



BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



04 May – 17 May 2010

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ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINE CONVENTION (APLC)

White House Is Being Pressed to Reverse Course and Join Land Mine Ban

The New York Times, 8 May 2010, <http://global.nytimes.com/>

The Obama administration, under intense political pressure from Capitol Hill and elsewhere, is engaged in a vigorous debate over whether to reverse course and join an international treaty banning land mines, administration officials said this week. (1,070 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR TEST-BAN TREATY (CTBT)

Indonesia's Foreign Minister Announces His Country Will Soon Ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty

CTBTO, 4 May 2010, <http://www.ctbto.org/>

“We hope that our decision to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) will be a positive incentive for other States to follow suit,” stated Indonesia’s Foreign Minister. (354 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Obama to Hold Off on CTBT Ratification for Now: Official

AFP, 6 May 2010, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/>

U.S. President Barack Obama will hold off sending the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to the U.S. Senate for ratification until after it takes up the recently signed START arms control treaty, a top U.S. official said Wednesday. (305 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS (CCM)

UK Ratifies Convention on Cluster Munitions

States News Service, 5 May 2010, accessed via Lexis Nexis

The UK has become the 32nd country to ratify the Convention on Cluster Munitions. (103 words) [Click here for full text.](#)



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NEW STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION TREATY (NEW START)

The Case for the New START Treaty [OPINION]

Wall Street Journal, 13 May 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/>

By Robert M. Gates

The U.S. is far better off with this treaty than without it. (718 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Russian Parliament to Begin Looking at New START Treaty in 3 Weeks

RIA Novosti, 14 May 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/>

The new Russian-U.S. START treaty will be submitted to the Russian parliament for ratification in approximately three weeks, a top Russian senator said on Friday. (298 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)

Obama Submits Nuclear Treaty to Senate

U.S. Department of State, 14 May 2010, <http://www.america.gov/>

The U.S. Senate is set to begin hearings May 18 on a proposed arms reduction treaty that would reduce U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals to their lowest levels since the 1950s, and advance President Obama's goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. (772 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)

NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT)

UN Permanent Five Promote Nuclear Nonproliferation

U.S. Department of State, 6 May 2010, <http://www.state.gov/>

The five permanent members of the UN Security Council strongly endorsed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and called on all 189 nations that participate in it to conform to its principles to block the spread of nuclear weapons, pursue disarmament and promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. (473 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

NPT Nations Float 2014 Disarmament Talks

Global Security Newswire, 17 May 2010, <http://gsn.nti.org/>

Countries participating in the 2010 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty review conference on Friday proposed convening an international meeting in four years to establish a time line for ridding the world of nuclear weapons. (452 words) [Click here for full text.](#)



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PROLIFERATION SECURITY INITIATIVE (PSI)

Colombia Endorses the Proliferation Security Initiative

U.S. Department of State, 17 May 2010, <http://www.state.gov/>

On Friday, April 9, 2010, the Government of Colombia announced its endorsement of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) Statement of Interdiction Principles. (225 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)

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White House Is Being Pressed to Reverse Course and Join Land Mine Ban

The New York Times, 8 May 2010, <http://global.nytimes.com/>

The Obama administration, under intense political pressure from Capitol Hill and elsewhere, is engaged in a vigorous debate over whether to reverse course and join an international treaty banning land mines, administration officials said this week.

In re-examining the issue, the administration is stepping back into the glare of a perennial cause that has captured the attention of world leaders, royalty and celebrities. It is also inviting another internal debate that pits the Pentagon against other parts of the administration.

The policy review, which officials expect to be completed this summer, could result in the United States pledging to abide by the treaty's provisions even if it does not join it. That would be a striking disavowal of its announcement last fall that it would stick to the Bush administration's refusal to join the agreement, known as the Ottawa Treaty.

It would also mollify critics, chiefly Senator Patrick J. Leahy, Democrat of Vermont, who called the earlier decision a "default of U.S. leadership and a detour from the clear path of history." Mr. Leahy, who expressed his dismay to President Obama, said on Friday that he was glad the issue was getting "the kind of attention it should have been getting then."

The military has long opposed signing the land mine treaty, arguing that it would put the lives of American soldiers at risk by depriving them of a deterrent weapon. There are still nearly a million mines in the demilitarized zone on the Korean Peninsula, shielding American troops from a marauding North Korean army.

