While the literature is clear on political polarization’s effects on *domestic* policymaking, there is a common belief that disagreements between the two parties “stops at the water’s edge” when it comes to *foreign* policymaking. But, is this really the case? It’s difficult to tell in an era marked by increasing polarization and divisiveness on issues that once saw bipartisan support. One such issue is that of arms control treaties.

U.S. grand strategy has been heavily focused on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons since the end of World War II, with Arms Control Treaties acting as the primary legal and normative tools to achieve this goal. Historically, major arms treaties that have been transmitted through the Senate. But, factors including increasing polarization post-Cold War, have made it difficult to achieve the supermajority necessary for ratification. As a result, Presidents have instead established these treaties through “Executive Agreements”, in part to avoid legislative gridlock caused by polarization. On the other hand, partisanship on the side of the President provides Executive with more political leverage to establish policy with these agreements.

While expedient, these agreements are domestically vulnerable and internationally unreliable. This is a matter of significant importance due to the heightened threat of nuclear confrontation with countries such as North Korea, Iran, and Russia, which the U.S. has entered into arms treaties with during an era marked by increasingly political polarization.