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A BIPARTISAN PLEA FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS ABOLITION

A World Free of Nuclear Weapons

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Dear US or English speaking visitor,

You are welcome on this French-English bilingual Website managed by the Action of Citizens for the total Dismantling of Nukes (ACDN).

Below is an impassioned call for US leadership to abolish nuclear weapons by a bipartisan foursome of prominent former US Cold Warriors.

No surprise if Senator Obama, candidate to the Presidency, refers to it in his speech of 2 October 2007. It becomes increasingly obvious in the US as well as in Europe or elsewhere that Nuclear disarmament is an absolutely urgent task

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Good reading.

The Wall Street Journal- January 4, 2007; Page A15

Nuclear weapons today present tremendous dangers, but also an historic opportunity. U.S. leadership will be required to take the world to the next stage â€" to a solid consensus for reversing reliance on nuclear weapons globally as a vital contribution to preventing their proliferation into potentially dangerous hands, and ultimately ending them as a threat to the world.

Nuclear weapons were essential to maintaining international security during the Cold War because they were a means of deterrence. The end of the Cold War made the doctrine of mutual Soviet-American deterrence obsolete. Deterrence continues to be a relevant consideration for many states with regard to threats from other states. But reliance on nuclear weapons for this purpose is becoming increasingly hazardous and decreasingly effective.

North Korea's recent nuclear test and Iran's refusal to stop its program to enrich uranium â€" potentially to weapons grade â€" highlight the fact that the world is now on the precipice of a new and dangerous nuclear era. Most alarmingly, the likelihood that non-state terrorists will get their hands on nuclear weaponry is increasing. In today's war waged on world order by terrorists, nuclear weapons are the ultimate means of mass devastation. And non-state terrorist groups with nuclear weapons are conceptually outside the bounds of a deterrent strategy and present difficult new security challenges.

Apart from the terrorist threat, unless urgent new actions are taken, the U.S. soon will be compelled to enter a new nuclear era that will be more precarious, psychologically disorienting, and economically even more costly than was Cold War deterrence. It is far from certain that we can successfully replicate the old Soviet-American "mutually assured destruction" with an increasing number of potential nuclear enemies world-wide without dramatically increasing the risk that nuclear weapons will be used. New nuclear states do not have the benefit of years of step-by-step safeguards put in effect during the Cold War to prevent nuclear accidents, misjudgments or unauthorized launches. The United States and the Soviet Union learned from mistakes that were less than fatal. Both

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countries were diligent to ensure that no nuclear weapon was used during the Cold War by design or by accident. Will new nuclear nations and the world be as fortunate in the next 50 years as we were during the Cold War?

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Leaders addressed this issue in earlier times. In his "Atoms for Peace" address to the United Nations in 1953, Dwight D. Eisenhower pledged America's "determination to help solve the fearful atomic dilemma â€" to devote its entire heart and mind to find the way by which the miraculous inventiveness of man shall not be dedicated to his death, but consecrated to his life." John F. Kennedy, seeking to break the logjam on nuclear disarmament, said, "The world was not meant to be a prison in which man awaits his execution."

Rajiv Gandhi, addressing the U.N. General Assembly on June 9, 1988, appealed, "Nuclear war will not mean the death of a hundred million people. Or even a thousand million. It will mean the extinction of four thousand million: the end of life as we know it on our planet earth. We come to the United Nations to seek your support. We seek your support to put a stop to this madness."

Ronald Reagan called for the abolishment of "all nuclear weapons," which he considered to be "totally irrational, totally inhumane, good for nothing but killing, possibly destructive of life on earth and civilization." Mikhail Gorbachev shared this vision, which had also been expressed by previous American presidents.

Although Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev failed at Reykjavik to achieve the goal of an agreement to get rid of all nuclear weapons, they did succeed in turning the arms race on its head. They initiated steps leading to significant reductions in deployed long- and intermediate-range nuclear forces, including the elimination of an entire class of threatening missiles.