But some of the administration's leading liberal insiders, like Harold H. Koh, the State Department's legal adviser, are pushing for the United States to join the ban. And even some Pentagon officials are said to favor a change.

In a sign of the effort's urgency, the White House is holding regular meetings with officials from the Pentagon and State Department. The administration has summoned outside experts, like Karl F. Inderfurth, a former senior diplomat who led the delegation to Ottawa in 1997, where the United States watched as 120 other countries signed the pact.

"I'm guardedly optimistic," said a senior administration official who favors the treaty and who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly. "Why stick with the status quo when we would get so much credit for even a modest move?"

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A Pentagon spokesman said it would be "premature" to comment before the review was completed. It is not clear where the defense secretary, Robert M. Gates, stands.

The White House said that the United States is already helping deal with the fallout from mines. "The U.S. record on humanitarian mine action shows that we share the concern of parties to the Ottawa Convention," said Michael Hammer, a spokesman for the National Security Council.

Some analysts say the rationale for land mines is even weaker now than it was in 1997. Technological advances have enabled the Pentagon to create explosives that function like mines but are detonated remotely, making them permissible under the treaty. The United States has not used land mines since 1991, despite fighting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan – two countries that have ratified the treaty.

"The situation has changed significantly in recent years," said Mr. Inderfurth, who is now a professor of international affairs at George Washington University. "There is every reason to believe we could join this treaty."

Next week, Senator Leahy plans to send a letter to Mr. Obama, urging him to join the ban. The letter notes that 158 countries have signed the treaty, including Britain and other NATO allies. It is signed by 68 senators, including 10 Republicans.

In the 13 years since Diana, Princess of Wales, walked near a minefield in Angola to dramatize the dangers, land mines have receded as a political cause. They were not an issue in the presidential campaign or in the early days of the administration.

By all accounts, the initial land mine review was "cursory and half-hearted," in Mr. Leahy's words. Last November, on the eve of a meeting on the treaty in Colombia, a State Department spokesman declared, "We would not be able to meet our national defense needs nor our security commitments to our friends and allies if we signed this."

A day later, after a storm of protest from Mr. Leahy and human rights groups, the administration insisted that the review was still under way, and that the spokesman's comments were premature. But one senior official said the "negative blowback" forced a more serious examination. The current review is being coordinated by two senior officials at the National Security Council, Samantha Power and Barry Pavel.

Another key player is Andrew J. Shapiro, the State Department's top liaison to the Pentagon who served as an adviser to Mrs. Clinton on defense policy when she was in the Senate.

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Officials said Mr. Koh, a former dean of Yale Law School, was drafting legal arguments on issues like the status of land mines in South Korea, where American troops are deployed.

In the past, the Pentagon has sought a "Korean exception" that would allow it to keep a stockpile of mines in the demilitarized zone. But while those mines are there to protect American soldiers, control over them has been transferred to South Korea, which is not a party to the treaty.

The goal of those who favor the treaty is to get back to the policy of the Clinton administration, which declined to sign the treaty in 1997 but said it wanted the United States to be compliant by 2006. In 2004, the Bush administration issued a new policy that emphasized the development of safer and more sophisticated mines, but pointedly refused to go along with a ban.

Since the treaty has been in force for more than a decade, the United States would no longer sign it, but accede to its terms, a decision that would still require ratification by the Senate. The most likely outcome, several officials said, is for the administration to bring the United States closer to full compliance, while setting a goal, as Mr. Clinton did, to join it eventually.

Such a move might not satisfy the advocates, said Heather Hurlburt, the executive director of the National Security Network, a foreign policy group. "But you definitely have people within the administration working to bring the United States closer to the spirit of the treaty," she said.

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Indonesia's Foreign Minister Announces His Country Will Soon Ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty

CTBTO, 4 May 2010, <http://www.ctbto.org/>

“We hope that our decision to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) will be a positive incentive for other States to follow suit,” stated Indonesia’s Foreign Minister, Marty Natalegawa, during a press briefing on the second day of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in New York. His statement followed an announcement at the Conference on 3 May that Indonesia is “initiating the process of ratification of the CTBT.” He underscored that Indonesia has taken this step in view of the recent positive momentum on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

Indonesia’s announcement that it will soon ratify the treaty “is extremely important for the entry into force of the CTBT”, said Tibor Tóth, the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). “With Indonesia’s ratification, we’ll only have eight countries to go.”

