

**WANTED: U.S. NUCLEAR WEAPONS POLICY THAT SUPPORTS  
NON-PROLIFERATION & GLOBAL DISARMAMENT OBLIGATIONS**



The nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) “entered into force” and became law in 1970. It is the most universal treaty of its kind in history, with 188 signatories. The NPT required the non-nuclear states that signed not to acquire nuclear weapons. In return, it obligated the states which already had nuclear weapons to negotiate the elimination of their arsenals. In May 2000, the U.S., along with other NPT signers, agreed to 13 steps to implement the Treaty’s disarmament obligations. These steps included “an unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapons states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals,” early ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, a fissile material cutoff treaty, and a diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies.

Eight years have passed, and the U.S. has not yet complied with the promises it made to undertake the 13 steps. Neither has it honored its moral and legal obligations to the text of the Treaty itself. Meeting these commitments is vital to U.S. security. Fulfilling our own country’s commitments is essential to ensuring a viable, global non-proliferation regime capable of stopping the spread of nuclear weapons, preventing their acquisition by terrorists, and achieving a world where all people are free from the terrible prospect of a nuclear attack.

**THE 2001 NUCLEAR POSTURE REVIEW: A DANGEROUS DIRECTION**

Present U.S. nuclear weapons policy does not comply with the nation’s international obligations. Over the past seven years, the U.S. has expanded options for the use of nuclear weapons, planned for maintenance of a large arsenal for decades to come, modernized nuclear missiles and aircraft, undertaken development of new generations of delivery systems, and deployed strategic missile defense systems.

Congress has recognized that a fundamentally different policy is needed. The 2008 Defense Authorization bill requires the next administration to conduct a new Nuclear Posture Review. Additionally, it establishes a congressional commission to broadly assess the U.S. strategic posture. Both studies should analyze U.S. policy in light of H. Res. 68 on nonproliferation strategies. Introduced by Rep. Lynn Woolsey, this proposal has 18 co-sponsors and has been referred to the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

**Recommendations**

- Senators should co-sponsor the Nuclear Policy & Posture Review Act of 2007 (S. 1914). Representatives should co-sponsor H. Res. 68 on nonproliferation strategies.
- Members of Congress should support negotiation of a new, verifiable U.S.-Russian agreement requiring deep reductions of strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons, and extension of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.
- Congress should ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and call for a verified Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.

Another positive approach to bringing the U.S. into better alignment with its disarmament obligations can be found in the Nuclear Policy and Posture Review Act of 2007 (S.1914). S. 1914 has been introduced by Senator Dianne Feinstein, with nine co-sponsors, and referred to the Senate Armed Services Committee. It requires the next president to conduct nuclear weapons assessments that consider U.S. international obligations. By incorporating outside input via independent experts and public meetings, and by requiring release of an unclassified version, S.1914 would also encourage much needed public debate. Further, it prohibits the appropriation of funds for the so-called "Reliable Replacement Warhead" program until the reviews have been completed and submitted to Congress.

### **SERIOUS ARSENAL REDUCTIONS ARE REQUIRED**

Between them, the United States and Russia have about 95% of the world stockpile of over 25,000 nuclear warheads and bombs. The 2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT) requires each country to reduce the number of deployed strategic warheads to no more than 2,200 by the end of 2012, when it expires, but it does not require verified dismantlement of delivery systems or withdrawn warheads. The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) provides some monitoring mechanisms for SORT reductions, but expires at the end of 2009.

Russia seeks a new, verifiable agreement on further strategic reductions. The Bush administration has rejected this approach, saying instead that a post-START "arrangement" should "focus on transparency and confidence-building measures." Neither country is addressing non-strategic nuclear weapons. Serious negotiations should commence on a post-START treaty on verifiable deep reductions of both types of weapons. This will enhance both U.S. and international security.

### **HALT PRODUCTION OF FISSILE MATERIALS**

A verified ban on production of plutonium and enriched uranium for nuclear weapons, a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT), would make permanent the existing declared halt to production by the United States, United Kingdom, Russia, and

France. A FMCT should also provide mechanisms for monitoring of fissile materials removed from warheads and military stockpiles, thus linking the treaty to the disarmament process.

### **PERMANENTLY END NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE TESTING**

The 1996 Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) prohibits nuclear weapon test explosions. It erects a barrier to the spread of nuclear weapons, in particular those deliverable by missile, and constrains their further refinement by existing nuclear powers. The CTBT creates an extensive monitoring system that detected the October 2006 North Korean nuclear test. The test ban also has major environmental and health benefits. Although the United States was the first signatory, the Senate declined to approve ratification. In 2002, the Bush Administration announced that it would not support ratification. The U.S. is one of nine remaining countries that must ratify the CTBT for it to "enter into force" and become law.

H. Res. 882, introduced by Rep. Ellen Tauscher, with 39 co-sponsors, calls for a bi-partisan process in the Senate to approve CTBT ratification. It has been referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. This is good news, but there is a problem. According to a December 2007 Congressional Research Service report, some members of Congress "see a CTBT-RRW [Reliable Replacement Warhead] link as a possible quid pro quo." The CTBT is a worthy objective. However, any "deal" with the weapons labs that would "trade" a test ban for U.S. production of new nuclear weapons is unnecessary and unacceptable.

