

CLOSER TO NUCLEAR ABOLITION

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Voices of the South on Globalization is a monthly newsletter intended to inspire a meaningful North-South Dialogue by raising awareness for global interdependences and by offering a forum for voices from the South in the globalization debate. Each edition will present short analyses or commentaries from a Southern perspective on one particular issue of the globalization process.

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U.S. RIFTS OVER OBAMA APPROACH

U.S. President Barack Obama's decision to chair a UN Security Council meeting Sep. 24 on nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament has drawn to the surface dramatically different views of his approach, the Global Security Newswire (GSN) reported from Washington.

As the first U.S. president to lead such a gathering, Obama sought Security Council sponsorship for some specific measures to grapple with the dangers posed by atomic weapons. However, he largely steered clear of singling out nations like Iran or North Korea, where nuclear work remains of international concern.

Obama's strategy of pressing the Security Council to address proliferation challenges generally, rather than focusing on specific punitive measures from the outset, is seen as a reckless gambit that could signal weakness to the world.

"The [Obama] move represents one of the most dangerous diplomatic ploys this country has ever seen," according to Anne Bayefsky, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute.

Others see the approach quite differently: "I applaud the Obama administration for seizing this opportunity" to focus the Security Council on global nuclear dangers, said Sharon Squassoni, a nonproliferation expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

"I think this is a preview of some of the issues that the Obama administration is going to want to raise in 2010," when world leaders gather for conferences on nonproliferation, she told GSN.

"Let me be clear, this is not about singling out individual nations -- it is about standing up for the rights of all nations that do live up to their responsibilities," Obama said Sep. 23 in a speech before the UN General Assembly. "Because a world in which [International Atomic Energy Agency] inspections are avoided and the United Nations' demands are ignored will leave all people less safe, and all nations less secure."

That said, he went on to rap Iran and North Korea by name, stating that they "must be held accountable" for violating international norms and that "the world must stand together to demonstrate that international law is not an empty promise, and that treaties will be enforced."

The UN event the next day offered Obama another international stage for underscoring a set of ambitious nuclear-related objectives that he first described as president during an April speech in Prague.

"The technology to build a bomb has spread. Terrorists are determined to buy, build or steal one," the president told a huge crowd in the Czech Republic. "Our efforts to contain these dangers are centered on a global nonproliferation regime, but as more people and nations break the rules, we could reach the point where the center cannot hold." To bolster security, Obama said his administration "will take concrete steps towards a world without nuclear weapons," to include negotiating with Moscow a new set of arms cuts and reducing the "role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy."

The White House would also push the U.S. Senate to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and seek a new global pact to end the production of fissile material usable in nuclear weapons, he said.

Obama reiterated those goals in Sep. 23 speech before the General Assembly: "We must stop the spread of nuclear weapons, and seek the goal of a world without them," he told global leaders in New York. "The threat of proliferation is growing in scope and complexity."

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NUCLEAR WEAPONS FREE WORLD BY 2020?

By Maria Luisa Vargas

If Tadatoshi Akiba, the mayor of Hiroshima, had his way, the special UN Security Council session chaired by U.S. President Barack Obama on Sep. 24 would have decided to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons by 2020 -- a year that would mark the 75th anniversary of the terrible destruction caused by U.S. atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Along with Nobel Peace Prize laureate Jody Williams, Tadatoshi Akiba, president of Mayors for Peace, was among eminent participants in the annual conference for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) under the banner 'For Peace and Development: Disarm Now!'

The meeting, attended by some 1,200 NGO and civil society representatives from about 70 countries, was organised by the UN Department of Public Information (DPI) in co-operation with the DPI/NGO Executive Committee, the Government of Mexico, and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs. The conference was held outside of UN headquarters in New York for the second time in its 62-year history. Mexico City is the seat of the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which in 1969 established Latin America as the first densely populated region to be a nuclear-weapons-free zone

"The abolition of nuclear weapons is not only the desire of *Hibakusha* (survivors), but also the majority of peoples and nations on this planet," said the Hiroshima mayor in an impassioned plea, urging NGOs and city mayors from around the world to mobilise public opinion for global nuclear disarmament. Echoing his support, UN General Assembly President Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, in a pre-recorded message, said that in August he had met with the victims and families of the 1945 atomic bombing in Nagasaki, Japan. The gruesome reality for them had lost none of its power to inspire grief and terror, as well as shame and righteous anger.