Indonesia has historically played a key role in promoting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It is a member of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and signed the CTBT on 24 September 1996, the day it opened for signature. Ratification of the CTBT will be of particular significance because Indonesia is one of the 44 nuclear holder States that must ratify the treaty before it can enter into force.

Indonesia hosts six seismic stations, which are fully operational and part of the CTBT’s globe spanning International Monitoring System (IMS). The IMS monitors the Earth for any signs of nuclear explosions.

In addition to the political benefits of CTBTO membership, the treaty’s monitoring data offer a number of potential civil and scientific applications, including their use for tsunami warning purposes. Indonesia signed a Tsunami Warning Arrangement with the CTBTO on 10 November 2008, which enables Indonesian authorities to issue tsunami warnings earlier than ever before.

The CTBT bans all nuclear explosions. 182 countries have signed the treaty and 151 have also ratified it. Thirty-five of the nuclear holder States that must ratify the treaty before it can enter into force have already done so. Besides Indonesia, the eight remaining countries are China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States.

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Obama to Hold Off on CTBT Ratification for Now: Official

AFP, 6 May 2010, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/>

U.S. President Barack Obama will hold off sending the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to the U.S. Senate for ratification until after it takes up the recently signed START arms control treaty, a top U.S. official said Wednesday.

"The Obama administration's priority is to get the START treaty ratified," Under Secretary Of State Ellen Tauscher told a press conference on the sidelines of a UN conference.

"That will take us through the legislative year," Tauscher said, adding that Obama will send the CTBT to the Senate "when the political conditions are right."

Both treaties need to be ratified by the Senate by a two-thirds majority and the Obama administration could struggle to get the necessary votes.

The new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty was signed on April 8 and provides for major cutbacks in both the U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals.

The CTBT, which bans nuclear blasts for military or civilian purposes, was signed in 1996 by 71 states, including the five main nuclear weapon states: Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.

A total of 182 countries have signed the CTBT, including 151 that have also ratified it.

North Korea, India and Pakistan have not signed the CTBT and all three have carried out nuclear tests since 1996.

Another six countries – the United States, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, China and Egypt – have signed but not yet ratified the pact.

The CTBT cannot come into force until it is ratified by the required 44 states that had nuclear research or power facilities when it was adopted in 1996. Only 35 have done so.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa announced Tuesday at the UN conference on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) that his country would soon ratify the CTBT.

"We hope that our decision... will be a positive incentive for other states to follow suit," he told reporters.

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UK Ratifies Convention on Cluster Munitions

States News Service, 5 May 2010, accessed via Lexis Nexis

The following information was released by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO):

The UK [United Kingdom] has become the 32nd country to ratify the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The instrument of ratification was deposited at the UN in New York on May 4. The treaty will now enter into force for the UK on 1 November 2010.

The Convention is recognized as one of the most significant disarmament treaties of recent years, prohibiting the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions. The Cluster Munitions (Prohibitions) Act 2010, which received Royal Assent on 25 March 2010, implements the UK's international obligations under the treaty.

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The Case for the New START Treaty [OPINION]

Wall Street Journal, 13 May 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/>

By Robert M. Gates

I first began working on strategic arms control with the Russians in 1970, an effort that led to the first Strategic Arms Limitation Agreement with Moscow two years later.

The key question then and in the decades since has always been the same: Is the United States better off with an agreement or without it? The answer for each successive president has always been "with an agreement." The U.S. Senate has always agreed, approving each treaty by lopsided, bipartisan margins.

The same answer holds true for the New START agreement: The U.S. is far better off with this treaty than without it. It strengthens the security of the U.S. and our allies and promotes strategic stability between the world's two major nuclear powers. The treaty accomplishes these goals in several ways.

First, it limits significantly U.S. and Russian strategic nuclear arsenals and establishes an extensive verification regime to ensure that Russia is complying with its treaty obligations. These include short-notice inspections of both deployed and nondeployed systems, verification of the numbers of warheads actually carried on Russian strategic missiles, and unique identifiers that will help us track – for the very first time – all accountable strategic nuclear delivery systems.

Since the expiration of the old START Treaty in December 2009, the U.S. has had none of these safeguards. The new treaty will put them back in place, strengthen many of them, and create a verification regime that will provide for greater transparency and predictability between our two countries, to include substantial visibility into the development of Russian nuclear forces.

