
U.S. APPROACHES TO NONPROLIFERATION

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Denying proliferators WMD technology and expertise is “a central framing element” of U.S. nonproliferation policy, says Assistant Secretary of State for Nonproliferation John Wolf. He sees the key U.S. challenges as: reducing and ceasing WMD materials production; stopping Iran’s acquisition of WMD and missiles; stopping nuclear and missile proliferation in and from South Asia; strengthening export controls, especially on Iraq; and strengthening the International Atomic Energy Agency.

“Every nation ... must take seriously the growing threat of terror on a catastrophic scale — terror armed with biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons.... Some states that sponsor terror are seeking or already possess weapons of mass destruction; terrorist groups are hungry for these weapons, and would use them without a hint of conscience.... In preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, there is no margin for error, and no chance to learn from mistakes. Our coalition must act deliberately, but inaction is not an option.”

(President George W. Bush, speaking on the six-month anniversary of the September 11 attacks)

Marshalling international efforts to deny proliferators the material, equipment, expertise, and technology necessary to pursue weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the means to deliver them has long been a priority of the U.S. government. But the terrorist attacks last September 11 and the subsequent anthrax deaths spurred a new sense of urgency in the fight against proliferation. What the president was making clear is that this effort is not just one of many foreign policy challenges; it is a central framing element, and we must win.

What is clear, too, is that our challenge has grown in complexity as WMD and missile technology has proliferated. Today’s threat is shaped by non-state as well as by state actors, including extremists

who will not hesitate to use WMD if they can get their hands on them.

We also must be concerned by the increase in regional instability that comes from the spread of WMD and their delivery systems. It is true in the Middle East; it is true in East Asia; and it is most clearly true today in South Asia. Moreover, WMD and missiles constitute a clear and direct threat to U.S. forces deployed around the world, as well as to our allies and friends.

Our first priority has to be security against WMD and missile use, development, deployment, and export. With that in mind, let me offer my views of key global nonproliferation challenges and steps we are taking to address them.

REDUCE AND STOP PRODUCTION OF WMD MATERIALS

Dealing with the large quantities of excess WMD systems and related material, technology, and expertise in the former Soviet Union continues to be our most immediate challenge and highest nonproliferation priority. The United States is pursuing a wide array of cooperative programs in Russia and the new Eurasian republics. Our objective is not only to help them meet their arms control obligations, but also to control and dispose of excess WMD materials — in particular excess nuclear weapon materials — and to ensure that

nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons and missile expertise does not leak to states of concern and terrorist organizations.

To these ends, the United States is working to: speed up material protection, control, and accounting programs at up to 40 sites in the former Soviet Union to reduce vulnerabilities of fissile materials; secure material in fewer, consolidated sites; and dispose of fissile materials declared excess to defense needs. We have further reinforced efforts to permanently shut down Russia's three remaining reactors producing weapon-grade plutonium. We are working with Russia and allies to develop more cost-effective programs to dispose of excess weapon-grade plutonium, and working with Kazakhstan to secure 300 metric tons of spent fuel — containing three tons of weapon-grade plutonium — from its BN-350 breeder reactor.

Another priority is securing dangerous biological pathogens in the former Soviet Union and resuming assistance to destroy chemical weapon stockpiles in Russia. The United States is concerned about the rate at which Russia is moving to comply with its obligations under the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). We are searching to find common ground with Russia on this issue. We are also committed to the scientist redirection programs at the Science Centers in Moscow and Kiev, which are designed to prevent former Soviet weapons experts from providing WMD and missile expertise to proliferators and terrorists.

STOP IRAN'S ACQUISITION OF WMD AND MISSILES

The proliferation threat posed by Iran is stark and multifaceted. Iran has an ambitious nuclear program, longstanding chemical/biological programs, and a rapidly increasing ballistic missile program. At the same time it is a leading exporter of support for terrorist groups. Iran is actively seeking to develop and improve all aspects of its WMD and missile programs. Its clandestine effort to produce fissile material is a particular worry. We should be under no

illusions: Iran is intent on acquiring nuclear weapons and is actively seeking the foreign assistance it needs to achieve this objective.

We continue to have an active dialogue with Russia on this issue. In our dialogue, we are forced to juxtapose those broad areas of cooperation that have developed over the past year-and-a-half as a result of meetings between Presidents George Bush and Vladimir Putin with Russia's continued assistance to Iran on missiles, sensitive nuclear technology, and advanced conventional weapons. We are working hard to convince Russia that cooperation with Iran on missile- and nuclear-related technology and destabilizing conventional weapons is a threat both to regional stability and to Russia's own security interests. Meanwhile we are working to ensure that China and other countries do not step in to replace Russia as a supplier of WMD- and missile-related technologies to Iran. Stopping North Korea's missile-related exports to Iran and elsewhere is a key part of the agenda we wish to pursue with Pyongyang.

