

Roadmaps to Disarmament: A Strategy for the Second Nuclear Era*

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Introduction

The 2005 NPT Review Conference in May ended in utter stalemate, producing no new ideas or proposals for strengthening the NPT regime or for confronting the crucial challenges of expanding nuclear dangers that the world today faces. The failure of the existing nuclear states to move genuinely toward their NPT nuclear disarmament commitments, combined with problematic compliance with NPT safeguards among many key non-nuclear states, have placed the NPT regime under unprecedented pressure. This paralysis highlights the present stagnation of global efforts to move meaningfully toward comprehensive nuclear disarmament.

This paper examines how the world has reached this predicament and what actions could promote renewed progress:

- First, the paper reviews the changed conditions and key challenges of the post-Cold War world, and discusses the continuing relevance and meaning of the goal of nuclear disarmament in this “second nuclear era.”
- Second, the paper reviews the utility of renewing progress toward nuclear disarmament by compelling all governments with extant or latent nuclear weapons capabilities to generate and publish “roadmaps” to national nuclear disarmament. These “roadmaps” would then become the basis for transnational debate aimed at constituting a single global “roadmap.”

* This essay reflects substantial contributions by David Cortright, Fourth Freedom Forum.

Today's Nuclear Challenges

The quest for nuclear disarmament is a paramount necessity in the twenty-first century, just as it was a defining imperative of the latter half of the twentieth. However, the nature of that challenge has changed significantly with the end of the Cold War

The Cold War Era

In the first nuclear era, a major focus was, rightly, on the two superpowers.

The US-Soviet arms race was piling up nuclear arsenals at a mind-numbing rate. At its peak, the US nuclear stockpile contained nearly 32,000 warheads; for forty years, that number never dipped below 20,000. The Soviet stockpile, at its peak, numbered over 40,000. That year, 1986, over 65,000 nuclear devices rested on the face of the planet.

This arms race also saw escalating magnitudes in the sizes of these weapons. Testing of these increasingly large weapons was the "hot" edge of the "cold" war. During this period the United States and Soviet Union together conducted over 1700 nuclear tests. All told there have been over 2000 nuclear tests conducted worldwide.

Most dangerously, the superpower nuclear arsenals were coupled to strategic policies that put the use of these weapons in a hair-trigger state of readiness. In the United States these policies were expressed by the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP) and through a multitude of deterrence commitments threatening first use of nuclear weapons in a fairly wide range of potential conventional conflicts. This razor's edge competition led to numerous situations where nuclear war was imminent, most famously during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.

From Hope...

The end of the Cold War relieved some of these dangers, and so brought encouraging progress toward the end of nuclear disarmament.

The United States and Russia have acted bilaterally and unilaterally to significantly reduce their nuclear arsenals.¹ The US arsenal is now down to about 10,000 warheads; Russia's is 15-20,000. Under the US-Russia "Moscow Treaty," both sides will reduce "operationally deployed strategic warheads" to 1,700-2,200 by the end of 2012.² The United States and Russia also reached agreements to "de-target" their weapons, improving the strategic relationship, and to work together to secure fissile materials and technologies throughout the former-Soviet Union.

There was also significant multilateral progress. Topping the list is the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1995. Equally important has been the extension of NPT membership to all countries in the world, except three already-nuclear countries (India, Pakistan, Israel), and agreement on a new protocol strengthening of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards securing the nuclear facilities in NPT countries.

Another major achievement was the successful negotiation of Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996, a long-standing milestone toward nuclear disarmament. There have been no nuclear tests since 1998, the longest hiatus ever. The incipient global norm against nuclear testing is a major step forward from the Cold War.

¹ The 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty eliminated the entire category of ground-launched mid-range nuclear missiles in Europe. In 1991 Bush the First removed nuclear weapons from all naval deployments, except strategic submarines, and all overseas deployments, except in Europe under NATO auspices.

² Although the US total stockpile will remain around 10,000, by 2012 Russia may have as few as 2000 total.

... To Frustration

But over the course of the 1990s, progress toward nuclear disarmament languished. Setbacks on old issues were accompanied by the emergence of new dangers.

