CTBT Solves

AM- CTBT shows US hopes for a nuclear-weapons-free world


The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) is critical for two reasons. It will send a message that the U.S. is serious about its vision of achieving a nuclear-weapons-free world, and it will stop other countries from conducting nuclear tests. The Senate was right to reject the CTBT in 1999. To do so again would send the wrong message to the world. That message would be that the U.S. seeks to maintain the nuclear double standards that have existed from the beginning of the nuclear age. This will encourage nuclear proliferation. The only conditions under which the citizens of the United States will be safe from a nuclear attack are those of a world with zero nuclear weapons. Banning all nuclear testing globally is an important step toward this goal.

AM- By ratifying the CTBT the US loses nothing and gains much


Rademaker began his remarks by saying that it wasn't enough for those in favor of the CTBT to refute the arguments against ratification; they also would have to show that there was a strong case that ratification would affirmatively increase the security of the United States. "I didn't marry my wife because I couldn't think of anything wrong with her," he said. "I married her because of what's right about her. The same burden should rest upon the Senate."

Setting out to make such a case, Kimball argued that the CTBT would prevent countries such as China, India, and Pakistan from progressing beyond their relatively vanilla nuclear weapons by developing neutron bombs or miniaturized hydrogen bombs that would allow each of their missiles a multiple-strike capability. Kimball also suggested that doubts about the U.S. ability to maintain its nuclear stockpile without testing and questions about its ability to detect cheating doubts and questions that helped kill ratification in 1999—now have been largely allayed as the Stockpile Stewardship Program has matured and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization's monitoring system has improved. "The United States loses nothing and gains much" by ratifying the treaty, he argued.

Like many arms control experts, Kimball is concerned that the global nonproliferation regime is growing increasingly rickety as more countries acquire the know-how to their nuclear energy infrastructure—a potential breakout capability from the NPT. Kimball argued that, against a backdrop of international complaints that the United States isn't serious about disarmament, CTBT ratification would restore the country's arms control credentials and thus, its ability to hold the line on proliferation, while helping to isolate countries such as Iran.

SC- Obama and senate need to ratify CTBT to reach national security goal


The 1999 vote fell short of an absolute majority, much less the two-thirds majority required for treaty ratification under the U.S. Constitution. This failure undercut traditional U.S. leadership on nuclear nonproliferation issues, and offered an easy justification for China to continue to refuse to ratify the CTBT, as well as for India and Pakistan to avoid signing the treaty altogether. An announcement in Obama's first year in office that he will call on the Senate to initiate the consideration of the CTBT by holding the appropriate hearings over the next year, with the goal of scheduling a ratification vote prior to the end of his first term in 2012, will send an unmistakable signal that the United States is once again committed to multilateral, rules-based cooperation with the international community to advance mutual interests. It will reenergize a flagging nonproliferation regime and offer the United States important leverage on key challenges like Iran and North Korea. With a healthy majority of Democratic senators in place, and close relationships with key moderate Republicans, Obama is within reach of the 67 votes necessary to secure ratification, and accomplish a significant foreign policy and national security goal.

SC- CTBT Ratification Crucial to Enhancing U.S. Security for Years to Come


Today, the CTBT is more important than ever. U.S. approval of the Treaty would substantially constrain the ability of other nuclear-armed states to perfect new and more deadly nuclear bombs, and reestablish U.S. leadership on stopping the spread of nuclear weapons—enhancing U.S. security for years to come.

KH- Ratifying the CTBT actually enhances security because it destroys loopholes created by the NPT bargains


The positive reason to ratify is that giving up nuclear tests enhances security.

Since 1999, we have learned that a nonproliferation system designed against threats from states must be rebuilt to eliminate loopholes and to contain new threats from commercial groups and from terrorists.

Iraq, Iran and North Korea exploited a critical vagueness in the NPT that must be fixed. In 2003, the news broke that a multinational, commercial network was selling bomb technology. On 9/11 Americans awoke to the terrorist threat, and we have since learned of some terrorists' nuclear ambitions.

