

Arms control and nonproliferation are becoming less distinct. Throughout the Cold War, strategic arms control focused primarily on the US-USSR nuclear relationship, and only secondarily on nonproliferation and disarmament. Nonproliferation policy, for its part, sought foremost to prevent the emergence of new nuclear weapon states, with little effect on the growth of US and Soviet strategic arsenals. Arms control and nonproliferation were backed by separate treaties, laws, policies, scholarly literatures, and government bureaucracies. Today, however, the barriers that separated arms control and nonproliferation are crumbling. Potential terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and missile threats from new nations are adding to the often-noted complexity of security in the modern world, spawning hybrid policies that could turn out to be less than the sum of their parts.

As new threats to US security create more emphasis on dealing with proliferation, arms control and nonproliferation are converging more than ever into a single policy instrument. This convergence, however, may not always be a good thing. The application of arms control concepts to address nonproliferation problems and the pursuit of arms control to bolster support for the nonproliferation regime can bring desired results, but can also detract from the contributions that either of these policies make to US and international security. Convergence can be harmful if it creates new initiatives that compete for scarce resources and political capital better used for other goals. Convergence can also be detrimental if it leads to an acceptance of managing proliferation by arms control rather than preventing it, or a tendency to judge arms control in terms of its contributions to nonproliferation rather than in terms of its intrinsic security benefits.

This viewpoint describes examples of hybrid policies where the distinction between arms control and nonproliferation is blurred. Cooperative Threat Reduction programs with Russia show how hybrid policies can have

benefits, while US policies toward China, South Asia, and North Korea illustrate possible costs of combining arms control and nonproliferation policies. Hybrid policies, such as the proposed Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT), that combine traditional arms control

goals with multilateral nonproliferation methods could even eclipse more important nonproliferation and arms control priorities such as ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and strengthening International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards.

Conceptual clarity is needed for policymakers to select appropriate instruments to achieve arms

control and/or nonproliferation objectives without losing sight of the distinct characteristics that make each an indispensable tool of American and global security. The next section describes the rationale and nature of the main policy instruments that the United States applies to WMD proliferation. Subsequent sections describe how these instruments are being combined in addressing a number of specific issues. The final section of this viewpoint argues that some long-standing, traditional arms control and nonproliferation policy goals still deserve priority over some of these more recent hybrids.

#### THE RANGE OF POLICY INSTRUMENTS

Arms control, nonproliferation, and disarmament share common origins in post-World War II efforts to control atomic energy. The 1946 Baruch Plan, President Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace proposal, and early test ban negotiations each included elements of horizontal and vertical control. The Treaty on the Non-Prolifera-

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**VIEWPOINT:**

**THE CONVERGENCE OF  
ARMS CONTROL AND  
NONPROLIFERATION:  
VIVE LA DIFFÉRENCE**

by Zachary S. Davis

tion of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) inexorably linked vertical arms control and horizontal proliferation in its Article VI, the implications of which are elaborated below. Arms control gradually became predominantly bilateral in nature, while nonproliferation diplomacy leaned more heavily on multilateral arrangements such as the NPT. The following definitions describe distinctions between arms control and nonproliferation that had taken root by the 1970s and persisted until the 1990s.

**Arms Control:** The main purpose of bilateral nuclear arms control was managing the US-Soviet strategic balance. Arms control supported nuclear deterrence by means of negotiated agreements to prevent perceived asymmetries from spawning destabilizing or threatening actions. It was a coping mechanism for a situation involving thousands of deployed nuclear weapons that nearly everyone agreed exceeded the requirements of defense and deterrence. Agreements such as the SALT, ABM, INF, and START treaties sought to limit a competition in weapons that both sides agreed was ultimately self-defeating. Export controls (administered by the defunct COCOM regime) blocked technology transfers to Soviet bloc nations. In the United States, diplomats from the State Department and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) negotiated bilateral arms control agreements; the Defense Department supported negotiations and oversaw their implementation. The Senate usually but not always consented to ratification of arms control agreements, liberal grassroots groups lobbied for them, and conservatives criticized them. Think tanks and beltway bandits thrived on analyzing the latest agreements. In the academic world, the theory and practice of arms control filled books, journals, articles, dissertations, and college courses.

**Nonproliferation:** The main purpose of nonproliferation policy is to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons by additional states. Simply put, for existing nuclear powers, nonproliferation preserves a mutually beneficial status quo. This is achieved through multilateral, bilateral, and unilateral arrangements that reduce the incentives and raise the costs of challenging the nonproliferation norm. The NPT and the IAEA provide a first line of defense and mild enforcement of the nonproliferation norm, which derives its legitimacy and effectiveness from Great Power support and near universal acceptance. A system of treaties, institutions, regional and bilateral security arrangements, export controls, and national laws collectively constitutes the nonprolifera-

tion regime. Before the end of the Cold War, in the United States nonproliferation was a junior partner to arms control that claimed a smaller, albeit devoted, share of congressional attention, grassroots support, and scholarly interest. Hawks and doves agreed on the undesirability of more countries acquiring nuclear weapons, which liberated nonproliferation policy from much of the sparring between conservatives and liberals that so often polarized arms control policy.

