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European Contributions to Nuclear Disarmament and Conflict Resolution

## European Contributions to Nuclear Disarmament and Conflict Resolution

### Remarks

#### Ellen Tauscher

Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security

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*As prepared*

Good afternoon. I am pleased to be joining you for this important conference on how Europe can contribute to nuclear disarmament and conflict resolution.

Although my brief remarks, as requested, will focus on what the United States and Russia can do together to move the world closer to President Obama's goal of a world without nuclear weapons, no one should be under the illusion that the United States and Russia can do it by ourselves.

Conferences like this one are useful because they serve as a reminder that although the United States and Russia may possess the world's two largest nuclear arsenals, we do not possess all the world's nuclear weapons.

And we certainly do not hold a monopoly on all the world's fissile material, advanced technology, and nuclear expertise, which in today's world can be transmitted worldwide with a click of a mouse. In such a world, achieving the elimination of nuclear weapons will require the active contributions of all.

On that note, I want to thank Ambassador Dhanapala for his kind introduction, as well as all his hard work to reduce global nuclear threats. His work on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was truly tremendous. This Administration is committed to bringing the CTBT into force. A ban on nuclear testing is a vital step on the path toward nuclear disarmament.

That is a path that the United States is taking, even if it is not always the easiest journey and not without its obstacles and setbacks. I want to again thank Ambassador Dhanapala, as well as all of Pugwash, for not settling for the easiest course.

Like many of you, President Obama understands that the most worthy goals are often the toughest to achieve, and can take a long time. While reaffirming and reenergizing the strategic imperative of nuclear disarmament, President Obama has acknowledged it might not occur in his lifetime.

But that has not discouraged him, Secretary Clinton, or me. Instead, the United States has adopted a practical approach of taking one concrete step at a time, often in partnership with Russia.

As the two states with the largest nuclear arsenals and nuclear complexes, the United States and Russia have a responsibility to lead on the path toward disarmament. We accept that responsibility.

A major step forward last year was our conclusion of the New START Treaty. The Treaty entered into force in February and its implementation is well underway.

We have exchanged data on our strategic nuclear facilities and forces, and have begun conducting on-site inspections of each other's Treaty-related facilities. When it is fully implemented, New START will result in the lowest number of nuclear warheads deployed by the United States and Russia since the 1950s.

My government's goal is to pursue deeper nuclear arms reductions. The New START Treaty covers only strategic delivery vehicles and their deployed warheads. We aim to extend constraints to non-strategic warheads and nuclear warheads in storage.

On signing the New START Treaty, President Obama noted his intent to pursue additional and broader reductions in U.S. and Russian strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons, including non-deployed nuclear weapons.

For its part, the Senate made clear in its resolution of ratification for the New START Treaty, the Senate's strong interest in addressing the large numerical disparity in non-strategic, or "tactical" nuclear weapons, between the United States and Russia.

Let me repeat, this Administration is committed to seeking reductions in all nuclear weapons, including non-strategic.

The United States is interested in moving the bilateral arms control process forward with Russia through a broad policy discussion on issues of stability, security, and confidence-building, which can help lay the groundwork for eventual further nuclear arms reductions.

The United States' 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, or NPR, provides a roadmap for advancing the Obama Administration's comprehensive approach to reducing the role and number of nuclear weapons toward the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, we will sustain, as long as nuclear weapons exist, a safe, secure, and effective nuclear arsenal.

A key part of implementing the NPR will be evaluating nuclear force requirements as we move further into the 21st century. Potential changes will be assessed according to how they meet key objectives outlined in the NPR, including reducing the role of nuclear weapons, sustaining strategic deterrence and stability, strengthening regional deterrence, and assuring U.S. allies and partners.

When analyzing possible changes to our force posture that would be associated with different types of reductions, we will take into account a large number of factors, including changes in the global security environment. As we undertake deeper reductions, we have a responsibility to hedge against geopolitical or technological surprise.

That is one of the reasons that we are building missile defenses and seeking cooperation on missile defenses with Russia. Rather than simply scrapping the excess weapons of our past competition, we want to build protection together against the current and possible future threats facing both our countries.

Our efforts to seek cooperation on missile defenses reflect the obvious: the Cold War has long since ended and Russia is not a target of those defenses. We seek to transcend traditional thinking on strategic stability, often associated with Mutually Assured Destruction, in favor of a concept of Mutually Assured Stability.

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This would be a new approach to achieving stability. It would create incentives for achieving cooperation and avoiding competition and conflict. Mutually Assured Stability would be based on mutual interest, respect, and peaceful cooperation.

While differences remain, states would share an overriding interest in peace and stability that is underpinned by formal agreements on the limitation of arms, be they nuclear or conventional, and other confidence building measures. As we transition away from Mutually Assured Destruction, we will need to develop incentives to refrain from precipitate actions, and pursue cooperative solutions to international problems.

One can envision a trend away from postures that emphasize acting first or worrying about “use or lose,” to postures that stress survivability and increasing time for decision-making. Achieving Mutually Assured Stability will not happen overnight, but could be promoted by confidence-building measures.

I have just attended a meeting of the five nuclear-weapons states in Paris. We continued a dialogue that began in London in 2009 on nuclear weapons verification, transparency, and confidence-building measures.

This dialogue is essential to lay the groundwork for an eventual expansion of the process of nuclear reductions to include states other than the United States and Russia.

As I said at the beginning and per the subject of this conference, the United States and Russia cannot do it alone. There is much we can do together, but we cannot eliminate nuclear weapons without the contributions and actions of all.

Disarmament and nonproliferation are two sides of the same coin. Countries with nuclear weapons will be reluctant to disarm so long as there is the prospect other states will acquire such weapons. Similarly, countries might pursue nuclear weapons programs because they do not want to forgo weapons that others possess. You cannot succeed on disarmament without continued progress on nonproliferation, and vice versa.

Arms control and disarmament efforts promote international unity on preventing new nuclear states and nuclear terrorism. Preventing proliferation creates the security needed to continue progress toward disarmament.

Understanding that dynamic, we consider such measures as the New START Treaty, the CTBT, the ongoing moratorium on nuclear testing, the FMCT, and other disarmament agreements as vital not only in and of themselves, but also for the long-term health of the nonproliferation regime.

Each new disarmament agreement makes nonproliferation cooperation more attractive and this cooperation, in turn, opens the way for the next step down the path of disarmament.

Like the President, I “harbor no illusions about the difficulty of bringing about a world without nuclear weapons.” I know progress will sometimes be very slow.

But I also know that pursuing disarmament and nonproliferation together is the only way we can succeed on either front. And I know that we owe it to all peoples of the world to do everything we can to prevent the further spread or use of nuclear weapons.

As was stated in the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review of last year, “It is in the U.S. interest and that of all other nations that the nearly 65-year record of nuclear non-use be extended forever.”

To try and ensure that happens, the United States will continue to seek further reductions in both the role and numbers of nuclear weapons. We hope that all other states, including our partner Russia, continue to do so as well.

Thank you. I am happy to answer any questions that you might have.

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