United States the sole remaining world power. The Cold War demarcated the political role of the United States in the post-World War II world. By 1989 the United States held military alliances with 50 countries, and had 1.5 million troops posted abroad in 117 countries. The Cold War also institutionalized a global promise to huge, permanent peacetime military-industrial complexes and large-scale military funding of science.

The US has invested heavily on military during the Cold War years which was estimated to be \$8 trillion, while nearly 100,000 Americans lost their lives in the Korean War and Vietnam War. Although the loss of life among Soviet soldiers is difficult to estimate, as a share of their gross national product the financial cost for the Soviet Union was far higher than that of the United States.

In addition to the casualties of uniformed soldiers, millions of people died in the proxy wars of superpowers at global scale, especially in Southeast Asia. Most of the proxy wars and subsidies for local conflicts ended along with the Cold War. The incidence of interstate wars, ethnic wars, revolutionary wars, as well as refugee and displaced persons crises were dropped suddenly in the post-Cold War years.

The inheritance of Cold War battle, however, is not always easily removed, as many of the economic and social tensions that were subjugated to create Cold War competition in parts of the Third World remain acute. The collapse of state control in a number of areas formerly ruled by Communist governments has generated new civil and ethnic clashes, particularly in the former Yugoslavia. In Eastern Europe, the end of the Cold War has accompanied in a period of economic development and there was an increment in the number of liberal democracies, while in other parts of the world, such as Afghanistan, independence was accompanied by state let-down.

After the Cold War, there were many facilities developed such as the availability of new technologies for nuclear power and energy, and the use of radiation for improving medical treatment and health. Environmental remediation, industrial production, research science, and technology development have all aided from the carefully managed application of radiation and other nuclear processes.

It was observed that despite the end of the Cold War, military development and expenditure were continued, particularly in the deployment of nuclear-armed ballistic missiles and defensive systems.

In the end of cold war, there was no formalized treaty. The former superpowers have sustained to maintain and even improve or modify existing nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Moreover, other nations not previously acknowledged as nuclear-weapons states have developed and tested nuclear-explosive devices. Due to continued delivery of military weapons, there was huge risk of nuclear and radiological terrorism by possible sub-national organizations or individuals.

The international non-proliferation government emanated from the Cold War still provides disincentives and protections against national or sub-national access to nuclear materials and facilities. Formal and informal measures and processes have effectually slowed national incentives and the speed of international nuclear-weapons creation.

It can be summarized that cold war grew out of post-World War II tensions between the two nations, the United States and the Soviet Union that continued for much of the second half of the 20th century. It had many consequences such as mutual suspicions, intensified tensions and a series of international incidents that brought the world's superpowers to the edge of calamity.