

Testimony of Adam M. Scheinman  
Nominee for Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation, with  
the Rank of Ambassador  
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
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Thank you Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee.

It is an honor to appear before this Committee as President Obama's nominee as the Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation. I am grateful to President Obama and Secretary Kerry for the confidence they have placed in me. I am also very pleased to be joined here today by my wife, Justine Fitzgerald, and family members, who remind me every day that, while there are good reasons for working to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, there's also life away from that work.

As a long-time civil servant, I have spent more than 20 years dealing with nonproliferation issues in the Department of Energy, where I was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in 2006, the National Security Staff in the White House, and now the State Department. I owe much to my father, Dr. Lawrence Scheinman, a well-known nonproliferation scholar and practitioner.

I learned from him and my colleagues that nonproliferation successes require patience, persistence, and steady leadership. That leadership must come from the United States; we were present at the creation of the nonproliferation regime, and no other nation has our reach and influence to sustain it. If confirmed, I pledge to do my part to carry forward the legacy of U.S. leadership, working closely with my colleagues on this panel, agencies in Washington, and the Congress.

Preventing nuclear proliferation is a bipartisan national security priority. Central to this effort is ensuring that the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty – or NPT – continues to serve as the unifying framework for international cooperation. As the President said about the NPT in Prague in 2009, “[t]he basic bargain is sound: Countries with nuclear weapons

will move towards disarmament, countries without nuclear weapons will not acquire them, and all countries can access peaceful nuclear energy.”

The United States has a broad strategy that is advancing the NPT’s goals and, as such, serving national security interests. We are working to strengthen International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards to make cheating more difficult; we are securing vulnerable nuclear materials around the world; we are encouraging new frameworks for nuclear energy cooperation that will reduce nuclear dangers; for the first time in a decade, we helped to secure a consensus final document at the 2010 NPT Review Conference; and we are implementing the New START Treaty successfully and committing to pursue further, verifiable reductions with Russia.

A positive and pro-active U.S. agenda reinforces international support for the NPT. That support is essential if we are to deal effectively with cases of noncompliance, and in particular by Iran and North Korea, which pose the most significant threat to the Treaty’s future. Rules must be binding and violations must have consequences.

Noncompliance challenges the NPT’s legitimacy and is a disservice to all states that play by widely-accepted rules. It should be dealt with openly and directly. It is not a distraction from the priority others attach to nuclear disarmament or rights to peaceful nuclear energy; it is fundamental to achieving those goals. Nonproliferation and disarmament are mutually reinforcing and should be pursued in a balanced and collective manner.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference approved an “Action Plan” that strikes this balance and is a good point of reference for future NPT review meetings. When NPT parties take stock of progress on the Action Plan at the next Review Conference in 2015, we will point to a solid record of achievement. For example, this year marks the final one of a 20-year agreement with Russia to convert uranium recovered from thousands of Russian nuclear bombs to reactor fuel that is used to light American cities. Others may be unaware that the United States is the world’s leader in peaceful nuclear assistance. States

that uphold their nonproliferation commitments should know they have a partner in the United States.

If confirmed, I will work to get this message across and pursue further steps to strengthen the NPT. More could be done to tighten IAEA safeguards, discourage abuse of the Treaty's withdrawal provision, and support existing nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties. Action by the Senate on the protocols to the African and the South Pacific zone treaties before the 2015 Review Conference would be a helpful gesture.

Forging a still stronger NPT will require enormous effort on our part and the cooperation of partners who understand that the NPT is too important to fail or to be held hostage to unrealistic disarmament proposals or regional agendas that cannot command consensus.

Mr. Chairman, I have learned from my government service that progress requires more than good ideas; it requires good people. There is no shortage of that in the United States. I have had the privilege of working with some of the most dedicated nonproliferation professionals in and outside of government, and, if confirmed, I look forward to drawing on this talent in the service of our nonproliferation goals.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman. If confirmed, I look forward to consulting frequently with Congress and, in particular, this Committee, and I welcome any questions you may have at this time.