Second, the treaty preserves the U.S. nuclear arsenal as a vital pillar of our nation's and our allies' security posture. Under this treaty, the U.S. will maintain our powerful nuclear triad – ICBMs, submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and bombers – and we will retain the ability to change our force mix as we see fit. Based on recommendations of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, we plan to meet the Treaty's limits by retaining a triad of up to 420 ICBMs, 14 submarines carrying up to 240 SLBMs, and up to 60 nuclear – capable heavy bombers.

Third, and related, the treaty is buttressed by credible modernization plans and long-term funding for the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile and the infrastructure that supports it. This

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administration is proposing to spend \$80 billion over the next decade to rebuild and sustain America's aging nuclear infrastructure – especially our national weapons labs, and our science, technology and engineering base. This week the president is providing a report to the Congress on investments planned over the next 10 years to sustain and modernize our nuclear weapons, their delivery systems, and supporting infrastructure.

Fourth, the treaty will not constrain the U.S. from developing and deploying defenses against ballistic missiles, as we have made clear to the Russian government. The U.S. will continue to deploy and improve the interceptors that defend our homeland – those based in California and Alaska. We are also moving forward with plans to field missile defense systems to protect our troops and partners in Europe, the Middle East, and Northeast Asia against the dangerous threats posed by rogue nations like North Korea and Iran.

Finally, the treaty will not restrict America's ability to develop and deploy conventional prompt global strike capabilities – that is, the ability to hit targets anywhere in the world in less than an hour using conventional explosive warheads fitted to long-range missiles.

These delivery systems – be they land or sea based – would count against the new treaty limits, but if we deploy them it would be in very limited numbers. We are currently assessing other kinds of long-range strike systems that would not count under the treaty.

The New START Treaty has the unanimous support of America's military leadership – to include the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, all of the service chiefs, and the commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, the organization responsible for our strategic nuclear deterrent. For nearly 40 years, treaties to limit or reduce nuclear weapons have been approved by the U.S. Senate by strong bipartisan majorities. This treaty deserves a similar reception and result on account of the dangerous weapons it reduces, the critical defense capabilities it preserves, the strategic stability it maintains, and, above all, the security it provides to the American people.

Mr. Gates is Secretary of Defense.

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Russian Parliament to Begin Looking at New START Treaty in 3 Weeks

RIA Novosti, 14 May 2010, <http://en.rian.ru/>

The new Russian-U.S. START treaty will be submitted to the Russian parliament for ratification in approximately three weeks, a top Russian senator said on Friday.

The new START treaty, signed on April 8 in Prague, replaces the 1991 pact that expired in December. The deal is expected to bring Moscow and Washington to a new level of cooperation in the field of nuclear disarmament and arms control.

"We [Russia] are also beginning work on the new START treaty ratification and the document will be submitted with the parliament in approximately three weeks," said Mikhail Margelov, who heads the Russian upper house's international relations committee.

The United States has already submitted the document for ratification with the Senate, and U.S. President Barack Obama discussed this with his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev on Thursday.

Margelov added that he would meet with U.S. Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense James Miller in the upper house of the Russian parliament on May 27 to discuss the ratification of the document.

He added that his committee would hold an extended session on June 21 concerning the simultaneous ratification of the new agreement by Russia and the United States.

The U.S. and Russian presidents earlier agreed that the two sides' ratification processes should be concurrent.

Experts believe that U.S. ratification could be delayed by Republican lawmakers who want to press the administration to commit to modernizing the U.S. nuclear forces while the reductions are underway.

The new treaty on strategic arms cuts stipulates that the number of nuclear warheads be reduced to 1,550 on each side over seven years, while the number of delivery vehicles, both deployed and non-deployed, must not exceed 800.

The pact must be approved by both houses of the Russian parliament and by the U.S. Senate to come into force.

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Obama Submits Nuclear Treaty to Senate

U.S. Department of State, 14 May 2010, <http://www.america.gov/>

The U.S. Senate is set to begin hearings May 18 on a proposed arms reduction treaty that would reduce U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals to their lowest levels since the 1950s, and advance President Obama's goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will be the first witnesses at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on the New START Treaty. The treaty, which would replace the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and the 2002 Moscow Treaty, was signed by Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Prague, Czech Republic, April 8.