**Counterproliferation:** Counterproliferation is an option when nonproliferation diplomacy fails and a resort to force against a hostile WMD possessor is deemed necessary. During the Cold War, US military planners prepared to fight specifically against Soviet WMD, but much of that planning is applicable to today's counterproliferation efforts. Military capabilities can bolster deterrence against WMD attack by persuading WMD possessors that WMD use would be futile and self-destructive. Notwithstanding the confusion that surrounded counterproliferation doctrine during the early years of the Clinton administration, counterproliferation remains an essential element of US defense policy.<sup>1</sup> Advances in weapons and doctrine and their demonstration against Iraq during the 1990s highlighted the continuum between force and diplomacy in the pursuit of nonproliferation objectives. However, reckless counterproliferation efforts can be self-defeating if they seriously undermine other nonproliferation efforts, or cause states to acquire WMD capabilities they would otherwise have foregone to defend against US counterproliferation forces. Counterproliferation can be a means of enforcing nonproliferation norms, but the efficacy and political rationale for such a resort to force—especially if it is unilateral—depends in part on maintaining the legitimacy of the purposes and objectives it is intended to enforce. Like any collective security endeavor, support for enforcing nonproliferation norms through counterproliferation depends heavily on the security benefits reaped by all states (other than the target).

**Counterterrorism:** Renewed interest in the threat of WMD terrorism further erodes old boundaries.<sup>2</sup> Proliferation is the source of this threat, but it expands beyond state actors to groups and individuals who are less vulnerable to traditional nonproliferation policy responses, and has helped to put more emphasis on chemical and biological weapons. This growing connection between the nonproliferation and counterterrorism agendas has

brought new actors to the field, and with them, predictable bureaucratic and budgetary maneuvering.<sup>3</sup>

**Missile Defense:** The politics of missile defenses have also broadened perceptions of proliferation threats. Much recent congressional interest in proliferation has been associated with efforts to justify theater and national missile defenses.<sup>4</sup> It is not necessary to elaborate on missile defense policies; the point is that adding the counterterrorism and missile defense rationales and constituencies to the already crowded nonproliferation/counterproliferation and arms control field hastens the erosion of old boundaries.

### THE LINK BETWEEN NONPROLIFERATION AND ARMS CONTROL

The connection between arms control and nonproliferation is not new. The NPT linked arms control and nonproliferation in its Article VI, which obligates the five *de jure* nuclear weapon states (NWS) to reduce their arsenals in exchange for promises by the non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS) not to proliferate. The main symbol of Article VI's linkage between the vertical arms race and horizontal proliferation has been the CTBT. Since the founding of the NPT, NNWS and disarmament proponents have advocated a CTBT as an essential step toward capping the arsenals of the weapon states.<sup>5</sup> The adoption of the CTBT text by the UN General Assembly in September 1996 and its signing by over 150 states by the end of 1998 marked a major milestone for arms control and nonproliferation proponents alike. However, banning nuclear tests has not been enough to satisfy those most interested in the disarmament linkage of Article VI.

The CTBT alone does not resolve the gap between the nuclear haves and have-nots. The five NWS retain substantial arsenals and show few signs of giving them up. The US Stockpile Stewardship Program underscores the US intent to maintain a robust nuclear deterrent force, and the decline of Russia's conventional forces may cause Moscow to place even greater value on its remaining nuclear weapons.<sup>6</sup> And while Washington and Moscow are reducing their arsenals, Beijing is modernizing its strategic systems. The Cold War arms race may be history, but the debate over the purpose and legitimacy of nuclear weapons is heating up. Calls for radical reductions and outright abolition have replaced the CTBT as the new symbols of Article VI compliance. The United States responds with evidence of deep reductions and

irreversible dismantlement and disposal of retired warheads, in hopes of quelling disarmament fervor.<sup>7</sup> But the question remains: How much arms control is needed to satisfy Article VI obligations?

It is becoming increasingly clear that these expectations cannot be satisfied, or even fended off, by new arms control agreements. Disarmament debates promise to spill over into the five-year review conferences mandated by the NPT and make them more divisive.<sup>8</sup> George F. Kennan's 1946 observation that the Soviet Union would "smell a trap and continue to harbor the most baleful misgivings" even if the United States completely disarmed and delivered "our air and naval forces to Russia" are equally applicable to some non-weapon members of the NPT, who use NPT meetings to protest the disparities of power in the international system.<sup>9</sup> Arms control may never succeed in closing the gap between the nuclear haves and have-nots, and will do little to promote a more just distribution of power, but implementation of START II and conclusion of START III would offer concrete evidence of Article VI progress. The real test will come when the NWS reach their minimum deterrence levels and arms control reaches a deadlock. In the days ahead, arms control will buy less and less support for the nonproliferation regime.

In addition to the historic link in Article VI, arms control and nonproliferation have overlapped in several more recent developments (and in US policy initiatives to address them), including the emergence of proliferation threats from the former Soviet Union, China's security policies, nuclear testing in South Asia, and North Korea's nuclear gambits. As I will show, in each case, arms control approaches have been applied with varying degrees of success to nonproliferation problems. An unintended consequence of this laudable creativity is a homogenization of these two related but distinct policy instruments that may detract from the usefulness of either.