He said it was crucial to set an early date for achieving disarmament and a clear, realistic timetable strongly supported the 2020 deadline. "Eleven years is not too little to demonstrate real commitment and real progress, D'Escoto said, adding that: "We can have realistic, time-bound interim benchmarks, against which the world community must hold all -- not just some -- nuclear powers accountable."

Noting that global military spending is now well over \$1 trillion per year and rising every day, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon supported the call for the total eradication of nuclear weapons and exhorted civil society groups in particular to continue to speak out against the scourge. "The world is over-armed and peace is underfunded," Ban warned in his opening remarks to the conference Sep. 9. He noted that more weapons continue to be produced and are flooding markets around the world. "They are destabilizing societies. They feed the flames of civil wars and terror," he stated. "Here in Latin America, gun violence is the number one cause of civilian casualties." Ban said the presidents of the Russian Federation and the United States had made a good start to create a nuclear-weapons-free world when they recently joined forces to seek to reduce their respective nuclear arsenals and delivery vehicles in accordance with their obligations under Article VI of the NPT.

"I have come here to give you my full encouragement to continue your work in disarmament. I also want to expand the coalition of support for my five-point plan -- first introduced on October 24, 2008 -- to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons based on key principles," Ban said.

That plan "to stop the bomb" requires enhancing security and protecting non-nuclear-weapon states from nuclear weapon threats, as well as having non-NPT states freeze their weapon capabilities and make their own disarmament commitments.

The plan also envisages that disarmament is reliably verified, thus supporting Britain's proposal for recognized nuclear-weapon states to discuss nuclear disarmament and confidence-building measures, including verification. Further, it must be rooted in legal obligations. Universal membership in multilateral treaties is crucial to the plan, as are regional nuclear-weapon-free zones and a new treaty on fissile materials.

Ban further called on countries with nuclear weapons to publish more information about their efforts to honour their disarmament commitments, stressing that the precise number of nuclear weapons in existence worldwide was unknown. The UN Secretariat could serve as a repository for such data. He proposed that the Council, through an appropriate mechanism, consider how to increase transparency and openness on nuclear weapons programmes of the recognized nuclear-weapons states.

The UN plan further stipulates that disarmament must also anticipate emerging dangers from other weapons urging progress in eliminating other arsenals of mass destruction and limiting missiles, space weapons and conventional arms. "There can be no development without peace and no peace without development. Disarmament can provide the means for both," Ban said.

The significance of the conference was also underlined by the fact that the end of the cold war had led the world to expect a massive peace dividend. But more than 20,000 nuclear weapons still exist today, and military spending continues to rise, with weapons flooding markets and destabilizing societies, feeding the flames of civil war and terror. That, coupled with ever-growing ballistic missile proliferation and increasing threats from terrorists, has demonstrated that nuclear weapons are existential threats to humankind.

Presently, more than 110 countries are covered by nuclear-weapons-free zones. Recently, the treaty for a nuclear-weapons-free zone in Central Asia entered into force. Political leaders had negotiated a treaty to outlaw all nuclear explosions, but it still has not entered into force, while the obstacles continue to derail tireless negotiations for a global ban on the production of fissile materials for use in nuclear explosives.

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UN CONFERENCE MULLS OVER NUCLEAR ABOLITION

By Taro Ichikawa

If a world without nuclear weapons is not to remain distant and just a dream, the nuclear haves must demonstrate political will, leadership and flexibility at the landmark NPT Review Conference slated for May next year in New York.

This was the upshot of discussions joined by some 90 government officials and academics from 21 countries including the United States, China, France, Germany, Japan and the Middle East at the three-day UN conference on disarmament held in Niigata, a city on the northwest coast of Honshu, the largest island of Japan. The gathering was the 21st in a series of conferences hosted by Japan since 1989.

The annual conference is considered an important forum for frank dialogue and exchange of views on pressing security and disarmament-related issues facing the international community. It also addresses the particular disarmament and non-proliferation concerns of countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

The conference, organised by the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs through its Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, took place less than four weeks in run up to the UN Security Council meeting Sep. 24.

