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Indeed, President Bush has moved to transform our relationship with Russia. Last fall, Presidents Bush and Putin affirmed this new reality between the United States and Russia in a joint statement declaring: "Our countries are embarked on a new relationship for the 21st century."

The passage of the Cold War and this new level of U.S.-Russian cooperation have also led to a transformation of the U.S. approach to deterrence. The new U.S. approach will consist of nuclear and non-nuclear offensive systems, active and passive defenses, and a revitalized defense infrastructure. These elements are interrelated, but have one thread in common -- a reduced reliance on nuclear weapons.
This new defense strategy requires no changes in current policy, doctrine, and strategy regarding the use of nuclear weapons. U.S. nuclear forces continue the existing practice of not being targeted on any state on a day-to-day basis. There is no change in U.S. negative security assurances toward NPT non-nuclear-weapon states.

Another major consequence of this transformation of deterrence is that it requires far fewer operationally deployed nuclear weapons. President Bush has announced that the United States will reduce its operationally deployed strategic nuclear weapons to a level between 1,700 and 2,200 over the next decade.

Decisions have already been made on the next phase of reductions of approximately 1,300 deployed strategic warheads below the level of 6,000 that became effective late last year under the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. Secretary Powell aptly summarized the philosophy of this Administration when he said before the U.S. Senate on March 12 that the approach "is to continue driving down the number of nuclear weapons."

President Putin pledged that Russia would make similar reductions in its strategic nuclear forces. The two sides are discussing how to incorporate their mutual commitment to reductions in a legally binding instrument.

The United States has not produced a new nuclear weapon in a decade, and is not developing new nuclear weapons. The United States continues to observe the moratorium on nuclear explosive testing and encourages others to do the same. The stockpile stewardship program has been designed to provide the tools
necessary to ensure safety and reliability without nuclear explosive testing. The new U.S. defense strategy is designed to raise the nuclear threshold by increasing the role of non-nuclear means of deterrence.

The United States has not produced fissile material for nuclear weapons for many years. We continue to support the negotiation of a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty at the Conference on Disarmament. This multilateral Treaty would contribute to nuclear nonproliferation and nuclear disarmament goals by placing a permanent cap on the amount of fissile material available for nuclear weapons. Separately, implementation is proceeding on a U.S.-Russian agreement that codifies the cessation of plutonium production for nuclear weapons and the permanent shutdown of military plutonium production reactors in both nations.

The United States will also continue a robust program of cooperation with Russia, funded primarily by the Departments of Defense and Energy, that addresses the security and removal of fissile material from military nuclear programs. These joint programs and unilateral U.S. efforts involve a total of more than 700 tons of weapons-grade fissile material from both sides. The vast majority of this fissile material is subject to transparency measures pursuant to U.S.-Russian negotiated agreements. Separately, Russia and the United States are working to develop practical measures for monitoring and inspection of this material, including verification by the IAEA. As a unilateral step, the United States has already placed some of its material under IAEA safeguards.
This fissile material is steadily being transformed into material no longer usable in nuclear weapons. This process contributes to the irreversibility of U.S. and Russian nuclear reductions by limiting the amount of fissile material available for nuclear weapons. Moreover, when combined with a halt in the production of fissile material, these policies and programs constrain the United States and Russia from rebuilding their nuclear weapon stockpiles to previous levels.

Two years ago, NPT parties assembled for the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Emerging from that Conference was a final document that included a number of conclusions related to Article VI. Regardless of any debate at this Preparatory Committee meeting over specific steps, it is clear that an underlying assumption of these conclusions is that nuclear disarmament is best approached on an incremental basis. Moreover, it is also clear that no timetable can be set for the ultimate fulfillment of Article VI or for the achievement of whatever steps may be involved in reaching that goal.

Engaging in technical or legal interpretation of the steps individually or collectively would not, in our judgement, be a useful exercise. The question that should be before us on Article VI is not whether any given measure has or has not been fulfilled, but rather: is a nuclear weapon state moving toward the overall goal? For the United States, the answer is an emphatic yes.

In brief: We have reduced our reliance on nuclear weapons; we are unilaterally reducing our operationally deployed strategic warheads to historically low levels over the next decade; and we are engaged in negotiations with Russia on
legally codifying the reductions. We are also discussing appropriate transparency measures to increase confidence that these reductions are being implemented. We are actively engaged with Russia in securing nuclear materials and placing them beyond future use in nuclear weapons.

It is, of course, true that we no longer support some of the Article VI conclusions in the Final Document from the 2000 NPT Review Conference. A prominent example of this is the ABM Treaty. But as was made clear at the start of these remarks, the U.S. believes that the time for mutual assured destruction is passed. The ABM Treaty is from an era when different assumptions guided the strategic relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union. Today, Presidents Bush and Putin are embarked on a new relationship. Moreover, we find it anomalous that those who profess the greatest interest in nuclear disarmament would criticize the United States for seeking to develop missile defenses that would in part reduce U.S. dependence on nuclear weapons. Moreover, as both U.S. and Russian policies demonstrate, the deployment of U.S. missile defenses is fully compatible with significant nuclear reductions.

Another example of a treaty we no longer support is the CTBT. But, as noted earlier, we continue to maintain a moratorium on nuclear testing. And last month, several senior Administration officials made clear that the United States is committed to this moratorium. The Stockpile Stewardship Program is designed to ensure the continued safety and reliability of U.S. nuclear weapons. The United States has no plans for a resumption of nuclear testing.
However, as Ambassador Wulf stated during the U.S. general debate statement -- the United States generally agrees with the conclusions of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Indeed, in May and again in December of 2001, the United States joined its NATO partners in affirming U.S. determination to contribute to the implementation of those conclusions. That is what the United States is doing and will continue to do.

Some claim that the U.S. Administration has abandoned multilateral approaches to arms control and disarmament. Nothing could be further from the truth. We support strong enforcement of existing multilateral treaties, and seek treaties and arrangements that meet today's threats to peace and stability.

Today, the United States is releasing an information paper that provides additional details on our actions and policies that meet our commitment under Article VI of the NPT. We believe strongly in the strengthened NPT review process and understand the value of transparency. This information paper is provided in that spirit.

In conclusion, it is important to emphasize that all NPT parties have a responsibility under Article VI to help create an international environment conducive to further progress on nuclear disarmament. Among the many steps for which we all have responsibility is insistence on full compliance with Articles II and III of the NPT, as well as continuing measures to address the threat of chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery.
Nuclear disarmament cannot be achieved in a vacuum without reference to the global security environment. No country has contributed more time and effort to this cause than the United States and we intend to continue that effort. It will not be achieved quickly nor can it be accomplished easily. But, just as the U.S. continues to spend billions of dollars to reduce the nuclear legacy of the Cold War in the United States and Russia, there should be no doubt of our political resolve to pursue policies that meet our obligations under Article VI of the NPT.

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