### EXAMPLES OF CONVERGENCE

#### The Cooperative Threat Reduction Hybrid

A sea change occurred when the Soviet Union transformed overnight from an arms control partner to a nonproliferation nightmare. Suddenly, a multitude of arms control aficionados, nonproliferation specialists, and experts on Soviet politics turned their attention to the proliferation risk of "loose nukes." The proliferation threat in the former Soviet Union (FSU) included the

possibility that everything from complete strategic systems to hungry nuclear scientists might be bought by anyone willing to pay for them. A new policy and a new cottage industry were born.

The Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program, fathered by Senators Sam Nunn (D-GA) and Richard Lugar (R-IN), included classical arms control activities such as helping Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan comply with their START obligations. CTR also branched out into more nonproliferation-oriented activities, such as the Department of Energy's Lab-to-Lab and Materials Protection, Control, and Accounting (MPC&A) programs and the State Department's International Science and Technology Centers (ISTC). As the threat that FSU governments might lose control of complete nuclear weapons receded, CTR and its spin-offs expanded to include efforts to corral weapons materials (highly enriched uranium and plutonium), technology, and scientific expertise. As the CTR mission grew, so did competition for programs and budgets among the Departments of Defense, Energy, State, and other agencies.<sup>10</sup>

Agreements to verify the dismantlement of retired warheads and the disposal of excess fissile material are further blurring the distinction between arms control verification—which had previously focused on discrete items such as launchers and warheads—and nonproliferation safeguards aimed at giving “timely warning” of diversions in non-nuclear weapon states of civil nuclear materials to military purposes. The primary US arms control verification agency, the Department of Defense's On-Site Inspection Agency (OSIA, now part of the new Defense Threat Reduction Agency), assumed responsibility for large portions of the CTR program and is expanding its cooperation with the IAEA, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and other international organizations.<sup>11</sup> Conversely, the IAEA is becoming increasingly involved in verifying that excess US and Russian nuclear materials are not re-used for weapons.<sup>12</sup> The merging of arms control and nonproliferation verification systems will continue with the proposed Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty and to some extent with multilateral verification of a CTBT.

CTR was, and remains, a prudent use of resources on behalf of US national security. Destroying strategic weapons that were aimed at the United States and decreasing the vulnerability of former Soviet nuclear assets to theft or diversion provide tangible nonproliferation

and arms control benefits. To do so required a deft use of both arms control and nonproliferation tools. This approach, however, may not work equally well in all circumstances.

### **China's Imports and Exports**

China's nuclear policies in the 1990s and the US response further blurred the distinction between nonproliferation, arms control, and other national security issues. China gained notoriety throughout the 1980s and 1990s as a key supplier of nuclear, chemical, and missile capabilities to Pakistan, Iran, and other countries.<sup>13</sup> Beijing's record of reckless exports has improved, but perceptions of a looming “China threat” have grown due to its imports of Western technology for its military modernization and its buildup of strategic forces. Although China has not embraced strategic nuclear arms control (largely due to US and Russian strategic superiority) it has gradually warmed to multilateral nonproliferation regimes. However, a situation that involves nonproliferation without arms control, and cooperation without threat reduction, leaves key questions about China's nuclear agenda unanswered.

Nonproliferation analysts have focused on Beijing's exports of WMD technology, while China watchers and regional defense experts have kept a close eye on its high-tech imports and how they aid the growing power of the People's Liberation Army.<sup>14</sup> Tensions over Taiwan nearly resulted in military confrontation in 1996, and a remark by a Chinese official about the vulnerability of Los Angeles to ballistic missile attack raised the specter of Chinese atomic brinkmanship.<sup>15</sup> China's initial reluctance to stop testing nuclear weapons and join the CTBT and its continued nuclear and missile transfers further fueled suspicions that Beijing did not share the norms of the nonproliferation regime.<sup>16</sup> The debate in 1997 over approval of the long dormant US-China Nuclear Cooperation Agreement added to the confusion. Would sales of US civil nuclear power reactors benefit China's military nuclear program, or accelerate proliferation if Beijing retransferred US technology to Pakistan, Iran, or others? The 1998-1999 congressional investigation of US missile/satellite technology transfers to China and revelations of Chinese atomic espionage at US nuclear labs appear to have confirmed China's predatory approach to acquiring US strategic weapons technology.<sup>17</sup> Despite the Clinton administration's emphasis on cooperation and engagement as the best tools

for dealing with Beijing's technology imports and exports, hopes for a real "strategic partnership" have faded.<sup>18</sup>

Even as concerns about China's nuclear intentions have multiplied, Beijing has become increasingly active in multilateral nonproliferation and arms control issues, including joining the NPT and the CTBT, supporting an FMCT, and considering joining the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).<sup>19</sup> The PRC strongly condemned the 1998 Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests, and is considered by some to be a key partner in US policy toward North Korea. In the face of such contrasting developments, Washington has set a course to simultaneously punish and contain Beijing's drive to buy and sell military technology while cooperating on selected nonproliferation projects.

