

Preventing Mass-Destruction Terrorism and Weapons Proliferation

A Strategy Session of the
MONTEREY NONPROLIFERATION STRATEGY GROUP
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Summary prepared by
John Hart and Shannon Kile
Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

Introduction

On 5–6 September 2002, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) hosted the seventh meeting of the Monterey Nonproliferation Strategy Group in Stockholm, Sweden. The meeting, entitled 'Preventing Mass-Destruction Terrorism and Weapons Proliferation', was attended by c. 30 participants, including scholars, government officials and representatives from international and nongovernmental organizations; all of whom participated in their personal capacities.

There was a wide range of views expressed during the meeting that reflected differing and sometimes rival perspectives on the risks and challenges posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their development or acquisition by terrorist groups. Among the principal topics discussed were: the range and hierarchy of threats associated with mass-destruction terrorism and the use of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons by state or non-state actors; the status of the multilateral regimes designed to ban or curb the spread of these weapons; the prospects and possible outcomes of a military attack on Iraq as well as the likely implications of such an action for nonproliferation efforts in the Middle East and elsewhere around the world; Russian and US priorities and approaches to nonproliferation; and the role of NATO in combating terrorism and WMD proliferation in the post-September 11 security environment. In addition, there was a discussion of current trends in NGO support for nonproliferation-related activities.

Mass-Destruction Terrorism

Effects of 11 September 2001

In the wake of the 11 September attacks and subsequent anthrax letter mailings, the possibility of terrorists using or threatening to use chemical, nuclear, biological or radiological weapons has gained plausibility. As a number of participants noted, 11 September has become a 'symbol', 'warning' and a 'catalyst' to the international community.

There was a general sense that the threat of use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) by non-state actors is growing. It was noted that much of the current international 'war on terrorism' was of an intelligence and law enforcement nature. There was disagreement over the extent to which this effort requires the involvement of conventional military power. Concern was expressed that characterizing counter-terrorist efforts as a war might lend legitimacy to those involved in carrying out such attacks. Participants disagreed on the extent to which additional counter-terrorist measures were required or whether existing capabilities and measures already allow for a proper response. Finally, the war on terrorism

has resulted in unlikely or unexpected levels of cooperation between political opponents, including the USA and Iran.

It was stated, however, that there is a strong reluctance in Europe to view the events of 11 September as a unique or 'catastrophic' phenomenon. This is partly because of the European historical experience with terrorist attacks dating from at least the nineteenth century, and various violent separatist and political movements which continue to this day. There is great reluctance in much of Europe to using military means to combat terrorism, both due to historical reasons as well as a possible negative impact on civil and human rights. Concern was also expressed regarding when the 'end' of the war would be reached. Finally, much of Europe's political attention has been focused on EU enlargement, perhaps resulting in an under-appreciation of the terrorist threat.

Recently, there has been a resurgence in the activities of 'old' terrorist groups, such as the Red Brigade in Italy, by a new generation operating in smaller, more compartmentalized groups using modern communications methods.

European intelligence and law enforcement agencies have long been aware of the existence of a large number of terrorist cells, largely composed of second or third generation immigrants, in such cities as Frankfurt, Hamburg, London and Madrid. A number of terrorist cells are composed of Algerians who left the country following the Algerian government's decision to invalidate an election in which Islamic fundamentalists apparently won a large percentage of the vote in national elections, thus triggering a cycle of violence that continues to this day. It was also noted that an Algerian-based Islamic society (GIA) was known to have sent members to Afghanistan for training, who had then returned to Europe to form sleeper cells. Its members have expressed an interest in acquiring and using 'weapons of mass destruction', particularly biological warfare agents. A number of members are considered by European authorities to be 'extremely good chemists'. Nevertheless, such information was known prior to the 11 September attacks. In addition, various attacks by such groups have been foiled, including a December 1994 attempt to crash an airplane into the Eiffel tower and attempts to blow up a church in Bologna, Italy, which contains a fresco depicting the Prophet Mohammed in hell. It was also stated that there is a need for a long-term strategy to counteract radical elements in Europe's growing Muslim immigrant communities. One of the strongest voices in this area has been a French investigative judge, Jean-Louis Bruguiere.