But 20 years after the end of the Cold War, the non-nuclear states feel that the weapons states haven't upheld their end of the NPT bargain: to move toward disarmament. They are, therefore, unwilling to discuss necessary new restrictions until they see movement. Ratifying the test ban is a necessary first step.
Jr. U.S. ratification will likely ensure China's—therefore impeding Iran's nuclear ambitions.


Ten years ago last week, the Senate rejected the treaty for a global ban on nuclear tests. In April, President Barack Obama promised to “immediately and aggressively pursue U.S. ratification.”

Proliferation threats like Iran make U.S. ratification more urgent and a smart global security strategy. After the U.S. and China ratify, the major powers will have another tool for impeding Iran’s nuclear ambitions. Because China’s ratification is linked to the timing of U.S. ratification, the United States must act first.

In light of recent revelations and consternation about Iran’s pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability, the global test ban is a critical tool. Iranian ratification is both a confidence-building measure and an obstacle to nuclear weapons development. A would-be nuclear weapons state requires nuclear tests to have confidence that its weapons work and can be deployed as deliverable nuclear warheads. States in pursuit of prestige also use nuclear tests to announce their capabilities.

KH- Ratification of the CTBT would impose no costs to national security.


American supporters of the CTBT argue that ratification would impose no additional costs on U.S. security given that Washington has already signed the treaty, has unilaterally adhered to the accord’s prohibition against nuclear testing, and has developed what they consider an effective program for maintaining the reliability and effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear stockpile even without testing or developing new nuclear weapons. As the United States is already constraining its behavior to conform to the treaty and has no compelling reason to resume nuclear testing, they depict U.S. ratification as essentially cost-free.

Advocates of the CTBT further argue that comprehensively ending nuclear testing through the treaty’s adoption would constrain vertical and horizontal nuclear proliferation since states would become less inclined to incur the financial and other costs of researching, developing, and deploying sophisticated nuclear weapons whose efficacy could not be verified through field tests. Supporters of the NPT also see the CTBT (.pdf) as a step towards the delegitimization and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons, which would end the current discriminatory practice by which a few NPT members are permitted to possess nuclear weapons while others cannot. The 1995 NPT Review Conference only agreed to extend the NPT indefinitely after the parties committed to negotiate a universal and comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty no later than 1996.

KH-The CTBT will discourage the creation of new Nuclear weapons and protect against covert nuclear testing.

Brent Scowcroft. October 18, 2009. Brent Scowcroft was the National Security Advisor to Presidents Gerald Ford and George H.W. Bush. Less famously, he’s the Chairman of the Atlantic Council International Advisory Board and served as Chairman of the Board of the Council itself from 1998-1999. "U.S and Russia must act to reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation". The Gov Monitor-A public sector news and information.

The CTBT is especially important to the goal of reducing nuclear weapons. Its ratification by the U.S. and eight other holdout countries will considerably strengthen the global nonproliferation regime in numerous ways. By actively seeking ratification, the U.S. will be more able to persuade Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty member states to erect stronger barriers against the acquisition of nuclear weapons. When ratified, the CTBT will expedite agreement on more rigorous export controls, measures to protect against the theft of dangerous materials and knowledge and measures to discourage the spread of enrichment and reprocessing facilities. Implementation of the CTBT’s international monitoring system will add significantly to U.S. national capabilities to detect covert nuclear testing worldwide. It will also impede the ability of countries with nuclear weapons to develop and deploy more advanced nuclear systems, including taking steps to miniaturize and otherwise make more usable their offensive nuclear capabilities.

KH- Ratification of the CTBT will allow advances and improvements in a worldwide seismic network


