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Transcript

TOWARD A SUCCESSFUL NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE

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WELCOME/MODERATOR:
Deepti Choubey
Deputy Director, Nuclear Policy Program
Carnegie Endowment

SPEAKERS:
Ambassador Susan F. Burk
Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation

Daryl Kimball
Executive Director
Arms Control Association

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DEEPTI CHOUBEY: All right, good afternoon. My name is Deepti Choubey, and I'm the deputy director for the nuclear policy program here at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. And it is my honor to welcome you here today, to our event, "Toward a Successful NPT Review Conference." In about a month's time, nearly 190 countries who signed up to the nuclear nonproliferation treaty will meet for the eighth time at the United Nations in New York to assess how well the provisions of the treaty have been implemented, and to chart a path forward.

The purpose of today's event is to help people interested in the review conference really understand what is at stake and how to interpret the debates that will ensue, and what developments to watch for. To that end, we are using a slightly different format for today's event. I'll provide some up-front context about the review conference and why we should care. We'll then hear from Ambassador Susan Burk, who is the special representative for the president for nuclear nonproliferation.

She'll provide us with some insight into the United States' goals for the review conference, and some of the opportunities and challenges she has encountered in her extensive consultations with other states in the run-up to the review conference. I know you're all eager to ask her questions, so immediately after she speaks, we'll open up the floor for a few questions. And then we'll proceed to Daryl Kimball, who is the executive director for the Arms Control Association.

Although a lot of the discussion in New York will be organized around the three pillars of the nonproliferation treaty, which are nonproliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, we can expect several contentious debates. And we're really lucky to have Daryl here today, where his role is to walk us through the landscape of these key issues to watch, different points of view, and where there might be some common ground.

After Daryl, I will then just close with a few final comments about how to measure the success of the review conference, and will then open the discussion up to Q&A from all of you, again. So again, a little unorthodox, but we're just trying to make sure we meet everybody's needs, and make sure this event is as valuable to you as possible.

So in terms of some basic context, I want to make sure we're all on the same page about what the review conference is and what it isn't. A lot of attention has been paid to President Obama's speech in Prague last year. And both supporters and critics of the agenda he's laid out pick and choose from parts of his speech.

In re-reading it recently, my own take is that the president was essentially making an argument for strengthening the overall nonproliferation regime. There are many ways in which to do that, and most of the components of that agenda are necessary and mutually reinforcing if we're serious about strengthening the rules that govern international security as it relates to nuclear weapons and nuclear energy cooperation. So how does the review conference fit in? For me, the upcoming review conference is an opportunity to do exactly that, which is strengthen the nonproliferation regime.

But we shouldn't make the mistake of casting this once-every-five-year event as a make-or-break moment for the regime. We should also not make the mistake of thinking that the review conference is a place to solve the problems of Iranian noncompliance for its obligations under the NPT. It is, however, a chance for states to agree on the consequences for states that are noncompliant and choose to leave the NPT.

And I think it's really important that we understand these distinctions about what the review conference can and cannot accomplish. And we should also, in terms of understanding how the review conference relates to the broader regime, we should recognize that the nonproliferation treaty is a cornerstone of the broader nonproliferation regime, which is a set of norms, rules, institutions and practices to prevent both the spread of nuclear weapons and the material and know-how necessary to acquire them.

But the regime itself operates, day-to-day, within other institutions, fora, and is embedded in the relations between states, in policies they may choose to make unilaterally, bilaterally or multilaterally. In this way, the nonproliferation regime extends beyond the review conference. The conference and its process is not without its flaws. There are serious limitations that can hinder its effective operations.

And these are, for instance, institutional deficits where there is no standing secretariat, substantive loopholes, such as a lack of enforcement provisions, and the opportunity for procedural politicking. And this primarily comes about because of universal consensus rules that have been in practice and that can actually facilitate spoiling behavior. And we'll talk about that a little bit later on.

But if you think about these limitations, I think it leads any of us to ask, well, what is this really about and why should we care? And for me, there are a few immediate answers. One is actually a political one, where there are some people who will look at the review conference as another chance to see how well President Obama is implementing the agenda he set out last April. But to see the review conference in such narrow terms is to ignore the president's own words in Prague, where he stated, "We cannot succeed in this endeavor alone, but we can lead it; we can start it."

And in this way, I think nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states should realize that the success and failure of this conference depends on their own positions as much as that of the United States. And I certainly think that the United States is indispensable for success – that a forward-leaning position is probably a necessary, but not sufficient, requirement for success, and that we actually need all states to take up the joint endeavor.

So in terms of what I think is at stake at this review conference, I boil it down to issues of equity. And what I mean by that is that, for nuclear weapons states and Iran's neighbors, there are doubts about the security benefits of the regime. This will hinder further steps towards nuclear disarmament as long as there are concerns that cheating is occurring within the regime. For other states, faith in the equity of the regime is what hangs in the balance. And it's worth noting that the review conference is one opportunity for the vast majority of states party to the treaty to voice their concerns about its implementation.

They are otherwise disenfranchised from the other decision-making bodies of the regime. And in my own view, I think the future of the nonproliferation regime really depends on decisions that these non-nuclear weapons states are going to make, you know, independent of their legal obligations. And as such, I think it's worth us engaging them in one of the few forums that they deem legitimate.

So with all this in mind, I think the review conference is an opportunity to restore faith in the essential benefits of the NPT, and I think that restoration can happen by taking some relatively small steps, but I think they'll go a long way. And I'll elaborate on that further when we talk about measures for success.

So in terms of a few formalities, you have complete bios of all the speakers in your handouts. And what I'll just say about our two terrific speakers today is that Susan Burk has had a long and distinguished career, and one of her strengths, as the current leader of American efforts regarding the NPT review conference is that this is not her

first time around. And I think she has the battle scars from previous review conferences, and needless to say, this is not her first rodeo. And I think she'll be really effective, come May.

Daryl Kimball is the executive director of the Arms Control Association. He's a tireless advocate for strengthening the nonproliferation regime. And he's also heavily involved in the Arms Control Association's premier publication, Arms Control Today. I strongly recommend it as required reading in the field. And if you look at even this month's issue, it features an interview with Susan. So hopefully, if you step outside, you can get copies of that.

But I also want to particularly thank Susan for taking the time to come here today, while this is clearly a critical window of activity in the run-up to the review conference. And Susan, all I can tell you is that there were so many people who RSVP'd for this event that we actually had to close the registration. And from our last count, there are over 25 foreign governments represented, over 100 experts, and there are 25 media outlets covering this event. So clearly, everyone is here to hear from both you and Daryl. So without further ado, let me pass over to Susan, who will share with us the United States' perspective.

AMBASSADOR SUSAN BURK: Thank you. You'll have to bear with me. I have to – I found that progressives don't work well with lights, and I get very tangled up in my remarks. I'm a little bit overwhelmed being on this side of the room, because I have spent so many hours on the other side of the room. And so this is really an honor to be here with Deepti, from Carnegie and Daryl Kimball from the Arms Control Association, to talk to you about the NPT review conference.

I want to thank Carnegie for hosting this conference about the eighth NPT review conference, which is going to open in just a little over five weeks from now in New York. And when I say that, I start to feel like I have a rash coming on. (Laughter.) At the outset, let me stress that the U.S. is not approaching the impending NPT review conference in any business-as-usual spirit, and those who've heard me talk about that, I think, can vouch for that.

President Obama has put a strengthened NPT at the center of American nonproliferation diplomacy. And as I will note later in my comments, the United States is taking a series of steps to help achieve that goal.

But I use the word "help" here very deliberately. The U.S. cannot realize the vision of the NPT on its own. It takes all parties working together, all of us setting aside stale debates and perspectives that have too often led to gridlock.

The history of NPT review conferences convincingly demonstrates that when there is political will, the review conferences are successful. As a long-time veteran of NPT debates, I firmly believe that now is the moment to rise to the opportunity placed before us by the Obama administration's posture on the NPT.

Towards this end, I have been very busy engaging NPT parties to find out exactly how to do that since I was confirmed last June. And in the past months, I've heard a broad range of views on the NPT itself and on the upcoming review conference.

And since I assumed my present position, my Washington colleagues and I have met with representatives of more than 70 NPT parties. I thought for sure we were up to 100; it certainly felt that. But many of these foreign counterparts and colleagues we've met with multiple times to really engage in a real conversation about the issues.