It was also said that at least 80-90 per cent of counter-terrorist efforts are comprised of intelligence and police activities. Cooperation among European intelligence and law enforcement authorities has been greatly expanded and streamlined in recent years. Concern was expressed on the rising level of violence that terrorist cells are willing to resort to and a possible blurring of distinctions between domestic and international groups. There was general agreement that the greatest danger still lies in the future.

Future problems and strategies for combating terrorism

Four broad categories of nuclear terrorist threats were identified: radiological dispersal devices, sabotage of nuclear facilities, theft of fissile material for the manufacture of a nuclear weapon, and seizure of nuclear weapons. There is a need to identify and safeguard all nuclear materials and to track and safeguard all nuclear materials during transport. The transportation question is complicated by a lack of complete, reliable information on the scope of the problem and the volume of nuclear materials being transshipped for eventual blending down to low-enriched fuel or waste.

There were differing views on the ease with which sub-state actors can acquire nuclear weapon materials and assemble a nuclear or radiological device. The quantities which might fall into the hands of such groups, however, is likely to be small. It was therefore suggested that attention be given to possible strategic uses of such weapons. While some terrorist groups may wish to inflict maximum damage with no prior warning, it was also said that terrorist groups may be more likely to communicate specific demands before using the limited number of WMD weapons in their possession. Concern was expressed on the level of security currently given tactical nuclear weapons. There were differing views on the level of difficulty involved in stealing such weapons.

It was noted that it may be impossible to attribute responsibility for the indiscriminate use of WMD with or without prior warning. The anthrax letter attacks and attempts to link these attacks to Iraq were pointed to as examples of the difficulties involved.

A view was expressed that Europe should significantly raise the amount of funding it provides to cooperative threat reduction programs in view of the great disparity with funding levels already provided by the USA.

It was said that a range of intermediate policy options should be developed to meet the threat posed by 'weapons of mass destruction'. A recent report published by the Carnegie Endowment, for example, essentially proposes that Iraq accept international inspectors once again and that a quick-reaction international military force be placed in the region to intervene in case Iraq fails to comply with inspector requests. It was also said that better strategies need to be developed to deal with hoaxes involving the threatened use of WMD.

There was general agreement on the need to better focus emergency management resources and to share expertise in order to meet future threats.

The emphasis by the international community currently engaged with Afghanistan needs to shift toward the long-term stabilization of the country (i.e., nation-building).

Pakistan is a cause for future concern partly because al-Qaeda elements are apparently regrouping in the country. Significant elements of the Pakistani military are not in favor of supporting the current US-led war on terrorism. The long-term stability of the current regime is uncertain.

The conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians requires constructive outside engagement. The differences in views on this conflict between Europeans and the United States need to be properly addressed, particularly in light of the potential geopolitical implications of a US attack against Iraq.

It was said that there should be a constructive debate on the implications of a war carried out by democracies on terrorism, including the possible implications for civil liberties and the possible consequences of democratic countries' support for authoritarian regimes in the fight against terrorism.

The Future of Nonproliferation Regimes

Multilateral regimes are agreements among states, which can also constrain non-state actors in that states are obliged to implement and enforce national legislation which criminalizes the development, production, stockpiling and use of banned weapons. Parties to international regimes are, as a rule, obligated to make necessary changes to domestic regulations and laws, report to the international body and/or other parties on the actions that have been taken, assist other parties with implementation and assist parties which are threatened or attacked.

One of the starting points of the discussion of the future of current multilateral arms control and disarmament regimes was the general sense among the participants that they are under increasing stress due to compliance-related concerns. Several participants made the point that the real issue to be addressed was not whether particular treaty regimes and regulatory arrangements had failed. Rather, it was how to deal with a state which deliberately violates its commitments made within the framework of these regimes as well as the norms underlying them. Thus, it was noted repeatedly during the meeting that the UN Security Council is vested with the ultimate responsibility for enforcing compliance. It has been the failure of the Security Council to live up to its mandate as the upholder of international law and the guarantor of peace and international security which has undermined the credibility of the nonproliferation regime writ large.

The US approach to multilateral regimes is heavily influenced by suspicions, or clear-cut cases, of noncompliance. The Bush administration has attempted to pursue a more proactive policy in addressing non-compliant behaviour, including publicly naming countries which it believes are violating international agreements. It has also shown an inclination to act unilaterally to deal with allegations of non-compliance.

