

“Importance of a CTBT to the NPT Regime”
Plenary Session on Nuclear Testing and a Comprehensive Test Ban
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The NPT has added immeasurably to the security of the United States and of the entire world. It is the basis on which all international arms control agreements are built and after the Charter of the United Nations, it is the principal agreement supporting international security. Before the NPT entered into force in 1970, the acquisition of nuclear weapons capability had often been a point of national pride. The NPT made it tantamount to a violation of international law.

The NPT is a “common sense” agreement; this is not a weakness, but rather the core of its enduring value. It encourage states to act in their own self-interest by not building nuclear weapons, and it forms the security environment in which states can be sure that their neighbors are not building nuclear weapons. It is important to keep in mind that the NPT is directed not only against horizontal proliferation, but against vertical proliferation as well. The NPT is the only legally binding commitment the nuclear weapons states have ever made to negotiate towards a nuclear-free world, and it provides the only context ever offered the world community in which such negotiations could even be contemplated. The NPT regime serves as the foundation upon which the considerable arms control progress made in recent years with the former Soviet Union has been accomplished. It established the conditions which make such progress possible. In terms of preventing horizontal nuclear weapon proliferation, the NPT has largely done what it was intended to do by establishing an international norm against nuclear weapon proliferation. Before the NPT, predictions were made that there would be 25 or 30

avowed nuclear weapon states with nuclear weapons fully integrated into their arsenals by the end of the 1970s, and who knows how many by this time. We might have faced a world with 50 or 60 nuclear armed states creating almost unimaginable insecurity with a daily question as to whether civilization would survive. The principal reason this is not the case is the NPT. While a few states have chosen to leave the nuclear option open, this dire prediction has not come to pass.

The decision to extend the NPT indefinitely and without conditions at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference demonstrates a strong conviction on behalf of the international community that nuclear nonproliferation should be an enduring norm and that the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons as contemplated by the NPT is what all nations support.

The 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference did more than extend the NPT indefinitely. It also adopted a set of “Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament” and a framework for a strengthened review process. These decisions give us the goals for our future efforts and guiding principles by which we can judge our success. The “Principles and Objectives” set forth the commitments of the parties and the agenda for the future. Pursuant to the “Principles and Objectives,” NPT parties agreed on the importance of strengthened and cost effective safeguards systems. They also endorsed the value of increased cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including in particular the safe and efficient utilization of nuclear energy. They agreed on the importance of continuing nuclear weapon reductions, with the ultimate objective being zero nuclear weapons. NPT parties agreed to pursue the establishment of more nuclear weapon-free zones and zones free of weapons of mass destruction, and on the importance of nuclear weapon state support for such zones through their

implementing protocols. And they also agreed on the desirability of universal adherence to the NPT, the need for a convention on the cut-off of fissile material production for weapons purposes, and the early attainment of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Let me address a few of these issues before sharing my thoughts on the importance of a CTBT.

The expansion of nuclear weapon free-zones is an important trend which strengthens the world-wide NPT regime. It adds emphasis to the important regional aspect of the control of weapons of mass destruction, providing a bottom-up, "grass roots" approach to nonproliferation that can prove extremely effective. The United States, France and the United Kingdom signed the Protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga -- The South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone -- on March 25; all five nuclear weapon states are now signatories to its Protocols. The Treaty of Pelindaba, or the African Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone, was opened for signature in Cairo on April 11 and the United States signed the Treaty and Protocols I and II without any reservations. All of the nuclear weapon states except Russia are now signatories to these Protocols. The U.S. decision to sign the Rarotonga and Pelindaba Treaty Protocols clearly demonstrates our commitment to the "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament" adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. In addition, I would note, the United States has been working closely with the ASEAN countries, led by Indonesia, to solve problems with the text so that the five nuclear weapons states can consider signing the Protocol to the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, which was opened for signature in December 1995 in Bangkok. A Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone will be another important step in the global fight against nuclear proliferation.

The NPT is already the broadest arms control agreement in history and it is nearing universality with 181 parties. Only a handful of non-parties remain, and we anticipate that four of these will join in the near future. This would bring membership in the NPT to 185 parties, the same number that have subscribed to the Charter of the United Nations.

The 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference “Principles and Objectives” also called for the commencement and conclusion of a “convention banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.” A Fissile Material Production Cut-Off Treaty would contribute substantially to nonproliferation objectives by ending the production of fissile material for weapons purposes. Unfortunately, efforts to begin negotiation of a cutoff treaty continue to be thwarted by parties seeking to link it to other issues. Since a cutoff treaty would become another significant addition to the nonproliferation regime, it is imperative that these delays be overcome and that negotiations begin soon.

