

PRESS BRIEFING BY
AMBASSADOR THOMAS GRAHAM, JR.
HEAD OF THE UNITED STATES DELEGATION TO THE
FOURTH MEETING OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE
1995 CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO
THE TREATY ON NONPROLIFERATION
OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

United Nations Room 226
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TG: Thank you, I have a short opening statement, the position of the USG on the extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is clear. As President Clinton declared on Tuesday, the United States is leading the charge for the indefinite extension of the NPT. A decision by the parties that extends the NPT indefinitely and without condition is the strongest and best outcome for the Review and Extension Conference and the U.S. commitment for this best outcome will not waver. We are looking to all of our friends in the international community to join this effort to make the NPT permanent. This is a national security and foreign policy objective of the very highest priority for the United States, and we expect many nations to stand with us at the 1995 NPT conference. With the help of close allies, we have rallied the largest plurality of States Parties to the NPT behind a permanent NPT and we are actively pursuing the widest possible support for indefinite extension. The commitment of the USG to do what is necessary to secure the indefinite extension of the NPT without conditions is firm. The President has given us clear guidance. A durable and dependable NPT is central to the security of the U.S. and to the world. There will never be a better time to make this Treaty a permanent part of the international security system. It is our responsibility to remove an doubt about the future of this critical arms control agreement. We owe our children more that a second best solution.

Thank you, that is the end of my statement, and I will be glad to take questions.

Q: Welcome Ambassador on behalf of the UN Correspondents Association on an issue that is obviously of great interest here. One of the issues that has been raised at all of the meetings about this is the attitude of the Arab countries, and particularly Egypt, to the silence on the part of Israel about its accession or otherwise to the NPT, could you explain what steps the administration is taking to persuade its friends in Israel to sign on the treaty?

TG: We regard the NPT as vital to a secure Middle East, and we think that Egypt and Israel agree with that as well. However, this is not a question that is for the United States to resolve.

It's a question for Egypt and Israel to resolve between them. They have had discussions, between the two countries, on this subject over a period of months.

We hope that Egypt can be made sufficiently comfortable as a result of its conversations with Israel to support indefinite extension of the NPT. We understand Egypt's position. We understand Israel's position. And of course, the United States is always available to do whatever parties ...whatever other countries ...parties to the NPT or otherwise, think would be helpful to advance the cause of peace and security in the world and the Middle East in general. But essentially, this is something for Egypt and Israel to address directly.

Q: I'm a little astonished by this answer. Maybe I could follow up on it? Are you saying that the United States is not regarded as something the Administration should do to approach Israel and bring pressure on Israel they are not a signatory to the NPT and you're looking for an indefinite extension of the treaty. You obviously think it's important.

TG: Right.

Q: You don't think it's important for Israel to become involved with this treaty?

TG: We very much hope that Israel will join the NPT. We don't expect that to happen before the extension conference which is less than three months away. But, the United States from the very beginning ...from the first day that the treaty entered into force has always advocated universality of membership. We want all countries of the world to be parties to the NPT. But the reason a country joins NPT is because it believes that it's in its national security interest to do so.

We don't believe that we can pressure countries to do that. They have to be persuaded to do that, and Egypt has expressed concern. As we all know, there was an article in the *Washington Post* today about the situation in the Middle East and in particular about the fact Israel has not yet joined NPT or entered into negotiations which have that as an ultimate objective. This is essentially for Egypt and Israel to work out themselves. But of course, if the two countries want the United States to help in some way, I'm not saying that we wouldn't; of course we would. But, it's not ...we don't feel it appropriate for us to pressure anybody.

Q: We've heard a number of states parties this week say that completion of a comprehensive test ban is essential to their adherence to an indefinite extension of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty and most of us just came from hearing McGeorge Bundy, the former national security advisor, saying that

the major of that obstacle of that treaty was the United States position tabled in Geneva last year that there be a provision for allowing countries get out of the treaty after 10 years for less than supreme national interest. Has the United States taken any decision this week that would effect removing that proposal at the negotiations to start in Geneva next week?

TG: The United States has taken no such position this week. Obviously we are continuously reviewing our position with respect to the CTBT and will continue to do that. I think it's an exaggeration to say that that is the principal issue preventing agreement on the CTBT. There are lots of other significant issues such as scope of the treaty, membership of the treaty, the position of the other four nuclear weapon states, the position of the non-aligned countries involved in the negotiations, the verification system that has to be developed, how intrusive will it be, how expensive will it be, and so forth. But it is certainly one of the significant issues and we are always in the process of reviewing our position. And, President Clinton said some time ago that we want to see a CTBT as soon as possible and we really mean that.

Q: If you address the criticism that the United States has in fact not been leading the charge towards an indefinite extension, that it is in fact taken not a serious (inaudible), almost lackadaisical attitude towards ..is coming up, haven't put enough attention towards this and also to the point where the votes might not be there. Could you also tell us where you see the votes going.