This has resulted in the perception among some US friends and allies, particularly those in Europe, that the USA is disengaging from multilateral arms control and disarmament regimes in favor of a more ad hoc approach in which like-minded countries agree on specific policies or actions on particular matters of concern. While the USA remains engaged with the various multilateral frameworks—at least in terms of taking an interest in what is occurring within them, US officials assert that they are more likely to openly criticize and question regimes or processes which they believe are not universally adhered to. The 11 September attacks, together with the mailing of the anthrax letters, are pointed to as reasons why there is effectively no margin for error against state and non-state actors seeking to acquire or use chemical, nuclear, biological or radiological weapons. Therefore, the official US view is that there can be no ambiguity regarding international compliance with existing norms and regulations. Cases of noncompliance or ambiguity must be addressed through all available multilateral, regional, bilateral, and unilateral means available.

In general, the European view is one of greater uncertainty regarding the status of compliance with international arms control and disarmament agreements and some scepticism regarding US assessments of the threat posed by specific countries. This view, which is more process-oriented, sees advantages to having such regimes even if compliance is not universal. While there was general agreement on the threat posed by terrorists, there was disagreement over the USA's approach to counteracting it. In particular, as noted above there was disagreement over the extent to which such efforts are intelligence or police matters and the extent to which the fight against terrorism requires conventional military intervention.

Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC)

The international prohibition on biological and toxin weapons essentially consists of three layers: the BTWC itself; documents produced by the various BTWC review conferences; and the various documentation produced by the ad hoc group which, until mid-2001, had been involved in negotiating a compliance protocol to the convention.

There appeared to be general agreement that the BTWC is among the weakest of the multilateral regimes. Biological weapons are inherently more difficult to control, and efforts

to establish an effective protocol to strengthen the BTWC protocol have slowed to a standstill at the present time. The Fifth Review Conference of the States Parties to the BTWC will re-convene in November 2002. The USA is reportedly pushing for a ten-minute meeting, just long enough to adjourn the conference and convene a Sixth Review Conference in 2006. This position is strongly opposed by other delegations, including many European and NAM countries. A second option is to hold yearly meetings of BTWC parties lasting two weeks each in order to discuss treaty implementation. It is possible that a majority vote could be forced on the issue of adjournment and result in acrimonious and public disagreement.

The mandate of the ad hoc group is still in effect. However, no funds have been allocated for further meetings and the likelihood of resumed negotiations is small. Two long-term issues of concern are a decline in the numbers of annual declarations submitted as voluntary confidence-building measures (CBMs) and the possible effects of technological developments on the scope and effectiveness of the convention.

Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)

A view was expressed that the CWC is a relatively robust regime, despite some compliance concerns that have been publicly expressed in Washington, London and Berlin. However, apparently such concerns have not been raised within the OPCW Executive Council and have been expressed outside the framework of the treaty regime only. The USA, for example, has repeatedly questioned Iran's compliance with the CWC. The USA and others have said that Iranian declarations on past activities to the OPCW are incomplete and that Iran has been partially or wholly unresponsive to other parties' requests that it provide additional information.

Approximately 70 000 agent tonnes of chemical weapons and 61 former chemical weapon production facilities have been declared to the OPCW. The organization is continuing to oversee the destruction of the weapons and destruction or conversion of these facilities. No challenge inspections or investigations of alleged use have been requested since the CWC entered into force on 29 April 1997.

The OPCW is entering a period of readjustment during which the emphasis on verification of destruction of chemical weapon stockpiles will shift as stockpiles are gradually eliminated. The future nature of verification of the chemical industry and technological assistance and cooperation activities will receive increased consideration.

Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)

There appeared to be general agreement that the USA does not intend to ratify the CTBT under the current administration and the current composition of the Congress and Senate. If one or more states choose to test or use nuclear weapons, the treaty could be effectively destroyed.

Different nuclear testing scenarios were discussed, including testing by the P-5 countries, India or Pakistan. It was argued that among the various testing scenarios by countries either singly or in combination, the most damaging would be a resumption of testing by the USA. The USA was said, however, to be committed to the current nuclear test ban moratorium. However, if the USA proceeds with the development of a new generation of nuclear weapons such as low-yield, nuclear-tipped, deep-penetrating devices produced as counterproliferation armaments, the treaty could be damaged beyond repair.

