



UNITED STATES ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY
GENEVA OFFICE

STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR THOMAS GRAHAM, JR.
U.S. ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY

TO THE THIRD MEETING OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE
FOR THE 1995 CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
TREATY ON THE NONPROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

SEPTEMBER 13, 1994

Mr. Chairman, I want to congratulate you on assuming the chairmanship of this meeting, which promises to make important progress in preparing for the 1995 NPT Conference.

The NPT has served -- and has served successfully -- for nearly twenty-five years as the cornerstone of the international nuclear nonproliferation regime. Indeed, it stands as the foundation for virtually all arms control agreements. Not only is the NPT the principal legal and political barrier to nuclear proliferation, it is the only nuclear nonproliferation agreement that is global in scope. Its requirement for full-scope IAEA safeguards provides invaluable assurances to all states of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and thereby supports the worldwide regime for cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Of equal importance, the Treaty provides a firm and dependable foundation on which all other measures of arms control and disarmament, such as the START treaties and the Chemical Weapons Convention, have been and are being built.

Some charge that the NPT is discriminatory, because it recognizes five nuclear powers while prohibiting the acquisition of nuclear weapons by others states. While the NPT reflects the reality that five nuclear-weapon states existed in 1968, it does not legitimize the permanent possession of nuclear weapons. Far from it. Rather, the NPT regime creates a system of shared obligations among its parties: while non-nuclear-weapon states promise not to acquire nuclear weapons, nuclear-weapon states promise to undertake measures to reduce and eliminate their nuclear arsenals. In fact, the NPT is the only global treaty that requires all its parties to pursue measures related to cessation of the nuclear arms race and to nuclear disarmament. For the nuclear-weapon states, this provision is clearly aimed at their nuclear arsenals.

For its part, the United States has undertaken massive reductions in its nuclear arsenal both as a result of the START I and II treaties as well as unilateral measures and bilateral agreements. In addition, President Clinton called in May of this year for the progressive reduction and elimination of all weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. The U.S. is currently destroying approximately 2000 nuclear weapons a year, which is as fast as is technically possible. In addition, I note that yesterday, at the Y-12 Plant in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) commenced application of safeguards on approximately ten tons of highly enriched uranium (HEU), thereby fulfilling the pledge that President

Clinton made last September that the U.S. would make available for application of IAEA safeguards HEU and plutonium removed from the U.S. nuclear deterrent. The U.S. anticipates placing additional material under IAEA safeguards, with the initial quantity of plutonium to come under safeguards before the end of the year. All of these initiatives demonstrate unmistakably that the U.S. is serious about its commitments under article VI of the NPT.

The NPT has played an important and irreplaceable role in the international security system and has benefited all of its parties in numerous ways. Indeed, it is the one international agreement on which the security of all of us depends. If we hope for a stable and peaceful world for our children and grandchildren, this Treaty is essential to that objective. Yet, it remains the only international arms control agreement that does not have permanent status. All other arms control agreements, such as LTBT, Treaty of Tlatelolco, and CWC, are permanent treaties.

In April 1995, we have an opportunity to give the NPT the same status as has been given all other arms control treaties. Making the NPT permanent through an indefinite extension next year will best ensure that the Treaty continues to serve as an effective and formidable force against nuclear proliferation and as a stable basis upon which additional measures of arms control and disarmament can be built.

There are some who appear to believe that a limited extension may be necessary to preserve leverage against making further progress toward nuclear disarmament. I believe such thinking is in error-- in fact, a limited extension of the NPT will make it less likely, not more, that further progress in arms control and disarmament will be achieved. Continued efforts toward nuclear disarmament in the post-Cold War world depend on the stability that a permanent NPT will bring.

We owe it to ourselves and to future generations to do what we can now to support, enhance, strengthen, and protect the NPT, and through this process make the Treaty's application universal and its benefits permanent.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.