Thank you for the introduction, Ed, and for inviting me to be here today. I never cease to be impressed with the group that the Exchange Monitor pulls together—both the speakers and the attendees. This forum and the dialogue it produces among experts are so important, so again, thank you, Ed, for bringing us together. I believe I have spoken at three out of the last four conferences—I believe the one I missed one took place during the New START negotiations in Geneva.

The theme of this conference, “Balancing Priorities,” is apt for our current situation. We all agree that we must maintain a safe, secure and effective nuclear deterrent for as long as nuclear weapons exist. Just as important is a shared understanding that we tailor our security strategies to meet both the challenges of today and those we will face tomorrow.

I have been asked to talk about arms control priorities for 2014 and beyond, but first I would like to talk about the basic question of why and how we pursue arms control policies.

Fifty two years ago, the United States and the Soviet Union were on the verge of nuclear war. Such a war would have had consequences we cannot possibly fathom. Our leaders brought us back from the edge of that terrible abyss and they did it with diplomacy, with patience and with arms control measures. The intricate system of treaties, laws and agreements that control the world’s most destructive weapons has weathered fairly well, but the system is not foolproof. As Douglas Adams once said, “[a] common mistake that people make when trying to design something completely foolproof is to underestimate the ingenuity of complete fools.”

This idea – the idea that we cannot assume that we can forever hold accidents, madness and miscalculation at bay – was certainly a factor that drove Henry Kissinger, Sam Nunn, Bill Perry and George Shultz to endorse the goal of seeking a world free of nuclear weapons. They saw that the world had changed. They saw that terrorists would not be deterred by a concept like mutually-assured destruction. These four giants of the U.S. national security establishment warned that the very weapons that had provided stability during the Cold War could become liabilities in our current environment.

The goal was not new – many leaders and presidents, including President Reagan, had endorsed a world without nuclear weapons. The difference was that Kissinger, Nunn, Perry and Shultz, or The Four Statesmen, not only endorsed the goal, they outlined an Action Plan to help reach the goal.

“Without the bold vision,” The Four said in 2007, “the actions will not be perceived as fair or urgent. Without the actions, the vision will not be perceived as realistic or possible.”

We pursue arms control today for the same reason we did fifty years ago, for the same reason that The Four Statesmen outlined seven years ago. We pursue arms control policies because they are in our national security interest. We pursue arms control because it has made and will make the world a safer place for ourselves, our families, our neighbors, our children.
President Obama laid out his own long-term vision for the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons coupled with practical steps in his speech in Prague five years ago.

**2010 Nuclear Posture Review**

The Administration’s 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, or NPR, connected concept to policy. The NPR properly refocused our nuclear policy for the 21st century, recognizing that the massive nuclear arsenal that the United States built to confront the threats of the Cold War is poorly suited for today’s security environment, where the threats posed by nuclear terrorism and nuclear proliferation eclipse those of a disarming strike or “bolt out of the blue” nuclear attack.

The NPR further notes that, a nuclear force of thousands of weapons has little direct relevance to deterring that threat. Concerted action by the United States and Russia – and indeed, by all nuclear weapon states – to reduce their arsenals strengthens the nuclear nonproliferation regime, as partners around the world join in securing nuclear materials, making it harder for terrorists to acquire them.

For this reason, in addition to working on the prevention of nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism, the United States has taken steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy. Mindful of the devastating humanitarian consequences of nuclear war, we have also clearly stated that it is in the U.S. interest, and that of all other nations, that the nearly 70-year record of non-use of nuclear weapons be extended forever.

**NPR Employment Guidance**

Building upon the 2010 NPR, the Administration conducted a detailed review of U.S. nuclear deterrence requirements in order to align U.S. nuclear planning to the current and projected security environment. This review was developed with, and has the support of, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, U.S. Strategic Command, and the Departments of Defense, State and Energy with the analytic support of the intelligence community. It was also imbued with the principle that a robust assessment of current and likely future threats coupled with a strategy designed to address those threats must drive nuclear force structure and posture decisions. Maintaining a posture for yesterday’s missions will not help us effectively address the dangers facing us today and tomorrow. Following this review, last June the President issued new nuclear employment guidance. This guidance is the touchstone of our arms control efforts.

The President’s guidance provides us direction in a number of ways:

- First and foremost, it affirms that the United States will maintain a credible deterrent capable of convincing any potential adversary that the adverse consequences of attacking the United States or our allies and partners far outweigh any potential benefit they may seek to gain through an attack.

- Second, the guidance directs U.S. plans to align with the policies of the NPR, including that the United States will only consider the use of nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States or its allies and partners. The guidance directs that U.S. nuclear plans should focus on only those objectives and missions that are necessary for deterrence in the 21st Century. In so doing, the guidance takes further steps toward reducing the role of nuclear weapons in our strategy and better accounts for the post-Cold War security environment.

