

Promoting the Global Instruments of Nonproliferation and Disarmament: The United Nations and the Nuclear Challenge

An event hosted by the Permanent Missions of Japan, Poland, and Turkey to the United Nations in cooperation with the Stimson Center

Date: May 31, 2011

Location: Japan Society in New York, New York

The one-day UN conference was designed to provide a forum for stakeholders in relevant sectors – government; international and regional organizations; think-tanks and civil society organizations; private industry – to openly discuss the evolving proliferation and disarmament challenges posed by today’s highly globalized economic and political landscape. The event also encouraged participants to formulate new strategies to overcome emerging proliferation threats, as well as strengthen existing nonproliferation initiatives under the auspices of the United Nations. In all, more than 150 participants representing 62 UN missions as well as leading experts in the area attended the event. Below is a brief summary of the event.

OPENING REMARKS

Ambassador Tsuneo Nishida of Japan began the conference by acknowledging the international community for key developments made in nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation efforts, and emphasizing the need for continued international cooperation and sustained awareness of critical international security concerns. He declared that the UN Missions of Japan, Poland, and Turkey coordinated the event in order to collectively share concerns and interests in an informative, innovative, and informal setting. Ambassador Nishida also noted the value of bringing disarmament and nonproliferation policy discussions to New York to gain fresh insights and perspectives. Ambassador Apakan of Turkey also lauded recent progress in the field, such as the ratification of the New START Treaty and the success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Amongst these positive efforts, Mr. Apakan identified some areas in need of improvement, including promoting the Additional Protocol as the international standard for safeguarding state nuclear programs, achieving full implementation of watershed nonproliferation instruments such as the UNSCR 1540, and eliminating gaps in international nonproliferation networks by endorsing agreements and initiatives such as the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). Ambassador Sobków of Poland discussed the advantages of creating a

nonproliferation and disarmament forum in New York; maintaining that the city, home to an array of stakeholders dedicated to nonproliferation and disarmament, represents a new opportunity for cooperation and synergy between relevant industries, NGOs, and governments. This sentiment was reiterated throughout the day-long event by other representatives, leading to a commitment to conduct similar exercises in the calendar year and beyond.





A GLOBAL VIEW OF THE WMD LANDSCAPE: TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

Ms. Ellen Laipson, President of the Stimson Center, urged participants to view nonproliferation and disarmament challenges beyond their traditional fields, and instead consider the ways these global issues interact with other security threats. The goal of the discussion was to defy conceptual boundaries, evaluate security threats in context, and welcome a more integrated policy approach that effectively prevents and responds to different defense threats simultaneously. Mr. Perkovich of the Carnegie Endowment of International Peace began the panel discussion by providing a general overview of the current international security landscape, noting that globalization has created a strong link between state and sub-state actors, rendering proliferation easier to accomplish and more difficult to detect. Furthermore, Mr. Perkovich emphasized that the proliferation of WMD materials is not an international crime, and that the efficacy of the nonproliferation regime depends upon current distributions of power. Thus it is critical that the international community carefully observe the interactions of all nuclear armed states. Ms. Hannelore Hoppe, Director and Deputy to the High Representative of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, gave an organizational perspective of addressing nonproliferation in a wider perspective--which includes the prevention of small arms and light weapons circulation and their synergies with WMD proliferation. According to Ms. Hoppe, existing nonproliferation instruments have significantly contributed to a safer global security environment, and that continued work in the

field must be transnational in scope without any political preconditions. Finally, Mr. Piero Bonadero of the United Nations Office of Drug and Crime (UNODC) noted the ways in which terrorist groups are profiting from organized crime; ranging from illicit arms trafficking to the proliferation of WMD materials. Mr. Bonadero described existing UNODC activities such as the Container Control Program, which aims to increase cargo inspection in critical transshipment points around the globe. These activities promise to not only curb opportunities for transnational crime, but to also create more secure environment for preventing proliferation of sensitive materials and technology through enhanced vigilance in customs and law enforcement authorities, thus contributing to facilitating international trade.

THE CHALLENGE FOR UN NON-PROLIFERATION REGIME AND OTHER INSTITUTIONAL EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN GLOBAL NONPROLIFERATION

Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral of Portugal, Chair of the UN North Korea Sanctions Committee, opened the second panel by delineating Portugal's recent nonproliferation efforts and highlighting Lisbon's work with UNODC on a variety of transnational threats, including human trafficking. Mr. Cabral also addressed the need for continued transparency, confidence, and cooperation between parties. He then stressed that this could be achieved through the international endorsement of the Arms Trade Treaty. Ambassador Cabral also emphasized of the support for and adherence to efforts by existing UN Committees on nonproliferation while acknowledging challenges faced by Member States in implementing various obligations under relevant resolutions. South African Ambassador Baso Sanqu's representative delivered the 1540 Committee Chairman's remarks. That Resolution has gained considerable ground, with the 1540 Committee receiving national implementation reports from 32 countries by 2006 to more than 120 by 2011. The Chairman, however, also recognized the large amount of work ahead. The extension of 1540 for another decade necessitates more resources for the Committee, but also more

responsibilities. The Resolution demands that the Committee facilitate technical assistance, coordinate with international bodies such as the IAEA and OPCW, and maintain relations with Member States through country visits and action plan consultations.