Despite achievement of the CTBT, the United States and other key states necessary to bring it into force have not ratified it. Negotiations on a companion treaty to end production of fissile materials is also stalled, most recently due to new US claims that such a treaty cannot be verified.

The US-Russia Moscow Treaty will go out of force the year target reductions are met, leaving those targets essentially non-binding. Although US and Russian nuclear forces have been “de-targeted,” thousands of warheads remain on hair-trigger, “launch on warning” alert status.

The United States, although reducing the total nuclear stockpile, is planning to diversify and modernize its nuclear arsenal. The notorious “low-yield” and “bunker buster” devices are only some the new designs under consideration. More dangerously, new US nuclear war planning linking nuclear weapons intimately with conventional capabilities threatens to erode the “nuclear firebreak” long considered a key impediment to nuclear escalation. These plans are embedded in a strategic fabric including nuclear infrastructure modernization, which could eventually lead to new nuclear testing, and to strategic defenses, which expand offensive nuclear use options.

Aggressive counterproliferation and pre-emptive strike doctrines pose perhaps a greater prospect of US first use of nuclear weapons than Cold War era extended deterrence doctrines.³

The United States is not, however, the only source of new nuclear dangers. Russian nuclear arsenal reductions are dictated mainly by resource limitations, not disarmament commitment, and Russia has withdrawn its previous pledge of no first use of nuclear weapons. The United Kingdom and France are also sustaining their current arsenals and first-use doctrines, while China is embarked on a long-term modernization of its strategic nuclear forces that includes development of new solid-fueled intercontinental missiles that would reduce its launch time from hours to minutes.

Absent the shadow of superpower competition, many other states have felt both freer and more compelled to develop indigenous nuclear capabilities. The 1998 nuclear tests by non-NPT members India and Pakistan demonstrated the continuing appeal of nuclear weapons as both strategic tools and national symbols. North Korea became the first state to withdraw from the NPT, and is widely believed to have some 6-10 nuclear devices. If North Korea were to conduct a nuclear test, it could trigger nuclear acquisition by Japan and South Korea, and other repercussions worldwide, as is foreshadowed by recent developments in Iran.

Experiences with North Korea, Iran and the A.Q. Khan network have spotlighted new proliferation dangers of civilian nuclear fuel technologies. According to the recent UN Secretary General’s report, at least forty countries now possess the industrial and scientific infrastructure to build nuclear weapons relatively quickly.⁴ Vast quantities of nuclear materials, particularly in the former Soviet republics, remain unsecured and vulnerable to theft or surreptitious sale, posing perhaps the world’s greatest proliferation threat.

Finally, in the aftermath of September 11, we are all keenly aware that the prospect of acquisition and use of a nuclear device by a non-state organization is growing. Unlike state governments, many such groups would not hesitate to use such a device in a major city if they could obtain the means to do so. Even US nuclear planners do not believe deterrence can work against terrorists.

³ For an elaboration of this analysis, see Wade L. Huntley, “Threats All The Way Down: U.S. Strategic Initiatives in a Unipolar World,” *Review of International Studies* (January, 2006).

⁴ *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, Report of the UN Secretary General’s High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, United Nations, 2004, p.39.

Nuclear Threats and Nuclear Capabilities

Progress toward nuclear disarmament in the past decade has stalled in part because of political fecklessness, militaristic cultures and the power of commercial arms interests. But these factors have long been present, and so cannot fully account for recent trends.

Nor does the tenacious retention of nuclear weapons by those states that have them and the fervent desire to acquire them by the many parties that lack them derive from some abstract strategic logic. These ambitions have roots in specific circumstances in which the capacity to make nuclear threats provides political benefits. Nuclear disarmament efforts have stalled in part because we haven't caught up with how the post-Cold War international terrain has introduced a new nuclear era with reshaped nuclear dangers – dangers to which governments, by their nature, are less responsive.

During the Cold War, the fantastic numbers of nuclear weapons accumulated by the United States and the Soviet Union were rightly the focus of immediate arms control efforts. In the ideologically-polarized climate of the Cold War confrontation, many regarded reducing nuclear arsenals as an imperative largely independent of politics. We can now see more clearly that nuclear dangers are not so independent of their political and social contexts. Indeed, it was the end of the superpower ideological competition, not reductions in their nuclear arsenals, which dissipated the palpable threat of massive nuclear war.