"We believe that the newly agreed reductions in strategic offensive armaments will strengthen the security of both Russia and the U.S. and will make relations between our countries more stable, transparent and predictable," the U.S. and Russian delegations said in a joint statement released in Washington and Moscow May 13. "They will thus have a beneficial effect on international stability and security."

"The treaty, therefore, is not only in the interests of our two countries, but of the entire world community. Everyone will win as a result of its implementation," the joint statement said.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry said formal submission of the treaty to the Senate begins the constitutional process known as advice and consent to ratification. Approval in the Senate requires the support of 67 of the 100 possible votes, which means the president will have to have considerable support from the Democratic majority in his own political party and some support from Republican senators. A similar process has to be conducted by the Russian parliament before the treaty can enter into force.

"Ratifying New START is an essential step toward making America safer," Kerry said in a statement May 13. "This treaty will maintain our flexibility to protect our national security interests and restore hard-won visibility into the strategic nuclear forces of Russia's still formidable arsenal."

Kerry and Senator Richard Lugar, the senior Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee and a staunch arms control advocate, issued a joint statement, saying that in the coming weeks a series of hearings are planned to examine the arms reduction treaty with administration witnesses and outside experts "from across the political spectrum to ensure the treaty is rigorously vetted."

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Lugar said this process will give Democrats and Republicans ample opportunity to review New START and its annexes to make sure the treaty is judged on its merits.

At a White House briefing on the new treaty, Clinton said she believes the Senate will support the treaty, noting that the last three arms-reduction treaties approved by the Senate received 90 or more favorable votes. "I believe that a vast majority of the Senate at the end of the day will see that this is in America's interest and it goes way beyond politics," she said.

In April, Kerry and Lugar held a hearing with former defense secretaries James Schlesinger and William Perry on the history of arms control and its implications for the New START Treaty. The hearing was designed to provide a sense of where this treaty fits into efforts since the Cold War years to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons. They are planning similar hearings over the next several weeks.

According to a recent U.S. Congressional Research Service report, the treaty gives the United States and Russia seven years to reduce forces and remains in force for 10 years from ratification, and it contains detailed definitions and counting rules that will help the parties calculate the number of warheads that count under the treaty limits.

"New START does not limit current or planned U.S. missile defense programs," the report said.

Along with the New START Treaty, Obama also submitted a plan to spend \$80 billion over the next decade to maintain and improve the nation's nuclear weapons complex, a requirement Republican senators have said is essential for their support for the New START Treaty.

Kerry said Gates, Mullen and other senior military leaders have expressed support for the treaty, which reduces the legal ceiling on the number of warheads that the United States and Russia can deploy to 1,550 warheads. The treaty also limits launchers and the means for deploying nuclear weapons, which include ballistic missiles, nuclear submarines and strategic bombers.

Obama told Medvedev in a telephone conference call he was sending the treaty to the Senate to launch the ratification process, White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said. "The presidents stressed the importance of completing the ratification process in both countries as soon as possible."

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UN Permanent Five Promote Nuclear Nonproliferation

U.S. Department of State, 6 May 2010, <http://www.state.gov/>

The five permanent members of the UN Security Council strongly endorsed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and called on all 189 nations that participate in it to conform to its principles to block the spread of nuclear weapons, pursue disarmament and promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

"The NPT is fundamental to protecting global peace and security from the threat of the proliferation of nuclear weapons," the five members said in a joint statement May 5 at UN headquarters. The permanent members, also known as the P-5, are Great Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States – and they all possess nuclear weapons.

The United Nations is hosting the eighth review conference of the treaty May 3-28. Every five years since the NPT went into effect in 1970, the review conference evaluates its operation and implementation. The pact is the primary barrier to the unchecked spread of nuclear arms across the globe. Delegates from the 189 nations belonging to the treaty are discussing compliance based on its three pillars – nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

"It has served the international community well for the past four decades," the joint statement said. And the five nations praised the international community's "shared commitment to seeking a safer world for all and to creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons ... in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all."

President Obama has made achieving a world free of nuclear weapons a central goal of his presidency. While acknowledging that it may not happen during his presidency or his lifetime, Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed a New START Treaty in Prague, Czech Republic, April 8 that, if ratified, would reduce each nation's nuclear arsenals over seven years to 1,550 strategic warheads and reduce the means to deliver them.