Unlike US relations with Russia, however, where cooperative threat reduction efforts have produced tangible results, the rationale for pursuing hybrid cooperative threat reduction programs with China is far weaker. China is modernizing its nuclear forces, not dismantling them like Russia is in accordance with treaty obligations. And Beijing has not lost control over its nuclear complex, as Moscow did. Revelations about China's nuclear spying raise troubling questions about the benefits of Lab-to-Lab cooperation and its vulnerability to espionage.<sup>20</sup> The Department of Energy's US-China Lab-to-Lab program has all of the liabilities of the CTR program in Russia, but without the arms control or nonproliferation benefits. At best, without clearly defined objectives to guide them, official exchanges between US and Chinese nuclear scientists merely duplicate existing "track two" dialogue fora. At worst, efforts to work with China in the nuclear field could inadvertently assist the PRC's strategic weapon modernization.

China's willingness to cooperate selectively on nonproliferation while continuing its strategic buildup raises questions about the interplay of nonproliferation and arms control in Sino-US relations. During the Cold War, Washington and Moscow cooperated on arms control and nonproliferation, even when relations were at a low ebb. If a similar logic is to guide US cooperation with China on nonproliferation, concrete evidence of threat reduction needs and benefits would help make the case. For example, is US MPC&A technology needed to secure Chinese nuclear materials against theft? Moreover, a real strategic partnership would, at a minimum, in-

clude understandings about the nuclear forces that Beijing and Washington have targeted at one another.

### **South Asia: Nonproliferation or Arms Control?**

For decades India claimed the right to possess nuclear weapons. With the exception of its 1974 "peaceful nuclear explosion," New Delhi was content to maintain the option without challenging the nonproliferation regime. So long as they did not cross the threshold, India and Pakistan were able to maintain serviceable, albeit strained, relations with the United States and other influential countries, such as Japan, that had strong nonproliferation policies. Both countries were able to build substantial nuclear weapon capabilities, despite international efforts to slow them down. When it tested nuclear devices in May 1998, India's BJP nationalist government asserted that it had struck a blow against "nuclear apartheid" by becoming a nuclear weapon state, regardless of what the United States, the P-5, the G-8, or anyone else said to the contrary.<sup>21</sup> India's blasts were reluctantly mimicked by Pakistan. Did the blasts herald the end of nonproliferation and the beginning of arms control in South Asia?

The Clinton administration condemned the tests and pursued a tough but fair strategy to limit the damage. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright warned both countries that they "could not blast their way onto...the Security Council."<sup>22</sup> Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott laid out four benchmarks by which India's and Pakistan's willingness to moderate their nuclear competition could be measured and initiated negotiations to encourage restraint.<sup>23</sup> However, some analysts were sympathetic to New Delhi's and Islamabad's rationales for testing and urged policymakers to "face reality" by lifting sanctions and accepting the two as nuclear weapon states. The time had come, they argued, to quit treating India and Pakistan as nonproliferation problems and begin tutoring them in the theory and practice of arms control. According to this view, the United States should provide technical assistance, such as permissive action links and other command and control technology, to prevent accidental or unauthorized use of India's or Pakistan's nuclear weapons and help "stabilize" the emerging "minimum nuclear deterrent" forces in South Asia. Some even view a nuclear India as a useful counterbalance to China.<sup>24</sup>

Adopting the contrarian notion that nuclear proliferation improves regional stability, advocates of nuclear-

based security have called on the United States to stop opposing proliferation in South Asia and to become its midwife. In exchange for Indian and Pakistani promises to exercise restraint in the conduct of their arms race, they say, the United States should lift the sanctions imposed after the tests and provide incentives such as removing export controls on US technology.<sup>25</sup> It was argued that nuclear weapons might even give the two ancient enemies the confidence needed to improve their bilateral relations.

The application of arms control principles to a longstanding nonproliferation problem in South Asia dealt another blow to the increasingly porous border between the two approaches to security policy. Giving up on nonproliferation in favor of arms control means abandoning the goal of rolling back nuclear weapons and instead finding ways to help manage an Indo-Pakistani nuclear arms race. In addition to the negative effect of India's nuclear weapons on China's nuclear force planning, such a policy could have other implications. For example, would other countries expect Washington to learn to live with their bombs too?

#### **North Korea: A Bad Precedent?**

North Korea's nuclear weapons program is a clear-cut nonproliferation/counterproliferation problem. Advocates of taking an arms control approach to managing North Korea's nuclear weapons are few and far between. Yet the 1994 Agreed Framework between the United States and North Korea chipped away at nonproliferation norms by forfeiting immediate NPT enforcement, instead providing the hostile Stalinist enclave with oil, food, and nuclear reactors and deferring resolution of ongoing nuclear weapons activities to the future. In US domestic politics, the deal broke a long history of nonpartisanship on nonproliferation policy and became embroiled in unaccustomed political criticism.

