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"Some Personal Observations on Proliferation in the 1990s"

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I want to extend my own welcome to the seminar participants and to commend the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA) for organizing a meeting on this important topic. A seminar that focuses on mobilizing U.S. resources to confront proliferation is a unique approach that should allow us to delve more deeply than usual into key issues.

Nonproliferation has been at the forefront of ACDA's responsibilities since its founding in 1961 and we are pleased to be the sponsor of this seminar. The term "counterproliferation" is relatively new. Its use implies a more activist and comprehensive approach to preventing and rolling back proliferation -- an approach that is designed to ensure that all the resources of the United States Government will be utilized to confront this serious menace to global security.

The global nonproliferation environment has changed dramatically in recent years; there has been considerable progress and new challenges. To illustrate:

- The proliferation threats from South Africa, Argentina, and Brazil have diminished.
- The breakup of the Soviet Union has not yet led to the emergence of additional nuclear-weapon states, but the debate in Ukraine related to START I and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has raised concerns about the future.

- Traditional suppliers have tightened export controls while new independent states and emerging suppliers threaten to undermine these advances.
- NPT membership has grown to 157, including China, France, and South Africa, while members like North Korea, Iran, and Iraq challenge the Treaty's effectiveness.
- The Chemical Weapons Convention is off to a promising start with over 140 signatories, but its real impact will not be known for several years.

The Administration has a dual challenge of sustaining the momentum in favor of stronger nonproliferation measures and of fashioning creative policies and approaches to address new problems. While certain aspects of the Administration's policy are already clear, the review mandated by the National Security Council is not complete. I will focus briefly on ways to strengthen existing measures and on a few other topics which could be part of a comprehensive approach. I should stress that I am not setting forth Administration policy but rather sharing with you some of my personal views.

Some new ideas and approaches have surfaced over the past year and there is a sense in Washington that we must go beyond "business as usual." But can we translate those "feel good" words into action? And are we aware of the "new thinking" necessary to accomplish it? Moreover, stating what we hope to accomplish is not enough; we must also be prepared to address long-standing concerns of our partners in the nuclear nonproliferation regime -- such as a comprehensive test ban and security assurances.

Priority on Nonproliferation

Let me begin by stressing a simple proposition. Nonproliferation must be a priority in word and deed. It must be recognized as an essential element of U.S. national security policy. Its importance should be emphasized in public statements, in conversations with foreign officials, and in the implementation of our policies toward other nations. These messages should be conveyed at all levels of the Administration, including the highest.

Existing Treaties

Treaties are the foundation of international cooperation in nonproliferation. The next few years will be critical for the Biological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the NPT. We should utilize all our resources to ensure they remain a vital part of the nonproliferation regime. While they are not perfect, they will continue to make an important contribution if they receive strong political support and are implemented effectively. We should continually seek ways to strengthen and enforce them.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) must be given the financial resources necessary to ensure it remains an effective verification instrument under the NPT, and these resources should be provided on time. The United States and others should be willing to share information with the IAEA relevant to its safeguards responsibilities and provide it with strong political support. We must continue to take a leadership role toward the IAEA -- especially as the Agency's safeguards responsibilities continue to expand.

The extension of the NPT in 1995 should be viewed as a decision with major consequences for national and international security. An uncertain future for the NPT beyond 1995 would create enormous potential dangers as nations would be forced to prepare for the possible collapse of the only internationally accepted political and legal barrier we now have to the world-wide spread of nuclear weapons. We should engage in vigorous diplomacy over the next two years to achieve an indefinite, unconditional extension of the NPT; this objective must be kept foremost among our priorities as we make decisions on a wide range of arms control and foreign policy issues.

The best international enforcement mechanism for these treaties is the UN Security Council. Beginning with discussions among its five permanent members, we should begin to promote acceptance of that principle. One possible initiative would be to reaffirm the positive security assurances made at the time the NPT was negotiated. The Council could also make clear to potential violators of these treaties that such an action could lead not only to international criticism at the UN, but also to possible sanctions.