In the post-Cold War era, nuclear policies are even more deeply enmeshed in such broader contexts. The reduced perception of the prospect of global nuclear holocaust has increased perceptions by governments of the political value of making nuclear threats and increased the range of circumstances in which such threats can be effective.

Hence, the challenge of nuclear disarmament today is about more than just eliminating nuclear weapons themselves. Nuclear threat-making capacity is now as relevant as material capacity. New US nuclear deterrence and counterproliferation strategies are more pernicious than the numerical size of the US nuclear stockpile. China's and India's resistances to joining multilateral arms control processes until US and Russian arsenals are reduced to sizes comparable to their own are anachronistic.

Even states without nuclear weapons can leverage latent capabilities to make potent threats. As noted earlier, some forty countries now possess the industrial and scientific infrastructure to build nuclear weapons relatively quickly. States whose potential nuclear weapons capabilities influence regional and global international relations (including disparate states such as Japan and Iran) are as responsible for promoting nuclear disarmament as is the United States.

Beyond the NPT

The utter stalemate of the 2005 NPT Review Conference in May 2005 demonstrates the unrelenting strain that the new pressures of the second nuclear era have placed on the core "bargain" that is the heart of the NPT regime.⁵ This bargain pits the disarmament obligations of the NPT's nuclear armed states (led by the United States) against the nonproliferation obligations of the NPT's non-nuclear armed states (today most notably Iran).

Many consider these challenges to reveal that the NPT has failed, and that today's nuclear challenges are direr than any the world has yet faced. These viewpoints overlook how much more dangerous today's world would be had the NPT not prevented considerable proliferation since its inception in 1970. Indeed, paradoxically, the NPT is somewhat a victim of its own

⁵ See Wade L. Huntley, "The NPT at a Crossroads," Foreign Policy In Focus (Silver City, NM & Washington, DC), July 01, 2005 (<http://www.fpif.org/fpiftxt/144>)

success. The world knows about the ambitions of North Korea and Iran that now challenge the NPT precisely because these countries have been subject to standards and verification activities created under the NPT's auspices. US resistance to disarmament confronts the NPT only because the NPT is the only formal international US commitment to achieve nuclear disarmament.

The NPT is at a crossroads today not because it has failed, but because nuclear dangers have changed. The increased value of nuclear threat-making, fueling perceptions of nuclear capabilities as a currency of power, has eroded the common obligation to pursue nuclear disarmament that all states share. Governments – both those with nuclear weapons and many of those without – are less motivated to pursue nuclear disarmament than previously. This ambivalence is a fundamental source of the paralysis of the NPT, which demonstrates the need for a new initiative, separate from the NPT, to rekindle substantive movement toward global nuclear disarmament.

A new strategy for disarmament can respond to today's wider scope of nuclear dangers, including the spreading reliance on nuclear threat-making and the insidious faith in nuclear weapons as a currency of international power. Such a disarmament strategy, focused on eliminating nuclear weapons coercion in all its forms, would therefore engage all states equally, on a non-discriminatory basis. This approach would sidestep the conflicts between the nuclear "haves" and "have-nots" endemic to the NPT. This approach would also engage as equals the four non-NPT members.⁶ This second track would rekindle consensual motivation for nuclear disarmament, begin the constitution of requisite global governance mechanisms, and ultimately transcend the current stalemate on capabilities reductions.

Roadmaps to Disarmament

This section outlines a new citizen-based initiative to rekindle nuclear disarmament by compelling all governments with extant or latent nuclear weapons capabilities to generate and publish "roadmaps" delineating how they would achieve disarmament. These roadmaps would then become the basis for transnational debate aimed at constituting a single public global roadmap. Roadmaps would overcome four principal obstacles to current disarmament efforts:

- Roadmaps would dispel the impression that nuclear disarmament is utopian – to distant and indefinable ever to be achieved.
- Roadmaps would be a constant reminder of the end to which all arms control and nonproliferation efforts are aimed.
- Each country's individual roadmap would be a visible permanent metric of that state's progress.
- The global roadmap would link all states in a sequential ordering clearly identifying which are "next" to take defined steps, preventing paralysis.