While the deal can be defended as the best that could be done at the time, it has consequences for other nonproliferation challenges. Russian and Iranian officials, for example, have compared Russia's sales of reactors to Iran to the Agreed Framework.<sup>26</sup> The potential damage done by rewarding defiant noncompliance might be ameliorated if North Korea eventually comes clean and honors its NPT obligations. The Agreed Framework is not an arms control agreement per se, but it is a negotiated arrangement that allows forbidden nuclear weapons to remain in place. In so doing, the agreement

relegates nonproliferation to an uncertain future on the Korean Peninsula. Negotiating proliferation management schemes, like the Agreed Framework, that involve living with the bomb in response to explicit challenges to nonproliferation norms and institutions sends a message that arms control or proliferation management may be an alternative for stubborn proliferators.

#### **HYBRID REGIMES: FMCT, TRILATERAL INITIATIVE**

There are good arguments for blending nonproliferation and arms control methods to create new hybrid regimes in response to new circumstances. Such hybrids attempt to get the best of both worlds. But not all hybrids are equal, and some may have unintended consequences. The proposed Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty is a good example. The FMCT seeks to end the production of fissile materials for nuclear explosives, thereby serving the arms control objective of capping the amount of plutonium and highly enriched uranium (HEU) available for nuclear weapons. The treaty would codify the decisions of the five nuclear weapon states to stop producing fissile material specifically for nuclear explosives, and also serve the nonproliferation objective of creating another obstacle to unsafeguarded production of weapons material by NNWS. Moreover, adherence to the FMCT could corral the nuclear arms race between India and Pakistan and limit Israel's nuclear capabilities.

Unfortunately, the FMCT risks falling short of achieving either its arms control or its nonproliferation objectives. While in theory verifying an end to weapon material production might be worthwhile, in practice the FMCT's global verification system will reveal more and more about less and less. Without breaking new ground in arms control, the FMCT takes the path of least resistance to nonproliferation. Five flaws undermine the FMCT hybrid, at least in the near term.

First, it is likely that existing military stockpiles in the NWS and the three non-NPT weapon possessors will remain beyond the scope of the treaty, despite the fact that off-limits stockpiles may evoke more suspicion than the material that is included. Second, intrusive inspections of weapons production facilities in the NWS by international inspection teams could inadvertently pose proliferation risks by revealing information about historic weapon-related activities that might help bomb builders perfect their own weapons. Charges of spying within the United Nations Special Commission on Iraq

and at the US nuclear weapon labs illustrate the risk. Third, new global inspection missions are expensive and require training, maintenance, and political support. Yet another new mission would be thrust on the IAEA, significantly increasing its responsibilities at a time when it is struggling to improve its safeguards system while coping with chronic budget shortfalls. At the same time, the OPCW in the Hague is establishing its inspection system, the fledgling Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) is taking its first steps, and a global inspection system for the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) is taking shape. Adding FMCT verification to this already crowded field threatens to overtax the tolerance and resources available for multilateral inspection regimes. Donor fatigue could leave these new missions scrambling to stretch meager resources over an expanding inspection empire. Without significant new funding, verification will be weak, and confidence in multilateral inspection regimes could plummet.

Beyond these three verification-related problems, the FMCT could undermine nonproliferation norms by indirectly conferring nuclear weapon state status on India, Pakistan, and Israel. If these three countries are treated like the five *de jure* nuclear weapon states and the treaty is crafted to permit them to possess undeclared stockpiles of weapons, weapon materials, and active weapons programs, some NPT members—especially those such as Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, South Africa, Argentina, and Brazil who gave up nuclear weapon capabilities—may wonder if they would have been better off keeping a stockpile of weapons or materials and opting for the FMCT alternative. Why stick with the NPT if comparable benefits (including good relations with the United States) can be had while developing nuclear weapons? Finally, if the FMCT permits the production of weapons-usable plutonium and enriched uranium, albeit under safeguards, stockpiles of HEU and plutonium can continue to grow even as Washington and Moscow are disposing of their excess weapons and materials. To avoid undermining the NPT regime, FMCT membership should not entitle India, Israel, and Pakistan access to nuclear technology that is currently denied to them as non-NPT members, even if they allow FMCT-related safeguards on selected production facilities. Suspending the full-scope safeguards norm to provide incentives for FMCT membership would risk a hard-earned nonproliferation principle for uncertain arms control benefits.

Arms control and nonproliferation also converge in efforts to verify dismantlement of retired nuclear weapons and disposition of excess weapon material in the United States and Russia. In the proposed Trilateral Initiative and related plutonium disposition agreements, the IAEA is being tasked with verifying that excess weapon material is never again used to make bombs.<sup>27</sup> The goals of preventing reconstitution of weapons and demonstrating the irreversibility of reductions are laudable. But the IAEA safeguards system—which was designed to give timely warning of diversions of a significant quantity<sup>28</sup> of weapon material in non-nuclear weapon states—may not be the best way to verify bilateral arms control agreements among nuclear weapon states.

The United States and Russia already possess thousands of warheads and tons of weapons-usable material. While the IAEA may be an honest broker capable of reporting to the rest of the world that Washington and Moscow really are dismantling warheads, accounting for every kilogram of plutonium and HEU declared by Moscow and Washington is not necessary and shows little promise of expediting further reductions, proving fidelity to NPT Article VI, or satisfying disarmament expectations. The United States will receive scant appreciation for its efforts.

