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Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
June 15, 2004

Sea Island and Beyond:
Status Report
on the
Global Partnership Against Weapons of Mass Destruction

Senator Lugar and Senator Biden, I thank you for inviting me to provide the opening testimony at this Hearing. The subject of your Hearing is of great personal interest to me.

Senator Lugar, even before our days working with Senator Nunn on the original Cooperative Threat Reduction legislation in 1991 and our work on the Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act in 1996, I've valued your leadership and partnership in working against the threat of these weapons.

Senator Biden, I have appreciated your leadership and assistance in jointly crafting vital pieces of legislation. Together with Senator Lugar, we introduced the Nuclear Nonproliferation Act in 2002. And just a few weeks ago, we authored a comprehensive amendment on Global Cleanout of Nuclear Materials.

These legislative approaches provide vital new authorities in the global fight against terrorism and against the threat that terrorists will use nuclear or radiological materials against us or anywhere in the world to destroy the foundations of freedom.

The events of September 11, 2001 demonstrated the lengths to which terrorists would go to attack us on our own soil. We

need to constantly remember that an attack using even a crude nuclear weapon could lead to one hundred times the casualties we suffered on September 11. Nuclear nonproliferation is a deadly serious business.

I was, as you also were, watching the information flowing out of the recent Sea Island G-8 Summit meeting. Although positive agreements were announced, I have yet to hear that progress on nuclear nonproliferation was as dramatic as I had hoped or as dramatic as the world needs. I find the outcome quite a disappointment.

But progress, albeit not as rapid as I wish, is happening and there have been significant developments in this vital area. The President highlighted the risk associated with a nuclear or radiological terrorist attack in his National Defense University speech in February. His action was followed by the May announcement by Secretary Abraham of the Global Threat Reduction Initiative. Progress in Libya has been dramatic.

The "10 plus 10 over 10" global partnership, championed by the President and announced at a previous Summit, was an important step. It offers new hope for addressing weapons of mass destruction in the former Soviet Union.

The President's Proliferation Security Initiative, launched about a year ago, is another positive step. I welcome the news from Sea Island that more nation's have joined this initiative.

The HEU deal continues to reduce stockpiles of HEU, a prime concern for proliferation. Programs like the Initiatives for Proliferation Prevention, and the Materials Control program are advancing the fight against nuclear proliferation. But more needs to be done.

Leading up to this Summit, there was no shortage of calls

for decisive action, including an excellent piece by Senator Nunn. New reports from Harvard, sponsored by the Nuclear Threat Initiative, emphasized the need for more comprehensive controls over nuclear materials. To date, we have fully secured only about a quarter of Russia's nuclear materials.

I hoped that Senate acceptance of the Global Cleanout package in mid-May would add focus and emphasis on the importance of treating proliferation of nuclear materials as one of the greatest threats to global peace and stability. That package identified removal and security of nuclear materials and equipment as a top national security issue. Thirteen Senators joined in sponsoring it, including the Chairmen and Ranking Members of your committee, Armed Services and Energy.

Of particular frustration to me is the slow progress on plutonium disposition. After I began that program with an infusion of \$200 million several years ago, the program has been blocked by disagreement over liability provisions. Why a program of this much global importance should be blocked by something as basic as liability remains beyond me.

I have been amazed that the leadership of the U.S. and Russia can not resolve this issue. Failure to resolve this issue is simply not consistent with the urgency that the Administration has attached to nuclear nonproliferation. Good proposals for resolution have been circulated, but not accepted so far. This same liability dispute impacts other programs as well, and has blocked progress on the Nuclear Cities programs.

President Bush has clearly emphasized the immense threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. I wonder if he has been advised that liability issues are preventing destruction of enough plutonium for about 10,000 weapons. Perhaps your Committee could discuss this liability issue with the Honorable John Bolton

when he testifies in a few minutes. You might also ask him why, after plutonium disposition was discussed in previous G-8 summits, it was omitted from agreements at Sea Island.

Last December, I spoke at the Woodrow Wilson Center's conference celebrating the 50th Anniversary of President Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace speech. I included a list of major unmet challenges in nuclear nonproliferation, challenges that must be met if we are realize the potential of nuclear energy for the good of mankind:

- the need for improved controls and reductions in tactical nuclear weapons,
- inadequate controls over Russian fissile materials,
- poor controls over radioactive sources around the world,
- reactors fueled with Highly Enriched Uranium, and
- our continued emphasis on Russia when we need a focus on global action

That list remains valid today.

The recent initiatives, recent legislation, and the Sea Island agreements are steps in the right direction. But we need more than steps. I have to say with regret that Sea Island did not make the giant strides on nuclear nonproliferation that our nation and the world need.