The START I Treaty and our discussions with Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan on the safety, security and dismantling of nuclear weapons have become critical to preventing an increase in the number of nuclear-armed states. There is no higher priority among U.S. arms control and nonproliferation objectives at present than to bring START I into force and for Ukraine and Kazakhstan to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon states. Otherwise, the deep reductions and stabilizing restructuring of forces called for in START II may never take place, and we would face the danger that the entire nonproliferation regime could begin to unravel.

Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones

The Administration could cite a renewed emphasis on nuclear-weapon-free zones as a key component of a comprehensive approach to nonproliferation. The Latin American nuclear weapon-free zone, established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco, has proved to be valuable in pursuing our nonproliferation objectives. For example, Brazil continues to stay out of the NPT but has stated it will bring Tlatelolco into force -- which will have largely the same effect. We also have supported proposals for nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa for many years. However, because of other priorities in the mid-1980s, we declined to sign any of the Protocols to the South

Pacific Nuclear Free Zone (SPNFZ) Treaty and discouraged Southeast Asian countries from pursuing a similar treaty. It is time to take another look at the SPNFZ Treaty and the Southeast Asian zone, as well as a possible nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty for Africa, negotiations on which may begin soon. Even in other regions where the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free zone may not be a near-term possibility, it could serve as a goal to be reached through a step-by-step approach.

Export Controls

There is wide support for export controls as a key element of nonproliferation. There has been considerable progress in recent years in developing and expanding the multilateral regimes, i.e., the Zangger (NPT Exporters) Committee, Nuclear Suppliers Group, Missile Technology Control Regime, and the Australia Group which focuses on CBW export controls. It is not necessary or desirable to make radical changes in these regimes. We should focus on regime maintenance, on improving their effectiveness, and on encouraging other countries to adhere to these export principles.

One key threat to the effectiveness of these multilateral arrangements is the lack of adequate controls in the new independent states of the former Soviet Union. Establishing such controls soon is very important. We need to maintain political pressure on these governments and provide assistance where appropriate.

Other related issues include the importance of continuing efforts to interdict sensitive exports and to encourage other supplier nations to exercise maximum restraint when exporting to countries like Pakistan and Iran where the risk of diversion is high.

Regional Arms Control

As the international security environment continues to evolve, regional arms control activities are likely to increase.¹ The United States can play an instrumental role by facilitating discussion on arms control and confidence-building measures among states where regional arms races threaten stability.

Regional arms control is multifaceted. It concerns both the demand and supply sides of nonproliferation, reducing or eliminating weapons inventories, and other measures that can reduce the risk of conflict. It requires convincing skeptical states that arms control agreements can be a useful policy instrument in promoting security and stability. Recent developments in South Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East all demonstrate a heightened attention to arms control possibilities by states in those areas. Such attitudes should continue to be encouraged.

Other Issues

I want to offer some brief views on four other policy areas which have been raised publicly over the past year.

First is the need for more effective consideration of our nonproliferation objectives in the overall implementation of foreign policy. We have a wide range of tools to influence the behavior of other countries such as exports/imports, trade policies, arms sales, security assistance, development aid, loans, economic assistance, debt relief, and our political relations. But full use of these tools to influence nonproliferation will take place only if it is accorded a priority similar to that of other major defense and foreign policy goals at the highest levels of government.

This is a difficult policy to implement, and if adopted it will require a good dose of "new thinking" to translate it into reality. Nonproliferation has to compete with many other primary U.S. goals, e.g., encouraging democracy and economic restructuring, protecting human rights, and promoting exports. That said, we must do a better job in giving nonproliferation the importance and attention it deserves. To be most successful, we should examine countries and regions on a case-by-case basis and seek multilateral support for such an approach.

