



## Mains Practice Question

**Q.** "Countries advocating global peace while maintaining military superiority through advanced weapons research face a fundamental ethical contradiction." How can this paradox be resolved? **(150 words)**

19 Dec, 2024 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

### Approach

- Introduce the answer by briefing the contradiction of military superiority and global peace advocacy
- Delve into the Ethical Contradiction and Factors Contributing to the Contradiction
- Give Challenges in Resolving the Paradox
- Suggest Steps to Resolve the Paradox
- Conclude in a balanced manner.

### Introduction

The **advocacy of global peace** alongside the pursuit of military superiority through advanced weapons highlights a paradox that **challenges the ethical and moral principles of international relations**.

- This contradiction undermines trust between **nations, escalates arms races, and contradicts the essence of peacebuilding**.
- Resolving this requires a multi-dimensional approach rooted in ethics, diplomacy, and disarmament initiatives.

### Body

#### Ethical Contradiction and Factors Contributing to the Contradiction:

- **Ethical Contradiction**
  - **Advocacy of Peace vs. Actions of Dominance:** Nations promoting peace while investing in weapons implicitly signal mistrust and deterrence.
    - **Example:** The **USA's efforts in nuclear disarmament dialogues** contrast with its **substantial investment in hypersonic weapons**.
  - **Erosion of Moral Authority:** Such nations lose credibility in leading global peace efforts.
    - **Example:** **China's participation in peace talks** juxtaposed with its military buildup in the **South China Sea**.
- **Factors Contributing to the Contradiction**
  - **Perceived Security Dilemmas:** Nations justify military superiority as necessary for self-defense.
    - **Example:** India's development of the **Agni-V missile system** is seen as a response to China's military advancements.
  - **Technological Advancement and Power Projection:** Advanced weapons serve geopolitical strategies beyond defense.
    - **Example:** **Russia's hypersonic missile programs** aim to assert dominance despite advocating for peace in international forums.

## Challenges in Resolving the Paradox

- **Geopolitical Rivalries:** Persistent distrust between major powers like the **USA and China undermines disarmament efforts.**
- **Lack of Enforcement Mechanisms:** Weak **international laws** fail to hold nations accountable for arms buildup. (**Russia** revoked its ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty )
- **Economic Dependencies:** Defense industries contribute significantly to **national economies including US and France** , making disarmament politically challenging.

## Steps to Resolve the Paradox:

- **Promoting Trust through Transparency**
  - **Arms Control Agreements:** Strengthen and expand existing treaties like **START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty)**.
  - **Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs):** Increase Share information on defense budgets, troop movements, and weapon development.
    - **Example:** India's annual sharing of nuclear installation data with Pakistan.
- **Investing in Multilateral Disarmament Frameworks**
  - Strengthen international bodies like the **UN Conference on Disarmament to ensure enforceable commitments.**
  - Encourage adherence to existing frameworks such as the **Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)**.
- **Shifting Focus to Defensive Technologies**
  - Research on defensive systems (**e.g., missile shields**) **instead of offensive capabilities can reduce fears of aggression.**
    - Example: Israel's Iron Dome serves a primarily defensive purpose while supporting peace rhetoric.
- **Public Accountability and Civil Society Participation:** Greater involvement of civil society in advocating for peaceful resolutions and holding governments accountable for arms races.
  - **Example: Nobel Peace Prize 2017**-winning International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) campaigns for nuclear disarmament.

## Conclusion

Resolving the paradox of advocating global peace while maintaining military superiority requires a **paradigm shift in international relations**. Nations must **align their actions with their peace rhetoric by promoting transparency, adhering to disarmament frameworks**, and fostering ethical leadership. Only through sustained efforts can global peace be achieved **without the shadow of militaristic dominance**.