



UNITED STATES DELEGATION TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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Statement

by

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It is a pleasure to see Mexico, a close friend and neighbor of the United States, sitting in the Chair -- even if only temporarily. It inspires confidence to have someone so experienced and knowledgeable in CD matters filling in, and to know that we will get the benefit of your presence on a longer-term basis again in the near future.

I would like to express my sympathy and that of all Americans to the government and people of Morocco on the devastating earthquake that occurred Tuesday. Our prayers are with the victims and their families.

It is an honor for me to be making my first substantive statement to the Conference today on behalf of the United States. We are all aware that the Conference has in recent years fallen on hard times. I regret to say that I do not have with me today ideas or proposals to lead the CD out of its current impasse, but that is because the solution does not lie in U.S. hands alone. Breaking the logjam is a collective effort, and I look forward to working closely with you and with all of our colleagues toward that end.

When solutions are not easy to come by, it is particularly important for us to continue a dialogue on the serious challenges we face, and to work cooperatively to address them. On February 11 President Bush issued a call to action to address what he considered as the "greatest threat before humanity today" -- that is, the possibility of a "secret and sudden attack with chemical or biological or radiological or nuclear weapons." That assessment may be startling to some, given that so recently the end of the cold war seemed to promise unprecedented peace and security. The specter of Armageddon may indeed have faded, but it would be a dangerous illusion to believe that we no longer face grave risks. And we must not draw false comfort that the solutions and methods that got us through the Cold War are sufficient to address the challenges we now face. Indeed, the threat has shifted and the tools we choose to meet it must necessarily evolve as well.

Today the materials and expertise necessary to produce weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery are more widely available than ever before. At the same time, we can no longer assume that all of our potential enemies will be persuaded by a shared impulse for self-preservation. The recent experience of my country and the countries of many of our colleagues here today shows that no state is immune from terrorist attack. Thus, no government can be sure that terrorists will not some day use weapons of mass destruction against its citizens. As President Bush said, "in the hands of terrorists, weapons of mass

destruction would be a first resort – the preferred means to further their ideology of suicide and random murder.”

The ongoing pursuit of weapons of mass destruction by a handful of states in violation of treaty commitments and international obligations poses multiple risks. It puts the safety of their neighbors and their own citizens at doubt. It threatens the international legal norms that our predecessors in this body and elsewhere worked painstakingly to build and that have helped keep the world safer for decades. It has also encouraged an international black market willing and able to put the most dangerous technologies in the hands of the world's most irresponsible regimes and individuals including terrorists. In short, it puts us all at risk.

Mr. Chairman,

These realities require a change in both our thinking and our tactics. We must first recognize a compelling common interest in halting proliferation, and then strengthen the tools to advance that common interest. This is not to dismiss the importance of existing concerns, but rather to recognize and deal with a threat of overriding urgency before us.

President Bush called for unity among nations in promoting an international environment that actively discourages proliferation. He identified a number of practical steps comprising an effort that would be both profoundly multilateral and effective:

First -- expand the work of the Proliferation Security Initiative. Through improved information sharing and enhanced operational readiness, the PSI has created the practical basis for cooperation among states in disrupting the trade in Weapons of Mass Destruction, delivery systems, and related materials. President Bush called for the PSI to expand its focus to law enforcement cooperation against proliferators, building on both PSI and on the tools already developed to fight terrorism, to prosecute illicit networks and other sources of supply.

Since the PSI's launch last May, it has gained the support of nearly 60 countries, many of whom are represented in this body, and that number continues to grow. We hope eventually to involve all countries that have the will and capacity to take action on proliferation. Key flag, coastal or transit states, as well as countries that are used by proliferators, are particularly important in these efforts.

Second -- enact and enforce effective domestic laws and controls that support nonproliferation. Governments should criminalize proliferation,

implement export controls conforming to the highest international standards, and ensure the security of dangerous materials within our territories. If our citizens act contrary to these laws and standards, there must be stiff penalties. President Bush proposed last fall a Security Council resolution calling for such measures. The permanent members of the Security Council are now crafting a resolution designed to meet these goals. We hope to submit a draft soon to the entire Council, and we should all work to see that it is adopted quickly. When it is passed, we stand ready to help states meet the goals of the resolution.

