STATEMENT
BY
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TO THE FIRST SESSION OF THE
PREPARATORY COMMITTEE MEETING FOR THE
2005 NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

APRIL 8, 2002

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, it is an honor to appear before you at this first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 NPT Review Conference. I congratulate our Chairman on his selection. Mr. Chairman, you have my delegation's highest respect for your talent and dedication to this important task. We pledge to work with you and all participants toward ensuring that this Preparatory Committee meeting serves as a useful first step toward the 2005 Review Conference.

The United States believes that the critical challenge of preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction requires a comprehensive strategy. Among the key elements of that strategy are multilateral treaties already in force. The United States continues to view the NPT as the bedrock of the global effort to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Last fall, President Bush joined Russian President Putin in endorsing efforts to strengthen the Treaty. The United States generally agrees with the conclusions of the 2000 NPT Review Conference and will contribute to their implementation.

In 1968, the members of the United Nations approved the NPT as it emerged from negotiations in Geneva. They did so because they believed it would reduce the risk of nuclear war and promote the security of all nations. Indeed, the NPT has largely met these expectations and has become the most widely-adhered to arms control Treaty in history. Like the United Nations Charter, the NPT is one of only a handful of treaties that truly approaches universality.

The United States continues to support universal adherence to the NPT. It is difficult to be optimistic about early action by the four non-parties -- Cuba, India, Israel and Pakistan. Yet, restraint in their nuclear programs is essential, as are
the efforts of these non-parties to protect against the proliferation of technology and materials to others seeking nuclear weapons.

The 2000 NPT Review Conference recognized that the goal of universality requires efforts to enhance regional security in areas of tension such as the Middle East and South Asia. The United States continues to recognize the validity of the goals of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. We are deeply saddened by the recent tragic loss of life in the region. We hope the parties can find a solution to the cycle of violence and move toward a better future for their long-suffering people. Our hopes are with Secretary of State Powell as he travels to the region to work to implement U.N. Security Council resolution 1402.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a primary source of global instability and danger. As NPT parties, our nations have long understood that fact and have worked to contain nuclear weapons proliferation. At the 2000 NPT Review Conference, we reaffirmed the importance of preserving the NPT's vital contribution to peace and security. Events since then have reinforced that conclusion.

On September 11, a terrorist group attacked the United States and caused death and destruction on a scale rarely witnessed previously. A horrible atrocity was perpetrated against innocent civilians from more than 80 nations. The devastation is still painfully evident a few miles from here. There is little doubt that the group responsible for these heinous acts would pursue any means to achieve its twisted goals.

In November, President Bush spoke to the United Nations General Assembly about the importance of all civilized nations uniting to defend themselves against those who would pursue terror and lawless violence. The President mentioned that these groups are trying to acquire weapons of mass destruction and emphasized the risk we all face from this threat.

The spread of nuclear weapons to additional states not only increases the risk of nuclear war among nations, but also increases the risk of nuclear terrorism. The nuclear weapon program of a proliferating state, from the design of a weapon to its assembly, offers new opportunities for exploitation by terrorists. New stockpiles of weapons-grade nuclear material present a tempting target. Nations seeking nuclear weapons who
also harbor terrorists represent a particularly severe threat to the civilized world.

We must work together to reinforce the NPT's prohibition on the acquisition of nuclear weapons. We must demand strict compliance with its terms and support rigorous verification and enforcement measures. Compliance with Articles II and III by non-nuclear-weapon states is essential if the goals of the Treaty are to be achieved. Violations of the NPT by Iraq and North Korea during the 1990s and their continued non-compliance with the Treaty underscore the dangers to the global community that arise from such actions.

These cases of noncompliance also demonstrate the need for constant vigilance by responsible NPT parties. The continued widespread support of the international community for the NPT, for IAEA safeguards, and, in the case of Iraq, U.N. Security Council resolutions, has helped to reduce the nuclear threat these two states might otherwise have posed to regional and global security. Yet, the danger persists. We must persevere in insisting on their full compliance with the NPT. The IAEA must be allowed to exercise its full mandate in both Iraq and North Korea. There can be no compromise on this requirement.

We also must be vigilant for other NPT parties whose membership in the Treaty belies their real intentions. Iraq cloaked itself in the respectability of the NPT while deliberately flouting its obligations under the Treaty. One way to uncover real intentions is to monitor procurement practices, including whether acquisition of a particular item has any reasonable peaceful purpose for the country in question. NPT parties must put such states on notice that a violation of the NPT will be met with swift and firm action by the international community. NPT parties who would violate the Treaty must make a choice. They can either join the vast majority of parties who take their NPT obligations seriously or risk the consequences of being an outlaw nation.

Compliance with Article I is no less important. Nuclear weapon states must have comprehensive nuclear export control systems and rigorous internal security programs to guard their military nuclear facilities. As a nuclear weapon state, the United States has long understood the need for strong regulation of its nuclear weapon program. Security has been upgraded at key sites since September 11. We have export controls over nuclear-related material, equipment and technology to help ensure strict enforcement of our obligation under Article I not
in any way to assist a non-nuclear-weapon state in the manufacture or acquisition of nuclear weapons.