U.S. President Barack Obama will preside over the meeting of world leaders providing a high profile political platform for two of the most sensitive issues at the United Nations: nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

While reaffirming Obama's intention to bring about a nuclear free world, Ambassador Susan Burk, U.S. Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Non-proliferation told participants: "The U.S. cannot do it alone but can take the lead of (other nations)."

Explaining the U.S. strategy, Ambassador Burk said that "the U.S. will lower the military role (of nuclear weapons) by reducing stockpiles" of those weapons and it would request other nuclear states to take similar steps.

Further: "The U.S. will seek to include legally binding verification function in the new agreement which U.S. is currently negotiating with Russia to replace START I. (the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty)." The purpose, she said, was to seek an effective treaty.

Katsuhito Asano, deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary of the Japanese government referred to President Obama's speech in Prague April this year, expressing his resolution to work towards nuclear disarmament and remarked that "a groundswell of nuclear disarmament is arising and it is the time to cooperate".

"In order to realise a world free of nuclear weapons, both nuclear states and non-nuclear states need to make efforts," said Hannelore Hoppe, director and deputy to the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

The conference explored ways and means to translate the vision of a nuclear weapon-free world into concrete actions. Such actions include some preliminary steps aimed at significantly reducing nuclear arsenals, enhancing efforts to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) into force, and negotiating a

Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT). The dangers posed by existing nuclear weapons and the risks of the proliferation of such weapons or their acquisition by non-state actors collectively pose the gravest challenges to international peace and security," said Hoppe.

Analysing the current global political situation, Yoriko Kawaguchi, a former Foreign Minister of Japan pointed out that "with the U.S. and Russia entering into negotiation for nuclear reduction, recent circumstances surrounding nuclear disarmament are in stark contrast with the situation several years ago".

Kawaguchi, who co-chairs the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND) expressed the conviction that "we need confidence-building among nuclear weapon states, drafting of law-abiding international rule, and discussions reflecting security circumstances in each region".

In an interview with the Chugoku Shimbun, a Hiroshima based daily newspaper, Libran N. Cabactulan, the Philippines Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, who will preside over NPT Review Conference next year, said: "Political will and leadership are critical to its success." He was happy that "these essential elements have been growing."

Cabactulan welcomed in particular the effort by President Obama for the U.S. ratification of the CTBT. "His enthusiasm is providing momentum for the success of the NPT Review Conference," said Cabactulan. At the same time, he emphasised the need for advancing discussion on all three pillars of the NPT: disarmament, non-proliferation, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. He also pointed out that, due to the lack of progress in regard to agreements made at past conferences, "signatories have been feeling some dissatisfaction".

These agreements include the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East as well as the 13 disarmament measures including "an unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenal". Besides discussing the prospects of next year's NPT Review Conference, the Niigata conference addressed topics ranging from denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula to the role of the media and civil society organizations in disarmament.

The conference also discussed the issue of 'nuclear umbrella', according to the Japanese Communist Party's newspaper 'The AKAHATA'. Japan enjoys U.S. protection through the U.S. nuclear umbrella. Former Foreign Minister of Japan and co-chairperson of ICNND Kawaguchi reportedly remarked: "How can Japan and South Korea, who are facing a 'serious threat' from North Korea, lower the role of nuclear umbrella without destabilizing the safety of their own nations?" She pleaded for sticking to the "nuclear umbrella" till those conditions were fulfilled. - IDN-InDepthNews ☑

AFRICA BECOMES WORLD'S LARGEST NUKE-FREE CONTINENT

By Fareed Mahdy

Africa, the world's second-largest and second most-populous continent after Asia has now become the world's largest nuclear free zone comprising 53 countries with about one billion people. This rather positive news, ignored by most mainstream media, which has its eyes set on a 'might-be nuclear' Iran, is significant also because it relates to the denuclearisation of one of the world's richest uranium producing regions.

In fact the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the African Union (AU) announced mid-August the coming into force of the Treaty of Pelindaba amidst news of an intensive legal and illegal exploitation of uranium mines in Africa by European and Chinese-backed multinational corporations.

The entry into force of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ) Treaty ensures that Southern hemisphere territories are now a zone free of nuclear weapons.

The process of the coming into force of the Treaty was completed July 15 after its ratification by Burundi, the 28th African nation to do so. Algeria and Burkina Faso were the first African countries that ratified the Treaty in 1998, only two years after its signature.

