

**Ambassador Thomas Graham Jr.**  
**Nuclear Disarmament and the Future**  
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Thank you Ambassador Jingye Cheng and Mr. Hong and China for organizing this program. An auspicious time as our presidents are this week meeting in Washington. Close cooperation among the U.S. and China and all major states is essential for disarmament progress.

Disarmament, arms control, is not a new issue. In the Middle Ages in Europe, the Pope outlawed the crossbow declaring it to be "hateful to God and unfit for Christians." However, the crossbow was later overtaken in effectiveness by the destructive firepower of the cannon.

But everything changed in 1945 with the advent of the atomic bomb, for the first time humankind possessed a weapon with which it could destroy itself. Disarmament efforts gradually gained momentum and over time a web of international treaties and agreements was constructed which limited weapon development and inhibited the spread of nuclear weapons as well as chemical and biological weapons. And there is no question but these efforts changed the course of history.

Soon, a vast nuclear arms race was underway, the Soviet Union built 45,000 nuclear weapons, the United States more than 70,000 and at one time had over 30,000 in its arsenal. This effort eventually bankrupted the Soviet Union and cost the United States in excess of \$5.5 trillion in 2004 dollars.

President John F. Kennedy truly believed that there was a serious risk that nuclear weapons were destined to sweep all over the world. In March of 1963 in response to a reporter's question at a news conference, he said, "Personally, I am haunted by the feeling that

by 1970 . . . there may be 10 nuclear powers instead of 4 and by 1975, 15 or 20. . . . I would regard that as the greatest possible danger and hazard.” He spent much of his presidency pursuing the cause of nonproliferation. President Kennedy had been told by the outgoing Secretary of State, Christian Herter, in December of 1960 that nuclear weapons would spread to additional countries and that the most likely next nuclear weapon states were India and Israel. He took this very seriously.

If such anticipated proliferation had in fact happened, there could be significantly more than two dozen nuclear weapon states in the world today, with nuclear weapons integrated into their national arsenals. Mohamed El Baradei, the former Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (the IAEA), expressed this concern in 2004 when in a speech in Washington DC, he said, “The danger is so imminent..not only with regard to countries acquiring nuclear weapons but also terrorists getting their hands on some of these nuclear materials- uranium or plutonium.” Director General El Baradei said in another speech around the same time that more than 40 countries then had the capability to build nuclear weapons. Thus, under such circumstances with that many nuclear weapon states in existence, potentially every significant conflict could have brought with it the risk of going nuclear, and it might have become extremely difficult to keep nuclear weapons out of the hands of terrorist organizations, they would have become so widespread. Illustrating this danger of nuclear weapon proliferation and the threat of terrorist acquisition, former U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry, a scientist not given to exaggeration, has often said that in his judgment nuclear terrorism which could involve a nuclear detonation in a major city is today’s gravest security threat.

In 1965 the UN General Assembly took up the subject. A resolution was passed which over the next few years proved to be the blueprint of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the NPT, the central agreement. Among other things this resolution called for “balanced obligations” between nuclear weapon and non nuclear weapon states in the treaty to be negotiated. The NPT was signed in 1968 and entered into force in 1970, and came to be

recognized as the principal reason- along with the parallel extended deterrence policies of the United States and the Soviet Union- that President Kennedy's darkest fears have thus far not been realized.

But the success of the NPT was no accident. It was based on a carefully crafted central bargain which incorporated the "balanced obligations" concept. In exchange for a commitment from the non nuclear weapon states (today more than 180 nations, most of the world) not to acquire nuclear weapons and to submit to international safeguards to verify compliance with this commitment, the NPT nuclear weapon states (now the U.S., the U.K., France, Russia and China) pledged unfettered access to peaceful nuclear technologies and undertook to engage in nuclear disarmament negotiations aimed at the ultimate elimination of their nuclear arsenals. It is this basic bargain that for the last four decades has formed the central underpinnings of the international non proliferation regime.

However, one of the principal problems with all this has been that the NPT nuclear weapon states have never fully delivered on the disarmament part of this bargain. The essence of the disarmament commitment in 1968 and thereafter was that pending the eventual elimination of nuclear weapon arsenals the nuclear weapon states would: agree to a treaty prohibiting all nuclear weapon tests, that is a comprehensive nuclear test ban; negotiate an agreement prohibiting the further production of nuclear bomb explosive material; undertake obligations to drastically reduce their nuclear arsenals; and give legally binding commitments that they would never use nuclear weapons against NPT non-nuclear weapon states. However, few of these disarmament elements of the NPT basic bargain have been actually accomplished forty years later.

Therefore, today the NPT is in trouble. The question is how long can it remain viable as an unbalanced treaty with an important part of its basic bargain unrealized and a significant part unraveling as North Korea and Iran pursue the bomb. It is true that the norm of nonproliferation runs deep after forty years. The NPT Review Conference this past spring was a

real success in stark contrast to the predecessor Conference in 2005. It may be that the NPT can limp along for some years with only limited further proliferation or maybe not. But without the NPT to hold the line the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons will not be possible.

Recognizing this vulnerability of the NPT, and with the end of the Cold War accompanied by the potential spread of nuclear weapon technology to failed and failing states and international terrorist organizations, urgent efforts have begun to attempt to move directly toward the elimination of nuclear weapons, as called for in the NPT.

On January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2007, in an op-ed article published in the *Wall Street Journal* by George Schultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger and Sam Nunn (and signed on to by a number of other former senior officials) the authors contended that reliance on nuclear weapons for deterrence "is becoming increasingly hazardous and decreasingly effective." Noting that President Ronald Reagan had called for the abolishment of "all nuclear weapons" which he considered to be "totally irrational, totally inhumane, good for nothing but killing, possibly destructive of life on earth and civilization," and that General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev shared this vision, the four authors called for "reassertion of the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and practical measures toward achieving that goal...." This op-ed article was most significant in that it represents the realization that the world has in fact become so dangerous that nuclear weapons are now a threat even to their possessors. A second similar article followed a year later. And the Global Zero movement has held two important world conferences in Paris and continues to advance the agenda everywhere.

