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For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
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Statement by the President

Today I have issued the National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction. The strategy establishes a comprehensive approach to counter the growing threat from weapons of mass destruction (WMD), including nuclear, radiological, biological, and chemical weapons. This strategy is integral to the National Security Strategy of the United States of America and the National Strategy for Homeland Security. We will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes and terrorists to threaten our Nation and our friends and allies with the world's most destructive weapons.

Weapons of mass destruction pose a grave danger. They could allow America's adversaries to inflict massive harm against our country, our military forces abroad, and our friends and allies. Some rogue states, including several that support terrorism, already possess WMD and are seeking even greater capabilities, as tools of coercion. For them, these are weapons of choice intended to deter us from responding to their aggression against our friends in vital regions of interest. For terrorists, WMD would provide the ability to kill large numbers of our people without warning. They would give them the power to murder without conscience on a scale to match their hatred for our country and our values.

Our national strategy to combat WMD is based on three pillars. We will pursue robust counterproliferation policies and capabilities to deter and defend against the use of these weapons. We will strengthen nonproliferation measures to prevent states and terrorists from acquiring WMD. We will increase our preparations to respond effectively to any use of WMD against us or our friends and allies. To succeed, we must use new technologies, strengthen our intelligence capabilities, work even more closely with allies, and establish new partnerships with other key states, including former adversaries.

The need to prevent, deter, defend against, and respond to WMD threats presents our Nation with a difficult and complex challenge. The strategy I have issued today asks much of our Federal Government, our state and local institutions, and, indeed, every citizen. The threat is real and the stakes are high. Success against this threat is a requirement of history -- one that the United States will meet with confidence and determination.

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