- Third, the new guidance directs strengthening non-nuclear capabilities and reducing the role of nuclear weapons in deterring non-nuclear attacks, recognizing non-nuclear options are not a substitute for nuclear weapons.
This guidance directs that we examine ways to reduce the role of launch under attack in U.S. planning, recognizing that the potential for a surprise disarming nuclear attack is exceedingly remote. Although we will retain a launch under attack capability, the Department of Defense will focus planning on the more likely 21st century contingencies that we face.

The guidance provides a new approach to hedging against technical and geopolitical risk, which will lead to more effective management of the nuclear weapons stockpile.

The guidance is also very clear: continued investment in our nuclear enterprise is essential to our approach to maintaining the stockpile. Make no mistake, as long as nuclear weapons exist, the United States will maintain a safe, secure and effective arsenal without a return to explosive nuclear testing.

As a result of this analysis and new guidance, and the anticipated shifts in our military plans it will produce, we can say with confidence that we have more nuclear weapons than we need to meet our deterrence requirements.

Priorities

That brings us back to our arms control priorities.

Through this new guidance, the President has determined that we can ensure the security of the United States and our allies and partners and maintain a strong and credible strategic deterrent while safely pursuing up to a one-third reduction in deployed strategic nuclear weapons from the level established in the New START Treaty. The United States is seeking negotiated cuts with Russia so that we can continue to move beyond Cold War postures. We are committed to maintaining strategic stability between the U.S. and Russia and support continuing a dialogue aimed at fostering a more stable, resilient, and transparent security relationship.

Over the past few years, we have achieved significant results in cooperation with the Russians. This includes Russian support of U.N. Security Council resolutions that created the toughest sanctions ever on North Korea and Iran, our work together on eliminating Syria’s chemical weapons, our continuing successful implementation of the New START Treaty, and the completion of the 1993 U.S.-Russian Federation Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) Purchase Agreement, which blended down 500 tons of highly enriched uranium from Russian nuclear weapons for use as fuel in U.S. nuclear power plants.

That said, it is no secret that we are dealing with some serious issues and challenges in our relationship with the Russian Federation – this applies to strategic issues, Syria-Geneva II process and beyond. This does not mean we stop trying to move ahead. We will continue to engage the Russians to try to find common ground, and when needed, to speak forcefully about our concerns. No one in this room should forget that even in the darkest days of the Cold War, the United States and Russia found it in our mutual interest to work together on reducing the nuclear threat. Of course, any further cooperation, agreements or treaties will only be pursued if they are in our national security interest.

In addition to bilateral engagement with Russia, we continue disarmament discussions with our P5 partners. This dynamic process – a key part of the 2010 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Action Plan – continues to break new ground and make new progress. There have been four P5 conferences so far, in addition to countless meetings between sessions. China will host the next conference in April. Detailed P5 exchanges are taking place, such as those aimed at compiling a nuclear glossary. At first glance, this might seem underwhelming, but this kind of communication builds trust. Trust paves the way for cooperation. That is how you establish a firm foundation for future arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation efforts.

Another priority for this Administration is the commencement of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT) in the
Conference on Disarmament (CD). We deeply regret that the CD has been unable to reach consensus on a program of work, but rather than dwell on these delays, the United States and its partners are forging ahead. We look forward to supporting the upcoming work of the Group of Government Experts (GGE) and hope it can bring us closer to the goal.

We will also be working to expand our public outreach on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty. As stated in the April 2010 U.S. Nuclear Posture Review: “Ratification of the CTBT is central to leading other nuclear weapons states toward a world of diminished reliance on nuclear weapons, reduced nuclear competition, and eventual nuclear disarmament.”

I want to be clear - we have no desire to rush up to the Hill for a vote. It’s been 15 years since this the CTBT was on the front pages of newspapers and whether we are talking to a Senator or a staffer, a schoolteacher or a student– we know that it is our job to make the case for this Treaty. Together, we can work through questions and concerns about the Treaty and explosive nuclear testing. In particular, the dangerous health effects of nuclear testing is a specific topic that can and should be addressed both here at home and abroad. Once we’ve brought the Treaty back to people’s attention, we can move on to discussion and debate – just like we did with the New START Treaty. We will not be setting timeframes for moving forward. We are going to be patient, but we will also be persistent. Above all, the CTBT is good for American national security and that is why we will continue educating the country on the treaty’s merits.

Looking Ahead

I want to wrap up, so that we have time for questions, but I wanted to touch on a few last points. As we consider arms control priorities this year or in any year, we will continue to consult closely with our allies and partners every step of the way. The security and defense of our allies and partners are non-negotiable.

The Administration is also fully committed to working with Congress on these issues. We know that they, like everyone in this room, are committed to building a safer, more secure United States and world. We look forward to constructive, collaborative conversations with the Hill in the coming year.

I am under no illusions that the road ahead will be smooth. We will come across speed bumps, potholes, detours, and ditches. The goal is to find ways over, around and through these impediments and of course, to avoid creating obstacles for ourselves. By finding our common ground – our shared desire to eliminate the threats posed by nuclear weapons – we can all travel the road toward a safer world together. Thank you.