

Alliance for Nuclear Accountability • Arms Control Association • British American Security Information Council • Council for a Livable World • Faithful Security • Federation of American Scientists • Fourth Freedom Forum • Friends Committee on National Legislation (Quakers) • Global Green USA • Natural Resources Defense Council • Peace Action • Physicians for Social Responsibility • Union of Concerned Scientists • Women's Action for New Directions

August 4, 2009

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

Thank you for your courageous leadership on nuclear weapons issues. Your visionary Prague speech is the most important statement on this issue since the fall of the Berlin Wall. We were particularly pleased that you called for "an end to Cold War thinking" and declared that the United States will "reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy" and "seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons."

Now is the time to ensure that your administration's Nuclear Posture Review fully reflects your intentions.

In our view, a new U.S. nuclear weapons policy that meets the criteria you laid out in Prague would include these four principles:

1. The United States maintains nuclear weapons for the sole purpose of deterring the use of nuclear weapons against the United States or its allies.
2. The United States is eliminating the requirement that its nuclear weapons be capable of a rapid launch in response to a nuclear attack, and will not develop or exercise plans for such rapid launches. Instead, the United States will develop and exercise plans that allow the President to delay a nuclear response for days, and change U.S. operational and deployment practices accordingly. The United States will make Russia aware of this new policy, and urge it to make similar changes in its policy and practices.
3. A total U.S. stockpile of 500-1,000 nuclear warheads, including both strategic and tactical and deployed and non-deployed weapons, is sufficient for today's international security conditions, and would advance progress toward a world free of nuclear weapons by opening the way to multilateral nuclear arms reduction negotiations.
4. The United States will not develop or produce newly designed warheads, or modify existing warheads for the purpose of creating new military capabilities. To maintain a reliable, safe, and secure nuclear arsenal, the United States will continue to conduct a nuclear weapons surveillance program, assess the performance of non-nuclear components, and periodically repair or replace these components as part of life extension programs. During the life extension process, the United States will strictly limit changes in the nuclear explosive package.

Page 2
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August 4, 2009

As you said in Prague, "We cannot succeed in this endeavor alone, but we can lead it, we can start it."
We stand ready to help you in that effort.

Sincerely,

Susan Gordon, Director
Alliance for Nuclear Accountability

Paul Ingram, Executive Director
British American Security Information Council

John Isaacs, Executive Director
Council for a Livable World

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cc: Vice President Joe Biden

The Honorable Antony Blinken, National Security Adviser to the Vice President

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State

The Honorable Susan Rice, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations

The Honorable James B. Steinberg, Deputy Secretary of State

The Honorable Ellen Tauscher, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security

The Honorable Rose Gottemoeller, Assistant Secretary of State for Verification, Compliance, and Implementation

The Honorable Robert J. Einhorn, Special Advisor for Nonproliferation and Arms Control

The Honorable Robert M. Gates, Secretary of Defense

The Honorable William J. Lynn III, Deputy Secretary of Defense

The Honorable Michèle Flournoy, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

The Honorable James Miller, Principle Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

The Honorable Michael Nacht, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Strategic Affairs

Mr. Bradley H. Roberts, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Ballistic Missile Defense Policy

Rear Adm. Philip Davidson, Deputy Director for Strategy and Policy, Joint Staff J-5 Directorate

The Honorable Steven Chu, Secretary of Energy

The Honorable Daniel Poneman, Deputy Secretary of Energy

The Honorable Thomas D'Agostino, Under Secretary of Energy for Nuclear Security and Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration

General James L. Jones, USMC (ret.), Assistant to the President for National Security

The Honorable John Holdren, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology

The Honorable Thomas E. Donilon, Deputy National Security Advisor

Mr. Barry Pavel, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Defense Policy and Strategy

Mr. Gary Samore, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Counterproliferation Strategy