

**Nuclear Non-proliferation and
Disarmament**



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Introduction

Thank you for the invitation to address the Committee. I serve as NTI's Senior Vice President for Programs and Operations. At NTI I also Co-Direct The Nuclear Security Project, an initiative to galvanize global action to reduce urgent nuclear dangers and to build support for reducing reliance on nuclear weapons, ultimately ending them as a threat to the world.

The Nuclear Security Project builds on the *Wall Street Journal* commentaries authored by former Secretaries of State George Shultz and Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of Defense Bill Perry, and former Senator Sam Nunn, and involves all four authors. NTI serves as the General Secretariat of the Project, responsible for coordinating the work of the four principals as well as managing the implementation of this project.

The Project is designed to motivate governments to rethink their policies, change direction and act on the steps that will reduce the risk of a nuclear weapon being used anywhere in the world. The Nuclear Security Project is increasing understanding, awareness, support and action by policymakers, policy experts and the public around the world for purposefully and significantly changing direction and reducing these nuclear dangers.

Evolving Threats

Today, the danger of a massive nuclear exchange between the US and Russia involving thousands of nuclear weapons has largely disappeared. Yet the risk of a single nuclear weapon exploding today in a major city continues to grow. We may already be at a dangerous tipping point, where the spread of nuclear know-how and material – combined with the rise of rogue states and terrorist groups -- could precipitate the first use of a nuclear weapon in over 60 years.

The growing distribution and quantities of nuclear bomb making material – plutonium and highly enriched uranium – around the globe, dramatically increases the risk that these materials will be illicitly acquired by terrorists for use in a crude nuclear weapon. The challenge of securing weapons useable nuclear materials will continue to grow with the anticipated expansion of nuclear power and related fuel cycle facilities.

Global security and controls of these nuclear materials is still woefully inadequate. We can have little doubt about the willingness of a terrorist group to use a nuclear weapon if

it were to acquire one. Moreover, deterrence and the threat of nuclear retaliation are of little if any relevance in the context of a terrorist attack where there would be neither a return address, nor any moral compunction about destruction on a mass scale.

As more states acquire nuclear weapons capabilities (we are at nine, and counting...) the likelihood that deterrence alone can effectively prevent an attack is diminishing. Reliance upon deterrence to ensure a state's security against nuclear attack is, at the very least, an increasingly dangerous bet. The chance of a nuclear accident or miscalculation is also rising.

Despite the high stakes, the existing approaches to fighting these mounting nuclear dangers has not been adequate.

The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty – the international legal architecture set up in 1968 to try to contain, regulate and ultimately eliminate nuclear weapons -- is under severe pressure from nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states alike.

Much of the recent strain on the Treaty emanates from growing unease from non-nuclear weapon states. Those states promised to indefinitely forgo nuclear weapons programs in exchange for a pledge from the nuclear weapon states that they would eventually give theirs up. Some four decades after the Treaty was concluded, not one of the five weapon states under the Treaty has disarmed, and most of them are either actively embarked upon or considering some form of nuclear modernization. At the same time, the departure of North Korea from the Treaty, the unwillingness of other nuclear weapon possessing states (India, Pakistan and Israel) to join and the inadequacy of the international safeguards regime that underpins the Treaty to confidently detect and respond to violators has badly shaken confidence in the only fragile bulwark we have.

While governments of all stripes have taken to criticizing the NPT and its associated mechanisms for their inadequacy, the stark reality is that we have not yet mustered the political will to do what is essential and address its shortcomings. The equivocal international response to Iran is proof of that.

NPT notwithstanding, there is still no global consensus on the illegitimacy of nuclear weapons and many of the non-nuclear weapon states that agreed not to pursue nuclear weapons programs in 1968 are tired of what they see as a discriminatory system of nuclear apartheid.

The imperative of collective action

This bifurcated system is no longer sustainable and must be fixed to achieve the cooperation we need for our collective security.

No single state acting alone can secure itself against the threat of a nuclear attack, especially a terrorist attack. As with other global challenges facing the world today (climate change, the spread of infectious diseases, etc), the nuclear threat can only be

successfully addressed through collective action. One weak link *anywhere* in the global chain of security of dangerous nuclear material is a threat to us all.