A New Nuclear Disarmament Strategy

Many governments today – both with and without nuclear weapons – are seduced by misplaced faith in the power and prestige of nuclear capabilities. Such governments have become increasingly ambivalent about the goal of nuclear disarmament.

Hence, nuclear disarmament cannot be achieved solely through inter-governmental mechanisms such as the NPT. Nuclear disarmament is now also very much about superceding the

⁶ India, Pakistan and Israel are the only three countries in the world that have not joined the NPT. All have nuclear weapons. North Korea joined the NPT in 1987 but withdrew in 2003 and may now also possess nuclear weapons. The NPT Review Conference did not acknowledge North Korea's withdrawal.

prerogatives of governments. This suggests the need to conceptualize the challenge of nuclear disarmament as a global public policy issue related to human security. It also suggests that a new disarmament initiative cannot be expected from governments – it must come from the people.

A new strategy to press governments to respond to the conditions of this new nuclear era must begin by reviving the global public's sense of the urgency to meet the considerable nuclear dangers the world still faces. Because governments have become so quiescent, this strategy would aim to mobilize popular power to compel governments to act meaningfully to achieve nuclear disarmament.

The United States bears a particular responsibility for leadership. Given today's global political realities, real progress toward nuclear disarmament requires the United States to take a leading role. Yet its government is among the most recalcitrant.

Therefore it is in the United States that popular power most requires mobilizing. Although opinion polls in the United States as much as elsewhere show broad public support for a world without nuclear weapons, few Americans consider nuclear abolition possible or realistic – the nuclear “status quo” has become an increasingly entrenched way of thinking. Hence, the US public must be the primary focus of a new strategy to compel governments to action.

Drawing National Roadmaps

The central feature of this new disarmament process would be to compel all governments with extant or latent nuclear weapons capabilities to generate and publish roadmaps delineating how they would achieve nuclear disarmament.

Developing a national roadmap would not oblige any state to dismantle a single nuclear weapon. This is an advantage, because governments could not logically resist undertaking this small disarmament measure on grounds of national security, as happens with efforts to obtain other measures dealing with capabilities directly (such as de-alerting). The call to develop nothing more than a *plan* for disarmament would be non-threatening in the short term to even the most ardent defender of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, disarmament roadmaps would act powerfully to reverse popular perceptions that nuclear disarmament, if desirable, is implausible or utopian. Nuclear arms advocates feed this perception by blithely dismissing nuclear disarmament as “unrealistic” in a dangerous world. Roadmaps, embodying a finite set of criteria and steps to achieve disarmament, would by their nature clear away the fog obscuring the path from today to a nuclear weapons-free world. Thus, demanding nuclear roadmaps would reinvigorate the idea of nuclear abolition in the public discourse. It would democratize the nuclear debate again, as was done during the nuclear freeze campaign of the 1980s – except now focusing on eliminating nuclear weapons rather than merely halting their buildup. Generating the roadmaps would begin the necessary process of national and international planning for nuclear disarmament, and create official government documents spelling out how to proceed.

Because the roadmaps would be compelled not just from the nine nuclear-armed states but also from states with latent nuclear capabilities, all countries would bear an equal responsibility to the obligation. In the United States, where the popular movement to compel these roadmaps should begin, the objective would be to achieve federal legislation requiring the US government to prepare a disarmament roadmap and specifying the detailed criteria that roadmap would meet.

Roadmap Terms

Each state producing a roadmap would specify its material and political prerequisites for disarmament, and detail specific plans for verifiably eliminating all elements of its nuclear

capabilities. This would include the irreversible dismantling of existing nuclear arms and verifiable restriction of all nuclear weapons development capacities of peaceful nuclear facilities.⁷

For states with nuclear weapons, issues to be addressed would include:

- The technical facilities, capabilities, and procedures required to verifiably eliminate the nation's nuclear arsenal and securely dispose of the fissile materials contained in them.
- The timeline for phased dismantlement and disposition of these physical capabilities.
- The technologies and procedures necessary to allow international verification of nuclear disarmament while insuring that the verification process itself does not risk proliferation of sensitive nuclear knowledge.

