



**Lawyers Alliance for World Security  
Committee for National Security**

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**Remarks on the CTBT**

**Press Briefing**

**The Office of Senator Byron Dorgan (D-ND)  
Ambassador Thomas Graham, Jr.  
President, Lawyers Alliance for World Security  
July 2, 1999**

I would like to begin by thanking all of you for coming today. I know its almost the weekend and everyone, including myself, is looking forward to the holiday. I'd also like to express my most sincere appreciation to Senator Dorgan for what he has done in recent weeks. He has been the leader of a very small group of senators who have spoken publicly on the need for Senate hearings on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), a fact that he, his staff, and the people of North Dakota should be very proud of. Tony Blaylock and Dana McCollum should also be acknowledged for their hard work in organizing this briefing over the last couple of days.

As Senator Dorgan said, we are here today to discuss the CTBT, an agreement signed by 152 nations that bans nuclear explosive tests. As many of you may be aware, the Treaty was submitted to Congress by the President 648 days ago and counting, but the Foreign Relations Committee has yet to hold even a single hearing on this vitally important Treaty. In an effort to help encourage consideration of the CTBT, my office has prepared a report entitled "The Time for Senate Action on the CTBT is Now: A Response to Conservative Criticisms of the Treaty." It comes in response to a May 1998 Heritage Foundation report

entitled “India’s Nuclear Tests Show Folly of Rushing Test Ban Treaty,” which presents the preeminent arguments in favor of delaying Senate consideration of the Treaty, and argues instead for immediate action.

The CTBT is vital to efforts to prevent the proliferation and development of advanced nuclear weapons technology by rogue states. It is unlikely that, without first conducting explosive tests to assure the reliability of warhead design, any nation would deploy advanced nuclear weapons, and by advanced I mean warheads small enough to be delivered by anything smaller than a B-52 bomber.

More importantly, this Treaty will protect U.S. national security by locking in the technological advantage that the United States has gained by conducting more than 1,000 nuclear explosive tests during the Cold War, far more than any other nation. By preventing nuclear testing elsewhere in the world, CTBT entry into force will assure that this advantage remains ours indefinitely. But this can only happen if the Senate approves the Treaty and the United States ratifies it, and the sooner the better.

In addition, as our report describes, while preventing other nations from developing advanced weapons technology, the CTBT does nothing to jeopardize the integrity of the U.S. nuclear stockpile. Our nation’s national labs, the Pentagon, the Department of Energy and the Administration have all stated in congressional testimony that they are satisfied that the science-based Stockpile Stewardship Program will protect the safety and reliability of our nuclear arsenal without explosive tests.

Similarly, while the Heritage report expresses the concern of many here on the Hill that the CTBT will threaten U.S. ability to deliver an effective nuclear strike if one should ever be necessary, our report identifies the reason why these fears are unfounded. Despite claims made

in the Heritage Report, nothing in the CTBT prohibits the United States from testing or developing missile systems. If it should be required in the future, the United States would be permitted under the Treaty to replace the Minuteman III missile, for example, with a new system designed to carry existing warheads, which are and will remain the world's most technologically advanced if the Treaty enters into force. There is no technical reason why the CTBT should not be ratified.

Failure to ratify the Treaty, on the other hand, could weaken U.S. national security by opening the door to more nuclear tests by India and Pakistan or, even worse, by other nations. As our report states, after their respective rounds of tests last year, both India and Pakistan indicated that neither would stand in the way of the Treaty's entry into force. Subsequently, both have pledged in discussions to sign the Treaty by October. This could well happen in September, after the elections in India. Ratification by the United States would allow other signatories to follow suit, as was the case with the Chemical Weapons Convention, and would put pressure on India and Pakistan to honor these commitments. As Paul Nitze and Sidney Drell wrote last week in the *Washington Post*, U.S. leadership on this matter "would remove any excuse for inaction on the part of these nations and would strengthen their resolve."

Indeed, the time for action on the CTBT is now. The credibility of U.S. leadership in protecting international security by promoting nuclear arms control and non-proliferation will be seriously challenged by our failure to ratify this Treaty. Moreover, the nation's national security would be negatively effected by the potential for the proliferation of advanced nuclear weapons technology should the CTBT not enter into force. Thank you for your attention.