Nuclear weapon-free zones, NPT universality, and a fissile material convention are all important topics, but the most pressing issue, and the one I would like to discuss with you today, is the CTBT. A CTBT will build upon the foundation established by the NPT to provide a meaningful step towards the ultimate elimination of nuclear arms. While efforts to create a CTBT presaged the NPT, it is the NPT that helped create the conditions which would make a CTBT possible.

The pursuit of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is one of the oldest arms control objectives of the nuclear age. The quest began in the 1950s, the first step being the informal testing moratorium which commenced in 1958 and collapsed in 1961. President Eisenhower later said that the failure to reach a CTB was the greatest disappointment of his presidency. An

impasse in the test ban negotiations in 1962 over the issue of on-site verification for underground tests led to the by-passing of this issue in 1963 and the conclusion of the Limited Test Ban Treaty which prohibits nuclear weapons test explosions or carrying out explosions for peaceful purposes anywhere but underground. A refinement was agreed to by the United States and the former Soviet Union in the 1970s, the Threshold Test Ban Treaty, through which underground nuclear explosions were capped at 150 kilotons, or roughly 10 times the explosive power of the Hiroshima bomb. A complete abolition of nuclear testing was difficult to achieve during the Cold War. The United States and Soviet Union viewed it as essential to continue to conduct nuclear tests in order to ensure the reliability of the stockpile of nuclear weapons, to improve existing types of nuclear weapons, and to develop new kinds of weapons in order to maintain the credibility of nuclear deterrence.

The five nuclear weapon states by the early 1990s had conducted almost 2000 nuclear weapon tests, the United States more than half of that total. However, whereas a credible argument could be made for the necessity of nuclear weapon tests during the Cold War, the rationale for continued testing was substantially diminished by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of superpower thermonuclear confrontation. In the current post-Cold War world, continued nuclear weapon testing by the nuclear weapon states reduces rather than enhances security in that it undermines efforts to strengthen the nonproliferation regime. This fact contributed to President Clinton's decision to support in 1993 the continuation of the current nuclear testing moratorium and the prompt negotiation of a CTBT, and in an announcement in January 1995, to extend the moratorium until a CTBT enters into force, on the assumption that a treaty will be signed by September 30, 1996. President Clinton gave further impetus to this

effort by his statement on August 11 of last year that the United States would support a “zero yield” CTBT prohibiting even very small nuclear explosions. Subsequent to President Clinton’s announcement, the objective of a zero yield CTBT was endorsed by both the United Kingdom and France, and more recently by Russia. The United States’ strong commitment to a CTBT was again underscored by President Clinton’s pledge, read to the opening of the 1996 session of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, of the “. . . full and energetic support of the United States to conclude promptly a treaty so long sought and so long denied.”

We are now on the verge of concluding a CTBT in the Conference on Disarmament. Last year, the UNGA called for a CTBT to be opened for signature by the outset of the 51st UNGA in mid-September. The CD is striving mightily to meet this target by concluding the negotiations by the end of the current negotiating session on June 28.

A CTBT will result in a profound and permanent new constraint upon nuclear weapons capability, especially on the nuclear weapon states. Since almost all of the other nations of the world have committed through the NPT or nuclear weapon-free zones never to acquire nuclear weapons, the prohibition on testing will affect only the nuclear weapon states or countries outside the NPT that keep the nuclear option open. The CTBT is an important step towards nuclear disarmament because it will in effect prevent the development of new generations of nuclear weapons. It will also help prevent states from becoming nuclear powers by preventing them from testing in order to learn how to build nuclear weapons. Both of these results are essential prerequisites to further progress toward nuclear disarmament. President Clinton noted in his message to the CD that: “A Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is vital to constrain both the spread and further development of nuclear weapons. And it will help fulfill our mutual pledges

to renounce the nuclear arms race and move toward our ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear arms.” A CTBT is in the best interest of the U.S. because it will prevent a new arms race and keep other states from building nuclear arsenals, and it is in the interest of every other nation in the world for these same reasons. Much like the NPT, the CTBT is a “common sense” agreement.

Eliminating nuclear weapons remains an important goal, and one the United States continues to pursue. Last year, Vice President Gore reaffirmed the United States’ commitment to Article VI of the NPT, “to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament, which remains our ultimate goal.” President Clinton reiterated this commitment in April in his joint statement with the Prime Minister of Japan, when the two leaders promised to “continue to seek universal adherence to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and to support systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons.”