All of the meetings have been valuable in gauging the priorities and the concerns of other parties and of course the meetings have enabled us to share our government's perspectives as well. One common view expressed to us that transcends whatever differences may exist among the parties is the firm conviction that the NPT is critical to the maintenance of regional and international peace and security. This certainly is the view that the United States strongly shares.

The review conference will be the occasion for all NPT parties to focus on our common goals and reinvigorate our commitment to the principles and basic bargain of the treaty. I see it as sort of renewing our vows. The core principles of the NPT are embedded in the treaty's three mutually reinforcing pillars that I know from all of you current and former colleagues and experts, you know what they are: nonproliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

There appears to be broad agreement among the parties that the 2010 review conference should carry out a balanced review of all three pillars. And the U.S. is looking forward to working with our partners towards such a balanced review and in charting a course forward that will reinvigorate the treaty's role as the cornerstone of the international nonproliferation regime.

Let me say upfront that the United States is not approaching the NPT review conference as an end in itself but as a critical milestone in the broader international effort to strengthen the international nonproliferation regime. Our efforts in May, if we're successful, can contribute valuable momentum to our collective efforts at the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and at the United Nations in New York. And that should be the key goal.

Over the past years, there have been significant developments on the disarmament front that we expect the review conference to address. In recognition of the NPT's vision in April of last year, Presidents Obama and Medvedev committed their support for achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Last Friday, President Obama announced that after a year of intense negotiations, the United States and Russia have agreed to the most comprehensive arms control agreement in nearly two decades and that he will sign this new agreement in Prague on April 8th.

The new START treaty will limit U.S. and Russian deployed strategic nuclear weapons to significantly lower levels, approximately 30 percent lower than the upper limits of the 2002 Moscow Treaty. It also will significantly reduce the permitted number of deployed missiles and heavy bombers by more than 50 percent from the original START agreement. And it includes an effective verification regime that will help the United States and Russia build trust and reduce the risks of misunderstanding and surprises. In his statement, President Obama clearly described this important development as an effort to uphold our own commitments under the NPT.

We also are in the final stages of the third congressionally mandated nuclear posture review. And while I cannot speak to the details of the report prior to its release by the president, I can assure you that the NPR will meet the president's commitment to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our security and further strengthen the nuclear nonproliferation regime as a whole.

The U.S. is taking other concrete steps as well. We're preparing to seek the advice and consent of the United States Senate to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty. And in the meantime, the U.S. is continuing its nuclear testing moratorium, in place since 1992, and we call on other states publicly to declare moratoria of their own.

And the U.S. also is committed to pursuing a verifiable ban on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other explosive devices: a fissile material cut-off treaty. Last year, the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva agreed on a program of work that included a negotiating mandate for a verifiable FMCT.

But the CD remains unable to move forward, so the U.S. is working with others in the CD to move the negotiations forward on the basis that we agreed last year. And we've sent in ambassador to Geneva, Laura Kennedy, to lead our efforts there. In the interim, we are continuing our decades-long moratorium on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons and we are calling on others to join us in this moratorium.

The disarmament agenda laid out by President Obama is ambitious and the political will is there. The United States and the other nuclear-weapons states do bear a special responsibility for pursuing nuclear disarmament. But the non-nuclear weapons states share this responsibility under Article 6, and in addition, they can contribute by working to prevent further proliferation and by helping to create the international conditions for nuclear disarmament efforts to succeed.

So onto the nonproliferation pillar. We recognize that progress on disarmament reinforces the nonproliferation pillar. But it is also the case that strong nonproliferation norms, what I've been calling a robust and reliable nonproliferation treaty and regime, must be upheld to create the environment needed for the nuclear-weapons states to make progress on disarmament consistent with our commitments under Article 6. In this regard, the review conference must be used as an opportunity to strengthen the implementation of the nonproliferation pillar, as well.

The burden for providing the necessary assurance to the international community that nuclear energy programs are in fact solely peaceful falls to the IAEA as it carries out its safeguards mission.

In addition to the comprehensive IAEA safeguards agreements NPT parties are required to have enforced, the Additional Protocol has added a new and important tool to the nonproliferation toolbox. The Additional Protocol serves as a valuable confidence-building measure to the international community because with the protocol enforced, the IAEA is more able to verify the absence of clandestine nuclear activities as part of an incipient nuclear-weapons program.

Currently, 95 IAEA member states, including the United States, have Additional Protocols enforced. And the IAEA director general has set a goal of 100 APs in force by the time of the review conference. This demonstrates a growing consensus that the international protocol represents the new international safeguards standard.

With a growing interest we're witnessing in civil nuclear technology, the IAEA's considerable responsibilities in promoting the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear energy have grown as well. The United States believes that the IAEA must be provided with the resources and authorities that it needs to carry out all of its mandates. And we are prepared to work with our partners to meet that goal.

The international community also must work together to encourage full compliance with the NPT and to address noncompliance. As President Obama said in Prague, there must be real and immediate consequences for countries caught breaking the rules. The review conference is an opportunity to address this very real challenge constructively and honestly.

For example, the United States together with a number of other countries has been considering how the treaty parties might address the issue of abuse of the NPT's withdrawal provision, specifically, how to dissuade a party from withdrawing from the treaty after having violated its NPT obligations.

We contemplate no change to the treaty, no amendment or abridgement of the right to withdraw. But we and many others believe the parties have a stake in discouraging countries from believing they can use the withdrawal provision as a way to evade penalties for treaty violations.

Some progress towards this end was made last year with the passage of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1887, which affirms that states will be held responsible for any NPT violations committed prior to their withdrawal.

And then finally, peaceful uses. From the time of President Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" address at the United Nations in 1953, the United States has supported international cooperation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. And it is this call for cooperation that underpins the NPT's third pillar.

The IAEA's core mission from its funding in 1957 is to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity. The U.S. supports the IAEA in that mission and remains the largest contributor over the history of the agency to IAEA technical cooperation programs.

Over the years, the use of nuclear energy and radioactive materials in medicine, agriculture, mining, health and other industries has grown tremendously. Nuclear science is vitally important to the continued social and economic development of many countries. This pillar of the NPT is more important today than ever, however, in light of renewed interest in nuclear power as a response to international concern about climate change, energy security and the promotion of sustainable development.

In Prague last year, President Obama called for a new framework for civil nuclear cooperation including an international fuel bank so that countries could access peaceful without increasing the risk of proliferation. He made clear that this must be the right of every nation that renounces nuclear weapons, especially developing countries embarking on peaceful programs.

Regardless of the ways states choose to pursue the development of nuclear energy, the NPT requires that they do so in conformity with their nonproliferation obligations. So without a strong nonproliferation commitment, the spread of sensitive nuclear technology would be imprudent and pose a threat to international peace and security.

When he addressed the United Nations General Assembly last year, President Obama announced a new era of engagement with the world by the United States. He spoke too of shared responsibility. All NPT parties in our view share equally in the responsibility to strengthen the norms of the treaty.

And the eighth NPT review conference in May provides an opportunity for the parties collectively to take stewardship of our shared responsibilities, to look beyond our differences and to advance our common goals for the treaty. The 2010 review conference can contribute to our shared efforts to strengthen the NPT and restore confidence in its authority.

Again, we're looking forward to working with our treaty partners to try to identify areas where agreement on concrete measures to reinforce the global regime can be reached now and on areas where further work and deliberation are needed so that agreement might be possible in the future.

The U.S. is continuing to work with our treaty partners. We will work with them for the next five weeks up to the last day and then we will have four intense months – four intense weeks in New York. But our goal is to revalidate the treaty's vital contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. Thank you.

MS. CHOUBEY: Great. Thank you, Susan. (Applause.) So what we'll do before we hand it over to Daryl is if there are people who have a few burning questions for Susan, we'll take that.

AMB. BURK: I want the easy questions. (Laughter.) I don't want the burning questions.

MS. CHOUBEY: Yeah. Okay. So softballs.

AMB. BURK: Nothing on fire please. (Laughter.)

MS. CHOUBEY: If there's anybody who has immediate questions, we'll take a few right now. Okay, there in the back. And just – please wait for the microphone and please identify yourself and your affiliation.

Q: Keunsam Kim from Voice of America, Korean service. I want to ask you to elaborate your specific agenda on North Korea in this upcoming NPT review and your call on this. Thank you. Bye.