Nevertheless, the IAEA can confirm that militarily significant quantities of excess materials in NWS are securely stored, irreversibly dispositioned, and not re-used for weapons, without accounting for every kilogram in the US and Russian declarations. The challenge is to formulate a modified safeguards approach for excess weapon materials in NWS without undermining the existing safeguards system. Special safeguards for NWS could be self-defeating if they are viewed by NNWS as discriminatory. Creating a two-tier safeguards system—one for nonproliferation and another for arms control—could interfere with efforts to strengthen the existing NPT safeguards system and might spawn interest in applying the less stringent arms control standards equally to all safeguards agreements.

The application of nonproliferation safeguards to verify arms control agreements responds to the requirements of the 1995 NPT Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, but great care must be taken that such special missions do not degrade the safeguards system. The proposed IAEA Nuclear Arms Control and Verification Fund is unlikely to ease budget pressures, although it would

multilateralize responsibility for achieving progress toward disarmament.<sup>29</sup> Who will pay to verify the completeness of US-Russian reductions? If choices must be made, strengthening the IAEA safeguards system is a higher priority than IAEA verification of an FMCT or IAEA verification of US-Russian excess material disposition. The core mission of safeguards remains nonproliferation.

### **SEPARATE BUT EQUAL: NONPROLIFERATION AND ARMS CONTROL PRIORITIES**

The convergence of nonproliferation, arms control, and counterterrorism was perhaps inevitable. The clear distinctions that once divided these threats and our responses to them no longer reflect the reality we face. Key US government agencies have recently reorganized to address the new composite threat perception. The Defense Department combined three formerly separate agencies—the On Site Inspection Agency, the Defense Special Weapons Agency, and the Defense Technology Security Agency—to form a new Defense Threat Reduction Agency. ACDA merged into the State Department. The FBI and CIA have formed joint groups to combat WMD proliferation and terrorism. Congress got into the act by forming two new subcommittees, the Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation, and Federal Services of the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee and the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats of the Senate Armed Services Committee. In recent years, Congress passed bills calling for a czar to oversee the convergence of nonproliferation, arms control, and terrorism, and establishing a commission to study the organization of the United States government for these issues. US institutions are adapting to the changing proliferation threat.<sup>30</sup>

Unfortunately, reorganizing the government to reflect today's threat perceptions holds little promise of strengthening nonproliferation or arms control policy, and risks overlooking the reasons for past successes and shortcomings. After all, the scorecard on proliferation is not nearly as bad as it could be, and the security of the United States has never been better. Reorganizing the government might bring some efficiency to the bureaucracy, but will not change the international circumstances that make nonproliferation and arms control necessary.

What is needed is an overarching strategy that applies appropriate means to achieve well-defined nonproliferation and arms control objectives. The hybrid blends of nonproliferation and arms control will not work in every case, and could be counterproductive. Some nonproliferation policies are best advanced through proven nonproliferation methods. For example, strengthening the IAEA's safeguards system to restore its credibility is a top priority that is best achieved by providing the technical, financial, and political support needed to ensure that inspections can detect—and, therefore, deter—NPT cheating. A new inspection protocol backed by the United States could give the IAEA the mandate it needs to detect undeclared activities.<sup>31</sup> But these efforts could be waylaid by burgeoning demands on nonproliferation resources. New agreements, commitments, and treaties should not take precedence over efforts to shore up the supporting structure of the nonproliferation regime.

Progress in US-Russian arms control can be conveyed into nonproliferation gains.<sup>32</sup> However, not all reductions are equal. START II and III envision very significant reductions, but further cuts below START III levels will be difficult to negotiate, especially if Beijing is building up as Washington and Moscow are building down, or if new threats radically change the strategic landscape. Yet demands for denuclearization will not cease. If arms control stalls and demands for disarmament are not met, some NPT parties may threaten to “suspend” their membership in an effort to pressure the United States to make further reductions. Such demands, however, are an insufficient reason to pursue arms control agreements. The only valid justification for new arms control agreements is the enhancement of US security. Without new arms control to demonstrate fidelity to Article VI, nonproliferation must be justified on its merits, as a shared benefit of all parties, not as payment for continued allegiance to the NPT.

The cooperative threat reduction hybrid bridges arms control and nonproliferation in Russia, but is not a good model for relations with other countries, especially China. China may eventually negotiate limits on its nuclear arsenal, as it did by joining the CTBT, but it is unlikely to foreclose its options while issues such as the effect of missile defenses on its deterrent force remain unclear. Beijing's participation in multilateral nonproliferation regimes should not be interpreted as a breakthrough in Sino-US relations, as arms control agree-



ments often were for relations with Moscow. In South Asia, India and Pakistan may eventually find utility in classical arms control to manage aspects of their arms race, but they remain a nonproliferation problem if high-tech exports to Delhi or Islamabad enhance their nuclear weapons or delivery systems. Efforts to nurture emerging deterrent forces there may even skirt Article I of the NPT, which obligates nuclear weapon states “not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any non-nuclear weapons state to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or control over such weapons or explosive devices.” In North Korea, arms control is no substitute for nonproliferation; sooner or later Pyongyang will have to come into compliance with its NPT obligations. Finally, hybrid regimes such as the FMCT and the Trilateral Initiative entail all the costs of arms control and nonproliferation combined, with few of the benefits. Multilateral verification of those agreements should be deferred until more important demands on the same resources, such as strengthened IAEA safeguards, are secured.