For many years, indeed throughout the long history of negotiations toward a CTBT, verification of compliance had been a separate issue. Over time, a broad consensus, based on considerable work by scientific personnel, developed in Geneva on a technical basis as to the means required to provide effective verification for a CTBT. This included improvements to and expansion of the worldwide seismic network, as well as radionuclide, hydroacoustic, and infrasound monitoring. All these systems were agreed to be incorporated into a vast international monitoring system established under the treaty. The primary system would consist of 50 seismic stations worldwide to monitor underground events (earthquakes and explosions) and 120 auxiliary stations. 80 radionuclide laboratories to monitor radioactive particles associated with a nuclear explosion, 11 hydroacoustic stations to listen for explosions under water, and 60 infrasound stations to monitor sound waves in the atmosphere. The data produced by these facilities flow continuously into an international data center, which is part of the technical secretariat of the CTBT Organization (CTBTO), located in Vienna, Austria. The data are stored, analyzed, and disseminated as appropriate and will be used to address compliance concerns, including decisions for on-site inspections. Importantly, the treaty provides for the right of the States parties to use national technical means (e.g., information from United States satellite monitoring – as well as potentially from other States) for verification, particularly to evaluate on-site inspection requests (which after a long negotiation it was agreed would be authorized by an affirmative vote by at least thirty of the fifty-one technical secretariat members).

A CTBT in force will mean it will no longer be possible to develop new types of sophisticated nuclear weapons and with the strength of the worldwide International Monitoring System behind it will make it impossible for additional States to acquire nuclear weapons except those of the crudest type, too heavy and unwieldy to be mated with a missile system. An operating CTBT regime will be a step toward the ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons worldwide.
KH-The CTBT would deter other countries from testing warheads.


Despite powerful U.S. national capabilities and a decade of advances in international monitoring capabilities, Kyl also repeats the age-old charge that clandestine tests cannot be detected with absolute certainty. This argument misses the point on verification and implies that low-yield tests are worth the high risk of getting caught. Those countries that are best able to conduct such clandestine testing successfully already possess advanced nuclear weapons of a number of types. Additional testing would do little to increase the threat these countries already pose to the United States. Countries with less nuclear-test experience or design sophistication would be unable to conceal tests in the numbers and yields required to master advanced warheads.

JR- Obama's step towards nuclear disarmament facilitates work with Russians and Chinese over Iraq.


Obama's Nobel already has sparked hopeful discussions among officials working on nuclear disarmament from European capitals to the halls of the United Nations in New York. Perhaps even more significantly, it is bringing attention to the issue in Main Street America. "This makes a positive impact on the Obama nonproliferation agenda if only because it highlights for the U.S. audience a recognition of the importance" of the issue, said Jeff Abramson, deputy director of the Arms Control Association. "There’s been a lot of criticism that this wasn't deserved," Abramson added. "I don't think the U.S. public recognized how much other countries do care" about disarmament. Former U.S. Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament Robert Grey characterized the award as "frosting on the cake" in intensifying international support for the nuclear disarmament ideals Obama laid out in a Prague speech last spring. "What the Nobel Prize symbolizes is a tangible, visible sign that people approve of what his administration has been trying to do and, most of all, they welcome the change" from Bush administration policies, Grey said. "It gives an impetus to it and given his popularity, it gives a real chance to move forward on these issues that have been around for 25 or 30 years."In fact, the Nobel could have immediate practical effects for U.S. efforts on issues such as Iran's nuclear program, according to Grey, who also served as U.S. political counselor at the United Nations. "It makes it easier to get the Russians and the Chinese to cooperate on the Iranians," he said. "The positive attitude toward this in Eastern Europe and in the Third World is something that impels the Russians and the Chinese to move forward and be more cooperative than they would otherwise."

JR-The CTBT is essential to impede new nuclear weapons, obstruct new nuclear powers and prevent further human and global devastation.


Ten years ago, the United States decided to pursue a “zero-yield” Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), opening the way to the successful completion of negotiations and the endorsement of the treaty here at the United Nations in September 1996. The CTBT is the product of decades of hard work, dedication, and advocacy by key governmental leaders and perhaps even more importantly, by NGOs, scientific experts, and millions of ordinary people around the world. They have long understood that ending nuclear testing is essential for three powerful reasons: to impede the development of new types of nuclear warheads and reduce dangerous nuclear arms competition; to obstruct the emergence of new nuclear powers; and to prevent further devastation of human health and the global environment. In the context of today's ongoing tensions between nuclear weapons states and would-be nuclear weapons states, illicit nuclear trading, and efforts by the nuclear weapon states to improve their nuclear weapon capabilities, the CTBT is more important than ever. Its entry into force is overdue.