A second policy area is the question of what to do about the increasing stockpiles of weapons-usable fissile material from military and civilian nuclear programs.

Our near-term objectives should include the secure storage in Russia of plutonium and highly enriched uranium taken from dismantled Soviet weapons and to establish monitoring arrangements that create a barrier to re-use of this material in nuclear weapons. The United States should be willing to place some of its plutonium and highly enriched uranium from dismantled weapons under similar arrangements, if necessary, to achieve an acceptable degree of transparency for Russian material. And it is important to bring the U.S.-Russia HEU purchase contract -- whereby the United States will purchase 500 metric tons of highly enriched uranium from weapons converted to low enriched uranium -- into force as soon as possible.

Civil reprocessing of spent fuel to produce separated plutonium in Japan, Russia, France, and Britain is viewed by them as a necessary step in the nuclear fuel cycle. We should not use U.S. consent rights over exported fuel to alter the energy policies of our friends and allies. However, we could encourage them to consider ways to increase further the transparency of the plutonium, such as some type of international management scheme. We could also seek an informal dialogue on the technical and economic factors associated with reprocessing and on possible alternatives to the ever-growing stockpiles of civil plutonium.

The third policy area relates to the dramatic changes in the international security environment and in U.S. policies related to the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons. These changes offer opportunities for advancing our nonproliferation objectives.

Last year, the United States announced that it was no longer producing plutonium and highly enriched uranium for nuclear weapons. This leads to the question of whether it is in U.S. security interests to propose a multilateral arms control treaty prohibiting such activities, i.e., a so-called cutoff agreement that would freeze the amount of fissile material available for nuclear weapons. Moreover, last month the United States announced that it would soon begin consultations with other nations aimed at commencing negotiations toward a multilateral nuclear test ban.

Achievement of a cutoff agreement and a test ban would offer not only the significant advantage of freezing the nuclear weapon programs of Russia and China, but also would promote U.S. security in the area of nonproliferation. The completion of such agreements would remedy some of the discrimination inherent in the nuclear nonproliferation regime and strengthen the NPT. Further, the completion of these agreements or perhaps even substantial progress toward such agreements would greatly assist in achieving the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995.

India, Pakistan, and Israel would come under considerable international pressure to adhere to such global, nondiscriminatory treaties. At present, they are the only states other than the nuclear-weapon powers known to possess large quantities of unsafeguarded nuclear material. A cutoff agreement coupled with a comprehensive test ban would cap their nuclear weapons programs and represent a substantial first step toward containing their nuclear proliferation activities.

We should also consider whether it is now possible to issue an unqualified commitment of non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states which are parties either to the NPT or to a treaty with equivalent obligations and which are in full compliance with these treaties. Many non-nuclear-weapon state NPT parties have long sought such a commitment from the nuclear weapon states. If the United States could move in this policy area, it would further reduce some of the discriminatory aspects of the NPT and would help in achieving a successful outcome at the 1995 NPT Conference.

Finally, there is a need to address those aspects of defense conversion which are relevant to nonproliferation such as alternative employment for Russian nuclear weapon scientists. Short-term civil R&D projects for these scientists may be funded soon through the new International Science and Technology Centers in Moscow and Kiev. But, in addition, there is a potential for these scientists to create long-term high-tech civilian enterprises which could be commercially viable. ACDA, the Department of Energy, and Russia's Ministry of Atomic Energy are cosponsoring a prototype entrepreneurial workshop in Moscow this month involving 20 Russian nuclear weapon scientists to further evaluate this concept.

In closing, I would like to express my hope that this seminar helps those in attendance to become more familiar with the key players in the Executive Branch, to gain more insight into some of the important issues, and to have a better appreciation of the range and type of resources that are essential to a successful implementation of U.S. nonproliferation policy. We look forward to hearing your ideas and to an exchange of views on all these issues. Again, I thank you for your attendance and know you will find this seminar informative and thought-provoking.