AMB. BURK: All right. Well, I can't elaborate a specific agenda for North Korea. I'm not in a position to do that. I think the functional agenda, really, is the issue of full compliance and I might add universal adherence to the NPT, which is a long-held U.S. objective.

MS. CHOUBEY: Okay. Any other questions? I thought I saw another hand. Yes, you, sir. And just wait for the microphone and then we'll take you back there. And please identify yourself.

Q: Guo Pingchang (sp) from Xinhua News Agency of China. Mrs. Ambassador, my question is what's the Obama administration's policy toward Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and India? Why is it that Washington is going to push the four countries to join the NPT regime?

AMB. BURK: Well, if the question is why are we going to push them to join the NPT, I don't think we're pushing countries to join the NPT. North Korea was a party to the NPT as you know and they announced that they were withdrawing. And the United States has been engaged in negotiations with partners to see if North Korea can be persuaded to come back into full compliance with the treaty. So that's a separate case.

The other three states have never joined the treaty. And I think, as I said, the goal – the U.S. has supported the goal for a very long time of universal adherence to the NPT. We haven't abandoned that goal, but I think we're down to three cases that are not similar and we have to deal with each country on a case-by-case basis.

I would just suggest that one way to bring those countries closer to the nonproliferation norm is through the FMCT negotiations in Geneva. That is a negotiation that would impact the programs of all states – whether in the treaty or outside of the treaty – who are producing fissile material outside of safeguards. So that is a real opportunity there to begin to close the gap between those in and out of the treaty.

MS. CHOUBEY: And there was a question – well, actually, Elaine, I'll take you. And then – and Paul – and then we'll come to you. Sorry.

Q: Thank you. Elaine Grossman with Global Security Newswire. Madame Ambassador, I wonder if you could help us understand how the U.S.-India reprocessing agreement that was just announced last week as part of the overall 123 agreement fits with President Obama's objectives – his longer-term objectives – to end the production of fissile material. Thank you. And also how that might play – your expectations for how that might play during the upcoming conference.

AMB. BURK: That's a good question. For specifics on the agreement, on the U.S.-India agreement, there are other people far more expert in this than I. So I'm not even going to wade into the details. My understanding is this agreement that was announced last week was part of the larger agreement. And this has always been seen as a unique agreement – not a precedent for other agreements.

And the goal there also was to, again, narrow the gap between states outside of the treaty and inside of the treaty and try to bring the Indians closer to the goal – the principles that the U.S. supports – the nonproliferation principles. And I think we will be prepared to discuss it in New York and to describe the thinking behind it and describe its implementation. But the right experts will be in New York to do that. I'm not the right one.

MS. CHOUBEY: Okay. And Paul Kerr right there.

Q: Thank you. Paul Kerr from the Congressional Research Service. I was wondering if you could explain the U.S. position on various proposals to discuss establishing a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East.

AMB. BURK: No. (Laughter.) I can't discuss proposals – there are proposals that were – there are several papers, I think, that were tabled during the preparatory process. And so I would draw your attention to those. Let me just say in commenting on the issue of the Middle East nuclear-weapons-free zone:

There is a resolution that many here are very familiar with that was adopted in 1995 that was co-sponsored by the three NPT depositaries and it was a resolution on the Middle East. And among its operative paragraphs was a call to establish a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear-weapons-free zone, in the Middle East.

We have been making very clear that we support that resolution and we support the objectives of that resolution. And we are working very hard with partners in the region and elsewhere to try to see if we can come up with some concrete measures that would begin to implement this resolution or at least move it forward in some direction. But I can't comment on those discussions right now, just other than to say that we're engaged in discussions and we do understand the importance of this issue.

MS. CHOUBEY: Great. So before we – I think there are probably some other questions there, but why don't we do this – let's have Daryl – now that we're talking about proposals – Daryl, if you could kind of talk about and unwrap for people what the issues are and then we'll proceed with the panel.

DARYL KIMBALL: Well, thank you very much, Deepti. It's an honor and a pleasure to be here on the same podium with both of you. And I would just note that I think we're making progress in one respect when women are the majority on the panel on the subject. (Laughter.) That's a very good sign of progress. We'll see if that translates into results in New York. (Laughter.) As I'm sure it will.

MS. : Oh. You should have just stopped – (inaudible, cross talk).

MR. KIMBALL: I should have just stopped where I was? (Laughter.) Well, I now have high expectations. I have very high expectations. Well, as Ambassador Burk said, President Obama's speech in Prague last year marks a shift away from some of the views of the previous administration on nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation.

And I think a return back to a more traditional U.S. position and that has created new possibilities for progress at the upcoming rev-con. We should just recall that in the just weeks after that speech, the preparatory committee meeting in New York agreed to an agenda for work for the 2010 review conference for the first time in a decade.

But at the same time, the states parties at the PrepCom meeting could not agree on recommendations for the review conference. And there are a lot of recommendations for the review conference. There's no shortage of recommendations.

And one response to that from the Arms Control Association that I just want to draw your attention to is a report that we just released yesterday that documents the many proposals by governments and some non-governmental entities to strengthen the Nonproliferation Treaty that our former Scoville Peace Fellow, Cole Harvey, wrote for us. He's now at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies. So I'd recommend that to you as a guide to the many ideas. But our survey of the proposals, I think, makes it clear that a majority of the 180-plus states do agree on a substantial number of practical measures to strengthen and update the treaty.

And if certain difficult issues are handled adroitly and smartly and if the United States and a representative group of states provide leadership and voice support for a common set of key objectives in a balanced way, on all three pillars, this conference can come together around an action plan to strengthen and update the treaty. Now, ideally, that action plan would be part of a final conference document. If that's not possible, the success of the conference and support for the action plan might otherwise be measured and expressed through a conference president's summary report. There are other mechanisms and, I think, Deepti is going to discuss some of that in a little bit.

Now, from my perspective there are five related sets of issues that the states parties are going to have to address. Many of these Ambassador Burk has touched upon and these must be addressed properly if there is to be agreement, or near-agreement, on an action plan to strengthen the treaty. Some of these are old issues. I think four of these could be classified as old issues. One is relatively new.

So the first set I would call – the first set of issues – Iran, North Korea, Syria and issues relating to withdrawal. And as Ambassador Burk said, one of the themes and issues discussed is going to be the concern of many states that there is a danger that some states may withdraw from the treaty without penalty, without consequences. And the North Korean situation in 2003 triggered a lot of discussion about this, beginning in 2003 and 2004.

And a lot of proposals have been put forward in this regard. Reaching agreement on an approach is going to be difficult, in no small part because Iran will likely try to block agreement on any such proposal, especially meaningful proposals. But I think it's very important that states at least try to agree to address, without delay – or agree to address without delay – any notice of withdrawal from the treaty and convene a special session of states parties, and to affirm that states remain responsible under international law for violations of the NPT committed prior to its withdrawal. Language along those lines was in Resolution 1887.

Now, unlike the U.S. effort at the 2005 NPT review conference to call out noncompliant states by name, I think we're going to see a different approach this time around. And I think we're hearing a little bit of that from

Susan today. That approach, in 2005, in my view and in the view of others, provoked Iran. It made it more complicated to reach agreement on key issues. And I think this time around, leading states are going to take a more country-neutral approach and I think that's wise.

However, with respect to this set of issues, action before or during the rev-con by the Security Council to approve tougher targeted sanctions against Iran could make it even more likely that Iran and some of its allies would try to block agreement on this issue; that is, the issue of withdrawal and other issues at the review conference. But with Lebanon serving as the president of the Security Council during the month of May, many believe it's unlikely that the Security Council is going to take a decision, actually, during the review conference.

Now, the second category of issues has to do with peaceful nuclear uses and safeguards. And several proposals have been advanced in recent years to provide nuclear fuel, or guarantees of nuclear fuel supplies, to states that meet basic nonproliferation criteria as an incentive for them not to pursue their own indigenous enrichment or processing capabilities. However, many developing states are concerned that these multilateral approaches to the fuel cycle, as they're called, could limit their future options and, generally, they do not embrace this approach.

So there's likely to be much discussion at this review conference, but little progress in reaching an agreement on this particular set of issues. And I think at most the states parties may agree to and should at least agree to continue to work together on multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle, including assurances of nuclear fuel supply, to help provide reliable fuel supplies while minimizing the risk of proliferation of sensitive fuel cycle technologies.

