



# CBRN

The Clingendael Radar  
alerts you on new threats  
for European security



## New and novel threats to watch

- **Lowering of threshold for nuclear use** as states move to build smaller nuclear weapons
  - Ex: Pakistan's low-yield systems, such as Nasr, raising concerns for nuclear escalation in South-East Asia [The Diplomat](#)
  - US nuclear posture review could also include building new smaller, tactical nuclear weapons [Business Insider](#) and [Politico](#)
- **Risk of lowering norm against use of chemical weapons** if use goes unpunished
  - New signs: block by Russia of the UN-OPCW inquiry into chemical weapons use in Syria [BBC](#), [The Guardian](#)
  - Aggravating factor: Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)'s viability put in question [Clingendael](#)
- **Inadequately controlled new biotechnology tools** could lead to severe health catastrophes
  - New developments (ex. gene-editing) progressively outpacing bioweapons convention, which requires adaptation [The Bulletin](#)
  - Lack of biosafety and security measures: risk of accidents or use by rogue actors such as terrorists [NTI](#), [The Guardian](#)



**Clingendael**

Netherlands Institute of International Relations

# Long term trend: a decrease in stockpiles but ongoing modernisation

Multi-factor assessment for the next 5 years (2017-2021)

Trend table		 CBRN weapons	Trend
Base rates	Chemical weapon stockpiles		▼
	Nuclear weapon stockpiles		▼
Factors	Expansion of arsenal (non US and Russia)		▲
	Modernisation of weapons		▲
	Escalation potential		▲
	Non-state actors' access to CBRN weapons		▲

■ CBRN threat decreasing

■ CBRN threat increasing

▲ Factor trending up

▼ Factor trending down