The Treaty of Pelindaba establishes that in order to allow for the verification of its nuclear non-proliferation undertaking, all parties involved are required to conclude "comprehensive safeguards agreements" with the IAEA.

These agreements are equivalent to the ones required in relation to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The Treaty also commits its parties "to apply the highest standard of security and physical protection of nuclear material, facilities, and equipment to prevent theft and unauthorized use, as well as prohibits armed attacks against nuclear installations within the zone".

The Treaty of Pelindaba officially declares Africa a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone. Drafted in Johannesburg and Pelindaba in June 1995, and opened for signature in Cairo on April 11, 1996, the Treaty is named after the Pelindaba nuclear research facility situated near the Hartbeespoort Dam, west of Pretoria in the Republic of South Africa.

Pelindaba is South Africa's main Nuclear Research Centre, run by the Nuclear Energy Corporation of South Africa, and was the location where South Africa's atomic bombs of the 1970s were developed, constructed and subsequently stored.

The IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei declared: "The African NWFZ, similar to other nuclear weapons free zones in Latin America and the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, South Pacific and Central Asia, is an important regional confidence and security-building measure and would contribute to our efforts for a world free from nuclear weapons."

He also welcomed the Treaty's support of "the use of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes and trusts that the use of nuclear technologies in Africa would contribute to the continent's economic and social development". The process of declaring Africa a nuclear weapons free zone was launched by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the then called

Organization of African Unity (OAU), held in Cairo from July 17 to 21, 1964, during which they decided to establish the African NWFZ.

In Cairo, the African leaders declared their readiness "to undertake, through an international agreement to be concluded under United Nations auspices, not to manufacture or acquire control of nuclear weapons".

The African heads of State and government based their position on all related international agreements, such as the UN General Assembly Resolution of December 11, 1975 that considered "nuclear-weapon-free zones one of the most effective means for preventing the proliferation, both horizontal and vertical, of nuclear weapons".

The African leaders emphasised their conviction of "the need to take all steps in achieving the ultimate goal of a world entirely free of nuclear weapons, as well as of the obligations of all States to contribute to this end".

They stated as well their conviction that "the African nuclear-weapon-free zone will constitute an important step towards strengthening the non-proliferation regime, promoting cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, promoting general and complete disarmament and enhancing regional and international peace and security".

While announcing the Treaty, African leaders underlined their firm believe that an "African nuclear-weapon-free zone will protect African States against possible nuclear attacks on their territories".

It will also "keep Africa free of environmental pollution by radioactive wastes and other radioactive matter". The treaty commits members not to dump nuclear waste.

However, they also expressed their firm observance of Article IV of the NPT.

This article recognises "the inalienable right of all States Parties to develop research on, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination". It recognises as well their inalienable right to facilitate the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for such purposes.

In Cairo, the African leaders also stressed their determination to promote regional cooperation for the development and practical application of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in the interest of sustainable social and economic development of the Africa continent.

Africa hosts some of the richest uranium mines on earth. Many industrialized countries have high dependence on African minerals in general, and uranium in particular. France, for example, relies entirely on uranium exploitation in Niger to operate its 58 nuclear power plants. Other uranium producers in the continent are Algeria, Botswana, Central African Republic, DR Congo, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Tanzania, and Zambia. ☑

'ASK WHAT WE CAN DO TO MAKE NUCLEAR ABOLITION A REALITY'

A world free of nuclear weapons is no longer a utopia. There is more than one reason to believe that it is a concrete possibility, says Daisaku Ikeda, president of the Buddhist association, Soka Gokkai International (SGI).

"In recent years, we have seen important, groundbreaking examples of humanitarian ideals surmounting military logic and narrowly defined national interests to bring new disarmament accords into existence," says Ikeda explaining the rationale behind his optimism.

"Rather than asking ourselves whether nuclear abolition is possible, we need to ask ourselves what we can do to make this a reality in our time," asserts Ikeda who tabled a five-point plan toward nuclear abolition early September.

"Through my proposal, I want to encourage the leaders not only of the nuclear-weapon states but also of those countries that rely on the nuclear weapons of others for their security to consider the present and future danger presented by nuclear weapons," the SGI president says in a joint interview with IPS and IDN-InDepthNews.

