



RS.TD9 Nuclear Deterrence and the Disarmament Debate

Total Marks

AQA 8062 · Calculators not allowed · about 50 minutes

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer ALL questions. Show all your working.

- 1** Which one of the following best describes the purpose of nuclear deterrence in international relations, as discussed in Theme D: Peace and Conflict?

- ☐ A: To immediately use nuclear weapons when a minor border incident occurs
- ☐ B: To possess nuclear weapons so that other states are discouraged from attacking
- ☐ C: To provide nuclear weapons to smaller states for their defense
- ☐ D: To remove all nuclear weapons by threat of force

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

- 2** Give two characteristics of the idea of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) as it applies to nuclear strategy in the Cold War and after.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

- 3** Explain two reasons why some religious believers might support nuclear deterrence as a way to preserve peace, referring to religious ethical concerns about protecting life.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

- 4** Explain two contrasting religious objections and religious arguments in favour of nuclear deterrence. Refer to a sacred writing or another source of religious belief or teaching in your answer, and give the source.

(Total for Question 4 is 5 marks)

- 5** State briefly what is meant by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its two main aims in global security.

(Total for Question 5 is 1 mark)

- 6** Give two differences between unilateral disarmament and multilateral disarmament as debated in Theme D, stating one clear distinguishing feature for each.

(Total for Question 6 is 2 marks)

- 7** Explain two reasons why some religious believers argue against unilateral disarmament, referring to concerns about security and justice.

(Total for Question 7 is 4 marks)

- 8** Give three potential consequences of nuclear proliferation for international security and for civilian populations, as discussed in Theme D.

(Total for Question 8 is 3 marks)

- 9** Explain two ways Just War proportionality concerns apply to the possession or threat of use of nuclear weapons, with reference to the likely effects on civilians.

(Total for Question 9 is 4 marks)

- 10** State two international organisations or treaties, other than the NPT, that work on nuclear disarmament or arms control and briefly identify their role.

(Total for Question 10 is 2 marks)

- 11** Explain two Christian responses in favour of disarmament, each supported by a named scriptural or doctrinal source of authority, and give the source.

(Total for Question 11 is 5 marks)

- 12** Evaluate the view that nuclear weapons can never be justified. In your answer you should give reasoned arguments to support this statement, give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view, refer to religious arguments, and reach a justified conclusion. This question carries up to 3 marks for Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG).

(Total for Question 12 is 15 marks)

Mark scheme · RS.TD9 Nuclear Deterrence and the Disarmament Debate

Question 1

- **B1** selecting option B, possession of nuclear weapons to discourage attack by others, oe
- **Answer: B**

Question 2

- **B1** it assumes both sides can inflict unacceptable damage on the other in retaliation, oe
- **B1** it relies on the certainty of devastating second strike capability to deter a first strike, oe
- **Answer: Both sides can inflict unacceptable damage in retaliation; it relies on a credible second strike to deter a first strike.**

Question 3

- **B1** point 1: deterrence is argued to prevent large scale war and so protect many innocent lives, oe
- **B1** development: this links to the religious priority of preserving life and the lesser-evil reasoning that keeping weapons may avoid a greater catastrophe, oe
- **B1** point 2: deterrence can be seen as maintaining a stable balance of power that prevents aggression, oe
- **B1** development: some believers adopt a pragmatic ethic where an evil means is tolerated to prevent a worse evil, citing duty to protect the innocent, oe
- **Answer: E.g. deterrence prevents large scale war and protects innocent lives; deterrence maintains balance of power and stability, a pragmatic toleration of a bad means to avoid a worse outcome.**

Question 4

- **B1** objection 1: sanctity of life argument, that nuclear weapons risk mass civilian death and are therefore intrinsically wrong, oe
- **B1** development: linked to religious teachings valuing human life such as Matthew 5:9 on peacemakers or Surah 5:32 on the value of a life, oe
- **B1** argument 2: pragmatic protection argument, that deterrence prevents greater loss of life and so can be morally permissible, oe
- **B1** development: some Christians appeal to the duty to protect the innocent and some Muslim scholars may use maslahah, public interest, to justify deterrence in extreme cases, oe
- **B1** the scriptural or source reference is given accurately and linked to the point made, oe
- **Answer: Contrast example: sanctity of life objection citing Matthew 5:9 or Surah 5:32 against mass killing; pragmatic protection argument that deterrence prevents worse loss of life, linked to protecting the innocent or the Islamic principle of maslahah.**

Question 5

- **B1** an international agreement to prevent spread of nuclear weapons and promote disarmament and peaceful use of nuclear energy, oe
- **Answer: An international agreement to prevent spread of nuclear weapons, promote disarmament and encourage peaceful nuclear cooperation.**

