International Relations · GS - II

Why has nuclear risk reduction become an urgent priority in contemporary international relations? Examine.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 24/11/2026	GS - II	International Relations

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Strategic rivalry, arms control erosion, nuclear deterrence, miscalculation, confidence-building measures, disarmament

Model Answer

Introduction

Nuclear weapons continue to pose an existential threat to international security. Intensifying geopolitical rivalries, modernisation of nuclear arsenals and weakening arms control arrangements have increased concerns about accidental escalation and deliberate nuclear conflict.

Factors Increasing Nuclear Risks

1. **Strategic competition:** Rivalries among major powers encourage nuclear modernisation, expansion of capabilities and increasingly complex deterrence strategies.

2. **Weakening arms control:** The erosion of bilateral and multilateral arms control arrangements has reduced transparency, verification and mutual confidence.

3. **Risk of miscalculation:** Misinterpretation of military exercises, intelligence failures, cyberattacks or false alarms can trigger unintended escalation.

4. **Emerging technologies:** Artificial intelligence, hypersonic weapons and cyber capabilities may compress decision-making time and complicate nuclear command and control.

5. **Regional tensions:** Conflicts involving nuclear-armed states increase the possibility of escalation beyond conventional warfare.

Measures for Nuclear Risk Reduction

1. **Strategic dialogue:** Maintain communication channels between nuclear-armed states to prevent misunderstandings during crises.

2. **Confidence-building measures:** Promote advance notification of military exercises, transparency and incident-prevention arrangements.

3. **Arms control negotiations:** Revive verifiable agreements limiting nuclear arsenals and preventing an uncontrolled arms race.

4. **Crisis management:** Establish reliable hotlines and protocols for de-escalation and emergency communication.

5. **Disarmament commitments:** Strengthen the NPT framework and pursue practical measures towards nuclear disarmament.

India's Role

India can promote universal nuclear disarmament, credible minimum deterrence, responsible nuclear behaviour and dialogue-based conflict resolution.

Conclusion

Nuclear deterrence alone cannot guarantee global security. A combination of dialogue, transparency, crisis-management mechanisms and renewed arms control is essential to reduce nuclear risks and preserve international stability.

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