Following are excerpts from the interview conducted by E-Mail in the aftermath of the Security Council special session Sep. 24 on nuclear abolition, chaired by U.S. President Barack Obama

Q: President Obama spelt out his vision of a world free of nuclear weapons last April in Prague. However, the U.S. president expressed doubts in his speech in Prague that a nuke-free world would be ushered in "our lifetime". Would you share that view? In your proposal you ask "the world's people to clearly manifest their will for the outlawing of nuclear weapons and to establish, by the year 2015, the international norm that will serve as the foundation for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC)".

Daisaku Ikeda: We stand today at a critical juncture, one that will determine whether or not humankind can make genuine progress toward a world free of nuclear weapons. Rather than asking ourselves whether nuclear abolition is possible, we need to ask ourselves what we can do to make this a reality in our time.

Through my proposal, I want to encourage the leaders not only of the nuclear-weapon states but also those countries that rely on the nuclear weapons of others for their security to consider the present and future danger presented by nuclear weapons. At the same time, I urge that we all understand that the real "enemy" is not nuclear weapons, nor the states that possess or would develop them.

The real enemy is the way of thinking that justifies nuclear weapons. It is our readiness to see others eliminated when they stand in the way of the fulfilment of our desires and ambitions. This was the underlying message of the declaration, issued some 52 years ago by my predecessor and mentor, second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda, calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

As you note, President Obama has expressed his determination to work for a world without nuclear weapons. At the same time, he has questioned whether this goal will be realized in our lifetime. If the leaders of the nuclear-weapon states and of all countries take concrete action on the basis of a shared sense of

responsibility and -- most importantly -- if there is consistent pressure from the world's people acting in solidarity, what might seem impossible now can certainly be made possible.

The five-year period to 2015, and in particular the eight-month period to next year's NPT Review Conference, will be decisive. To establish a solid beachhead for a world without nuclear weapons, we need to expand global popular commitment toward this goal.

Q: The document released Sep. 8 -- 'Building Global Solidarity Toward Nuclear Abolition' -- points out that the path to the adoption of an NWC is likely to be a difficult one, not the least because the entrenched perceptions of military security stand in the way. Do you see any realistic possibility of "humanitarian" ideals taking an upper hand over military and money-making ideologies?

Daisaku Ikeda: In recent years, we have seen important, groundbreaking examples of humanitarian ideals surmounting military logic and narrowly defined national interests to bring new disarmament accords into existence. I am referring of course to the treaties banning landmines and cluster weapons. Both were realized through international campaigns based on the collaborative efforts of NGOs working together with governments seriously committed to disarmament.

I am calling for the establishment of a clear international norm condemning nuclear weapons. This will provide the basis for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) prohibiting these most inhumane of all weapons. It is clear that the way forward to an NWC will not be easy. But there are signs of new awareness among the world's political leaders that are cause for hope.

The first is that we now hear more voices calling for nuclear abolition from a realistic assessment of the dangers they pose. These include former high-level officials of the nuclear-weapon states. I think the confluence of this "realist" approach with more traditional peace and humanitarian antinuclear perspectives presents an important opportunity to make progress toward a world free of nuclear weapons.

The second is the fact that, in the 64 years since the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear weapons have never been used. This points to the steadily solidifying awareness that nuclear weapons are essentially unusable for military purposes, even if we include the implicit threat underlying deterrence as a form of "use."

I think this understanding is shared to a greater or lesser degree by the political leaders of the nuclear-weapon states. In order to outlaw nuclear weapons, we will need to raise the visibility of the issue internationally to a far higher degree than was the case even for the movements to ban landmines and cluster weapons. Civil society needs to come together to create a popular groundswell for nuclear abolition. ☑

Full text is available at:

<http://www.indepthnews.net/news/news.php?key1=2009-09-29 14:20:27&key2=1>

U.S. RIFTS OVER OBAMA APPROACH

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If we fail to act, we will invite nuclear arms races in every region, and the prospect of wars and acts of terror on a scale that we can hardly imagine." Exercising its prerogative as this month's rotating chair of the Security Council, the United States drafted a resolution on nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament that, as the Obama team hoped, the 15-nation body adopted unanimously.