Testing of low-yield, sub-critical nuclear devices may also be used by others as an excuse to ignore NPT commitments. There was a general sense among participants that the current moratorium on nuclear weapons testing is of major significance for sustaining the NPT.

However, it was said that the relevance of the Swedish example will continue regardless of whether other countries carry out nuclear tests. That is to say, that acquisition of nuclear weapons would not serve the national security interests of many states, even if the P-5 continue to rely on nuclear weapons in their defence policies and they or other states resume nuclear weapons testing.

It was said that the Indian-Pakistani dispute over Kashmir must be addressed in order to reduce tensions and the corresponding threat of use of nuclear weapons by either India or Pakistan.

Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT)

There was a general sense that the fabric of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty regime, while not unravelling, is at least fraying around the edges. The successes achieved at the 1995 and 2000 review conferences, while not to be dismissed, will not by themselves save the regime. One participant said that the outcome of the 2005 review conference will likely be decisive for the future of the regime.

It was pointed out that the NPT regime has two obvious shortcomings. First, it continues to lack universality. The emergence of three de facto nuclear weapon states—India, Pakistan and Israel—outside the regime have weakened its credibility. It was suggested that the relatively restrained response of the international community to the Indian and Pakistani nuclear weapon tests may lead other proliferators to conclude that their interests are better served by being outside the regime. Second, there are two states parties—Iraq and North Korea—which are in material breach of their treaty commitments. These cases cannot be solved in the NPT review process because of the requirement for consensus. Ultimately, they must be addressed by the UN Security Council.

In addition, the NPT regime faces challenges connected with implementing the 13 steps towards nuclear disarmament agreed in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. To date, progress made in implementing these steps has been decidedly mixed. While there have been some successes, there have also been important failures, particularly with regard to negotiating a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) and bringing the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty into force. There has also been backsliding by some nuclear weapons states—in particular, recently by the USA—on their commitments to reduce the roles and missions accorded to nuclear weapons in military doctrines and force planning.

Several participants emphasized the importance of the NPT as the legal underpinning for the system of safeguards and inspections administered by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). That system will be strengthened considerably as more states sign and ratify the Additional Protocol. Gaining additional adherents should be made an urgent priority on the nonproliferation agenda. Furthermore, it was stressed that the states parties to the NPT must also provide the necessary financial and technical support to the IAEA in order to allow the organization to effectively implement the strengthened safeguards.

Conference on Disarmament

There appeared to be general agreement that if no substantive work is undertaken at the CD by next year, some countries in Europe and elsewhere will begin to withdraw their high-level delegates and reduce the size of their missions.

Some participants placed great importance on the desirability to conclude a FMCT, while others were more ambivalent on this point. Conclusion of an FMCT was pointed to as an important step towards enhancing accountability of and control over nuclear material stocks.

Compliance assessments and strategies for dealing with non-compliance

Differing views were expressed on whether instances of noncompliance with international agreements, such as DPRK's violation of the NPT, represent a treaty failure or instead reflects a failure on the part of the UN Security Council to take effective action.

Differing views were expressed on the status of compliance of countries party to international agreements, including Iran's compliance with the CWC and NPT. The underlying reason for this disagreement may be the result of differing levels of access to and understanding of information derived from national technical means of verification. It was also noted that there is great reluctance to share information gathered by national technical means (NTMs) owing to concerns about compromising sources and methods. Such information, whether presented in its entirety or partially, might also be subject to multiple interpretation and lead to open-ended, highly-politicized discussions.

The question was raised as to why the USA and other countries, including Russia, have cooperated in sharing intelligence information related to the war on terrorism, while such sharing of information has been virtually absent in the nonproliferation field.

First use of nuclear weapons and differentiating between types of WMD

Differing views were expressed as to whether and under what circumstances nuclear weapons should be used. Some participants considered any use or threat of use of nuclear weapons as unacceptable, while others saw usefulness in their deterrent value against use of chemical and biological weapons. Some participants believed that nuclear weapons should be used either to pre-empt a chemical or biological attack or to respond to such an attack. It was said that any use or threat of use of nuclear weapons should be evaluated by the criteria of 'priority' and 'proportionality'.

Most conference participants emphasized the seriousness of the threat posed by state and non-state actors which possess or seek to acquire 'weapons of mass destruction'. Relatively little effort was made to differentiate between the use of chemical, nuclear and biological weapons, or to question whether these weapon systems should be lumped together. However, a view was expressed that chemical and biological weapons are not comparable to nuclear weapons in terms of their ability to cause death and destruction. This called into question the appropriateness of a nuclear strike to prevent or deter the use of CW or BW and whether a nuclear response to use of CW or BW would be warranted.