Ultimately, the best defense against nuclear weapons is to work for the elimination of these weapons from the arsenals of all states that possess them, and the creation of a strong system of controls to prevent, detect and respond to violators. Much collective work remains to be done to build this new system of controls.

Momentum from the *Wall Street Journal* Commentaries

On January 4, 2007 *The Wall Street Journal* ran a commentary by four senior American statesmen entitled “A World Free of Nuclear Weapons.” In their essay, George Shultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger and Sam Nunn pointed out the tremendous dangers posed by nuclear weapons today and endorsed setting the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Their piece also urged a series of concrete steps designed to move the world towards that goal. A second article by the four advancing these ideas followed in the same paper one year later, in January of 2008. The key phrase from their two essays is: “Without the bold vision, the actions will not be perceived as fair or urgent. Without the actions, the vision will not be perceived as realistic or possible.”

While many calls for the elimination of nuclear weapons have been made over the decades since their creation, the appeal of these four senior statesmen has resonated with the international security community in a new and seemingly powerful way. The reaction to the *Wall Street Journal* commentaries – both within the United States and from around the globe – has been extensive and largely supportive. In the United States, support now includes 17 former Secretaries of State, Defense and National Security advisors, though some – including former Defense Secretary Harold Brown – have argued that there is no realistic path to a world free of nuclear weapons, and that embracing the goal could undermine support for specific steps.

Overseas, the response to the op-ed has also been overwhelmingly supportive. The Government of the United Kingdom formally embraced the “vision and steps.” Australia has taken a leadership role, among other things by establishing the International Commission on Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament to develop recommendations for advancing the nonproliferation and disarmament agenda. Earlier this month Japan’s Foreign Minister Nakasone proposed a series of 11 steps designed to advance the global disarmament agenda. Other states too, have programs in place, or have made policy statements supporting the goal of, and steps toward, a nuclear weapons free world including Norway, Germany, India, and President Sarkozy of France on behalf of the European Union last December. Other groups of senior statesmen in the UK, Germany, Italy, Poland and Australia have banded together to publish articles in their own national papers, supporting the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and urgent action on steps to get there.

On April 1st, US President Obama and Russian President Medvedev met in London and jointly affirmed their commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons and committed

their two governments to immediate commencement of negotiations for a follow-on to the START agreement (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty). This historic statement was followed days later by President Obama's speech in Prague, which was breathtaking in the scope and ambition of the nonproliferation and disarmament agenda it detailed.

So there is serious momentum behind the idea of a world free of nuclear weapons. But much hard work and many serious challenges remain for realizing this vision.

Near Term Hard Work: Building political will, a Joint Enterprise and a Common Vision of Base Camp

What can and should supportive states be doing to build this momentum into action on specific steps that make the world safer?

Base Camp

Senator Sam Nunn, one of our four Project Principals in the Nuclear Security Project has proposed the metaphor of a "mountaintop" to describe the ultimate goal of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons:

"In some respects, the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons is like the top of a very tall mountain. From the vantage point of our troubled world today, we can't even see the top of the mountain, and it is tempting and easy to say we can't get there from here. But the risks from continuing to go down the mountain or standing pat are too real to ignore. We must chart a course to higher ground where the mountaintop becomes more visible."¹

In service of the goal of "charting a course to higher ground" the Nuclear Security Project of NTI has been working on an analytic study we call "Base Camp." The goal of the study is to help us visualize, develop and debate alternative pathways and milestones, or "Camps" on the way to the Summit. It is meant to help us develop consensus around these milestones, and the work required to reach them. We've established an international consultative process to help identify possible Base Camps as well as the paths from that Base Camp to the end goal.

Our consultations with international experts have produced a series of papers, each laying out a different perspective on what would constitute an acceptable camp from which the Summit could be attempted. We have also hosted two international workshops to discuss the ideas brought forward by the experts' papers.