What will it take to rekindle the vision shared by Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev? Can a world-wide consensus be forged that defines a series of practical steps leading to major reductions in the nuclear danger? There is an urgent need to address the challenge posed by these two questions.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) envisioned the end of all nuclear weapons. It provides (a) that states that did not possess nuclear weapons as of 1967 agree not to obtain them, and (b) that states that do possess them agree to divest themselves of these weapons over time. Every president of both parties since Richard Nixon has reaffirmed these treaty obligations, but non-nuclear weapon states have grown increasingly skeptical of the sincerity of the nuclear powers.

Strong non-proliferation efforts are under way. The Cooperative Threat Reduction program, the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, the Proliferation Security Initiative and the Additional Protocols are innovative approaches that provide powerful new tools for detecting activities that violate the NPT and endanger world security. They deserve full implementation. The negotiations on proliferation of nuclear weapons by North Korea and Iran, involving all the permanent members of the Security Council plus Germany and Japan, are crucially important. They must be energetically pursued.

But by themselves, none of these steps are adequate to the danger. Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev aspired to accomplish more at their meeting in Reykjavik 20 years ago â€" the elimination of nuclear weapons altogether. Their vision shocked experts in the doctrine of nuclear deterrence, but galvanized the hopes of people around the world. The leaders of the two countries with the largest arsenals of nuclear weapons discussed the abolition of their most powerful weapons.

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What should be done? Can the promise of the NPT and the possibilities envisioned at Reykjavik be brought to fruition? We believe that a major effort should be launched by the United States to produce a positive answer through concrete stages.

First and foremost is intensive work with leaders of the countries in possession of nuclear weapons to turn the goal of a world without nuclear weapons into a joint enterprise. Such a joint enterprise, by involving changes in the disposition of the states possessing nuclear weapons, would lend additional weight to efforts already under way to avoid the emergence of a nuclear-armed North Korea and Iran.

The program on which agreements should be sought would constitute a series of agreed and urgent steps that would lay the groundwork for a world free of the nuclear threat. Steps would include:

" Changing the Cold War posture of deployed nuclear weapons to increase warning time and thereby reduce the danger of an accidental or unauthorized use of a nuclear weapon.

" Continuing to reduce substantially the size of nuclear forces in all states that possess them.

" Eliminating short-range nuclear weapons designed to be forward-deployed.

" Initiating a bipartisan process with the Senate, including understandings to increase confidence and provide for periodic review, to achieve ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, taking advantage of recent technical advances, and working to secure ratification by other key states.

" Providing the highest possible standards of security for all stocks of weapons, weapons-usable plutonium, and highly enriched uranium everywhere in the world.

" Getting control of the uranium enrichment process, combined with the guarantee that uranium for nuclear power reactors could be obtained at a reasonable price, first from the Nuclear Suppliers Group and then from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) or other controlled international reserves. It will also be necessary to deal with proliferation issues presented by spent fuel from reactors producing electricity.

" Halting the production of fissile material for weapons globally; phasing out the use of highly enriched uranium in civil commerce and removing weapons-usable uranium from research facilities around the world and rendering the materials safe.

" Redoubling our efforts to resolve regional confrontations and conflicts that give rise to new nuclear powers.

Achieving the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons will also require effective measures to impede or counter any nuclear-related conduct that is potentially threatening to the security of any state or peoples.

Reassertion of the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and practical measures toward achieving that goal would be, and would be perceived as, a bold initiative consistent with America's moral heritage. The effort could have a profoundly positive impact on the security of future generations. Without the bold vision, the actions will not be perceived as fair or urgent. Without the actions, the vision will not be perceived as realistic or possible.

We endorse setting the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and working energetically on the actions required to

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achieve that goal, beginning with the measures outlined above.

Mr. Shultz, a distinguished fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford, was secretary of state from 1982 to 1989. Mr. Perry was secretary of defense from 1994 to 1997. Mr. Kissinger, chairman of Kissinger Associates, was secretary of state from 1973 to 1977. Mr. Nunn is former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

A conference organized by Mr. Shultz and Sidney D. Drell was held at Hoover to reconsider the vision that Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev brought to Reykjavik. In addition to Messrs. Shultz and Drell, the following participants also endorse the view in this statement: Martin Anderson, Steve Andreasen, Michael Armacost, William Crowe, James Goodby, Thomas Graham Jr., Thomas Henriksen, David Holloway, Max Kampelman, Jack Matlock, John McLaughlin, Don Oberdorfer, Rozanne Ridgway, Henry Rowen, Roald Sagdeev and Abraham Sofaer.