TG: Well, I've been working in arms control for a long time, since 1970 so NPT will be 25 years old this year and my arms control career will be 25 years old this year and obviously with respect to any subject like the NPT review and extension conference, there is a slow build up of commitment and interest and involvement and so forth. But I will say that in all of my 25 years of work in arms control, I've never seen the degree of full commitment that exists now of the U.S. government from the very top, from the president down through the cabinet to the sub-cabinet, than exists right now to achieve the indefinite extension of the NPT. The President said in his State of the Union message that the U.S. was leading the charge toward the indefinite extension of the NPT. That is what we're doing that is what he is doing, that is what the whole government is doing. I am used to in arms control negotiations of over the years of considerably more differences within the government and uncertainties than exist on this issue. I've never seen the government more united on an issue. I've never seen more commitment and I think that will begin to show through as the next weeks and months go by and there will be very high level involvement in this effort from the very top through the cabinet, as I said, on through the government and there is very solid

commitment and very strong decision to play a very significant leadership role here.

Q: ...and the votes?

TG: We don't really keep vote counts because its a dynamic situation. There are some organization that have organizational commitments to the NPT, NATO, CSCE, the South Pacific Forum, Northeast Asia, Japan, South Korea, the Honduran Ambassador made a statement at the Security Council last week on behalf of the seven Central American states in favor of indefinite extension. If you add up those kinds of sort of group or organizational commitments, which you might argue are somewhat firmer than individual bilateral commitments, you get to 60 or 65, something like that. There are many other countries around the world that are favorably disposed toward indefinite extension of the NPT and we believe that we will have a majority, a significant majority of the states parties prepared to vote for indefinite extension by the time the vote is held.

Q: Could you bring us up to speed on what actually has happened in this conference so far because many issues relating to rules of procedure and decision making by grand (inaudible). When we get down the road to Geneva do you expect to see this conference concluding, or some of the additions are going to be carried forward to the actual conference?

TG: Well, it is difficult to say. We had an exchange of views for the first two days, and since then we have been working on trying to complete the agenda and the rules of procedure. I think that there is a possibility that we will be able to complete both of those, but I am not sure that we will. The agenda, perhaps a slightly greater chance than the rules of procedure because that is simple and much less complicated. We are going to try hard to finish, but it may be that the rules of procedure, the final agreements on the rules of procedure, will be carried over to the main conference.

Let me take some questions over here.

Q: This morning Greenpeace held a press conference that released the report called, "Changing Targets: Nuclear Doctrine From Cold War to Third World." It's long. I haven't had a chance to read it, but the basic point that they wee making is that the new U.S. security doctrine for joint nuclear operations permits under rules of engagement for the United States to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states if these countries possess some other kinds of weapons of mass destruction. This would seem to go against, at least the spirit of the NPT and other policy statements by the U.S. Government. How do you respond to all of this?

an obvious need to include in the treaty states which had gone nuclear since '67. How likely is this, and do you favor any such move?

TG: I favor such a move on the basis that South Africa joined the treaty. By such states verifiably eliminating their nuclear weapons and submitting all of their peaceful -- all of the nuclear facilities -- to International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. That is the only solution for that question that I favor, that the U.S. Government favors, or that I believe will ever happen.

Q: There are fears that terrorists at some point or other may be able to get hold of nuclear material and apply it in their nefarious activities. One of the sources is mentioned, and that is Iraq. What is the status of the U.S. Government with regard to that threat?

TG: The United States believes that Iran has taken a decision to pursue a nuclear weapons option, even though they are a party to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. But right now, Iran is fully in compliance with all of its NPT obligations. It is their intentions that concern us, not their current compliance with NPT obligations. They have submitted their peaceful nuclear facilities to IAEA inspections, there have been routine international atomic energy agency inspections held in Iran, and there have been two non-routine inspections of the North Korea type. They were called visits, which have been carried out without incident. So, Iran is fully in compliance with its NPT obligations now, but based on what we think their intentions are, we believe that they are intent on the pursuit of a nuclear weapons program, and that worries us greatly. We hope that they will turn away from this course.

Q: Does the United States have reason to believe that Iran has a program dedicated to the production of nuclear weapons grade fissile material?

TG: I don't think we believe they have a program that is that far advanced at this time.

Q: (Inaudible)... some details of my question, because you made it a point to quote to box the Israeli-Egyptian talks about NPT into a bilateral framework. Though yourself, you have been in the region in Egypt and yourself have been engaged in trying to bridge that gap. So why is it all of a sudden a bilateral issue from your point of view, though it is quite, from the other point of view, a regional, Saudi Arabia and other countries have taken up Egypt's position, and as it is... I would like a follow-up, but I'd like a clarification on that first. Why now bilaterally versus regionally?

have made no such commitment, but we're hopeful with Argentina and Chile as parties that Brazil's adherence is not too far off in view of the fact that they have joined the Latin American Nuclear Free Zone Treaty. We are moving, with some rapidity toward universality. There are 170 parties, there are 185 members I believe of the United Nations. We are not far away, and we are getting closer.

Thank you all very much.