Thank you so much for the introduction, Ryan and Jennifer. Thanks also to the Utah Council for Citizen Diplomacy and Heal Utah for hosting this event and a special thanks to Senator Jake Garn for being here tonight. It is a perfect time to be visiting the beautiful state of Utah. I spent yesterday in Saint George and today I have been to Ogden. Tomorrow I will make it down to Provo. It's like a one-woman whistle-stop tour for nuclear policy.

I am very pleased to see so many people here tonight – it is heartening to see the interest that I have seen in this issue throughout the state.

While we are gathered here today in Salt Lake, the world is facing serious challenges: the threats to Ukraine’s sovereignty and Russia’s flagrant disregard for international law, the continuing conflicts in the Middle East, a dangerous Ebola outbreak in West Africa that has now travelled to our shores. It is not surprising that most people are not focused on nuclear weapons or nuclear deterrence.

When the Cold War ended, the looming threat of nuclear war seemed to drift away for the average American. When was the last time you even heard of someone doing a duck-and-cover drill or building a bomb shelter in their backyard? Unfortunately, there are still thousands and thousands of nuclear weapons in the world. The threat from these weapons is real and in fact, it may have increased due to the threat from nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists.

Let me say more about that.

It was 31 years ago that President Ronald Reagan pronounced clearly and with conviction that “there can be only one policy for preserving our precious civilization in this modern age. A nuclear war can never be won and must never be fought.”

President Reagan's belief became the basis for pursuing serious nuclear arms reductions on a bilateral basis between the United States and the Soviet Union and later with Russia.

But how do President Reagan’s policies apply in today’s world, since the long standing principle of nuclear deterrence - the idea that a country would not initiate a nuclear war for fear of nuclear retaliation - does not apply to terrorists.

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, 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.”

President Obama laid out his own long-term vision for the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons through practical, responsible steps in his speech in Prague five years ago. In the years that have followed, the United States has been working to limit and reduce the nuclear threat, while at the same time maintaining a safe, secure and effective nuclear arsenal for as long as nuclear weapons exist.

One part of this effort was to negotiate a new strategic arms treaty with Russia – the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or New START. I led these negotiations for the United States and we and the Russians reached agreement on the Treaty in early 2010. In December of that year, the U.S. Senate gave its advice and consent for ratification.

New START is important because the United States and Russia possess more than 90 percent of the world’s nuclear weapons. When the New START Treaty is fully implemented, it will result in the lowest number of deployed nuclear warheads since the 1950s.

The implementation of this Treaty is going very well. It is enhancing our national security, as well as strategic stability with Russia.

The current tensions with Russia highlight the importance of mutual confidence provided by data exchanges and on-site inspections under the Treaty, and the security and predictability provided by verifiable mutual limits on strategic weapons.
While New START’s implementation is proceeding in a business-like fashion, we are having severe difficulties with another Treaty – the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. This landmark treaty, negotiated during the Reagan Administration, banned an entire class of nuclear weapons—those deployed on missiles with a range of 500 to 5,500 kilometers. This past summer, the United States announced its determination that Russia is in violation of this Treaty. We are deeply concerned about this, as we believe that the INF Treaty benefits the security of the United States, our allies, and the Russia Federation. For that reason, we urge Russia to resolve our concerns, return to compliance, and ensure the continued viability of the Treaty.

We are in complete compliance with the INF Treaty. Nevertheless, we have told our Russian colleagues that we will listen to their concerns about our INF implementation and try to allay those concerns.

Indeed, we have been working to do so, but the Russians seem to be only hearing and not listening to us. We need to continue working this problem, but they need to listen to our concerns, just as we are listening to theirs.

As we look to the future with respect to future nuclear reduction agreements, the United States will only pursue agreements that are in our national security interest and that of our allies. We expect Russia to do the same, but in the course of pursuing such national goals, historically we have always come up with agreements that are in our mutual interests to reduce nuclear threats and ensure mutual stability and predictability.

Cooperation in the arms control realm has been an important facet of strategic stability over the past forty years and it should remain so in the future. Of course, we are in a difficult crisis period over Ukraine. However, we need nuclear cooperation with Russia and others to address new threats, first and foremost the risk that terrorists could acquire a nuclear weapon or the fissile materials needed to make one.

We will continue to pursue arms control and nonproliferation tools, because they are the best - and quite frankly - the only path that we can take to effectively prevent a terrorist nuclear threat and reduce nuclear dangers more broadly.

Shifting gears slightly, I want to talk to you about another priority for the Administration. It is one that might be familiar to people here in Utah – the ratification and entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Over 2,000 nuclear explosive tests have taken place around the world over the last 69 years. As many of you know, from 1951 to 1992, 928 nuclear explosive tests were conducted at the Nevada Test Site, now known as the Nevada National Security Site. This included 100 above-ground nuclear explosive tests. These above-ground tests, the purpose of which was to further improve the effectiveness, safety and security of our nuclear deterrent, had the consequence of distributing radioactive fallout downwind from the site.

Over time, radioactive and cancer-causing particles, like Strontium-90, found their way into milk and other products, eventually ending up in the bones and teeth of children. Beyond the multiple radioactive “hotspots” in Utah, hotspots were detected throughout the West and as far away as the East Coast.

Growing public concern about the dangers of nuclear explosive testing collided with a turning point in history – the Cuban Missile Crisis. As an initial step leading us back from the brink of nuclear war, President John F. Kennedy called for a complete ban on nuclear explosive testing in 1963.

