

Pakistan Establishes Nuclear Control Body

- [Arms Control Today](#)

March 2000

On February 3, Pakistan's National Security Council announced the establishment of a new body responsible for creating policy regarding the development and use of Pakistan's nuclear weapons. The new organization, dubbed the National Command Authority (NCA), will "exercise employment and development control over all strategic nuclear forces and strategic organizations" and was described as an "institutionalized command and control mechanism consistent with Pakistan's obligations as a nuclear power" by the official Associated Press of Pakistan.

The organization houses two primary committees, the Employment Control Committee (ECC) and the Development Control Committee (DCC), both led by head of state General Pervez Musharraf and dominated by military officials. The ECC will develop policy for the deployment and use of nuclear weapons and is composed of the foreign minister, the minister of the interior, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC), the service chiefs, the director-general of the Strategic Plans Division, and any necessary technical advisors. The DCC will guide the technical aspects of the development of weapons and command and control systems and is made up of the CJCSC, the service chiefs, the director-general of the Strategic Plans Division, and other yet-to-be named representatives of the strategic organizations and the scientific community.

No statement of nuclear weapons policy accompanied the announcement on the NCA. Pakistan has not disclosed a doctrine for the use or development of nuclear weapons, though it has repeatedly declined to offer a no-first-use pledge. Musharraf, who took power in a bloodless coup on October 12, reiterated this stance in an interview with Indian television on February 7. "I have said very clearly that nuclear power cannot be used, should not be used. However, when national integrity is threatened, then we will take a decision at that time," he said.

Source URL: <https://www.armscontrol.org/node/2899>