Now, on this issue also, Iran is going to be looking for ways to avoid being isolated. And it will, in its rhetoric and in its diplomacy, try to equate its pursuit of sensitive fuel cycle activities in defiance of UN Security Council resolutions with the right under Article 4 of the NPT on peaceful uses of nuclear energy. But it's crucial, particularly at this conference at this time, for the non-nuclear weapons state majority not to play into Iran's strategy.

And I believe that it's important at this conference – this is what, I think, people mean when they say leadership from others, other than the United States, is important – it's important for states, especially in the nonaligned group and other groupings, to urge Iran to respond fully to the IAEA's ongoing investigation, as a confidence-building measure to halt its enrichment activities and to engage in diplomacy with the P-5 and other countries to reach a resolution to the crisis.

Now, Iran's safeguards transgressions and the ongoing investigation of Syria's nuclear program by the IAEA have highlighted, again, of course, the importance of strengthening safeguards. And there's a long history of NPT states parties looking for ways to strengthen safeguards to avoid diversion of civil activities for military purposes. The key issue is going to be about what the conference says about the Additional Protocol and the universalization of the Additional Protocol.

And the basic fault line – and I'm summarizing a great deal of sophisticated, nuanced speeches and ideas about the topic – is that while many Western and developing countries support the Additional Protocol as the verification standard, developing states generally oppose making it a legally binding obligation. And so this conference, again, is unlikely going to bridge these divergent points of view. State parties should at least try to agree to make further progress towards universalization of the Additional Protocol, with the goal of doing so, I would say, by 2015, which I think is a reasonable timeline to get to the universalization goal.

Now, on nuclear disarmament, the third basket of issues: Until recently, at least, a majority of countries in the non-nuclear weapons state majority felt that the five original nuclear-armed states were not moving quickly enough to fulfill their NPT pledges to eliminate nuclear weapons and their other NPT-related disarmament commitments, such as the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty. And the continuing possession of nuclear weapons by these states, reinforced by lackluster progress over the last decade, has, I think, clearly eroded the willingness of certain states in the non-nuclear weapons majority to agree to strengthened measures for the treaty.

Now, the conclusion of the new START agreement is an important diplomatic achievement for the United States and Russia and it puts the two sides back on track towards verifiable reductions in strategic arsenals. Yet, as I think this audience clearly knows, there are other portions of those two countries' nuclear-weapons stockpiles that remain. There's more work to be done in the non-deployed warhead category, in the sub-strategic warhead category. And that is going to be a point that, I'm sure, many states raise at this conference.

And furthermore, the U.S. government's change of heart to support the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty is going to be welcomed and should be welcomed by many states – President Obama's commitment to immediately and aggressively pursue reconsideration of the CTBT – but clearly since his remarks on April 5 in 2009 on the CTBT, there has been little tangible and visible progress on this front here in the United States as well as in Beijing. And China has been promising to act on the CTBT for some time but has failed to follow through with concrete action.

So frustration on the CTBT is understandably high. And on another front, while President Obama has pledged to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. national security strategy and may soon announce exactly how he's going to do that in the Nuclear Posture Review as soon as next week, there are other nuclear-weapons states – the other nuclear-weapons states certainly could do more on this front to reduce the role and number of their nuclear weapons.

So we're going to be hearing a lot at this conference about disarmament, about some of the progress, about some of the disappointment with the progress. And this time around I think the P-5 certainly have a better story to tell than in 2005, but there is clearly more to be done. And there are some things that they can do to address these concerns and issues up front in a proactive manner.

There are several statements that the P-5 might make together ahead of the conference to boost momentum ahead of the meeting. For instance, Presidents Obama and Medvedev could announce their readiness to resume consultations on the next round of nuclear arms reductions covering other types of nuclear warheads.

Obama and Medvedev could also invite the world's other recognized nuclear arms states to engage in a high-level dialogue to make their nuclear weapons capabilities more transparent, to create greater confidence and to move toward the eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons.

Those words I plagiarized. Those words actually come from President Obama in comments that he made in September of 2008 during the presidential campaign as a goal of his administration.

And I think it's very important and I hope this will be done also – that all five nuclear-weapons states reaffirm their so-called unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. An unequivocal undertaking statement was very pivotal in the success of the 2000 review conference.

So there may be some other areas where the state's parties can agree on common steps on disarmament, encouraging all states to reduce the roles and missions of their nuclear weapons. To urge the nuclear-weapons

states not to increase the size of their arsenals and to undertake concrete action to eliminate verifiably all types of nuclear weapons; to call upon all states to refrain from nuclear test explosions for any purpose and to undertake all necessary measures to secure the entry into force of the CTBT by a date certain. I would suggest 2015 is a reasonable date to aim for.

And on fissile material, given the problems at the Conference on Disarmament on moving forward with the negotiations, this conference could conceivably urge all states to halt production of fissile material for weapons purposes pending the conclusion of a verifiable FMCT.

And there are other ideas on disarmament that have been put forward by various states including a very good paper put forward by the Japanese and the Australian governments just less than two weeks ago on these issues.

So to be clear nuclear disarmament in the context of the NPT is not an end unto itself. These disarmament steps not only would – and commitments – not only enhance the prospects of strengthening the NPT in the nonproliferation and compliance areas of the treaty, but each of these steps are clearly in the national security interests of the nuclear-weapons states themselves.

Now, there was a question from the crowd about another key issue at this conference. And I think the fourth key issue is going to be the extent to which states at this conference advance the cause of the Middle East nuclear-weapons-free zone. Lack of progress on this issue could be a major impediment for progress in other areas at this conference. The treaty was extended in 1995 in part on the promise to make progress on the Middle East zone.

Egypt has, as Ambassador Burk said, put forward I think three working papers at each of the three past preparatory committee meetings proposing specific steps to move in this direction. Some of these proposals, frankly, are designed clearly to make a point about Israel, the non-NPT state in the region. But there are other very pragmatic and reasonable ideas that the Egyptians put forward that I think provide the basis for agreement.

And what I would specifically offer as the way forward on this is visible and early U.S. support for tangible steps toward a Middle East nuclear-weapons-free zone such as the naming of a special envoy by the revcon to convene states to discuss the matter at a conference to be held at a later time. That is critical, I think, for progress on that issue.

It's particularly important, mind you, because Egypt is ahead of the nonaligned at the moment and will be able to organize a great deal of support from its colleagues.

Now, there is a fifth issue which I'd like to highlight, which is not often on the list of issues relating to the NPT – and that's because it is a relatively new issue that has disrupted some of the basic, fundamental principles of the NPT regime – and that is the exemption for nuclear trades with India that was consummated in 2008 with the Nuclear Suppliers Group decision to change its guidelines barring civil trade with states that don't have comprehensive safeguards.

And as a non-NPT member with nuclear weapons, India does not have comprehensive safeguards. And so I'm sure that Ambassador Burk in her consultations has heard at least a little bit about this. And this is going to surely come up at the revcon at least in the private discussions in the wonderful basement rooms in the United Nations.

And while the damage from this deal, much of it has already been inflicted, I think the United States and other key states can make some statements and support language that mitigates the damage and guards against further erosion of key NPT principles.

And I should just add that – why does this matter to many states? It matters – and this has offended many NPT states parties because it extends to a non-NPT state the peaceful nuclear use benefits that have been reserved so far only for those states that meet their nonproliferation obligations.

Now, what could the United States do? We should recall that when the NSG approved the exemption on September 6, 2008, the NSG statement said the basis for the India exemption includes India's continued adherence to the several nonproliferation pledges it made in July 2005 and on September 5th, including continued observance of its nuclear test moratorium.

Now, India rejects this linkage between the exemption and those – the direct linkage and their commitments. The United States could reassure NPT states parties that this is an anomalous exemption; this is a one-time exemption – in that there would be penalties if India did not respect those nonproliferation obligations by making it clear that any nuclear test explosion by any state would lead to the termination of nuclear trade by the United States with that country that conducted a nuclear test explosion.

And I think it's important to remember that Sen. Barack Obama held his position when this was being debated in the Senate. On September – November the 16th, 2006, he said – and I quote – in a colloquy with Sen. Lugar: "In the event of a future nuclear test by the government of India, nuclear power reactor fuel and equipment sales, nuclear technology cooperation would terminate," unquote.

I think NPT states parties should consider adopting similar language that reaffirms that nuclear testing anywhere is a serious threat to international security and calls on states parties to suspend nuclear cooperation with any state that conducts a nuclear test explosion for any reason or violates its safeguards agreements.