Third -- expand on Cooperative Threat Reduction and other assistance efforts to deal with dangerous weapons and materials. Since proliferation is a global problem, we see opportunities to extend the scope of the G-8 Global Partnership beyond Russia to other states of the former Soviet Union as well as to countries such as Iraq and Libya. This could include expanding programs for the security and disposition of fissile material, destroying chemical weapons, improving border security, controlling radiological sources, promoting cooperation against bio-terrorism, eliminating the use of highly-enriched uranium fuel in research reactors, and redirecting scientists and other specialists with weapons of mass destruction know-how into peaceful civilian employment, including commercial ventures.

Fourth -- prevent governments from developing nuclear weapons under false pretenses. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) sought to strike a balance between preventing proliferation and permitting maximum scope for states to pursue peaceful nuclear programs. Article IV reflects that balance by making clear any such peaceful nuclear program must be in conformity with the nonproliferation provisions of the Treaty. International nuclear commerce has settled into a reliable system that provides reactors and fuel for NPT parties, with the vast majority of states foregoing the large economic and technical challenge of constructing their own enrichment and reprocessing facilities. It is very clear that the peaceful nuclear benefits envisaged under the NPT can be fully realized without building an enrichment or reprocessing plant. Yet, in the last 15 years, a handful of states without any operational power reactors have sought their own enrichment or reprocessing facilities, and did so secretly and in violation of the NPT.

For this reason, President Bush proposed that the Nuclear Suppliers Group decide that no member state provide enrichment or reprocessing equipment or technology to any state that does not already possess a fully functioning enrichment or reprocessing facility. Nuclear Suppliers Group states long ago pledged to provide no such assistance to non-NPT states, and that position remains firm. At the same time, states that

have renounced enrichment and reprocessing should have reliable access at reasonable cost to fuel for civilian reactors.

Fifth -- Add impetus to the Additional Protocol. More than 80 countries have already negotiated an Additional Protocol, with about half of these being in force. The United States must do its part, and the President urged the Senate to consent immediately to ratification of the Additional Protocol. We must accelerate diplomatic efforts in this area and also make signature of the Additional Protocol a condition of nuclear supply by the end of 2005.

Sixth -- strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The President also proposed to enhance the IAEA's capability to ensure compliance by creating a special committee of the IAEA's Board of Governors to focus intensively on safeguards and verification.

Finally -- countries under IAEA investigation should not be allowed to exercise the privileges of Board membership. The IAEA and its Board of Governors have faced very difficult noncompliance cases in recent years, and we must ensure the IAEA has all the tools it needs to fulfill its mandate.

Mr. Chairman,

A realistic appraisal of the challenges we face is sobering. The continued spread of weapons of mass destruction and related technologies threatens the interests of every responsible government, and the future well-being of every person on this planet. But we are beginning to recognize the scope of the problem, and to identify the outlines of solutions.

As Secretary of State Colin Powell recently observed, there is some good news. The overwhelming majority of states have responsibly complied with their treaty obligations. Those that have not may be having some second thoughts -- we hope so -- with a view to following the good examples set by those countries which have renounced nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons programs, including South Africa, Argentina, Brazil, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus and, most recently, Libya. These states have recognized correctly that such weapons would ultimately make them less, not more, secure. Six-party talks on North Korea resumed yesterday in Beijing, and we remain hopeful that the DPRK will make the strategic choice to give up its nuclear programs.

Resolving the problem of proliferation will not be quick or easy. Terrorists and outlaw regimes will not be dissuaded by high-minded speeches or written agreements. We can begin by fostering an

environment in which outlaw behavior is met with universal condemnation and with real consequences that make the costs of proliferation unsustainable. As Under Secretary of State John R. Bolton recently stressed, "Dictators around the world must learn that weapons of mass destruction do not bring influence, prestige or security -- only isolation."

President Bush has outlined several pragmatic steps, and we look forward to working with the international community in developing these ideas. There will be no single solution, and no state can win this battle alone. Whatever our individual national priorities may be in securing a higher and richer quality of life for our citizens, I believe we can all agree that our collective and national interests are best served if we combine our efforts to combat and defeat the scourge of weapons of mass destruction. The United States looks forward to working with every country here today to help achieve this goal.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.