Question 6

- **B1** unilateral disarmament: one state gives up weapons on its own, regardless of what others do, oe
- **B1** multilateral disarmament: multiple states agree together to reduce or eliminate weapons, often via treaty, oe
- **Answer: Unilateral: one state gives up weapons alone; multilateral: several states agree together, often by treaty, to reduce or eliminate weapons.**

Question 7

- **B1** point 1: unilateral disarmament may leave a state vulnerable if other states keep weapons, risking injustice to its citizens, oe
- **B1** development: religious duty to protect the innocent could be cited to justify keeping weapons until others disarm, oe
- **B1** point 2: unilateral action might weaken deterrent stability and provoke hostile behaviour, increasing the chance of conflict, oe

Question 8

- **B1** increased risk of nuclear war or regional conflict, oe
- **B1** risk of nuclear weapons or materials falling into hands of non-state actors/terrorists, oe
- **B1** greater potential for humanitarian catastrophe and long term environmental damage to civilian populations, oe
- **Answer: Any three: increased risk of war; risk of weapons/materials reaching terrorists; potential humanitarian catastrophe and long term environmental harm.**

Question 9

- **B1** point 1: proportionality requires that harm caused by force is not excessive compared with the good aimed for, and nuclear weapons cause massive, indiscriminate harm, oe
- **B1** development: therefore threat or use of nuclear weapons is hard to justify proportionally because civilian casualties and environmental damage would vastly outweigh most aims, oe
- **B1** point 2: even deterrent threats may fail proportionality because they accept the possibility of unacceptable civilian suffering, oe
- **B1** development: Just War theorists and religious critics argue that the scale of destruction makes nuclear deterrence morally problematic under proportionality, oe
- **Answer: E.g. proportionality is breached because nuclear weapons cause massive civilian and environmental harm that outweighs aims; even threat of use accepts potential unacceptable suffering so may be unjustifiable.**

Question 10

- **B1** example 1: Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO), monitors nuclear test bans through seismology and verification, oe
- **B1** example 2: International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), promotes peaceful nuclear energy and safeguards to prevent diversion to weapons, oe
- **Answer: CTBTO which monitors compliance with a test ban via verification systems; IAEA which promotes peaceful nuclear use and safeguards against diversion to weapons.**

Question 11

- **B1** response 1: pacifist Christian view that weapons should be renounced because followers of Jesus must not kill, oe
- **B1** development: supported by scripture such as Matthew 5:9 'Blessed are the peacemakers' or Matthew 5:21-22 on refraining from killing, oe
- **B1** response 2: moral argument that disarmament upholds sanctity of life and prevents mass civilian suffering, oe
- **B1** development: linked to Genesis 1:27 about the value of humans made in God's image and Catholic teaching emphasising protection of life, oe
- **B1** the scriptural or doctrinal sources are named accurately and linked to the responses, oe
- **Answer: E.g. pacifist Christian view using Matthew 5:9 or Matthew 5:21-22 to support renouncing weapons; sanctity of life argument linked to Genesis 1:27 and Catholic teaching about protecting life.**

Question 12

- **Level 4** (10-12): A well-developed, balanced evaluation that analyses strong reasons for and against the view, includes relevant religious arguments and sources, and reaches a clear, justified conclusion.
- **Level 3** (7-9): A clear evaluation with several relevant points on both sides, some use of religious arguments or sources, and a supported conclusion.
- **Level 2** (4-6): Some evaluation with points for and against, but limited development or limited reference to religious arguments; a simple conclusion is given.
- **Level 1** (1-3): A few simple, relevant points, likely one-sided or descriptive, with little or no conclusion.
- **Level 0** (0): No relevant content.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Arguments supporting the statement: Sanctity of life and the scale of civilian casualties mean nuclear weapons are intrinsically immoral; religious teachings that value human life such as Surah 5:32 and Matthew 5:9 can be used to argue for absolute rejection.
 - The indiscriminate nature and long term environmental and humanitarian damage make proportionality impossible, so Just War principles rule out nuclear weapons.
 - Arguments against the statement: Deterrence may have prevented major wars since 1945, saving many lives; some religious thinkers argue a pragmatic duty to protect innocent citizens could allow possession as a last resort.
 - Multilateral disarmament may be unrealistic without security guarantees; some argue nuclear weapons as a temporary measure until effective global treaties and verification systems are in place, citing maslahah or stewardship responsibilities.
 - Religious responses are diverse: pacifist and sanctity of life positions reject nuclear weapons unconditionally; other religious voices accept limited deterrence to prevent greater evils, so the moral judgement depends on weighing outcomes and intentions.
 - Conclusion: a justified conclusion should weigh the strength of the sanctity of life and proportionality arguments against pragmatic protection arguments and consider whether credible, enforceable alternatives to deterrence exist.