Since the mid-twentieth century almost all American presidents have placed disarmament policy high on their agendas. But no President has spoken out more eloquently and in such a comprehensive way as did President Obama in Prague last April. Among other things he declared his strong support for a replacement START Treaty to be followed by deeper cuts in nuclear weapons leading to a multilateral nuclear weapon reduction negotiation involving all of the nuclear weapon states. He reiterated his support for U.S. ratification and

entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (the CTBT), as Vice President Biden reaffirmed in his speech on February 18, 2010 in Washington, and confirmed his support for a process leading to a nuclear weapon free world. And he underscored his commitment to the strengthening of the NPT.

The replacement START Treaty or New START, an important step forward, was completed early in 2010 and after great difficulties was finally approved by the U.S. Senate by a vote of 71- 25 in December. Russia will approve and ratify the New START treaty soon. Sometime, probably in February, the U.S. and Russia will exchange instruments of ratification thereby bringing the Treaty into force. This achievement will open the door to negotiations toward further, much steeper U.S.-Russian reductions in strategic nuclear weapons, perhaps to the level of 1,000 total nuclear weapons each, a negotiation that will last several years. This level is regarded as a necessary step to permit consideration of multilateral nuclear weapon reduction negotiations involving all nuclear weapon states which, over a number of years, if successful, would put the world community on the road toward the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons envisioned by Secretary Schultz and his three colleagues and the Global Zero movement. Of course as long as the NPT holds. These multilateral negotiations must involve the five nuclear weapons states, the U.S., U.K., China, France and Russia and somehow the other three, India, Pakistan and Israel. Perhaps in stages the objective would be to reduce to zero weapons but virtual arsenals: agreed amounts of fissile material retained under national and international safeguards until the issue of "lost" nuclear material, a feature of at least several nuclear programs, is resolved.

But it must not be forgotten that of greatest immediate importance is the CTBT. The NPT is, the central international agreement underlying international peace and security in today's world. The principal quid for the quo of most nations of the world to never acquire nuclear weapons under this Treaty was the test ban. It is the only arms control agreement explicitly mentioned in the NPT and it is the most significant commitment made by the nuclear weapon states to bring the necessary political balance to the NPT, the idea of "balanced

obligation” that I mentioned. The 1995 Statement of Principles, which was the political price for indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995, explicitly called for the negotiation of a CTBT in one year, that is, by the end of 1996.

This deadline was met and the CTBT was signed in September 1996 with the United States as the first signatory. The Treaty provides by its terms that it will enter into force upon ratification by the 44 states that had nuclear facilities on their territory and were members of the Conference on Disarmament in 1996. Thirty-six of those states have now ratified the CTBT and most of the rest are waiting upon ratification by the United States, if I may say so, China, Israel and Indonesia more or less explicitly. Indonesia nevertheless has announced that it will ratify soon. Egypt likely is waiting for Israeli ratification which will happen after US ratification. India promised ratification to the U.S. in 1998 but was let off the hook by the Senate’s vote in 1999, perhaps India will return to this position and if so it is likely that Pakistan would follow suit. This would leave only North Korea.

However, in the first months of 2009, the Obama Administration chose not to seek ratification of the CTBT immediately—at the time when history tells us a new President’s political strength is at its zenith. The Administration wanted to be sure it could win and 67 votes in the Senate, as required by the U.S. Constitution, can be difficult to achieve. In addition, important Senators such as Senator Lugar wanted the START Treaty to come first. CTBT was not approved in the last Congress it is now difficult to ascertain when it can be approved. There are fewer Senators now in the Senate who would naturally support it.

So, soon the New START Treaty will be in force but with political obstacles placed in the path toward negotiations of a second phase START Treaty, (coming from the recent debate in the Senate as well as possible reluctance by Russia to pursue further reductions, especially in the tactical weapons), which will be difficult enough in any case, as well as CTBT ratification. Thus a multilateral nuclear weapon reduction negotiation involving the five NPT nuclear weapon states and in some way the three others, India, Pakistan and Israel, could be off to the

somewhat further future. And there will be seriously diminished chances for CTBT ratification in the foreseeable future. The only hope in the near term for this latter issue is personal involvement by President Obama directly negotiating with key Senators one by one. Hopefully, the positive outcome at the recent NPT Review Conference will mitigate any short-term damage to the NPT from CTBT entry into force not yet being achieved. Because, again, without the NPT, in my view at least, disarmament will not succeed.

Nevertheless, in spite of the difficulties that progress in nuclear disarmament faces, none of which are new, this remains a time of promise because of the commitment of President Obama and the widespread support for progress on nuclear arms control and nonproliferation in the international community as well as the growing support for Global Zero. It is important and positive to this process that the U.S. and China are working better together, as evidenced by the meeting this week between presidents Hu and Obama in Washington. Success will resume world-wide cooperation. Of course it is also a time of great difficulty because of the many overwhelmingly serious crises that were left at the end of 2008 and against which only limited progress has been made, such as the world economic downturn, climate change, Iran, North Korea as well as the NPT itself. Great damage to the disarmament process has been sustained in recent years and the proliferation crises seem to grow steadily more dangerous. But while the hour is growing late, it is not too late. Success remains possible; that safer and more secure world that all of us want can still be built. We must not give up. In a real sense we must all truly keep the faith and, to paraphrase a famous British statesman, never, never give in.