

## **Conference Summary and Recommendations**

Siegfried S. Hecker,<sup>1</sup> David Holloway<sup>2</sup> and Nikolay P. Laverov<sup>3</sup>

Co-chairmen of the 2<sup>nd</sup> U.S. – Russian Nuclear Non-Proliferation Conference

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Russian and American specialists discussed cooperation on the crucial issues of nuclear nonproliferation and arms control and disarmament. This was a propitious time to discuss these issues because the deterioration in US-Russian relations in recent years has limited cooperation in nuclear matters. The United States and Russia are still the two greatest nuclear powers, and they must use their considerable experience in nuclear cooperation to address urgent global security issues. The nonproliferation regime is under great strain and arms control and disarmament could take another step backward when the START Treaty expires in December 2009. The Obama administration is determined to “reset” relations between our two countries and the D. Medvedev government has welcomed the US overtures. The environment at the conference reflected cautious optimism that we may be at a turning point in US-Russian relations. However, participants from both countries reiterated their governments’ security grievances accumulated during the past decade.

The list of Russian grievances includes concerns about NATO expansion eastward, the abrogation of the ABM Treaty and US plans for ballistic missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic, lack of US interest in a follow up to the START I treaty, and other concerns. The primary grievance expressed by US participants was inadequate cooperation by Russia to halt Iran’s drive to expand its nuclear capabilities. The continuing stark differences in security concerns between Russia and the United States were highlighted by Alexey Arbatov, who listed the following Russian security concern priorities:

- NATO expansion to post-Soviet space
- US BMD in Central Europe
- US strategic conventional precision guided munitions
- US strategic up-loading superiority
- US military space superiority
- International terrorism (North Caucasus, Central Asia)
- Nuclear and missile proliferation

<sup>1</sup> Siegfried S. Hecker – Co-Director of CISAC and Professor (Research), Stanford University; Co-Chair of the Conference (USA).

<sup>2</sup> David Holloway – Spruance Professor of International History and FSI Senior Fellow, Stanford University; Co-Chair of the Conference (USA).

<sup>3</sup> Nikolay P. Laverov – Vice-President of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS); Co-Chair of the Conference (Russia).

US participants consider the bottom two as their highest priority concerns. The Russian participants insisted that Russia's high-level security concerns -- particularly the issues of NATO expansion and BMD deployments in Central Europe -- must be addressed before significant cooperation can be achieved on nonproliferation and disarmament issues. The issues of conventional forces, uploading, and space superiority will be important for the Russians as moves to reduce nuclear forces to much lower levels get underway.

The conference featured presentations and discussions by both sides on a wide range of issues from challenges to the nonproliferation regime; to nuclear disarmament and the nonproliferation regime; imperatives for strategic Russian-US cooperation; nonproliferation challenges posed by the growth and expansion of global nuclear power; regional proliferation challenges with a focus on Iran, North Korea, South Asia and the Middle East; prospects for enhanced Russian-US nuclear technical collaboration; nuclear security and safeguards; and countering nuclear terrorism.

In contrast to the October 2002 conference also co-sponsored by the Russian Academy of Sciences and NTI, we found a convergence of concerns between most Russian and US participants on the serious threats posed by nuclear proliferation. Since 2002, the Libyan nuclear program and the A.Q. Khan network were exposed, the Iranian covert uranium enrichment program was discovered and found to have made significant technical progress in the past two years, North Korea withdrew from the NPT and tested a nuclear device, and Syria was discovered to have built a plutonium-producing reactor. UN Security Council resolutions and sanctions against North Korea and Iran have done little to curtail their progress. Iran has made substantial progress in its missile program and North Korea continues to attempt to upgrade its missile capabilities in defiance of international sanctions. The 2005 NPT Review Conference ended in total disarray. In addition, a significant increase in the expansion of global nuclear power, particularly in the developing world, will pose new nonproliferation challenges. The grave threat posed by proliferation challenges are now better appreciated, although there is still little agreement on how the international community should respond to this threat. These were the issues that framed most of the discussions at the conference.

To deal with these proliferation challenges the participants stressed that progress in nuclear nonproliferation is inextricably linked to progress in nuclear disarmament. Concurrently with this conference, the four American statesmen (George Shultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger, and Sam Nunn) who reenergized the global debate to eliminate nuclear weapons met with former Prime Minister Evgeny Primakov and President D. Medvedev to discuss their initiative. Senator Nunn and Secretary Perry also spoke at the conference. Conference participants and Russian government officials have publicly shown strong support for this initiative, although serious reservations have been expressed in private discussion both on the Russian and American sides. At the conference, it was agreed that the United States and Russia must lead the five recognized nuclear weapons states in taking concrete steps toward nuclear disarmament as part of their Article VI obligations before the NPT Review Conference convenes in 2010. Conference participants agreed that the technical community represented at the conference could help to catalyze some of the steps suggested by the four statesmen.