So those are some thoughts about what the challenges are going to be, what some of the potential solutions are. I have been cruising through a vast amount of material here. There are many issues, for the sake of time, I haven't tried to cover. I'm sure these are going to come up in the Q&A. But I think there is an opportunity at this conference, despite the cynicism that pervades these NPT discussions, despite the fact that progress occurs slowly. That this time, with the right leadership, a sufficient number of states can come together on an action plan that helps advance and update and strengthen the treaty at a critical moment in history. Thank you.

MS. CHOUBEY: Thank you, Daryl. Before we open up the floor to questions, I just wanted to provide some further thoughts about, you know, at the end of May, how do we come to a determination about whether this, what I call, multilateralism exercise was successful or not? And what I think about is, what do you do the day after the review conference? And what can states do to prevent declarations that the regime is failing?

And the traditional measure of success has been what we call a universal consensus final declaration, and what that means is not majority-plus-one, or even more than that, but it's, in fact, every single state needs to agree to this final declaration. And in the past, that has happened, sometimes, but it's also been very difficult. And that's what leads to creating the conditions for what we call spoiling behavior, which is where one state can just stand up and say, nope, I don't support it, and then that scuttles the adoption of such a declaration.

And my personal view is that, yes, it would be great to get a substantive, progressive final declaration. But my assessment is that too much time has been lost, particularly in the last five years. And this is to come back to a

point that Susan made, which is review conferences reflect. They're milestones. They reflect what has come before. And I think it is naïve and overreaching to think that just because, yes, there is this new American administration with a president who has this vision and who is aggressively pursuing it – that, that's what makes the different. I actually don't think it does.

And my hope is that states will not repeat the mistake of the 2008 preparatory committee meeting in Geneva, where they just quite literally were waiting around for a change in administration. And I think that should be an indication of, kind of, how much time has been lost, and where there is a conceptual problem, again, about who is responsible for success here. I mean, success really does – you know, in an arena where any one state can object, that also means that every single state has a responsibility for success.

And I think – I'm hoping that states have woken up to understanding that responsibility come May. But in terms of, you know, what can be reasonably accomplished, I think it's going to take really extraordinary measures at the head-of-state level of bridge some of the fundamental disagreements between and among critical states. And I think one opportunity is coming up in just a few weeks, when President Obama hosts the nuclear security summit.

And of course, the summit doesn't have anything to do with – or it's not directly related to the review conference, but what it is, is an opportunity for the president to speak to key leaders on the margins of the summit. And so that will either be whispering in ears, or perhaps a little bit of arm-twisting. But I think it's going to be one last, good effort to try to say, can we find some common ground here? What can we all do to make sure that the day after the review conference, people see that there is positive momentum in place for further strengthening the regime?

So with that, let me just give you a few thoughts I've had about, you know, short of a final consensus declaration, what else we should be able to point to and what you should all look for, as measures of success. And part of my answer comes from realizing that the day-to-day operations of the regime occur through other mechanisms, right? It happens in the Nuclear Suppliers Group; it happens in the IAEA board of governors; it happens in, sometimes, the U.N. Security Council; sometimes, in theory, in the Conference on Disarmament, although we hope in practice soon.

But another part of the answer comes from, again, this idea of, each state has something to contribute to the perception of whether there is momentum, and whether the regime has vitality or not. So I think that one of the beauty – one of the things that are beautiful about the nonproliferation regime – it is this multi-element, multi-issue agenda, and that gives countries opportunities to act by themselves or in groups.

And by this, I mean specifically a few things. So one is, they can choose to have the political will to elevate the president of the review conference's summary or statement as guidance, after the review conference. So Daryl had touched on this before. That can be a guideline that gets us, at least from the end of the review conference to the next preparatory committee meeting, where states can say, you know what, everybody's short of a handful, or a few states agreed, broadly, to these ideas in the discussion. Why don't we use that as guidelines?

They can choose to do that. One caveat, though, I will make about this is, I actually think the review process itself needs some improvements. What we've seen from the last PrepComs is that it takes – you know, they're supposed to actually do more than approve the agenda. They're supposed to engage substantive issues. And it just doesn't happen. And I think that's a problem, because then it basically pushes off all of those hard discussions to the four weeks at the U.N.

So I think improving the process could help. And to that extent, there are a few proposals out there. And one is actually a Canadian proposal that's been recently floated. And they assert that it's a proposal that will make the process more efficient – it will actually decrease the cost of the review process – and currently, it enjoys diverse support. And so those kinds of proposals, I actually think should be looked at, particularly if we have an eye towards 2015, which is the next review conference.

But other steps, I think, that would show a positive momentum for action afterwards are a few things. One is a coordinated P5 statement. I understand that those efforts are in the works and – I'm sorry, P5 is the permanent members of the Security Council and the acknowledged nuclear-weapons states under the NPT. In my interviews with non-nuclear weapons states, and particularly those who are critical non-nuclear weapons states in the Non-Aligned Movement, they've said that, actually, this is a very important signal and they would see it as a mark of progress. So I think that's one thing to look for.

Secondly, I think states can talk about steps that they're willing to do independently. And so if a state – one of the goals of strengthening the regime – or steps towards it – is adopting, universally, the Additional Protocol. If a state has not adopted it and they can announce that they intend to or that they have a timeline for it, I think that's a good-news story. I think that shows that states are taking their responsibility seriously and they're trying to move in that direction.

Maybe we don't have universalization yet, but if we can show that kind of momentum, and that states are willing to commit themselves to those steps, I think that's important. On the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty, there are annex one and annex two countries. We need the annex two countries to sign and ratify for it to enter into force.

There are currently nine states outstanding, the United States being one of them, but five of those states are actually Non-Aligned Movement members, some who are nuclear-armed and some who are still non-nuclear weapons states. I think, you know everybody waits for the United States. And where is there, maybe, some pressure here that some states can take a more forward-leaning view?

Indonesia made one step towards that in saying that they promise to immediately ratify after the United States does. That's great; that's welcome. But it would be even better if they just went and ratified. And I think the same is true for some other states as well, such as the Chinese. I do also think that another measure of success is if we could see the review conference really moving on issues where they have a unique responsibility, and in fact, a comparative advantage.

And that, for instance, is on Article 10, which is the withdrawal clause, where I think it's going to be very difficult to come to agreements on this, particularly because Iran has equities at stake on this issue. I think that states who are concerned about the regional threat that the Iranians pose might have incentives to keep the regime weak.

But could we see, after the conference, a set of states saying, you know what, this is a tricky issue; there are at least nine proposals, and even more, out there about what we should do to clarify the consequences and process of withdrawal. Could we see this set of states saying, you know what, we're going to take this up. We're going to provide consultations, evaluate these proposals, and try to come back with something that has a reasonable amount of support for the next PrepCom. So kind of showing that there are states that are willing to take issues forward.

And what I would suggest, actually, to a lot of states who are critical when the U.N. Security Council steps in on these kinds of issues – for instance, on U.N. Security Council Resolution 1540, there are objections from the

Non-Aligned Movement that the U.N. Security Council was legislating obligations for all of these states and they weren't properly consulted. What I would suggest to them is that this is time to get involved – that they can actually have a seat at the table and make sure that their interests are looked after, rather than there being a situation either a few years down the road where the U.N. Security Council feels that out of the interest of international peace and security that it needs to move on this.

And then the last thing I'll just say about a measurement of success – and this is a little bit more oblique – it's not necessarily a positive thing to look for but something a little bit different. And that is, how are would-be spoilers treated?

So in the case of Iran, they are – if we can avoid the naming-and-shaming strategy, which I think we did a really good job with in 2009 at the last preparatory committee meeting, if we can avoid that, we can still expect that Iran will deposit a set of working papers. And these are everything from castigating the nuclear-weapons states for not doing enough on disarmament to their working paper on Article X, the withdrawal clause, essentially states this is not an issue, we should not spend time talking about it, so they're going to do this.

I think they're also going to continue with their narrative about – questions about their nuclear program in saying that this is just unfair oppression of Western powers and an attempt to constrain their Article IV rights. The real issue will be is anybody still buying that? And particularly in terms of Non-Aligned Movement countries, is there skepticism?

