

“Coming Attractions: the Arms Control Agenda for 1997”

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The last few years have been a time of unprecedented success in arms control. We have seen the cornerstone of United States efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons -- the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) -- indefinitely extended. A significant step towards reducing the overarmament of the Cold War was taken when START II was ratified by the U.S. Senate. And the signing of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) ended the era of nuclear testing, a goal that had been sought for more than forty years.

Although the world has seen much progress made in the fight against weapons of mass destruction in recent years, more remains to be done to reduce the threat posed to peace and security by these weapons. Massive stockpiles of nuclear and chemical weapons left over from the Cold War continue to pose a potential threat. The spread of technology has made it possible for many states, some of whom view the United States as a potential enemy, to possess the capability to build nuclear, biological or chemical weapons and systems for their delivery. As President Clinton has noted, we are engaged in “the most ambitious agenda to dismantle and fight the spread of weapons of mass destruction since the dawn of the nuclear age.” On this agenda are several important items that will reduce this threat, but I would like to focus today on just a few of the most prominent items on the agenda. These are:

- the continuing nuclear disarmament progress between the United States and Russia embodied in the START I and START II Treaties, and the recently announced goal of a START III;
- strengthening the now-permanent Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), one of the foundations of international security;
- the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which was been the source of so much controversy in Washington over the past few months;

- and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which you will likely be hearing much more about in the coming year as the Senate begins its consideration of this treaty.

START II

Although the Soviet Union has collapsed and the United States no longer views Russia as an enemy, the huge nuclear arsenals left over from the Cold War continue to pose a serious potential threat. The United States and Russia have attempted to lessen this threat through the negotiation of bilateral disarmament treaties such as START I, START II, and, after START II enters into force, a START III Treaty, as announced at the Helsinki Summit ten days ago.

The START I Treaty, which mandated reductions in the total number of deployed strategic warheads to 6,000 on each side (roughly a one-third cut), entered into force on December 5, 1994. The United States Senate gave its advice and consent to the START II Treaty in January 1996. Unfortunately, over a year later, we are still waiting for the Russian Duma to follow suit. Building on the disarmament progress made under START I, START II will leave each side with 3,000 - 3,500 deployed strategic warheads. Entry-into-force of START II will also facilitate negotiation of further reductions -- leading to a START III.

At the Helsinki Summit, President Clinton and President Yeltsin underscored the importance of prompt ratification of the START II Treaty by the Duma and reached an understanding to begin negotiations on START III immediately once START II enters into force. The goal of START III will be to establish by December 31, 2007, a ceiling of 2,000 - 2,500 strategic nuclear warheads for each party. This represents a 30-45 percent reduction in the number of such warheads permitted under START II, and more than a 65 percent reduction in the number permitted under START I. The two Presidents also agreed that START III will be the first strategic arms control agreement to include measures relating to the transparency of strategic nuclear warhead inventories and the destruction of strategic nuclear warheads, as well as taking into consideration issues related to transparency in nuclear materials. President Clinton and President Yeltsin also agreed to extend the START II deadline for eliminations to December 31, 2007, subject to the approval of the Russian Duma and U.S. Senate and agreed to the goal of making the current START Treaties unlimited in duration.

The nuclear disarmament progress highlighted at the Helsinki Summit proves that the United States is committed, as President Clinton noted, to continuing “to lead the world away from the dangers of weapons of mass destruction.

NPT

One of the most important means of doing just that involves the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) The indefinite extension of the NPT in May 1995 was a significant step forward in fighting the proliferation of nuclear weapons. With 185 countries party to the NPT, it is clear that the international community has taken a stand against the further spread of nuclear weapons.

Before the NPT entered into force in 1970, the acquisition of nuclear weapons capability had been a point of national pride. The NPT has made it tantamount to a violation of international law and has added immeasurably to the security of the United States and of the entire world.

Since the NPT entered into force in 1970, periodic Review Conferences (RevCon) have been held, which provide Treaty parties with the opportunity to review the operation of the NPT to ensure that the preamble and provisions of the treaty are being realized. The next NPT RevCon will take place in the year 2000. The first Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) meeting leading to the 2000 NPT Review Conference will be held early next month. This is the first PrepCom under the post-1995 NPT Conference regime and it will be an important step toward the “strengthened treaty review process” called for at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. The meeting will address exactly how the “strengthened treaty review process” should be implemented. The PrepCom will make both the substantive and procedural

preparations for the 2000 NPT Review Conference. The United States is looking forward to a constructive, cooperative process leading to the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

CWC

Another way to “lead the world away from the dangers of weapons of mass destruction” is the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The CWC will ban the stockpile, transfer, and production of chemical weapons, eliminate stockpiles now in existence, and require parties to submit to intrusive on-site inspections. Due to its comprehensive verification regime, this treaty, which was drafted in consultation with representatives from our chemical industry, is a landmark in the struggle against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Convention will make it tougher for rogue states to acquire chemical weapons and will reduce the threat to our citizens at home as well as our troops in the field.

With more than the 65 states necessary to trigger the 180-day countdown toward entry-into-force now having ratified the CWC, the Convention will enter into force at the end of next month. As I’m sure many of you know, certain individuals on Capitol Hill in Washington are not fond of this treaty, and as a result, the United States has not yet ratified the CWC. Despite their opposition, President Clinton has vowed that the U.S. “will join the ranks of nations determined to prevent the spread of chemical weapons,” and he and President Yeltsin stressed their intention at the Helsinki Summit to take the steps necessary to expedite ratification of the CWC in each of their countries.