Finally, the top priority for arms control remains arms control. In this regard, the National Academy of Sciences 1997 report “The Future of US Nuclear Weapons Policy” and the “Jump-START” proposal elaborated by the Committee on Nuclear Policy both describe arms control and CTR initiatives that could advance US, Russian, and international security interests.<sup>33</sup> Such an ambitious agenda would also go a long way toward satisfying the NNWS thirst for arms control progress. With respect to Article VI linkage, the CTBT remains the top priority. Yet the Clinton administration has not done the heavy political lifting required to gain the Senate’s consent to ratification, and time is running out.<sup>34</sup> Loss of the CTBT would be a double blow for arms control and nonproliferation. This is a full agenda requiring consistent high-level attention and the full concentration of America’s arms control and nonproliferation talents.

Policymakers ordinarily weigh the expected benefits of arms control and nonproliferation policy against other policy objectives such as trade, regional stability, and other political factors. Such a cost-benefit analysis is evident in US relations with Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, and others, where nonproliferation sometimes takes a back seat to other considerations. Choice is the essence of strategy. But there is a price for subor-

inating nonproliferation to other objectives, even when the other objective is arms control.

<sup>1</sup> Brad Roberts and Victor Utgoff, “Counterproliferation: A Mid-Term Assessment.” (Arlington, VA: Institute for Defense Analysis, 1997); William Perry, “US Counterproliferation Efforts: Prevent, Deter, Defend,” in Barry Schneider and William Dowdy, eds., *Pulling Back From the Brink: Reducing and Countering Nuclear Threats* (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1998).

<sup>2</sup> US Senate, Governmental Affairs Committee, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, *Hearings: Global Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction*, October 31, November 1, 1995, and March 13, 20, 22, 27, 1996. These hearings and the subcommittee’s investigation of global WMD terrorism were the origin of the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici domestic preparedness legislation, the first major step toward homeland defense.

<sup>3</sup> The White House, “Remarks by the President on Keeping America Secure for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, at the National Academy of Sciences,” Washington, DC, January 22, 1999; Chuck McCutcheon, “Homeland Defense: Mobilizing Against Terrorism,” *Congressional Quarterly Weekly*, March 6, 1999; Richard Falkenrath et al., *America’s Achilles Heel* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Senate debate on S. 257, the National Missile Defense Act of 1999, *Congressional Record*, March 15, 1999, S2625-S2646. The Senate passed the measure on March 17 by a vote of 97-3.

<sup>5</sup> The 1995 NPT extension conference specifically identified a CTBT as an Article VI requirement. NPT/CONF.1995/32/DEC.2, “Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament,” paragraph 4(a); Tariq Rauf, “Report: The April 1998 NPT PrepCom,” *The Nonproliferation Review* 5 (Winter 1998).

<sup>6</sup> David Hoffman, “Kremlin To Bolster Nuclear Stockpile,” *Washington Post*, April 30, 1999.

<sup>7</sup> “US Commitment to the NPT,” ACDA Fact Sheet, May 8, 1996.

<sup>8</sup> Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, “The Strengthened Review Process for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: A Compendium of Readings” (Monterey, CA: 1998).

<sup>9</sup> Ambassador George F. Kennan to State Department, February 22, 1946, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1946, vol. VI, pp. 696-709.

<sup>10</sup> Jason Ellis, “Nunn-Lugar’s Mid Life Crisis,” *Survival* 39 (Spring 1997); Todd Perry, “Securing Russian Nuclear Materials: The Need for an Expanded US Response,” *The Nonproliferation Review* 6 (Winter 1999).

<sup>11</sup> On Defense Threat Reduction Agency support for international verification regimes, see their website at <<http://www.dtra.mil/inspection>>.

<sup>12</sup> Washington and Moscow have each declared 50 metric tons of excess plutonium and are negotiating transparency arrangements that would be verified by the IAEA. The IAEA already safeguards some excess material at several US locations. Zachary Davis, *Nuclear Weapons: Disposal of Surplus Weapons-Usable Plutonium*, Congressional Research Service [hereinafter, CRS] Report, April 1999.

<sup>13</sup> Testimony of CIA Director George Tenet before the US Senate, Armed Services Committee, Hearing on Current and Projected National Security Threats, February 2, 1999; Shirley Kan, *Chinese Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction: Current Policy Issues*, CRS Issue Brief 92046, February 18, 1999.

<sup>14</sup> Hans Binnendijk and Ronald Montaperto, eds., *Strategic Trends in China* (Washington: National Defense University, 1998).

<sup>15</sup> Patrick Tyler, “As China Threatens Taiwan, It Makes Sure US Listens,” *New York Times*, January 24, 1996.

<sup>16</sup> Zachary Davis, “China’s Nonproliferation Behavior: Boom or Bust for

the Nonproliferation Regime?," *Asian Survey* 35 (June 1995).