For both states with nuclear weapons and other states possessing latent nuclear weapons capabilities, issues to be addressed would include:

- The national capacity to prepare a complete accounting for all fissile materials in the nation's territory.
- The procedures or policies to provide high confidence that no state is hiding nuclear material or weapons, while claiming either to have eliminated its nuclear arsenal or to have never possessed one in the first place.
- The level of confidence the state would require in disarmament verification before it could verifiably dismantle the last nuclear weapon or put the last kilogram of fissile material under IAEA safeguards.
- The national security conditions required to eliminate all national need for reliance on nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence, through security assurances under irreversible international agreement where possible or through conventional force substitutes where necessary.
- Economic conversion mechanisms to provide adjustment assistance, alternative employment opportunities and income security for the people and communities that now depend on nuclear weapons systems for their livelihood.

Publication of these national reports would create a matrix of conditions for global nuclear disarmament. The cumulative list would no doubt be daunting. But the existence of these national roadmaps would initiate global dialog and debate toward combining them into a single roadmap to disarmament.

The existence of the concrete roadmaps would also curb extremes of the current debate over the prospect of global nuclear disarmament. Nuclear arms advocates, faced with a finite set of criteria for disarmament, would no longer be able to blithely dismiss nuclear disarmament as a utopian aspiration without real meaning in the practical world. At the same time, proponents of disarmament would face directly the difficult technical and political security challenges that would have to be overcome to achieve nuclear abolition.

After a suitable period of dialog, an international conference would be convened to knit together the roadmaps into a single global plan for nuclear disarmament capable of receiving universal support. This conference would be convened under the authority of the UN Security Council,

⁷ Some of the subsequent criteria are drawn from George Perkovich, et. al., *Universal Compliance: A Strategy for Nuclear Security*, Report by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 2005, pp.145-57. The present proposal broadens the disarmament concept of *Universal Compliance* by calling for participation by all countries with potential nuclear weapons capabilities, not just with fissile material stocks, and by including in the roadmaps each country's security and political as well as material prerequisites.

either under the auspices of the UN Conference on Disarmament, the IAEA, or as an independent process. The conference would meet without an expiration date until the global roadmap is achieved.

Alternatively, the roadmap plans could be framed in the context of existing international responsibilities, such as the disarmament obligations of all NPT members under Article VI of that treaty⁸ and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling that there exists a duty to pursue and conclusively achieve nuclear disarmament. The roadmap plans could also be implemented as a series of reciprocal independent initiatives, following the model of the 1991 U.S.-Soviet reductions; such initiatives could complement more multilateral processes by sustaining momentum of practical disarmament steps.

The resulting roadmap will be complex, and its timeline for achievement would likely be extended. Implementation of the roadmap would be fraught with challenges as international conditions continue to evolve in unpredictable ways. But with a roadmap in hand specifying reciprocal steps by all states, progress could be carefully metered and monitored, and accountability for setbacks fairly allocated.

A Civil Society Strategy

Building momentum for nuclear roadmaps would require a vast and sustained commitment of citizen involvement. Civil society mobilization should begin in the United States, but would ultimately be initiated in all countries with existing or latent nuclear weapons capabilities. In the United States, the strategy would focus on insisting that the US government develop a disarmament roadmap. The ultimate aim would be to have a Congressional mandate requiring the government to produce a detailed roadmap according to a fixed timeline (perhaps attached as a binding amendment to defense authorization legislation).

The civil society strategy could follow two simultaneous tracks.

Model Resolution. In the United States the strategy would focus on developing a model resolution: a simple statement describing the purpose of the disarmament roadmap, obliging the government to produce a meaningful roadmap and outlining what the criteria of the roadmap should be. The campaign would encourage adoption of the model resolution by citizens groups, religious bodies, governmental councils and agencies, professional associations, trade unions, business groups, service organizations, and other civil society groups. The goal would be to gain the endorsement of thousands of such groups, so that virtually the entire society expresses support for the roadmaps.

A further stage of this strategy would involve presenting the resolution to voters in non-binding ballot measures. This second phase could begin after the first is already under way and could be tested in a pilot project in a few localities.