Mr. Brian Finlay, Director of the Managing Across Boundaries Program at the Stimson Center, moderated the second part of the discussion, which examined current developments and challenges for the UN Committees Panel of Experts concerning nonproliferation and disarmament. Mr. Finlay expressed his hope that discussions would imbue member states with greater appreciation for the information and assistance that Resolution committees provide to the nonproliferation regime, as well as illustrate capacity shortfalls due to the lack of cooperation and transparency. Dr. Richard Cupitt, Coordinator for the UNSCR 1540 Committee, explained the value of the UNSCR 1540 matrix, a tool that assists the committee in developing relationships with states during and after the resolution implementation process. Moreover, Mr. Cupitt underscored the global risks of WMD proliferation, stating that a WMD attack not only harms the security of a country, but also inflicts substantial economic damage that would influence neighboring states. UNSCR 1784 Acting Coordinator Mr. Erik Marzolf discussed the unique challenges faced by the Resolution 1718 committee and Panel of Experts due to the nature of the Committee mandate. Difficulties include a general lack of transparency, limited access to on-the-ground information, and obstacles in monitoring state-to-state activities and differentiating between new and ongoing transactions. Mr. Jonathan Brewer, member of the UNSCR 1929 Panel of Experts, also shared some factors that impede progress, such as delays in information gathering and weak ties with the private sector. There was a strong sense among participants of the Panel for the need of strengthened coordination and collaboration between Committees and Member States while being mindful of the limited resources available on both sides.



KEYNOTE ADDRESS:

SECRETARY GENERAL BAN KI-MOON

In his keynote address, Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon reiterated his strong commitment to nonproliferation, disarmament by recalling his latest visits to Hiroshima, Semipalatinsk and Chernobyl. He emphasized that there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, and that rule of law is a critical component of the nonproliferation regime. The Secretary-General also stressed the important role relevant Security Council Resolutions on sanctions play in non-proliferation efforts. He urged the international body to pass the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) by 2012, start negotiations on Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty, as well as find common ground to move forward on the stagnant Conference on Disarmament.

NEXT STEPS FOR STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK ON NUCLEAR SECURITY, DISARMAMENT, AND NONPROLIFERATION, AND THE CHALLENGES FOR IMPLEMENTING RELEVANT UN RESOLUTIONS

This roundtable discussion commenced with brief comments from Geoffrey Shaw, Director of the IAEA Office in New York, and Emma Belcher from the Council of Foreign Relations. Mr. Shaw framed the critical components of the IAEA’s work as protecting communities all over the world from the misuse of nuclear technology and assisting states to build confidence that nuclear facilities are safe

and secure. To advance these two goals, the current nonproliferation framework should promote a culture that values education training, information exchange, peer reviews, and programs which address issues other than nuclear security. Ms. Belcher contributed to the discussion by encouraging participants to consider the efficacy of non-legally binding agreements vis-à-vis legally binding instruments in the nonproliferation framework. After these remarks, participants divided into smaller groups to discuss how to better incorporate other regional and international initiatives into the larger nonproliferation agenda. When the audience reconvened, several participants shared discussion points, ranging from the need to enhance awareness not only at the expert level but also at the political level on the critical importance of non-proliferation in national security priorities to establishing partnerships with and providing nonproliferation assistance to countries in the Global South.

Before the second breakout session, Ms. Yadira Soto from the Organization of American States (OAS) shared experiences in helping with UNSCR 1540 implementation efforts in Central America. She noted the value of interacting with sub-regional entities who are more likely to be “in-tune” with activities on the ground and have knowledge in discussing global security issues in a local context. Furthermore, she advised that states need to pay close attention to the security-development dimension of nonproliferation, and should promote initiative that connect nuclear security and capacity building. Panelists also spoke about engagement with the private sector, specifically in achieving export control compliance from companies who produce infrastructure technologies that could be utilized for nuclear, chemical, or biological plant operations. The importance of reputation was called out as a key motivator for inciting positive behavior. It was postulated that businesses would be more receptive to export controls if they are framed as an issue of corporate responsibility or adherence to international norms. Smaller group discussions touched on the challenges faced by various resolution committees and identified avenues for committee activity overlap. Again, the discussion also extended the conversation on private sector cooperation and considered methods with which



to effectively reach out to small, medium, and large-scale businesses and navigate through political and private interests.

SUMMARY REMARKS

Ambassador Apakan asserted that the conference was a very valuable exercise and observed that every panelist emphasized the issue of cooperation and coordination in global, regional, and sub-regional contexts. Ambassador Sobków expressed his appreciation for the diversity of experts present during the conference and encouraged participants to take home lessons about implementation and compliance. Finally, Ambassador Nishida thanked all attendees and praised the group’s willingness to explore innovative approaches to nonproliferation and disarmament. He hoped that participants would leave with new insights and optimism towards future cooperation in the field. Mr. Nishida also expressed his desire to hold a follow-up conference later this year, which he invited all participants to attend.

In short, the meeting provided a welcome launch to what should be a continued dialogue in New York on issues of nonproliferation and disarmament, and their implications on the global economic and development agenda. The value of convening a meeting to allow for a candid exchanges of views among experts from respective missions, Panel Experts, and think tank specialists was widely supported by the participants of the event. Other delegations similarly agreed that this session had significant utility, and vowed to support its continuation with their participation in future events, as well as with parallel gatherings in New York and elsewhere to support this process.