And I think we started to see a few cracks in that façade. One is when the Non-Aligned Movement chose not to provide consensus support for Iran trying to pass a resolution at the IAEA general conference in September, where they wanted to prohibit military tax on nuclear facilities. Some members in the Non-Aligned Movement said, wait a second, what are you doing, this doesn't make sense, why don't you take more simple steps to clarify issues around this?

And then secondly, the Malaysian ambassador to the IAEA had voted against the vote of censure in November and was actually subsequently recalled by the Malaysian government saying, you voted the wrong way. Malaysia is still a pretty strident voice within the Non-Aligned Movement.

These are really key indicators. And what I think can happen at the review conference and where there is a connection between this almost esoteric, multilateral, legal exercise and some of the proliferation concerns we see in the headlines around Iran is there's a feedback loop where if Non-Aligned Movement states can say to the Iranians, hey, you know what, we've got serious concerns here, why don't you take the deal that's been offered to you, such as the low-enrichment uranium trade, and rebuild faith with the international community, I think that can actually play out possibly in a positive way. And we should look for that. We should look for how they are treated in terms of whether the rest of the community is either accepting their narrative or greeting it with skepticism because I think it's going to matter for these other issues.

So with that, all I will say is – just conclude with is, (messy ?) multilateralism doesn't work as quickly as we want or as effectively as we want but I think in this security situation that we find ourselves with in terms of international security, I think we need all the tools we can get in terms of stronger rules and consequences for rule-breaking; that it's worth really all states putting as much as they can into this review conference. I think to wait until 2015 is a big mistake. And there's a variety of reasons for that and I'm happy to get into that in Q&A.

So with that, why don't I open the floor and we'll take questions. And if you could just identify yourself and wait for a microphone. So sir, I see you all the way in the back.

Q: Thank you. Raghubir Goyal for India Globe & Asia Today. My question is that recently the U.S. and India's – well, they decided a while ago but President Obama just completed the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement just the day before yesterday. And now, in two weeks, he will have including the prime minister and many other heads of state in Washington talking about nuclear deals or nuclear accounts around the globe.

My question is that how this deal will help India or the U.S. or the (non-proliferators ?) around the globe or upcoming nuclear summit in Washington.

And also at the same time, of course Iran is a rogue nation in making statements against Israel and many nations as far as their nuclear ambitions are concerned. But at the same time, I don't understand why nobody talks about Pakistan's nuclear program because Pakistan is the one who really supplied – or gave technology to Iran, Libya and other nations. But still, Pakistan also is a threat just like Iran in the future, too, in the region.

MS. CHOUBEY: Okay, and then why don't I take one more question and then we'll divide amongst the panel. So you, sir, about a third of the way back if you can just wait for a mike. Go ahead. And if you can identify yourself.

Q: Hi, my name is Alex Brozdowski. I'm with the Stimson Center. My question for the panel regards the international fuel bank concept. What are the initial ideas on who would foot the bill for this program?

MS. CHOUBEY: Okay, great. So why don't we go with that. Did you have a – (inaudible, off mike).

Sure, the first question is on the U.S.-India reprocessing agreement and the upcoming nuclear security summit; how are those two related and how might they impact each other. And then the second question was in terms of Iran, there's a lot of discussion about that but where is there a discussion about Pakistan in terms of its proliferation problems. And then the third question is on the international fuel bank; what are the ideas about footing the bill.

AMB. BURK: Let me try to answer the first question very briefly. I'm not involved in the nuclear security summit. I don't think that there's any relationship between the U.S.-India deal and the nuclear security summit. The summit is focusing on a very narrow slice of the problem, which is a vulnerability of nuclear materials and their – securing them against the threat of terrorist acquisition. And the states that have an invite into the summit include parties and nonparties. And it includes other nonparties besides India, too, so I don't think there's any linkage with a deal.

On Pakistan and Iran, if I understand the question, I'm working on the nonproliferation treaty review conference exclusively, which is sort of a burden and a blessing. But the issue with Iran is a state that has joined the NPT voluntarily, accepted the obligations of the treaty and has been found by the IAEA not to be complying with its NPT safeguards agreement. So it's a different set of issues.

I would draw your attention – and I'm not endorsing this from the U.S. government but there was a study that came out at the end of last year – Australia and Japan, the Evans-Kawaguchi study. And that is a study that actually addresses the issue of all states possessing nuclear weapons in its recommendations. It doesn't make any distinction between NPT nuclear-weapons states and states outside of the NPT with nuclear weapons. And I believe that that may have been the case in 2000 at the review conference. I'm not certain.

On the fuel bank, I am not familiar with the details on the funding. I know that there has been – I don't know whether you have –

MR. KIMBALL: Go ahead, I'm fine.

AMB. BURK: Maybe Daryl can answer that because my information is probably too fuzzy and I may say something that's not accurate so I better not go there.

MR. KIMBALL: Well, on the fuel bank idea, I would refer you to page nine of the report – (laughter) – because there isn't just one proposal; there are actually about a dozen serious proposals for fuel-supply assurances or fuel-supply guarantees. And there is one particular proposal that actually has some money behind it. That's the one that involves the support of the nuclear threat initiative. It's been discussed at the board of governors. There's some information about that in here. It involves pulling together financing to provide a certain amount of material for that so-called fuel bank.

But the main point is there are many different proposals, there are many different approaches. This is an issue that has been with the nuclear nonproliferation system for decades. And it is not one that lends itself to quick and easy solutions and that's why I suggested that this conference is not going to solve the problem. It is going to discuss it and there may be some least-common denominator ideas coming out about how to move forward.

Just very quickly on – just a comment about the reprocessing deal. What the questioner was asking about was the recently signed subsidiary arrangement to the original U.S.-India Nuclear Cooperation Agreement – the 123 agreement – that allows for India to have the right to reprocess U.S.-origin fuel.

I think that that deal is going to complicate on the long run the overall task of reducing the amount of nuclear-weapons usable nuclear material in the world, mainly because it implicitly endorses the idea of reprocessing as a spent-fuel management option. And this agreement, contrary to the original 123 agreement, would allow India to reprocess U.S. fuel in more than one reprocessing facility, which Congress may have some opinions about.

So, you know, if we all accept the basic notion that reprocessing and enrichment technologies are of dual use, it is in the overall interest to minimize the utilization of those approaches. And it will be more difficult for the U.S. and other countries to persuade others, other than India, not to pursue reprocessing if we are working with India to allow them to reprocess our nuclear fuel.

MS. CHOUBEY: Great. Other questions? Okay, you, sir, and just wait for the microphone, which is coming.

Q: Hi, my name is Mohammed Hafez (sp). I'm an intellectually curious citizen. With so much momentum going into the rev-con, I'm wondering if there's, you know, a plan of action to address the concern and hesitation that many nations publicly and privately hold about advancing the NPT, due to the belief – you know, the wrong belief – that it will only further sway the balance of power in the world in favor, as Mr. Kimball said about the continued possession of nuclear stockpiles by the world powers. So I'm wondering if there's a plan of action to address that.

MS. CHOUBEY: I'm sorry. Can you further clarify – just, I think, we're just trying to understand the question in terms of –

Q: Yeah, it's essentially the fact that a lot of – there's a belief that a lot of nation-states hold that, you know, in this nuclear disarmament round there's a large stockpile of nuclear arms by the world powers and that disarmament will only make the balance of power shift further to the world powers by them continuing to have such stockpiles.

MR. KIMBALL: Well, I think what you're speaking to is, I think, the problem that we are still grappling with, which is the center of the NPT bargain, about whether the states fulfill their respective obligations. And as I said and as you will read in the weeks ahead, there is frustration with the pace of progress on disarmament, but at the same time, concerns about proliferation make it more difficult for nuclear-weapons states to, how shall we say, organize the political will to move towards the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons.

The NPT is by definition a discriminatory treaty, but that's why there is this bargain. That's why there are these obligations. That's why, in many ways, why there is a review conference. And that is why we're talking about plans of action. So, I don't know if I'm addressing your question directly, but, I mean, you're just raising the fundamental crux of the problem, which points to the need for leadership at every opportunity that avails itself to make progress.

MS. CHOUBEY: Are there questions? You, sir.

Q: Dean Rust, retired, State Department. A comment and a question: I endorse the comment from the back about not letting Pakistan get off scot-free on this either. I would like to see the review conference make some rather pointed observations about all three of the non-NPT states. Daryl mentioned how this would perhaps happen in the context of Israel. Whether you mention Israel or not is kind of secondary, but the Middle East resolution is certainly one way to do it.