STOP NUCLEAR AND MISSILE PROLIFERATION IN AND FROM SOUTH ASIA

The threat that WMD and missile programs pose to regional stability is nowhere more evident than in South Asia, where one million troops face off on the India-Pakistan border. The presence of WMD and missiles in the region has increased dramatically the danger of miscalculation during times of crisis, and the resulting regional instability magnifies the risk of these weapons falling into the hands of terrorists. Yet there is no near-term prospect of getting India and Pakistan to relinquish their nuclear weapons and missiles.

While the recent sharp escalation in tension between India and Pakistan has reminded us all of the pressing danger of unchecked proliferation, it is not yet clear that Pakistan and India have drawn the right conclusions from this crisis about the dangers their WMD and missiles pose. We hope that confidence-building measures like keeping weapons and delivery systems separated, halting fissile material production,

and restraining nuclear and missile programs can be implemented. Tightened export controls are also vital to ensure that India and Pakistan do not become sources of, or transshipment points for, sensitive materials and technology.

STRENGTHEN EXPORT CONTROLS, INCLUDING ON IRAQ

All efforts to secure existing WMD- and missile-related items will be futile if we are not able to cut off the flow of arms and sensitive WMD/missile technologies through strengthened export controls. We urgently need to strengthen the implementation and effective enforcement of export controls on a multilateral basis and add terrorism to the scope of their coverage. Without broad cooperation among export and transit countries, sensitive dual-use items and technologies cannot be effectively controlled. Adherence to the guidelines and control lists of the multilateral export control regimes is vital to the success of our nonproliferation efforts. To help, the United States is expanding its Export Control and Related Border Security Assistance cooperation with other countries, particularly those in Central Asia, to help them strengthen their controls. But even with well-intentioned laws, it is essential that governments commit to vigorous enforcement and exemplary judicial action for those caught violating controls.

Strengthening and enforcement of export controls is particularly important in the case of Iraq. Iraq flaunts its hostility to the world; remains in violation of its U.N. and Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) obligations; supports terrorism; and has continued to pursue WMD, missile, and conventional military programs in contravention of U.N. Security Council resolutions.

In May 2002 the U.N. Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1409, which puts in place new U.N. export controls on Iraq that focus on denying Iraq the wherewithal to reconstitute its weapons programs. By freeing up trade in goods for purely civilian use while maintaining controls on militarily useful items, this system makes clear that the international community interposes no obstacles to efforts to assist the Iraqi people.

STRENGTHEN THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Mindful of the world's near miss with Iraq, and of new risks from countries like Iran and North Korea, we must improve and fund effective safeguards on nuclear power users and the ability of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to ferret out covert weapons efforts. The Additional Safeguards Protocol sets an important new nonproliferation norm that every country should accept. The IAEA also has a central role in verifying the Agreed Framework with North Korea.

But carrying out new tasks requires more resources. We need to ensure that the IAEA gets the financial, technical, and political support that it needs. The Board of Governors endorsed proposals to strengthen and expand IAEA programs for the worldwide protection of nuclear materials, radioactive sources, and nuclear facilities against acts of terrorism. The United States strongly supports those initiatives and is urging member states to ensure that the IAEA has the resources needed to put them into practice.

Strengthening the IAEA is part of our overarching goal of strengthening international agreements, arrangements, and organizations devoted to nonproliferation and of strengthening compliance measures. It should be clear that the United States places great importance on multilateral efforts to control WMD and technologies, but I want to emphasize this point. The United States is strongly committed to the existing international nonproliferation treaties, including the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Chemical Weapons Convention, and Biological Weapons Convention, as well as to nonproliferation regimes like the Zangger Committee, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Wassenaar Arrangement, and the Australia Group.

CONCLUSION

September 11 has given a new sense of urgency to a danger that we all have been concerned about for some time, and in that sense it provides an opportunity. The scope of those attacks has

underlined the need to take vigorous action now to end the possibility that terrorist groups or rogue states could launch even more devastating attacks in the future. Proliferation of WMD and missiles is an urgent and profound threat to the security of all states and requires urgent action.

- All states should elevate security against WMD and missile proliferation to an overarching imperative that trumps other, secondary considerations.
- Suppliers of WMD- and missile-related technology should end such cooperation now. Security against WMD and ballistic missile attacks is a first-order imperative on which there should be no compromise.
- All states should strengthen nonproliferation regimes such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

- Nations should immediately secure their WMD and missiles to the highest possible extent and help other states that lack the resources to do likewise.
- Similarly, states should immediately increase the effectiveness of their export control systems and assist other states to the same end.

The United States appreciates the cooperation and assistance the world community has shown since September 11. We hope now to build on that cooperation to move forward in strengthening nonproliferation efforts across the board. We have had clear warning of the enormous danger posed by WMD and missile proliferation. Now it is incumbent on us all to act decisively. ●