Article III.2 of the NPT obligates all NPT parties, not just the nuclear weapon states, to ensure the application of IAEA safeguards to exports of nuclear equipment and material to non-nuclear-weapon states. However, NPT parties have for many years recognized the importance of going beyond this requirement. The condition of full-scope IAEA safeguards for any new nuclear supply commitment was endorsed at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences; and is a part of the Guidelines of the 39 nation Nuclear Suppliers Group. The control of nuclear-related dual-use items is now routine, when it used to be the exception.

Suppliers should spare no effort when it comes to protecting against the procurement efforts of a nation seeking nuclear weapons. Sometimes, the only recourse is to deny all nuclear cooperation with such countries -- particularly if they harbor terrorists. Such rigorous export control policies combined with a robust IAEA safeguards system facilitate peaceful nuclear cooperation among responsible NPT parties by minimizing the risk that nuclear commerce will contribute to proliferation.

The application by the IAEA of full-scope safeguards under the NPT is the one critical international verification tool to deter and detect would-be violators. The strength of the safeguards applied in NPT states is absolutely critical to the future of the Treaty. If parties come to suspect a widespread breakdown of the IAEA's effectiveness, there could be devastating consequences for the Treaty and for nuclear nonproliferation goals in general.

We must not shrink from demanding that the IAEA apply strong safeguards, but we must also be prepared to provide the IAEA with the funds needed to meet these demands. The IAEA has implemented many economies over the past 15 years. The time has come when more resources must be provided for safeguards. In the coming months, we will be working with other member states of the IAEA to develop a consensus for increasing the resources available for IAEA safeguards.

We must also increase our political support for more states to conclude Additional Protocols. Progress has been too slow. The United States urges all NPT parties with significant nuclear programs to conclude an Additional Protocol as soon as possible,
but in any event no later than the 2005 NPT Review Conference. In this connection, we commend the work of the IAEA and Japan in promoting acceptance of the Protocols. But we all must do more.

Keeping nuclear material out of the hands of terrorists requires more than strict compliance with the NPT. Many additional measures are needed. We look forward to a discussion during this meeting on ensuring the safety and security of peaceful nuclear programs. The conclusions of the 2000 NPT Review Conference highlight a number of them, including the physical protection of nuclear material and the need to combat illicit nuclear trafficking.

Turning to Article VI, the United States has always taken this obligation seriously and has done a great deal to reduce nuclear weapons. Some examples are the 1987 Treaty on Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces, which eliminated an entire class of nuclear weapon systems; and the 1991 Presidential Nuclear Initiative, which led to the withdrawal and destruction of thousands of U.S. non-strategic nuclear weapons. U.S. and Russian cooperation throughout the 1990s led to continued reductions in nuclear weapons and the withdrawal of hundreds of tons of fissile material from defense stockpiles. The 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty led to significant reductions in the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads.

Declaring the advent of a new world, President Bush is determined to transform our relationship with Russia. Today, a new approach is required -- one that leaves the legacy of the Cold War behind us. In vigorously seeking to develop this new relationship, the President has sought to replace mutual assured destruction with mutual cooperation. The United States is implementing a new concept of deterrence -- one that is no longer based solely on the threat of nuclear retaliation. This means a reduced reliance on nuclear weapons, and an increased emphasis on the role of advanced conventional forces, active and passive defenses, intelligence capabilities, and a revitalized defense infrastructure. In the future, the United States will require far fewer nuclear weapons. Accordingly, President Bush has decided 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.

President Putin pledged that Russia would make similar reductions in its strategic forces. The United States and Russia are negotiating a legally-binding agreement that will codify these reductions. President Bush has said that he looks
forward to having such a document to sign when he visits Russia in May.

Finally, I want to close with a brief discussion of Article IV. Early in the history of the NPT, much of the focus of peaceful nuclear cooperation was on providing assistance in the acquisition of nuclear reactors to generate electricity. Such activities continue and it is important for countries with nuclear power to recognize that the NPT helps to create a climate of confidence in which these peaceful uses can occur.

Today, much attention related to Article IV concerns the benefits of nuclear energy in sustainable development. The IAEA is to be commended for its efforts to expand the contribution of nuclear energy in developing countries. The United States is proud to be the largest donor to the IAEA's technical cooperation program. We will continue to work to enhance the effectiveness of this program, which is aimed at diverse applications from increasing agricultural productivity to expanding the use of nuclear medicine.

The NPT has led to peaceful nuclear cooperation among nations, with benefits extending across the globe. But just like the other benefits of the Treaty, they will not be preserved without strong support for strict compliance with the NPT's nonproliferation undertakings.

Mr. Chairman, the United States looks forward to hearing the views of all participants in this first meeting of the Preparatory Committee. The conclusions of the 2000 NPT Review Conference provided additional guidance on how to carry out the 1995 decision on strengthened review. I am confident that we will fulfill our responsibility to "consider principles, objectives and ways in order to promote the full implementation of the Treaty, as well as its universality." We have an opportunity to do this without needing to draft recommendations to the Review Conference. This allows us more time to focus on information exchanges and advancing our mutual understanding. The U.S. delegation looks forward to working with all participants in an open and transparent manner to accomplish these goals.

Thank you.