What is interesting about the dialogue and analysis on this topic to date, is not that there has been (yet anyway) convergence on what, precisely, should constitute base camp, but rather that:

¹ Toward a Nuclear-Free World by George P. Shultz, William J. Perry, Henry A. Kissinger and Sam Nunn, *The Wall Street Journal*, January 15, 2008

- 1) There is a high-degree of buy-in to the concept of Base Camp and its usefulness as an organizing principle for discussion on next steps (in our last meeting of 23 experts in Washington last month, there was universal agreement on this);
- 2) Even though there is not agreement on exactly what elements should be included in a Base Camp scenario, there is growing convergence on key themes/issues that a Base Camp scenario should include; and
- 3) There is value in establishing an international process to engage a dialogue on “what constitutes a Base Camp” and to build consensus toward that end.

It has also become clear from our international consultations that there are a range of possible definitions of the concept of Base Camp. Here are a few that emerged:

1. Base Camp is a point from which the Summit is visible/achievable (vantage point).
2. Base Camp is a point at which basic consensus has been reached on the goal of a Nuclear Weapons Free World (where we are all headed up the mountain, and not down).
3. Base Camp is a vision of what progress the world needs to make on key threat reduction tasks (a map).
4. Base Camp is a temporary stopping point that is safe, secure and stable on the ascent up the mountain, and from which we can assess how and where to go next.

Indeed, “Base Camp” could meet several of these definitions at once, and multiple base camps or stopping points on the way to the Summit may be both necessary and desirable. For example, the southeast ridge route to the top of Everest has includes a Base Camp, and then four additional camps above that on the way to the Summit.

What does Base Camp look like?

Of the six papers we’ve commissioned on Base Camp to date, we have received six very different views of what Base Camp should look like. Some have been very ambitious – others have proposed less ambitious but more achievable scenarios in the near term. What we are beginning to see in our discussions of this concept, however, is that certain common themes are beginning to emerge from the discussions and papers and workshops on this concept. These themes can serve as a guide to our discussions, and can help us frame our global work plan.

Common Themes or Elements of Base Camp

- **Declaratory Policy** – There is a clearly perceived need to devalue or delegitimize nuclear weapons through clear and public changes to the declaratory policies of nuclear armed states. This could take the form of clear affirmation by those states of their commitment to working toward zero, and a related statement about the role of nuclear weapons in the security policies of those states that makes clear that nuclear weapons will no longer play a central role in the security of the

nuclear armed states and that they have no military role. Some have described such a declaratory policy in terms of a “deterrence only” policy. Others have advocated for policies of “No First Use” of nuclear weapons.

- **Nuclear Materials** – It’s essential that we work globally to secure all weapons-useable materials and end the production of any new materials for nuclear weapons programs.
- **Fuel cycle capabilities** – It is essential that we prevent the proliferation of new fuel cycle facilities around the world in a way that does not discriminate or disadvantage some states over others. In order to do this, we will have to create a new global architecture for providing nuclear fuel.
- **Enforcement** – We must work on develop an enforcement mechanism/regime.
- **Weapons** – All states with existing arsenals must reduce and eventually eliminate them. Some have also suggested that states with smaller arsenals could commit to a freeze on further increases to their arsenals while the biggest nuclear states (the US and Russia) reduce their arsenals.
- **Inclusiveness, Universality or “Jointness” of this Enterprise** -- And last but certainly not least, there is a recognition that all states must join the expedition to the Summit. The climb to the summit will only be possible if it includes nuclear and non-nuclear states, and all nuclear states – not just NPT states.

I believe that the first and last of these measures are perhaps the most important elements for creating the necessary momentum for reaching a Base Camp. Until such time that states have clearly and publicly committed to the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons we will have some states continuing to head down the mountain, and not up. By definition, it will take unprecedented cooperation to construct the kind of multi-layered and multilateral mechanisms that will be necessary to reach the Summit. Building the tools we need to Summit will in turn will require the building of trust and confidence, and a sense of common purpose. At the very least, a critical majority of states will need to muster the political will to decide that they want to head up the mountain, and not down.

The four statesmen captured this idea in crisper and more elegant text:

“Progress must be facilitated by a clear statement of our ultimate goal. Indeed, this is the only way to build the kind of international trust and broad cooperation that will be required to effectively address today's threats. Without the vision of moving toward zero, we will not find the essential cooperation required to stop our downward spiral.²”

For the first time perhaps in the nuclear age, we have the wind at our back. We ought to take advantage of this momentum, before the weather changes.

² Ibid