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One of the most oft-heard criticisms of the CWC in Washington is that rogue states have no intention of signing the treaty, and that therefore, the United States should not, either. This is a most unconvincing argument. The United States is already committed under laws passed by Congress in 1985 and 1992 to destroying its chemical weapons. As Chairman of the Joint Chiefs

of Staff General John Shalikashvili testified, “Desert Storm proved that retaliation in kind is not required to deter the use of chemical weapons . . . Our ability to deter the use of chemical weapons in a post-Cold War world will be predicated upon a robust chemical weapons-defense protection program and the ability to rapidly bring to bear superior and overwhelming force in retaliation against a chemical attack...”. Since the U.S. has already decided to destroy its own chemical weapons, the rationale that we should refrain from ratifying the CWC because a few nations may continue to pursue them is illogical. The CWC will make it harder for those countries to acquire the ingredients they need for chemical weapons.

The Convention will also require those states who become party to it to adopt domestic legislation making the manufacture or possession of chemical weapons illegal. Currently, many states lack such laws. It is worth pointing out that within weeks of the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway, Japan quickly ratified the CWC and approved accompanying domestic legislation. The Administration’s proposed CWC implementing legislation, which must accompany ratification of the Convention, will significantly improve U.S. ability to investigate and prosecute those who try to produce chemical weapons.

As a nation whose interests are truly global in nature and whose troops serve all over the world, we stand to gain the most from making outlaws out of those states who refuse to follow the international norm against chemical weapons. If we fail to ratify this treaty, we miss out on a chance to help banish poison gas and make our own military forces and citizens much more secure.

CTBT

Last but certainly not least, I would like to discuss the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which was opened for signature last September. A Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty has been 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.

Despite all of these efforts, 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 convincing 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. He also decided, in an announcement in January 1995, to extend the moratorium until a CTBT entered into force, on the assumption that a treaty would be signed in the fall of 1996. President Clinton gave further impetus to this effort by his statement on August 11, 1995 that the United States would support a "zero yield" CTBT prohibiting even very small nuclear explosions, and the U.S. commitment 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.”

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is a bulwark against the spread and further development of nuclear weapon capabilities and reinforces and complements the international norm of nonproliferation embodied in the NPT. The CTBT places a profound and permanent new constraint upon nuclear weapon capabilities, with particular impact on the nuclear weapon states. It will constrain the qualitative improvement of any nation’s existing arsenal and prevent the development of a new generation of nuclear weapons. It also keeps new states from becoming nuclear powers by preventing them from testing in order to learn how to build nuclear weapons more efficiently, or to make more advanced weapons. Both of these results ensure that the arms race is over once and for all and are essential prerequisites to further progress toward nuclear disarmament. As President Clinton remarked, the CTBT points us “toward a century in which the roles and risks of nuclear weapons can be further reduced, and ultimately eliminated.”

Now that the CTBT has been opened for signature and 142 countries have signed the treaty, we must begin work to secure ratification by the required parties to bring the treaty into force. The goal of the Clinton Administration is to work towards achieving entry-into-force of the CTBT at the earliest possible date: September 1998. Of the 44 countries whose ratification is necessary for entry-into-force, 41 have already signed the treaty, including all five of the declared nuclear weapon states, as well as Israel. While it is obviously of extreme importance that the remaining three countries -- India, Pakistan and North Korea -- sign and ratify the CTBT, it is crucial that the other signatories

begin the ratification process as well. A strong international consensus against nuclear explosive testing already exists, but each signature and ratification serves to further codify this international norm and make it stronger.

And there is no doubt that a strong norm against nuclear explosive testing does exist. The clamor and controversy raised by French nuclear explosive testing in the Pacific two years ago was only one, albeit highly visible, sign that the world desires an end to nuclear explosive testing. It bears repeating that all five of the declared nuclear weapon states have stopped testing and that for the first time in history, all five of the declared nuclear weapon states have accepted not only the principle of a test ban, but every word of a specific text. In addition to the support and commitment of the nuclear weapon states, the overwhelming majority of non-nuclear weapon states also supported the CTBT and its goal of ending nuclear explosive testing. The fact that these states over-rode the objections of those who wanted to link the CTBT to time-bound nuclear disarmament illustrate that they viewed the CTBT as a valuable achievement in its own right. States do not sign treaties lightly, and the fact that the CTBT bears the signature of each of these states serves as a strong reminder, pending entry into force, that a political barrier against nuclear explosive testing has been built and that henceforth, the international community will view it as out of bounds for any state to engage in nuclear explosive testing.

However, this strong international norm against nuclear explosive testing does not mean that we can rest easy. Formal entry into force remains a crucial goal, and when that is accomplished, energetic and effective verification of the CTBT's strictures. A state violating a treaty commitment is even

more a pariah than one violating a powerful international norm. The entry into force of this historic treaty will buttress the regime of nuclear nonproliferation that already exists and will add teeth to the norm of non-testing.

In the United States, the CTBT likely will be submitted to the Senate in a few months, and although the treaty will be subject to serious debate, I am confident that the Senate will give the CTBT its advice and consent to ratification. The day all states are legally bound to forego nuclear weapon testing is a day which will see the world become a much safer place.

Conclusion

Before I conclude, I would like to point out that some critics have stated that arms control has outlived its usefulness and that ^{*the mission of*} my own organization, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency is a Cold-War relic and should be eliminated. However, one glance at a newspaper proves how misguided these claims are. As we saw at the Helsinki Summit just ten days ago, arms control continues to play an important role in relations between the United States and Russia. The on-going debate over the CWC proves that arms control still generates strong emotions and intense focus in Congress, which is ironically perhaps the greatest testimonial to arms control's continued relevance in the post-Cold War world. The final thought that I would like to leave you with is that arms control is a valuable tool for ensuring and enhancing the national security of the United States, and will be for many years to come.