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Statement by  
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To the Conference on Disarmament  
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Thematic Debate of the United Nation's First Committee  
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I take the floor today to underscore the United States' commitment to Article VI of the Non-proliferation Treaty. I will also address our commitment to assist other states in the voluntary reduction of the amount of weapons-usable nuclear material *they* hold. Both these efforts advance the common interest in reducing the risk of proliferation and the possibility that such material could end up in the hands of non-state actors.

In 2002, President Bush and Russian President Putin signed the Moscow Treaty, which will reduce the number of both countries' operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads to between 1,700 and 2,200 by 2012. In addition to this treaty, President Bush directed in 2004 that by 2012, the size of the overall nuclear weapons stockpile -- both reserve and operationally deployed -- be reduced nearly 50 percent from the time he entered office. That goal was met five years early, so he further directed that the stockpile be reduced almost 15 percent more by 2012. Currently, the stockpile is the smallest it has been since the end of the 1950s, and some weapon types, such as the W79 and W56, have been completely retired. The last nuclear weapon in the current stockpile was produced in 1991.

When weapons are removed from the stockpile, the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) schedules the weapons for dismantlement. U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile dismantlements have increased by 20 percent over last fiscal year's level, according to the NNSA administrator -- the second year in a row where NNSA surpassed its target in terms of the number of weapons dismantled. This feat was achieved through improved efficiencies in the process. We continue to dismantle nuclear weapons in a safe and efficient manner, ensuring that they can no longer be used. While the plutonium cores that are removed from the weapons are initially placed in highly secure storage, eventually the excess material will be turned into fuel.

We are also removing nuclear weapons materials from nuclear weapons sites in the U.S. This fiscal year, we placed a total of 12 metric tons of plutonium and highly enriched uranium

(HEU) on the path to quick and safe disposition. To date, we have eliminated well over 100 metric tons of U.S. highly enriched uranium.

We continue our cooperation with Russia to secure nuclear material and downblend HEU to LEU. Jointly we have downblended 322 metric tons of HEU from Soviet-era dismantled nuclear weapons, and ten metric tons of Russian weapons-usable material. That downblended HEU is sold to U.S. utilities for power production.

The United States continues to work with over 100 countries to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Since its inception in the 1990s, the U.S.-origin fuel removal program, now part of the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, has returned 45 shipments of U.S.-origin fuel from 27 countries, for a total of over 1,190 kilograms of HEU fuel – enough for over 45 nuclear weapons – and more than 8,500 fuel assemblies. The program has removed all eligible U.S.-origin HEU fuel from the following 16 countries – Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and Thailand.

Mr. Chairman –

The United States remains steadfast in its commitment to reduce its stockpile of nuclear weapons, and the amount of nuclear-weapons usable material in the United States and in other countries. Our efforts are a solid contribution to international security and non-proliferation, and reduce the risk that such dangerous material could end up in the hands of non-state actors. The United States will also continue to be as transparent as possible about its efforts in this area, as shown not only by our intervention today, but also by repeated briefings by U.S. experts to international organizations and their member states, including the UN, the Conference on Disarmament, and the IAEA.