<sup>17</sup> NSC Response to Select Committee (Cox Committee) Recommendations, February 2, 1999, unclassified; James Risen and Jeff Gerth, "China Stole Nuclear Secrets For Bombs, US Aides Say," *New York Times*, March 6, 1999; Jeff Gerth and Eric Schmitt, "House Panel Says Chinese Obtained US Arms Secrets," *New York Times*, December 31, 1998.

<sup>18</sup> White House Press Release, "Remarks by President Clinton and President Jiang Zemin, Great Hall of the People," Beijing, China, June 27, 1998; Department of State, Secretary Albright's Press Conference, March 2, 1999.

<sup>19</sup> Barbara Opall-Rome, "Chinese Official Urges Broader, Revised MTCR," *Defense News*, January 25, 1999, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Sandra Blakeslee, "Circling Los Alamos Inquiry: Specter of Science As a Sieve," *New York Times*, March 12, 1999; Nancy Prindle, "The US-China Lab-to-Lab Technical Exchange Program," *The Nonproliferation Review* 5 (Spring-Summer 1998).

<sup>21</sup> Jaswant Singh, "Against Nuclear Apartheid," *Foreign Affairs* 77 (September/October 1998).

<sup>22</sup> Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, CNN "Late Edition," June 14, 1998.

<sup>23</sup> The four benchmarks were derived from the P-5 and G-8 statements on the tests. The benchmarks are that both sides: (1) stop testing and sign and ratify the CTBT; (2) end production of fissile material for weapons and participate constructively in FMCT negotiations; (3) commit not to deploy or test nuclear-capable missiles and exercise restraint in development and storage of weapons and delivery systems; and (4) adopt export controls equivalent to those of the Nuclear Suppliers Guidelines, the Australia Group, and the Missile Technology Control Regime to prevent unauthorized exports.

<sup>24</sup> Joseph Nye, "Nuclear Advice for South Asia," *Washington Post*, November 25, 1998; Devin Hagerty, *The Consequences of Nuclear Proliferation: Lessons from South Asia* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998).

<sup>25</sup> Martin Sieff, "Passage to India: The US Should Consider the Indian Nuclear Tests as Muscle Flexing of a Potential Ally," *National Review*, June 22, 1998; Council on Foreign Relations, Task Force Report, *After the Tests* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1998); Virginia Foran, "The Case For US-Indo High Technology Cooperation," *Survival* 40 (Summer 1998).

<sup>26</sup> Fred Hiatt, "US Efforts to Block Iran Reactor Sale Cause Anger in Moscow," *Washington Post*, March 3, 1995; Reuters, untitled item quoting Iranian President Rafsanjani discussing US support for reactor sales to North Korea, April 7, 1995.

<sup>27</sup> NPT Principles and Objectives, Draft Decision Proposed by the President, paragraph 13, on transferring nuclear fissile material from military to peaceful use, NPT/CONF.1995/L.5, May 9, 1995; IAEA General Conference, Press Release, "Statement on Behalf of the Russian Federation, the United States, and the IAEA," PR 98/18, September 22, 1998.

<sup>28</sup> The IAEA defines a significant quantity as 8 kg of plutonium or 25 kg of highly enriched uranium. Others calculate lower quantities. Department of Energy, "Drawing Back the Curtain of Secrecy," *Restricted Data Declassification Decisions 1946 to the Present*, pg. II-27, number 33.

<sup>29</sup> IAEA, Press Release, "Director General El Baradei Addresses IAEA General Conference," PR 98/17, September 21, 1998.

<sup>30</sup> John Sopko, "The Changing Proliferation Threat," *Foreign Policy* 105 (Winter 1996-97). The Commission to Assess the Organization of the Federal Government to Combat the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction was established by Public Law 104-293, the Intelligence Authorization for FY 1997. Congress also supported the idea of creating a nonproliferation czar in the Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction bill sponsored by Senators Nunn, Lugar, and Domenici included in the Defense Authorization for FY 1997.

<sup>31</sup> "International Safeguards Strengthened," ACDA Fact Sheet, May 15, 1997; John Carlson, Victor Bragin, John Bardsley, and John Hill, "Nuclear Safeguards as an Evolutionary System," *The Nonproliferation Review* 6 (Winter 1999); "Future of Safeguards," *IAEA Bulletin*, December 1997; Zachary Davis, *International Atomic Energy Agency: Strengthen Verification Authority?*, CRS Report 97-571, May 1997.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, Robert Manning, "The Nuclear Age: The Next Chapter," *Foreign Policy* 109 (Winter 1997-98).

<sup>33</sup> National Academy of Sciences, *The Future of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy*, Washington, DC, June 1997; "Jump-START: Retaking the Initiative To Reduce Post-Cold War Nuclear Dangers," *Arms Control Today* 29 (January/February 1999).

<sup>34</sup> Article XIV of the CTBT, "Entry Into Force," includes a requirement that if the treaty has not entered into force three years after its opening for signature, a conference of states that have ratified shall be held to consider measures to accelerate entry into force. The conference is planned for September 1999. Unless the United States ratifies by then, it will not play a leadership role in the conference.