Presentation in Session I

By

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1540 workshop on Building New Synergies on Nuclear Security

New Delhi, India
30 November 2012
I thank the government of India for hosting this workshop, which has been organized to address many issues bearing directly upon international peace and security. It will provide an overview of the 1540 activities in the context of nuclear security. It will consider possibilities for strengthening the activities agreed upon in the Seoul Communiqué. And it will bring together stakeholders to explore innovative ways and “new synergies” to improve nuclear security.

This event is timely in that we are already preparing for the third Nuclear Security Summit, to be held in The Hague in 2014. A first Sherpa meeting for that event was held in Istanbul from 26 to 28 November. As its predecessors, this Summit will continue to focus on measures to enhance nuclear security worldwide.

In reviewing the recent history of international efforts to pursue this goal, however, one can see that it is very much more than an end in itself. In his famous Prague speech in 2009, President Obama addressed nuclear security in the context of the larger goal of achieving a world without nuclear weapons. Thus when the Washington Summit agreed on the objective to “secure all vulnerable nuclear material around the world” within 4 years, I think it is fair to view this not just as a measure to advance non-proliferation or counter-terrorism goals, but as one also intended to contribute to global nuclear disarmament.

These Nuclear Security Summits have focused global attention and strengthened widespread support for this ambitious goal, while efforts have also been underway in other arenas, including the UN General Assembly, to promote nuclear disarmament. The summits have helped to raise the priority of nuclear security issues, inspired new initiatives to pursue this goal, and promoted public awareness and support. And by enhancing understanding both of governments and the public about the hazards of fissile nuclear materials in particular, I believe these Summits also help to underscore the urgent need for progress in nuclear disarmament.

The Summits have certainly strengthened the international norm of nuclear security, which embraces the principles that “nations should constantly be looking to improve their efforts in this field” and that “no nation should be complacent about the status quo.” This approach to
nuclear security requires the continuous pursuit of improved ways to address an evolving threat.

The participants at the Hague Summit will not only have to reflect on developments since the initial 2010 Washington Summit, but they will also be required to chart a way to make progress on the issues already discussed and agreed upon. In addition, they will have to consider how to best ensure the sustainability, legitimacy and universality of this process.

Continued high-level attention to this issue is truly a *sine qua non*. Yet we must also be realistic in our approach and not expect these Summits to continue indefinitely. We will therefore need to explore new approaches to ensure that nuclear security and safety are addressed not just at periodic high-level summits, but as day-to-day responsibilities of all who produce or use hazardous nuclear materials.

The United Nations has an important role to play in this process, especially in light of its support for international cooperation for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), as well as its role in advancing the rule of law within global efforts to prevent terrorism. The role of the International Atomic Energy Agency also deserves special consideration, given its technical capacity to develop and promote enhanced standards for nuclear safety and security.

These are widely recognized at the UN as worthy global priorities. On 28 September 2012, the Secretary-General convened a High-Level Meeting on Countering Nuclear Terrorism with a Specific Focus on Strengthening the Legal Framework. This event had two objectives: to strengthen the legal framework to prevent nuclear terrorism; and to enhance capacity-building to assist States in ensuring the effective implementation of their international obligations. These goals were in accordance with the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, as well as the IAEA Nuclear Security Plan.

As for new synergies at the September 2011 High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Safety and Security—which was also convened by the Secretary-General—participants recognized both that nuclear safety cannot be effectively dealt with in isolation of nuclear security, non-proliferation and disarmament.
This point has been emphasized by influential personalities in published commentaries. In a provocative op-ed in the *Wall Street Journal* in January 2007, former U.S. officials George Shultz, Henry Kissinger, William Perry, and Sam Nunn set out their vision for a world free of nuclear weapons, outlining ways in which the United States can contribute to this goal.

The essay argued that relying on nuclear weapons for deterrence was, in their words, "becoming increasingly hazardous and decreasingly effective." As preliminary steps, the authors called for substantial reductions in the U.S. nuclear arsenal, elimination of short-range forward-deployed nuclear weapons, ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), creation of an international nuclear fuel bank, and a halt to the production of fissile material.

I would like to note that the five-point nuclear disarmament proposal launched by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on 24 October 2008 also emphasized the importance of strengthening controls over nuclear materials including those used for peaceful purposes. On that occasion, he stressed “We should never forget that the nuclear fuel cycle is more than an issue involving energy or non-proliferation; its fate will also shape prospects for disarmament.”

With respect nuclear weapons per se, the United States and Russia continue to hold over 90% of the global inventory of such weapons. The entire world would welcome significant new initiatives to reduce these stockpiles and to commence the process of eliminating all the remaining weapons. I commend the Government of India for reviving the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan for achieving precisely this goal.

We must not pursue a world order based on *fewer* nuclear weapons. We must pursue a world order *free of* nuclear weapons.
International instruments for combating nuclear weapons proliferation were largely successful before 1991, but are proving unable to meet today’s challenges. The world will never achieve “global zero” by pursuing non-proliferation alone. Not a single known or suspected case of proliferation since the early 1990s was deterred or reversed by the multilateral framework created for this purpose. Sadly, it is also true that no treaty—multilateral or bilateral—has yet required the verified destruction of a single nuclear bomb or warhead. This record is totally unacceptable to virtually all States and it must end.

Yet there are other aspects of this challenge that also merit our attention. Within the UN system-wide study on the implications of the Fukushima accident—submitted by the Secretary-General ahead of the High Level Meeting of September 2011—a number of issues were identified that could lead to a number of new synergies.

The Meeting addressed a variety of important issues, including environment, health, food security, sustainable development and the nexus between nuclear safety and nuclear security. It also presented system-wide views on how to improve disaster risk preparedness.

These issues will need to be further developed to ensure that the world remains a safe place—safer than yesterday, safer than today, and safer yet tomorrow. On behalf of my colleagues in the Office for Disarmament Affairs, I wish to close by emphasizing that we stand ready to work closely both with Member States and with groups in civil society to pursue these solemn goals. We will not rest until they are achieved.

I thank you.