Now is the time to achieve the long-sought goal of a CTBT. Everything is in position. We have the commitment of the vast majority of states, including all the nuclear weapon states, to conclude the Treaty. However, the commitment is to conclude the Treaty in 1996, and the international community has been working toward this goal with an intensity that some believe will not be sustainable.

On May 28, Ambassador Jaap Ramaker, the Dutch Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on the CTBT, laid before us a Treaty text that by no means satisfies everyone. However, if adopted as the basis for negotiations, it will replace the so-called “rolling text” that delegations have been using for over two years. The rolling text contains over 1200 pairs of brackets of disputed language and

time simply does not allow us to continue to use this document.

Chairman Ramaker's text is a singular accomplishment and it provides a way forward in the negotiations. It is our fervent hope that the distinguished diplomats in Geneva, and more importantly, their governments around the world, will now focus on what is possible to achieve together in the draft CTBT text and set aside what in some cases are completely individual, if not isolated, concerns. If so, the international community will have significantly strengthened the NPT regime and it will have taken a major step toward attaining our ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament. Whether or not the current Geneva negotiations can achieve these lofty aspirations in time to make the Treaty available for signature in September, 1996, just prior to the convening of the 51st General Assembly, will depend a great deal on the political will of the Parties in Geneva to act quickly and decisively in the very few weeks remaining in the CD's second session which concludes on June 28. It is the U.S. Government's intention to meet this timetable.

If the international community does not succeed in concluding a CTBT, some countries will likely try to place responsibility for such a result at the feet of the nuclear weapon states and will claim that they are not serious about nuclear disarmament. Such a debate will spill-over into the NPT Review Conference process and could complicate efforts to further strengthen the Treaty. However, the reality is that the United States and other nuclear weapon states are committed to a CTBT. They have made their commitment known -- separately and collectively -- through unilateral statements, through supporting the 1995 NPT Conference decision on "Principles and Objectives," through supporting numerous UN resolutions, and in working day by day with serious purpose in Geneva to bring the CTBT negotiations to a successful conclusion. In the United States, President Clinton has repeatedly stressed that concluding a CTBT is one of his Administration's highest

foreign policy priorities and the United States has already been extremely forthcoming in its approach to the CTBT. As many of you know, President Clinton has courageously reversed two U.S. positions that many feared would derail the CTBT negotiations. In January 1995, he dropped U.S. insistence that States be allowed to withdraw from the Treaty after ten years without citing the traditional rationale of threats to “supreme national interests,” and in August 1995, he committed the United States to support a “true zero-yield” Treaty.

The United States must hold firm to certain other principles that will ensure a fully effective CTBT and realize the commitments we made in the NPT Review Conference. In addition to the scope provision I just mentioned, the United States believes that the CTBT must have a robust verification regime that accommodates national means of verification as a trigger to on-site inspections and it must avoid raising extraneous issues that hold this Treaty hostage to unrealistic timetables or to unattainable objectives, regardless of their abstract merit. Efforts to load down the CTBT with unacceptable provisions can and will be beaten back. It is important to realize that we are in fact running out of time, and it is imperative for us all to focus on the Chairman’s text, accept the pragmatic realism it represents, and embrace the Treaty as the next logical step in the long road ahead.

A CTBT will be an inherently important step both for disarmament and for nonproliferation. If a CTBT is not completed, the international community will have lost not only an important opportunity finally to codify in an international treaty the end of nuclear weapon testing, but also an opportunity to strengthen further the international nonproliferation and disarmament regime. And, just as a successful effort will further strengthen this global regime, the failure to achieve a CTBT could negatively impact the nonproliferation and disarmament regime. The NPT, as the cornerstone

of that international regime, will surely be affected. This is because achievement of a CTBT has long been viewed by NPT parties as an essential step toward fulfilling the Article VI disarmament goals of the NPT, and in this way is viewed as a "litmus test" of the nuclear weapon states' commitment to nonproliferation and disarmament. As such, the CTBT can further reinforce the viability of the NPT; it can strengthen the effort to make adherence to the NPT universal; and it can lead the way to completion of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty in the near future. Failure to complete the CTBT this year, however, would be a huge disappointment and would set us back across the board in arms control.

It is crucial that in the next few weeks, the nations of the world redouble their efforts to reach agreement on a CTBT. Failure to do so will destroy what is possibly the only chance the world will ever have to achieve this valuable treaty. It is my fervent hope, and my personal opinion, that the international community will not allow this tragic outcome to occur. The stakes are too high, and the rewards are too great. A CTBT will be one more step on the path to what the President has called "our ultimate goal," a world free of nuclear weapons, and I am confident we will sign it this year.

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