And concerns by NPT parties about the civil-nuclear cooperation deal with India is certainly a way to address that thing too. But there's lots of things like that, that all three of the NPT states we could address – FMCT, the Comprehensive Test-Ban too. So I don't think we should single out any particular state, or leave any of them out. The outliers, so to speak, need to be addressed.

My question is just to Ambassador Burk. It has to do with – she talked about in her diplomacy with 70 countries, she's encouraged the notion that we all share in the value of this treaty and that we all share in the responsibility for trying to ensure its long-term integrity and so on. With the fairly substantial Article 6-related agenda of this administration, one would expect you might get, or you ought to get, a little bit more responsiveness on the part of the countries you're talking with on sharing this responsibility. And I wonder whether you could characterize, generally, whether you think you're seeing those kinds of positive messages from some of these states? Because in the long run that's one of the reasons that the president has been so forward-leaning on nuclear-disarmament stuff.

Not only is it important in itself, but he advertises that this is the kind of thing that is supposed to draw more countries into supporting things like the NPT and other aspects of the regime. And this review conference will be looked at, in many ways, as sort of a signal as to whether or not the Obama strategy, along these lines, is going to work. This won't be the only thing, of course. It's a long-term process. I just wonder how much you see in your consultations about – yes, you know, we do share this responsibility and we might be prepared to engage a little bit further than we have in the past towards constructive outcomes.

MS. CHOUBEY: Okay, Susan, why don't you take that first and then –

AMB. BURK: Well, thanks a lot, Dean, on that. Let me just comment back to you on the three nonparties. I think my recommendation would be that the emphasis should be at the review conference on the three nonparties, again, which there's no one size fits all. And, you know, I think it's safe to say that it's unlikely that the three will join the NPT as non-nuclear weapons states, which is the only way they can join in the foreseeable future. But there are initiatives out there and there are things that are available that would include them, like the FMCT. And I think the review conference could underline the importance of some of these initiatives, which, as I said, begin to narrow the gap.

On the positive side, you know, I was at a dinner last night and someone talked about cautious pessimism and professional optimism. And I sometimes say cautious optimism. You know, in the end I have been very gratified by the conversations that I have had, by the candor of the conversations. And I've been very candid on my part, too, and I have been very well informed by the views of other countries. And my sense is that there is a desire to really move beyond business as usual and take advantage of this, but I would never predict what's going to happen. I mean, when you said what are you going to do the day after the conference, I'm going to Disney World regardless of what happens.

But I think all – my main mission has been to describe what the United States is about, what we're committed to do, to express our willingness to really work in partnership. The president has said that. I think Deepti said that in her remarks. The president's agenda is really very significant; it's been very well received, but there should be no illusions that the U.S. alone is going to ride in on the white horse and safe the day. It's going to be a collective effort either way.

And I think it's been very important to emphasize that we're looking for partners. We're not looking to do this on our own. And I do think this is messy multilateralism. It's an opportunity to demonstrate constructive multilateralism and so the challenge, really, is up to the collective. You know, will we rise to the challenge or not? I am cautiously optimistic that we will rise to the challenge because the stakes are high, but the opportunities are higher. And so we're hoping that that will be the case.

MS. CHOUBEY: I just wanted to offer a few comments on your comment as well, where with the states that are nonparty to the NPT, I think the one thing I would at least encourage them to do is attend as observers. And they have done that in the past, at previous review conferences, and in fact, as we look at the evolution of the regime, where people eventually acceded to the NPT, they always attended as observers first. And although it's a longer-term process, I think, for eventually getting ten conditions or combing up with the scenario in which they may or may not accede to the NPT, I think they should at least be present.

But one of the other issues that I've raised, in terms of how do you incent (sic) nonparties to the NPT to actually engage in the regime, I think one issue that still is there is for those states that eventually want to be exporters of nuclear technology. And I think that's one of the last incentives we have here, where NPT parties should talk about under what terms do we engage with non-NPT parties who want to be nuclear trade suppliers? And I think that might be one of the last pieces of leverage that we have.

And in terms of the civil nuclear cooperation deal, I mean, in interviews I've done, it constantly comes up but, you know, one thing that the U.S. delegation can say – (chuckles) – is that there were a set of states that had a chance to stand up and condition the deal and raise their objections and at the end of the day, for whatever reasons, they chose not to. And you know, I think that's something that's going to come up and, you know, we'll see how that conversation plays out.

MR. KIMBALL: Just real quick. On the three outliers. I mean, one of the ways that this conference can speak to those countries is to use this conference – the collective statements that might come out of this conference and the national statements that are made about what the standards are for responsible behavior. What is the nuclear nonproliferation disarmament mainstream?

And that's why clear statements about no further nuclear testing and entry into force the CTBT are important. Fissile material production cutoff. No matter who you are – whether you're in or outside the treaty, call on all states not to expand your nuclear arsenal and to engage in reducing your nuclear arsenals in a verifiable fashion, et cetera, et cetera.

For nuclear supplier states to continue to make comprehensive safeguards and the Additional Protocol a condition of nuclear supply. That's what was done before the U.S.-India nuclear deal or at least on comprehensive safeguards. So these are the kinds of things that can be done to make sure that the nonproliferation standards are increased and raised high and all states are being asked and expected to meet those standards.

On the question of, you know, that Dean just asked about – what the United States is hearing from other states of a more positive response following President Obama's Prague agenda. I'm getting the question from a number of reporters – and to the reporters out there, this goes to you – you know, can we expect this conference to suddenly – you know, we'll see the light and all the states will come together in one big happy circle and agree to all sorts of measures that we've been arguing about.

You know, obviously the answer is no. And what has happened over the last year is that the president has outlined a very ambitious agenda on disarmament, nonproliferation, nuclear security. And that's important. But it has been less than 12 months. And words alone do not change things and I think many states are looking for concrete action and this administration has not had much time to actually move forward on those concrete steps simply because one year is not a lot of time to move forward on some of these difficult things.

So I think we're going to have to wait to see what the results of this approach that the Obama administration is pursuing will be on a broad range of issues and some of the measures that Deepti was pointing to that we should be looking for beyond the final conference document.

AMB. BURK: Just to make a further comment. This goes to the initiatives – the U.S. initiatives that were out there. I've been saying lately – and I have found myself needing to say lately – that when the president made the Prague speech and the timing of these other events, it wasn't so that we would have a happy review conference. It's an agenda that he is deeply committed to.

It's an agenda that will take time to accomplish. And while I would love to have all of these things wrapped up so we would go to (bat ?), we would still have I think a challenging review conference. So it's very important not to see this as the goodies to deliver, you know, a successful four-week meeting in May but part of a long – you know, an agenda that will take time to implement.

And then to see the role that a strong nonproliferation treaty that would manifest itself by strong recommitments and strong statements of support in New York by the parties – the role that that can play in helping to move this agenda along. And I think one of the big goals here is to get a greater understanding – and this is where I do sense that there is a greater understanding of – well, we talk about mutually reinforcing. And everybody talks about that, you know, nonaligned, East-West, you know, North-South – everybody's using the words "mutually reinforcing."

But more and more, I do get the sense that we're all talking about it in the same way – that there's an understanding that the disarmament greases the nonproliferation, but the nonproliferation greases the disarmament. And that it's not a question of you go first and then we'll go; we have to all go together. And I think if we can have a near consensus on that principle, I think that's a very important step forward.

MS. CHOUBEY: Other questions? Yes, you, sir, right there.

Q: I'm Chad O'Carroll from the Center for Arms Control. This is a question for the ambassador. I'm just wondering what the U.S. opinion of South Korea's plans to reprocess spent fuel is, especially in consideration of efforts to denuclearize the North.

AMB. BURK: I am very sorry. I don't have any – (chuckles) – I don't know what to say on that one issue. I would have to – I'd have to take that back. And I'm sorry I can't answer that question. And I'll add that to my list of things to do in my homework. I'm going to have to put it on the list. (Laughter.)

MS. CHOUBEY: Daryl.

MR. KIMBALL: Write your congressman or woman because –

AMB. BURK: Well, I can't say that, so – (laughter).

MR. KIMBALL: – you know, this is an issue that's going to be discussed as the Republic of Korea and the United States evaluate the new agreement for nuclear cooperation – I think 2014 is the date. But you know, another example of, you know, whether sensitive nuclear fuel's cycle activities are going to be employed in yet another state. It could be a big problem over the long term for the Northeast Asia region.

