



OFFICIAL TEXT

STATEMENT BY

MR. THOMAS GRAHAM, JR.
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR

U.S. ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY

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TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF
NUCLEAR WEAPONS

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Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you on behalf of my delegation for your able leadership this week. I believe we all should take satisfaction in the progress that we have made.

Our efforts are all the more important because of the end towards which they are directed -- the extension in 1995 of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the cornerstone of the international nuclear nonproliferation regime. The NPT is the foundation for international nuclear commerce and, indeed, for the entire fabric of international arms control. Without a stable and durable nonproliferation regime, which includes a strong NPT, further arms control measures would be jeopardized. The United States is strongly committed to the NPT and is prepared to make every effort to achieve its indefinite and unconditional extension in 1995.

I would like to share with you our thinking on the importance of the NPT and why this leads us to conclude that indefinite extension best serves the interests of the parties, both in the security sphere and in the area of social and economic development.

The NPT is an invaluable and irreplaceable element of the nonproliferation regime. It is essential to prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons. It is the only nuclear nonproliferation agreement that is global in scope, and as such, is the principal legal and political barrier to nuclear proliferation.

The NPT is essential to support the worldwide regime for the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy under effective international safeguards. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) provided us with an excellent overview of the extensive technical cooperation that is administered through and by the IAEA with NPT parties. And it is the IAEA safeguards system that underpins and provides the basis for this nuclear cooperation.

The NPT provides a framework to address regional proliferation problems. For example, by joining the NPT, South Africa contributed to the opening of a security dialogue with other African states and paved the way for consideration of an African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty. The NPT will continue to make a critical contribution to security and stability in the territory of the former Soviet Union. Full compliance by North Korea with the NPT regime would make a substantial contribution to peace, stability and prosperity on the Korean peninsula and elsewhere in the region. On the other hand, regions where the risk of proliferation is greatest are those where key states have been unwilling to join the NPT.

Finally, the NPT is the only multilateral arms control agreement that obligates all states to pursue measures of disarmament. For the nuclear weapon states, this obligation is clearly aimed at their nuclear weapons arsenals. The NPT contributes to a stable international environment that facilitates progress toward arms control and provides a framework for nuclear arms limitation measures. In fact, it has provided a foundation

upon which all of the arms control efforts of the past twenty-five years have been based. For example, the START I and START II treaties, the INF treaty, and the Chemical Weapons Convention have both contributed to and been facilitated by a strong nonproliferation regime.

A comprehensive nuclear test ban is a measure of nuclear arms limitation to which great importance has been attached by NPT parties. The U.S. decision to continue the testing moratorium and begin negotiations on a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was greatly facilitated both by the end of the Cold War and by the strength and vitality of the international nonproliferation regime established by the NPT. Both the testing moratorium and the ultimate conclusion of a CTBT will make vital contributions to our shared nonproliferation objectives. The United States is committed to concluding the CTBT negotiations at the earliest possible time. In our view, there is virtually universal support for the principle of a CTB, as reflected in the consensus achieved at the UN this past fall.

It is clear that the NPT benefits all of us in critical ways and its continuation is essential if these benefits are to continue to be available. Indefinite extension is, in our view, the strongest outcome of those identified in Article X.2 of the treaty. It would be the most unambiguous signal the international community could send in support of the international norm of nonproliferation. It would deny the argument that states need to keep open an option for nuclear weapons as a hedge against a future when the NPT might no longer exist. And, it would increase the leverage the international community has on states outside the regime to join the NPT or adopt other measures to conform with established nonproliferation norms. The full weight of the NPT's membership behind a treaty of unlimited duration would be a formidable political force for nonproliferation.

We must do everything we can to support this regime in an ever more dangerous world. We must take all necessary steps to preclude the possibility of nuclear arms races in the future. Nuclear proliferation is not now, nor will it be in the future, acceptable. Nuclear nonproliferation is, in short, and enduring value, not a transitory policy. We must, for the sake of future generations, make the NPT a permanent part of the international security system.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.