We were able to achieve part of this objective through the Limited Test Ban Treaty back in 1963 – banning tests in the water, in space and in the atmosphere. At that time, we did not reach agreement on banning underground nuclear explosive tests, as we lacked the technology to accurately detect such tests. Through steady work and persistence, we developed the tools we would need to negotiate a verifiable Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Once in force, the CTBT will be a legally binding global ban on nuclear explosions of any kind. Opened for signature in 1996, today 183 nations have signed the Treaty and 163 have ratified it.

Although the United States signed the CTBT in 1996, the Senate in 1999 failed to give its advice and consent to ratification. At that time, two main issues concerned the Senators: our ability to maintain the nuclear stockpile without explosive testing and our ability to verify compliance with the Treaty.

Today the situation is much different.

Our science-based Stockpile Stewardship Program is ensuring that we do not need to conduct nuclear explosive tests in order to ensure the safety, security and effectiveness of the nuclear weapons we maintain. In fact, last month marked 22 years since the last United States nuclear explosive test. Today, the Department of Energy’s Stockpile Stewardship Program – a suite of experimental, diagnostic and supercomputing capabilities – allow us to model and simulate nuclear devices without nuclear explosive testing.

With this program in place, the Directors of the Department’s National Security Laboratories affirm the safety, security and effectiveness of the current stockpile to the President every year. In fact, they believe we actually understand more about how nuclear weapons work now than during the period of nuclear explosive testing.

The ability to monitor and verify compliance with the CTBT is also stronger than it has ever been. The International Monitoring System (IMS), the heart of the verification regime, was just a concept two decades ago. Today, it is a nearly complete, technically advanced, global network of sensors, including 35 stations in the United States, that can detect even relatively low-yield nuclear explosions.

My boss, Secretary of State John Kerry recently referred to the IMS as one of the great accomplishments of the modern world. In addition to its verification role, the IMS has also proven its ability to contribute critical scientific data to benefit mankind. Since the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami in 2004, the IMS has contributed critical seismic data to the Pacific Tsunami warning system. Additionally, after the Fukushima nuclear crisis, we saw how the IMS can contribute critical insight in tracking radioactivity from nuclear reactor accidents.

The on-site inspection element of the CTBT verification regime has advanced significantly as well. In the next few weeks, U.S. experts are going to participate in a large-scale Integrated Field Exercise sponsored by the CTBT Organization and hosted by Jordan. I will be an observer at that exercise, seeing first-hand the formidable technology and expertise the international community can bring together to investigate the site of a suspected nuclear explosion.
Plain and simple, the CTBT is good for U.S. and international security. It is a key part of leading nuclear weapons states toward a world of diminished reliance on nuclear weapons and reduced likelihood of nuclear arms races.

An in-force CTBT will make it difficult for states without nuclear weapons to develop advanced nuclear weapons capabilities. An in-force Treaty would also make it hard for states with more established nuclear weapon capabilities from confirming the performance of advanced nuclear weapon designs that they have not tested successfully in the past.

Because of this, an in-force CTBT will also constrain regional arms races. These constraints will be particularly important in Asia, where states are building up and modernizing nuclear forces.

All told, it is in our interest to close the door on nuclear explosive testing forever.

Despite the clear merits of the Treaty, it has been a long time since the CTBT was on the front pages of U.S. newspapers, so we need time to educate the public and Congress to build support for U.S. ratification.

That’s one of the reasons I am here today and one of the reasons I have been travelling around the country and the world to talk about this. People need to know what this Treaty is and why it is important. The most important thing that supporters of the CTBT can do is to educate their friends, their family and their communities on the reasons that the Treaty is good for America.

Two people who have been doing just that are right here in Utah. On March 8, 2010, the Utah House of Representatives unanimously passed a resolution urging the U.S. Senate to give its advice and consent to ratification of the CTBT. The resolution, HR4, was introduced by Democratic Representative Jennifer Seelig, and co-sponsored by Republican Representative Ryan Wilcox.

In addition to noting the security arguments for the Treaty, the nonbinding Utah House resolution and the floor debate recognized the health effects suffered by Utahns and other downwinders exposed to fallout from nuclear explosive testing in the past.

The work of Representatives Seelig and Wilcox is important for two reasons. First, it is critically important that Americans understand the nuclear threat and how they can help. You all have a huge say in the future of this nation’s security and it is important for you to make sure that your voices are heard. Seelig and Wilcox made sure that Utahns had a voice in this debate.

Second and just as important, they cast aside party affiliation and worked together on an issue that was important to their constituents – an all-too rare occurrence these days. They should be commended on their partnership and I hope that they can serve as an example as we expand the dialogue on the CTBT.

With an emphasis on an open dialogue, rather than a timeline, we are working with the Senate to re-familiarize Members with the Treaty. Ratification of this Treaty will require debate, discussion, questions, briefings, trips to the National Labs and other technical facilities, hearings and more, as was the case with the New START Treaty. The Senators should have every opportunity to ask questions – many, many questions – until they are satisfied. That is how good policy is made and that is how treaties get across the finish line.

We are confident that we have a good case to make. As former Reagan-era Secretary of State George Shultz said, “Senators might have been right voting against the CTBT some years ago, but they would be right voting for it now.” Utah’s own former Senator Bob Bennett actually came up with a nice twitter worthy hashtag, when he told me, “I’m converted” on the issue of CTBT ratification.

We have a lot of work to do, but as I said, this is a worthy goal. An in-force CTBT will benefit the United States and indeed, the whole world.

With that I will wrap up, as I want to leave some time for questions, but I want to leave you all with a thought. We face challenges on nuclear issues and international security issues across the board. At times, it can seem overwhelming.

That’s when we should heed the words of one of our less-quoted Presidents, Calvin Coolidge. “Nothing in the world can take the place of Persistence,” he said. “The slogan ‘Press On’ has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.”

So with help from concerned citizens like you, we will press on and meet the challenges ahead.

Thank you.