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The Ten Most Important Moves to Rescue the Non-Proliferation Regime

It is unnecessary to emphasize to members of this group that recent developments in North Korea, Iran, Libya, India, Pakistan and Israel, and also in the Iraq of the early 1990s, give clear warning that the non-proliferation regime may be on the verge of collapse. If that occurs, the result will be a proliferated world with up to forty weapon states and active trade in weapons to terrorists and criminals. Danger of WMD attack will increase throughout the world, the UN's capacity to make peace and to carry out peacekeeping against nuclear-armed participants in conflict will drastically decrease, and the world will become a dangerous, violent jungle.

Many measures have been proposed to deal with this situation. This morning, I would like to describe what I consider the ten most important moves to restore and strengthen the non-proliferation regime. Several of them involve action by the Security Council.

1. The obvious highest priority today is negotiated solution of the North Korean issue. Solution requires willingness of the U.S., China, Russia, Japan and South Korea to negotiate flexibly with a comprehensive program of long-term economic aid and security assurances for North Korea in return for complete and reliably verified elimination of the North Korean nuclear weapons and missiles programs. Steps that assure survival of the North Korean regime, possibly ultimately through a Security Council guarantee, are the main requirement for now. Regime change can be left to a gradual process in the future. There is a good prospect of success if the talks continue. The UN can play a valuable role in promoting that continuation.
2. Iran has been caught in apparent violation of its obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and has been moving toward development of nuclear weapons capability. The Iranian government states that it is willing to negotiate a verified end to these activities. As in North Korea, assurance against regime change by external action, including military force, is the key to agreement. This could take the form of a Security Council resolution assuring the external

security of Iran if all enrichment and reprocessing facilities are permanently eliminated, together with Iran's missile program.

3. Third, it would be desirable for the Security Council to pass a resolution, based on the 1992 statement of heads of state and government declaring proliferation a threat to international security, making it mandatory for all state parties to the NPT to accept the 1997 Additional Safeguards Protocol. As you know, this Protocol enables the International Atomic Energy Agency to broaden its inspection of nuclear power installations, but it is now in effect only in 38 NPT states.
4. The U.S. administration has proposed a Security Council resolution outlawing transfer of WMD materials to individuals or terrorist groups. Recent revelations of how Iran and Libya received help from the government of North Korea and from private individuals in other countries, including Pakistan, emphasize the need to support this measure.
5. The administration has inaugurated the Proliferation Security Initiative, a program of cooperation with selected countries to seize illicitly trafficked WMD components on the high seas or in the air. In its present form, this proposal can be carried out only in the territorial waters or national air space of the participating countries. The U.S. or some other member of the Security Council should propose a Council resolution that would apply this measure to international waters and international air space and authorize UN member state governments to implement the measure when called on by the Council to do so.
6. As a deterrent to proliferation, the Security Council should be asked to agree in advance on a standard set of penalties for acts of proliferation by governments. This could include, as recently decided by the European Union -- on a step-by-step basis -- economic sanctions, suspension of trade, suspension of air and sea travel, and coercive military action as a last step. This Council decision would be a preparatory and deterrent move. Specific action would require subsequent Security Council decision in the individual case.

Agreed action by the Security Council against proliferants is far preferable to preemptive action by a few governments. From the viewpoint of the coalition states now in Iraq, given the high costs of the Iraqi operation, preemptive action involving ground force invasion and destroying existing governments is unlikely to recur, leaving a serious gap in potential action against proliferants which can only be filled by Security Council action.

7. The Security Council should establish a permanent inspection corps to supplement the work of existing international agencies on detection of illicit WMD, and to publicize attempts and methods of would-be proliferators. These inspectors could be used in Libya and ultimately in North Korea, and also to implement the Secretary General's existing authority to investigate possible use of biological or chemical weapons.
8. The ease and speed of withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty in ninety days has created the possibility that a state party to the treaty could amass all the installations and skills necessary for nuclear weapons, then withdraw from the treaty and proceed to produce nuclear weapons.

One possible measure to forestall this outcome is an amendment to the Non-Proliferation Treaty that would increase the withdrawal period to five years, a period during which the international community can enter into dialogue with the withdrawing state and seek to dissuade it, applying all possible pressures. Because the process of NPT amendment could take several years, to make this provision effective immediately, the Security Council should pass a stopgap resolution to the same effect, based on Chapter VII dangers to international security from abrupt withdrawal from the NPT.

9. The Director General of the IAEA has on several occasions urged international control over all nuclear enrichment and reprocessing plants. These statements are extremely significant because they amount to a statement by the head of the agency charged with implementing safeguards under the NPT that NPT provisions are not adequate and must be supplemented by more far-reaching measures. A Security Council or General Assembly resolution should point out the dangers to international security in this situation and call for the elaboration of specific proposals for international control.
10. The U.S. and the other four nuclear weapon states recognized in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (UK, France, China, and Russia) should invite the three other governments that are known to possess nuclear arsenals, but that do not participate in the NPT – Israel, India and Pakistan – to join them in negotiations to reduce the nuclear forces of all weapon states. The first steps should be the exchange of information on the nuclear arsenals of each participant and a freeze on the level of deployed weapons.

An alternative approach would be to convene the less structured conference to eliminate nuclear dangers which has been proposed by the Secretary General, to include in this conference all states known to have nuclear weapons, and to devise at least a few obligations that could be

undertaken by all of these states, bringing all known weapon states under some form of international control.

To decide on measures like those I have described today, there would have to be agreement among the five permanent members of the Security Council that the crisis in the non-proliferation regime can be resolved only by their agreement to take specific action. The U.S., UK, France and Russia are already probably disposed to cooperate on this subject. Obtaining Chinese agreement would require very open U.S.-Chinese dialogue on strategic issues. This would be valuable in its own right. However, without U.S. leadership and Chinese cooperation, the nuclear non-proliferation regime cannot be saved.

Clearly, the U.S. administration is not enthusiastic about recourse to the UN. However, it is keenly interested in blocking proliferation and it has gone to the UN for that purpose on occasion. If the administration comes to perceive that Security Council action could facilitate its non-proliferation program, it is likely to try to seek agreement on specific measures like those I have described today.

My final point goes beyond the area of non-proliferation and disarmament.

The UN's main function, securing the peace, requires coordinated efforts against all forms of armed conflict. Yet it is striking that, within the United Nations, there has, at least in the past, been a fairly rigid compartmentalization of functions between the Secretariat departments charged with peacekeeping, disarmament, and political affairs. In particular, the Department of Disarmament Affairs is not playing as active a role as it could in peacekeeping and post-conflict disarmament, and the other two departments could be more active in contributing to disarmament. There may have been good reasons for this practice originally, but all three departments are dealing with aspects of the same subject matter: preventing or reducing armed violence. There should be a recognized way of coordinating their activities, perhaps by giving responsibility for this function to the Deputy Secretary General of the UN. Better coordination could improve individual operations and perhaps lead to the general doctrine for coping with armed violence that the UN needs, a doctrine that combines conflict prevention, enhanced peacekeeping, and both conventional and nuclear disarmament.

A group of NGOs with which I am affiliated, Global Action to Prevent War, has tried to sketch out such a doctrine and I have taken the liberty of bringing with me copies of our latest Program Statement which describes this approach, and which I hope each of you can review.

Thank you.