MS. CHOUBEY: But I also think it's, you know, this push from the South Koreans, which has been, I think, in place for the last few years – it's another unintended consequence of the U.S.-India civil nuke deal. Where I've talked to South Koreans and they make these arguments, which are – we're your ally. We're your friend. We're a democracy. We have a responsible nuclear record. Why is there resistance to us engaging in these activities? So I think this is, again, it just – it underscores for me kind of really thinking through what are the implications and consequences when we make exceptions to global trading rules.

AMB. BURK: But can I make an important point on this: South Korea is a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty in full compliance with its obligations. That's a very important fact to keep in mind.

MS. CHOUBEY: Okay. Any other – so you, sir? And a mike is coming to you on your right.

Q: Bruce MacDonald with the United States Institute of Peace. If we could lift our vision up a little bit, look a little further down the road. It took longer than we expected, but thank goodness we got a START agreement – START follow-on agreement. When you look at the agenda of issues that would need to be taken up in what I call STAN – or the START treaty after next. (Laughter.)

The issues are daunting: missile defense, tactical nuclear weapons, non-deployed weapons, third countries. One always wants to be hopeful, but it could be quite a while before we see further progress on a new treaty. Do you think that if it takes a protracted period of time to get to something like that or it bogs down, care to hazard any thoughts about what the implications are for the cause of nuclear nonproliferation?

MR. KIMBALL: Do you want to try? I mean –

AMB. BURK: No, I'm happy to offer my personal view, but –

MR. KIMBALL: Go ahead.

AMB. BURK: Well, first of all, from everything I've heard, the negotiation of this treaty has been done at the speed of light. So I understand that they set a six-month deadline to do it, but you know, it's been pointed out to me by Russian counterparts, some of these past agreements took up to a dozen years.

So I don't think, you know, I think we ought to – let's call it the way it is, which is it was accomplished in record time. I think – since I am – again, I'm not working on START – I would say the START agreement is negotiated. It needs to go to the Senate for advice and consent, for ratification. We'll worry about the next steps. I can't comment on the next steps. And I think it will be up to the other parties to determine whether or not the nuclear-weapons states are continuing to make good-faith efforts to move the ball along.

MR. KIMBALL: I would agree with Susan about the pace of the new START negotiation. I mean, you know, those of us who were carefully looking at the calendar were disappointed what didn't happen when December 5 rolled around. But the treaty exists. It was done very quickly. This is a real treaty. It's a substantial treaty. It has to be ratified by both countries.

But you know, clearly, as I said, there are more things that need to be done. There are more nuclear weapons out there. And as you know better than anyone, Bruce, you know, the number of nuclear weapons often doesn't matter so much in terms of security and the perception of progress on disarmament and the reality as the policies behind those weapons and the potential of those nuclear-weapons states. So that's why I was suggesting that while the road ahead for the United States and Russia is complex, there are going to be issues that they have to deal with that they haven't really talked about in an adult fashion in 15 years.

There is a lot of work to be done and we shouldn't expect things to happen fast. But it would be very, I think, judicious from a U.S. national security standpoint – and it would help, by the way, at the review conference, if the United States and Russia said, we're not going to stop with a new START; we're going to continue consultations. Consultations are different than negotiations.

So what I'm suggesting is that the two sides talk about what they are going to negotiate about, but they keep working and moving forwards even as they're completing the ratification process for a new START.

MS. CHOUBEY: And I just want to offer another response to your question about what are the implications for the disarmament agenda and nonproliferation as they relate to one another. I actually think with the complexity of the issues for this follow-on, to the follow-on treaty, I actually think it's going to underscore – particularly for non-nuclear weapons states – how complex this is.

You know, I think that's been part of the challenge of the last few decades, is that there are sometimes these really simplistic polemics about who needs to do what in getting to disarmament. And I think that when we look – when the challenges between the United States are unpacked, it is going to become very clear what are all of the different conditions that would have to go into actually getting towards a safe and secure world free of nuclear weapons. And I think that's going to drive the message home to non-nuclear weapons states about what role all of these states have to play in that.

So I think, in some ways, it might be positive in terms of setting more realistic expectations and uncovering the issues that we're all going to need to grapple with.

Any other questions? Okay, you, sir.

Q: We Pon Fung (sp), Xinhua News Agency. My question is, do you think the Obama administration will in the future introduce a new clear disarmament mechanism which is based on the new START treaty with Russia, asking the other nuclear countries such as China, Britain and France to reduce their nuclear arsenals? Thank you.

MS. CHOUBEY: Do we anticipate support for multilateral arms control?

MR. KIMBALL: Well, do we expect a new mechanism? I don't expect a new mechanism. I quite frankly think the Obama administration national security team is a little exhausted at the moment; it was a tough negotiation and they're focused on ratification.

I noted President Obama said during the campaign that one of his goals – and I'm paraphrasing – before the end of his first term would be to engage other nuclear-arms states in a high-level dialogue on transparency, confidence-building and the path forward.

Now, as you know, the U.S. defense secretary sought to engage China in strategic dialogue on a range of issues. It would be helpful if China would reciprocate. I don't think, you know, let's look back at Winston Churchill and remind ourselves that there is nothing wrong with talking about these issues.

So I think that is an aspiration at least and I quite honestly and frankly think that the Obama team is sorting out next steps. And we may find out more about this in the weeks and months ahead. We may not. But that was a goal that the president outlined: not a mechanism, but a high-level dialogue with other nuclear-arms states. And I think that would address one of the long-standing proposals that have come at the review conferences, which is that there should be a discussion at the Conference on Disarmament on disarmament. Okay? So this would be a dialogue in a slightly different format but it would still be driving at the same general goal to have the nuclear-weapons states, the NPT weapons states talking with one another.

AMB. BURK: And can I just add – I don't know about a mechanism. I have no idea. But I think I would point to the Prague speech, which was after he was elected, where he acknowledged that the U.S. and the Russians have the largest number of nuclear weapons and they would need to bring those levels down.

But he did preview a future when all of the states possessing nuclear weapons would be included. And, frankly, that's the only way that we will achieve a world without nuclear weapons, is to bring everybody into the negotiation.

But, yeah, I think Daryl's answer is good on that one. I have no idea about that. I think we're focusing right now on the steps that he outlined last year and accomplishing those steps. When we get those done then we'll be talking about next steps.

MS. CHOUBEY: I think your question, though, is another example of where it's actually not up to the United States, you know, where after the Prague speech the president met with Hu Jintao in London and they had raised the same issue of eventually getting to conversations about arms control.

And, you know, this is my – the president is absolutely leading the charge on this idea of the peace and security of a world free of nuclear weapons. I think, for me, there is a real question about whether anybody is following him – maybe aside from the U.K. But I think they're – issues like whether we can see multilateral arms control and other things that Daryl has talked about is a real opportunity – particularly from other nuclear-weapons states – to prove that they don't have just purely rhetorical support for disarmament, that they can actually take steps to show that they're serious. And they're not just hiding behind what the United States is or is not doing.

Great. Any other questions? One more from the back.

Q: Thank you. Raghubir Goyal. Do we have any inventory how many nuclear weapons China has – because most of the time they really keep building up and nobody knows and it's a closed society; it's not like other nations. And, second, also, if I may follow one more, that as far as terrorists and al-Qaidas are concerned, now their next target is to acquire nuclear weapons. And there are rogue nations who are willing to sell them. So what is the future, Madame? Where do we go? Are you concerned about that?

MR. KIMBALL: Well, just on the first question about do we know how many weapons China has, China has not made a declaration about what it has nor have some of the other nuclear-weapons states and the states that possess nuclear weapons that don't acknowledge them.

So one of the things that has been proposed time and again – and this is a proposal specifically put forward by Japan and Australia in a working paper – is that all states possessing nuclear weapons should report regularly information relating to their nuclear weapons, their delivery systems, fissile material stockpiles, ENA formats agreed upon by states parties to the NPT.

I mean, this would be a useful step forward just to simply account for how much progress is being made in this one facet of implementation of the NPT.

AMB. BURK: And I would only add that when you mentioned terrorism, that really is the focus of the nuclear security summit the week after next. We'll be looking at that very question of vulnerable materials and terrorists.

MS. CHOUBEY: Great. Any other questions? Terrific. I'm glad that we answered all of your questions. Please join me in thanking Susan and Daryl – and thank you for coming.

(END)