Independent Roadmaps. In addition to demanding that governments develop disarmament roadmaps, citizens groups could develop their own roadmaps. They could publicize or update the best of the existing plans for disarmament, such as the 1996 Canberra Commission report. They could hold citizen hearings and invite expert testimony on why and how governments should proceed toward the elimination of nuclear weapons. People could be encouraged to learn about and develop proposals for nuclear disarmament. To demonstrate the viability of renouncing nuclear weapons, the campaign could produce reports and analyses examining the experiences of countries such as South Africa and Ukraine that gave up nuclear weapons after acquiring or developing them.

⁸ Note that the non-universality and discriminatory basis of NPT membership may limit its applicability as a legal framework to which roadmap-based disarmament obligations could be attached.

This activity would serve several purposes:

- Educate millions of people on both the need for and practicality of nuclear disarmament.
- Invest in these people the commitment to work for the elimination of nuclear weapons.
- Demonstrate the viability of governmental roadmaps, further underscoring the plausibility of nuclear disarmament.
- Increase popular pressure for governments to adopt roadmaps.

Questions and Challenges

Several questions and challenges remain to be addressed.

It is quite conceivable that the U.S. government and other nuclear weapons states will simply refuse to develop the required nuclear roadmaps, or will produce documents asserting that disarmament is impossible. These governments are, after all, more ambivalent about disarmament than ever before.

The campaign can anticipate this resistance by assuring that the requirement to develop roadmaps is established in binding law, and that the requirements for the roadmaps are highly specific. More importantly, the campaign must develop sufficiently strong levels of political support to mobilize pressure for the government to fulfill its obligation to plan for disarmament. This depth of support may require years to generate, and the campaign should attempt to require a legally binding disarmament roadmap from Congress only after it has already developed a very broad base of public support.

The next challenge would be to insure that governments producing roadmaps actually implement them. There are many progressive plans that are never implemented because of political resistance from entrenched vested interests.

The response to this resistance would be to refocus the campaign on the new goal to “start the plan” by focusing on implementation of the first steps provided in the plan, whatever they may be. At this stage the campaign would direct its momentum toward ensuring that elected officials remain accountable for seeing that implementation of the roadmap is fulfilled.

It is important to remember that the very process of building the campaign for nuclear roadmaps will change the public debate and prompt a range of responses from political adversaries and third parties. Typically, as such campaigns generate momentum, efforts emerge to undercut them through compromise. During the nuclear freeze campaign, for example, congressional moderates responded by generating pressure on the Reagan administration to adopt a more flexible arms control negotiating policy toward the Soviet Union. A disarmament roadmaps campaign must be prepared for similar responses.

An intricate problem will emerge if a transformation of the US position is achieved, but governments of other nuclear-armed or nuclear-capable states fail to reciprocate. Each state's roadmap, including that of the United States, will likely be tied to conditions requiring other states to act as well. No state will be able to fully implement its roadmap without reciprocity.

This problem is the reason for international coordination of the roadmaps, either through an international conference or other means, to link the roadmaps to one another, spelling out the sequencing of reciprocal implementation. The integrated global plan will in itself provide a powerful political instrument to pressure governments to follow through with commitments, because each stage of implementation of the global plan would be universally known and the state(s) responsible for the next steps evident to all. No state could deny, as they can today, that it is “their turn” to act.

But the United States, as the world's preeminent power, has an assurance of security exceeding all other states. This provides it with latitude of action enabling it to "go first." Moreover, US preeminence today sets the tone for global politics. Current policies entrenching US commitment to retaining its nuclear capabilities endorse and embolden proliferation ambitions worldwide. A reversed US posture firmly forswearing any reliance on nuclear threats would dramatically deflate the image of nuclear weapons as a useful currency of world power. Increased US support for existing international institutions aiming to curb nuclear proliferation would further impinge the abilities of smaller countries to resist global pressures to adopt and follow their own disarmament roadmaps.

Ultimately, if other states fail to reciprocate, the disarmament process will stall. But if the United States is fulfilling a genuine leadership role, mobilizing global civil society to begin pressuring other states to follow through will be a much more achievable objective than at present.