Conference participants reviewed the rich history of technical cooperation between Russian nuclear institutes and American nuclear laboratories. The collaborations established in the early 1990s were essential in helping to reduce the danger of nuclear materials and nuclear expertise leaking from the Russian nuclear complex during the transition from the well-secured Soviet times to those of economic and political hardship and uncertainty. Both Russian and American specialists lauded the scientific collaborations – particularly the lab-to-lab and ISTC programs. However, they lamented the fact that, for numerous reasons, this cooperation has weakened dramatically in the past few years. Both sides believe that support from the highest level of both governments will be required to rejuvenate nuclear cooperation and collaborative programs, and adjust to new domestic and international environments. We believe it is imperative to consummate the US-Russian civilian nuclear agreement (the 123 agreement) that fell victim to the Georgian crisis last August. We also believe that technical cooperation should now focus not only on the Russian and US nuclear complexes, but more broadly on how Russian-US cooperation can help solve global nuclear problems.

We heard both about the benefits of a global expansion of nuclear power and the additional risks posed, especially by the spread of nuclear power to politically volatile and unstable regions. Innovative proposals comprising technical, organizational and institutional approaches were presented to control the risks resulting from increased global nuclear fuel cycle requirements. The Nuclear Threat Initiative and the IAEA have been leaders in this area. IAEA Deputy Director General, Olli Heinonen, and others presented specific ideas on strengthening the future verification regime. Russian specialists presented some novel ideas to promote more proliferation-resistant nuclear reactors and fuel cycle concepts.

Preventing nuclear terrorism remains at the top of the American agenda and is also considered a serious threat by the Russian participants. Although carrying out a nuclear terrorist attack is not simple and requires overcoming many obstacles, it was agreed that an entire spectrum of actions need attention – from preventing, to detecting, interdicting, managing the consequences and attribution. Ongoing cooperation between Russia and the United States has yielded significant enhancements in nuclear materials security and transportation security, yet more needs to be done to meet the current threat. Significant enhancements have also been made in the safety and security of nuclear power plants. More cooperation in all of these areas was judged to benefit both countries, but it has been challenging to move forward in the current political environment.

**We make the following recommendations to our respective governments:**

**1) It is imperative to resolve the high-level political obstacles that inhibit increased nuclear cooperation.**

It is important for our governments to resolve political disagreements that impede crucial cooperation in nuclear matters. Russian participants named the following at the top of their list:

- NATO expansion eastward.
- Ballistic missile system deployment in Poland and Czech Republic.
- START I Treaty follow-on before expiration on Dec. 5, 2009.
- Keeping the INF Treaty in force.
- Preventing weaponizing of space.
- Addressing the imbalance of capabilities in conventional forces.

US participants focused primarily on the need to work cooperatively to address Iran's nuclear ambitions.

We offer our technical and professional support to assist the governments in overcoming these obstacles. For example, such activities could include analysis to support verification protocols for a START I follow-on treaty, joint examination of the Iranian nuclear and missile threat, and jointly exploring various missile defense scenarios to counter the Iranian threat.

**2) Nonproliferation and disarmament are inextricably linked. It is imperative for Russia and the United States to make progress toward disarmament in order to further the nonproliferation agenda and to increase the prospects for a successful 2010 Nonproliferation Review Conference.**

Continued reduction in the nuclear arsenals of Russia and the United States is important, but so are additional steps that demonstrate significant progress toward Article VI. For example, ratification of the CTBT, implementing a Fissile Materials Cutoff Treaty, securing all nuclear materials to the highest international standards, and the question of stability at low numbers of nuclear weapons all pose significant technical as well as political challenges. We recommend that joint technical collaborations between US and Russian specialists be initiated quickly so as to achieve substantive progress by the 2010 NPT Review Conference. To cite just one example, prospects for ratification of the CTBT could be enhanced by technical collaboration at each other's test sites to increase our confidence in compliance with and verification of a test ban.

**3) Scientific cooperation and collaboration between Russia and the United States is crucial to deal with nonproliferation threats. It is imperative that this cooperation be rejuvenated and strengthened.**

Joint technical cooperation and collaboration in the nuclear arena has been and continues to be critical to deal with global nonproliferation challenges and to build confidence in US-Russian arms control and disarmament measures. Moreover, enhanced collaboration in civilian nuclear energy and across a broader front of fundamental science will benefit both countries. Unfortunately, strained high-level governmental relations have severely curtailed the successful nonproliferation and defense collaborations initiated nearly two decades ago. In addition, they have prevented the development of increased civilian cooperation. We strongly urge finalizing the civilian nuclear energy 123 agreement and reinvigorating programs such as the lab-to-lab and ISTC programs. The current gridlock in these programs requires support and specific approval at the highest level of our governments.

The Russian participants made it clear that cooperation on the issues spelled out above would be possible only if the political leaders on both sides took a firm public stand in support of such cooperation. The Russian participants, for the most part, are clearly interested in cooperation and believe that the United States and Russia can build on their past experience of collaboration and in the future can work together in support of nonproliferation and disarmament.

<sup>1</sup> *Center for International Security and Cooperation at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University*

<sup>2</sup> *Vice President, Russian Academy of Sciences*