For Obama's efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons and promote greater peace and stability, he was awarded the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize.

And the permanent Security Council members also endorsed the 2010 START Treaty, which when fully implemented would result in the lowest number of deployed nuclear weapons since the 1950s.

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The joint statement also endorsed the full implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which Obama has pledged to see ratified by the United States Senate. The CTBT aims to keep nations from conducting nuclear tests because such tests create instability and also threaten the environment with excess nuclear radiation.

"The proliferation of nuclear weapons undermines the security of all nations. It sets back the cause of disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament, and imperils the prospects for strengthening international cooperation in nuclear energy, including the role we wish to see such cooperation play in combating climate change and ensuring sustainable development of nuclear energy," the joint statement said.

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NPT Nations Float 2014 Disarmament Talks

Global Security Newswire, 17 May 2010, <http://gsn.nti.org/>

Countries participating in the 2010 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty review conference on Friday proposed convening an international meeting in four years to establish a time line for ridding the world of nuclear weapons, the Associated Press reported.

The preliminary agreement outlines 26 steps for pursuing the abolition of nuclear weapons and avoiding conflict once global nuclear disarmament is achieved, Agence France-Presse reported. The plan, formulated by Zimbabwean Ambassador to the United Nations Boniface Chidyausiku, calls for an initial meeting next year aimed at expediting the disarmament process.

The document also seeks pledges from nuclear-armed nations to halt further modernization of their nuclear arsenals; enter the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty into force; ban further production of fissile material for nuclear weapons; declare existing nuclear-weapon fuel; and establish a process for removing fissile material from all nuclear weapons under UN supervision.

Participants in the month-long NPT review meeting were unlikely to adopt the disarmament schedule proposal in a final agreement, though, because it would not encompass known and assumed nuclear weapon holders outside the treaty, and because the five nuclear powers recognized under the pact – China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States – have not backed such an arrangement in the past, according to AP.

A potentially less controversial measure in the draft agreement "reaffirms the unequivocal undertaking of the nuclear weapon states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals." The Bush administration rejected such language at the previous treaty review meeting in 2005, but the Obama administration has appeared more amenable to the goal enshrined in the treaty text.

The draft was prepared over one week by a conference committee responsible for initiatives related to eliminating and curbing the spread of nuclear weapons. A second committee submitted a proposal on nuclear weapon-free zones and monitoring of nuclear activities, while a third panel presented a draft document on civilian nuclear programs.

The proposals are expected to undergo alterations in panel deliberations this week before moving to a unified draft body later this month.

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Meanwhile, conference delegates were weighing whether to assemble a list of potential mechanisms aimed at preventing NPT states from ending their participation in the pact, Kyodo News reported Friday. North Korea withdrew from the treaty in 2003 and has since conducted two nuclear tests.

A state withdrawal "could shake the foundation" of the treaty, said Japanese Ambassador Takeshi Nakane, chairman of the conference committee on civilian nuclear programs.

"The possibility of Iran seceding from the NPT is not zero," the official said.

Washington and allied governments have sought punitive measures against countries that leave the treaty, while some non-Western nations have argued that individual countries should have the right to decide whether to continue participating in the pact.

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Colombia Endorses the Proliferation Security Initiative

State Department, 17 May 2010, <http://www.state.gov/>

On Friday, April 9, 2010, the Government of Colombia announced its endorsement of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) Statement of Interdiction Principles with the following declaration:

“By adhering to the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) Colombia expresses its willingness to work jointly with members of PSI to prevent and stop the transport of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems and related materials. Colombia will devote resources and efforts to interdiction operations and capabilities within the framework of the Initiative, in accordance with its national law and national capabilities, and without prejudice of the efforts and resources that Colombia should allocate to the maintenance of public order and defense of the institutions against the actions of the illegal armed groups.”

The United States welcomes Colombia’s participation in the PSI and looks forward to working with the government to advance the nonproliferation goals of the PSI and its Statement of Interdiction Principles.

PSI participants commit to undertake measures to interdict illicit transfers of WMD-related items, exchange relevant information, and strengthen national legal authorities. With the addition of Colombia, 96 countries on six continents are PSI participants, having endorsed the PSI Statement of Interdiction Principles. The United States believes there should be the broadest possible participation in the PSI by all responsible states, to further strengthen international cooperation against trafficking in WMD, their delivery systems, and related materials.

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