Perhaps the most important challenge will be sustaining the required level of citizen commitment and involvement over the several years that will be necessary to achieve the objective of an integrated global roadmap. This problem cannot be "solved" but it can be managed by establishing a series of achievable interim goals and objectives that will give citizens a sense of empowerment to continue the campaign toward the longer range objective. Gaining approval for roadmap resolutions will provide opportunities for achieving interim objectives. Each church body or professional organization that adopts the civil society resolution will provide a victory for those who organize for it. Winning voter referendum campaigns on behalf of the resolution will provide an even greater sense of empowerment. These victories will build upon one another as the campaign gradually acquires momentum for the challenge of pressuring Congress and the federal government.

Interim victories also can be achieved by linking the long-range effort to short-term campaigns against, for example, the development of new nuclear weapons. The recent effort to block the bunker buster (successful for the moment) advances the longer range goal. The campaign will also address other interim challenges and opportunities as they arise, constantly linking short-term efforts to the long range objectives. This linkage, in turn, will help cement the shorter-term gains. By combining short and long term efforts in this manner, the campaign can empower its supporters with interim successes while building momentum over the long term to abolish nuclear weapons.

Conclusion

Nuclear disarmament has always been not only an ultimate goal, but also a vision with practical consequences for nearer-term arms control and nonproliferation practices. The vision reminds us that arms control and nonproliferation are means to a greater end, not simply instruments to curb the greatest dangers of a nuclear status quo. Sustaining global nuclear disarmament as the ultimate objective is a prerequisite for any arms control and nonproliferation achievements to be sustainable. In other words, to be realistic, solutions even to immediate nuclear challenges must aim to advance nuclear disarmament.

But today, we face a cruel paradox: success in mitigating the greatest nuclear dangers of the Cold War era has made it easier for governments to disassociate the nearer-term means from the ultimate end. Some nuclear dangers of the emerging second nuclear era are more potent than those of the first. But these nuclear dangers are also different in kind, and not strictly comparable. Now more than ever, these dangers are tied to threats to use nuclear weapons to instill fear and seek gain in specific social and political contexts.

Here emerges a second paradox: although the responsibility of states to pursue disarmament is broader, the diminution of the prospect of massive nuclear war has made the world appear to be

“safer” for governments to embrace nuclear capabilities (extant or latent) as currencies of power and prestige. Governments of states possessing nuclear weapons increasingly regard arms control not as a means to disarmament but as an instrument only to curb the greatest dangers of a nuclear status quo. Governments of incipient nuclear weapons states increasingly regard nonproliferation not as a means to disarmament but as an instrument only to prevent new entrants into the nuclear “club.” Both sets of governments, grasping the short-term “fix” nuclear weapons seem to offer, have abandoned the long-term imperative of nuclear disarmament.

For this reason, civil society efforts to rekindle a global movement toward nuclear disarmament are as vital as ever. More than before, such efforts must now also recognize the depths to which nuclear weapons and nuclear threat-making are enmeshed in global security structures, and must therefore also offer progressive new forms of global governance that create security structures sustainable in a non-nuclear world. The imperative of nuclear disarmament is today inseparable from the need to establish new forms of global governance independent of the sovereign state system and based on principles of law and democratic accountability.⁹

Realizing practical progress toward nuclear disarmament, however incremental, sustains the viability of this vision. Such progress further constitutes that vision by adding depth and substance to it, and transmits to future generations the requisite knowledge and skills, and imagination, to carry forth that imperative.

We know that, with wisdom and conviction, real near-term progress can be made. The experiences of the early 1990s, among others, have proven that. We also know that the ultimate goals, if distant, are not utopian. In the words of William Arthur Ward, “If you can imagine it, you can achieve it. If you can dream it, you can become it.”¹⁰

⁹ States are unlikely to go away any time soon, and will remain the loci of decisions to develop nuclear weapons and utilize nuclear threats. But globalization is already producing new forms of transnational non-governmental communication and action that impinges state sovereignty and constitutes incipient alternative global governance mechanisms. These mechanisms can be nurtured and grown to supplement domestic efforts and effectively increase all states’ accountability for nuclear weapons decision-making.

¹⁰ Thoughts of a Christian optimist, vol. II: The words of William Arthur Ward.