The five-page statement leads off with support for "[creating] the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons," noting that this is a facet of implementing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. The nonproliferation accord, which is to undergo a periodic international review next year, also bans non-nuclear states from acquiring atomic weapons and promises them access to civil nuclear energy technologies.

The resolution reaffirms in detail many of the Security Council's past efforts to stem the spread of nuclear weapons and offers support for some new nonproliferation initiatives. New items include support for imposing penalties on any NPT signatory nations that withdraw from the treaty, and a call for countries to minimize the use of bomb-grade uranium for civilian purposes.

Writing online for the National Review, Bayefsky took issue with Obama's effort to seek the council's consensus on a more general set of standards for countering proliferation, rather than castigate specific nations like Iran and North Korea.

The tactic "shamelessly panders to Arab and Muslim states," implicitly giving an opening to Iran or other Middle Eastern nations for demanding that Israel eliminate its undeclared nuclear arsenal before Tehran disbands its program, Bayefsky said.

Moreover, a failure to clearly identify rogue-nation nuclear programs in Obama's agenda for the meeting "stretches his 'beer summit' technique to the global scale," she said, referring to the president's recent effort to address racial sensitivities by holding an informal gathering on the White House lawn.

"This feel-good experience will feel best of all to Iran, which has interpreted Obama's penchant for form over substance to be a critical weakness," according to Bayefsky.

However, to Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, the decision to frame the Security Council's nonproliferation objectives as a set of universally applicable standards is exactly the right approach.

"There is no reason to go after Iran by name in this context, because it would give Iran every reason to push back and disrupt the opportunity to reach consensus on the very actions necessary to deal with Iran and the Irans of the future," he said in a telephone interview with the GSN. "This is an attempt to ... build support around a set of nonproliferation and disarmament goals."

Kimball said it "might make certain individuals feel good [to call] out Iran for its violations." However, Obama is pursuing a different strategy that lays the groundwork for even "stronger action against Iran" in the

future, based on this resolution that makes nonproliferation measures applicable to everyone, he said.

By choosing wording that applies to all potential proliferators, the new resolution "gives Iranian leaders less of a foothold to complain how everything is so unfair [to them]," Squassoni said. "This does signal a shift back to principled diplomacy."

In fact, a close reading of the resolution reveals backing for tools that could be used specifically to hold Iran to account for its nuclear program, Kimball said. For example, the text states that the right of non-nuclear nations to pursue civil nuclear energy depends on their adherence to Nonproliferation Treaty safeguards provisions.

The U.S.-drafted resolution also cites a number of prior Security Council measures but refers to them only by number, without specifying the individual nations to which they applied, Squassoni noted. These subtle references are actually reaffirmations of four earlier resolutions condemning North Korea's efforts to build nuclear weapons, and five resolutions taking Iran to task for its suspected development activities.

Henry Sokolski, executive director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, criticized the U.S.-drafted resolution for including allusions to the eventual global abolition of nuclear arms before laying out a much larger agenda for stopping the spread of these weapons worldwide. "They are trying to rally support for their arms-control agenda," he told GSN. "But someone could easily argue that, [once] this resolution has passed, we can't make progress on nonproliferation objectives described in this resolution before we make progress on disarmament."

"The order of the words I don't think dictates what you're going to do," Squassoni countered during a GSN interview.

The resolution's disarmament provisions, including support for U.S.-Russian negotiations aimed at further shrinking their strategic stockpiles, are "not gifts to the non-nuclear weapon states," Kimball said. "These are manifestly in the interest of the United States."

Sokolski also voiced concern that the resolution is not ambitious enough when it comes to listing initiatives that could be taken to stem proliferation. For example, he said, the draft statement uses modest language to "encourage" a stronger International Atomic Energy Agency without investing the nuclear watchdog organization with greater authority to challenge proliferators.

"It's unclear to what extent this resolution will be used to promote the further spread of dangerous nuclear technology," he said. A bipartisan panel last year recommended curbing the civilian use of highly enriched uranium and imposing penalties on nations that withdraw from the Nonproliferation Treaty, initiatives that are now captured in the UN resolution.

However, the advisory group also listed a number of additional measures to thwart proliferation, including discouraging the use of financial subsidies for nuclear power and giving the International Atomic Energy Agency the resources and authority it needs. ☑