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Remember:

- Iran Nuclear Crisis:
  The solution exists, it just has to be seized!

A BIPARTISAN PLEA FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS ABOLITION

By David Krieger

An amazing and important commentary appeared in the January 4, 2007 issue of the Wall Street Journal, co-authored by four high-level architects of the Cold War: George Shultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger and Sam Nunn. The article, entitled "A World Free of Nuclear Weapons," was amazing not so much for what it proposed, but for who was making the proposal. The four prominent former US officials reviewed current nuclear dangers and called for US leadership to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons. Their argument was as follows:

1. Reliance on nuclear weapons for deterrence is becoming increasingly hazardous and decreasingly effective.

2. Terrorist groups are outside the bounds of deterrence strategy.

3. We are entering a new nuclear era that will be more precarious, disorienting and costly than was Cold War deterrence.

4. New nuclear weapons states lack the safeguarding and control experiences learned by the US and USSR during the Cold War.

5. The nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty envisioned the elimination of all nuclear weapons.

6. Non-nuclear weapons states have grown increasingly skeptical of the sincerity of the nuclear weapons states to fulfill their Non-Proliferation Treaty obligations to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.

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7. There exists an historic opportunity to eliminate nuclear weapons in the world.

8. To realize this opportunity, bold vision and action are needed.

9. The US must take the lead and must convince the leaders of the other nuclear weapons states to turn the goal of nuclear weapons abolition into a joint effort.

10. A number of steps need to be taken to lay the groundwork for a world free of nuclear threat, including de-alerting nuclear arsenals; reducing the size of nuclear arsenals; eliminating tactical nuclear weapons; achieving Senate ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and encouraging other key states to also do so; securing nuclear weapons and weapons-usable materials everywhere in the world; and halting production of fissile materials for weapons, ceasing to use enriched uranium in civil commerce and removing weapons-usable uranium from research reactors.

For many of us committed to the global effort to abolish nuclear weapons, there is nothing new in their arguments. They are arguments that many civil society groups have been making since the end of the Cold War. Other former officials, such as Robert McNamara and General George Lee Butler, former head of the US Strategic Command, have also made such arguments. What is new is that these former Cold Warriors have joined together in a bipartisan spirit to publicly make these arguments to the American people. This means that the perspectives of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, the Global Security Institute, the Nuclear Policy Research Institute and other dedicated civil society groups are finally being embraced by key former officials who once presided over Cold War nuclear strategy.

The bipartisan advice of Shultz, Perry, Kissinger and Nunn to abolish nuclear weapons will require a full reversal of the current Bush administration nuclear policies. The Bush administration has thumbed its nose at the other parties to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, behaving as though the US had no obligations to fulfill its commitments for nuclear disarmament under the treaty. The administration has largely opposed the 13 Practical Steps for Nuclear Disarmament agreed to by consensus at the 2000 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

If the administration wants to demonstrate leadership toward nuclear weapons abolition, it could immediately submit the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to the Senate for ratification; call for negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty; reach an agreement with Russia to begin implementing deeper cuts in the nuclear arsenals of the two countries, which Russia supports; and call for a summit of leaders of all nuclear weapons states to negotiate a new treaty for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

If the United States becomes serious about leading the way to a world free of nuclear weapons, as called for by the former US officials, it can assume a high moral and legal ground, while improving its own security and global security. Each day that goes by without US leadership for achieving a nuclear weapons-free world undermines the prospects for the future of humanity. There is no issue on which US leadership is more needed, and there is no issue on which the US has more to gain by asserting such leadership.

The 19th century philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer said, "All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident." The truth that if we are to have a human future the US must lead the way in abolishing nuclear weapons has been frequently ridiculed and violently opposed. The commentary by Shultz, Perry, Kissinger and Nunn suggests that this truth may now be entering the stage of being self-evident.

David Krieger is president of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (www.wagingpeace.org). He has lectured and written widely on the need to abolish nuclear weapons.

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