Iraq and Proliferation in the Middle East

There was little agreement among the participants about the likely outcome of a US invasion of Iraq or about its implications for nonproliferation regimes and underlying norms.

The views expressed in the discussion were largely divided into two distinct and competing assessments of these implications. One group of participants, which included many of the Europeans, tended to focus on the risks involved in taking military action and to stress the need to develop credible alternatives to US plans for the use of force.

A number of potential dangers were identified. First, the launching of any war against Iraq might result in prolonged chaos inside the country, allowing for leakage of WMD-related materials and expertise. Second, the prospect of a full-scale US invasion might lead Iraq to resort to the pre-emptive use of chemical and/or biological weapons. Although such weapons might be employed in pursuit of limited, tactical objectives (e.g., slowing the deployment of Allied forces or intimidating US allies in the region), their use would break important norms. More disturbingly, their use could also result in mass casualties, either in Iraq or elsewhere—possibly including inside the USA. If these occurred on a sufficiently large scale, the US administration would be under enormous pressure to retaliate with nuclear weapons ‘to stop the pain’. This could effectively shatter the nuclear nonproliferation regime which Washington professes to be defending.

In this regard, one participant warned that senior Bush administration policymakers appear to be complacent about the dangers of a cornered and desperate regime in Baghdad resorting to the use of unconventional weapons. This complacency arises from a misplaced confidence in the deterrent value of US nuclear weapons in a war involving regime survival. It overlooks the fact that such a war would differ fundamentally from the 1991 Persian Gulf War, during which many in Washington believe that nuclear threats deterred Iraq from using chemical and biological weapons.

While acknowledging that taking action against Iraq could jeopardize important nonproliferation norms and goals, another group of participants tended to place greater emphasis on the risks of inaction. This group, which included some Americans, expressed concern about allowing Iraq to continue to develop chemical, biological and especially nuclear weapon capabilities in contravention of both its legally binding commitments not to do so as well as many UN Security Council resolutions. This was seen as sending an undesirable signal to aspiring proliferators that the international community is not willing to act decisively to enforce compliance with those commitments and resolutions. In general, among this group there was a feeling that a war to change the regime in Baghdad is manageable and that the benefits would outweigh the risks of allowing Saddam Hussein to remain in power.

Consequences of success

There was also little agreement within the group about the impact that a successful US-led intervention to remove Saddam Hussein from power would have on nonproliferation efforts in the Middle East and elsewhere. Iran’s suspected nuclear weapon programme, as reflected in its nuclear fuel cycle activities, was identified by a number of participants as posing a more serious long-term challenge to regional stability than Iraq’s programme. Some participants argued that the ouster of Saddam will present Washington with an opportunity to intimidate Iran and force it to rein in its nuclear weapon ambitions. Moreover, it was argued that the spectre of ‘America on a roll’ after removal of Saddam

would cause potential 'over-the-horizon' proliferators to have second thoughts about pursuing clandestine WMD programmes.

However, in the view of other participants, a successful campaign to remove Saddam would likely have some important negative implications for nonproliferation regimes. This would be especially true if it came about as the result of a largely unilateral effort by the USA. In Iran, concerns about US intentions after a regime change in Iraq might well increase proliferation incentives and spur clandestine unconventional weapon programmes intended to deter outside intervention. Others argued that decisive US military action in Iraq would also affect China's proliferation incentives, since Beijing sees nonproliferation primarily in the context of Sino-American relations. The prospect of a 'rogue superpower' might well undermine its commitment to restraining exports of ballistic missile and nuclear technology. It might also give Russia pause to reconsider its recent rapprochement with the USA.

Russian and US Priorities and Approaches to Nonproliferation

The discussion highlighted the differences in the approaches of the USA and Russia to nonproliferation issues and in the relative priority accorded to these issues in their respective foreign and security policies. These differences suggest that the prospects for resuming the close co-operation on a range of nonproliferation issues that characterized US-Soviet relations are not promising. Several participants observed that the dispute over Russia's reactor sales to Iran is already poisoning the new-found spirit of comity in US-Russian relations.

For the USA, nonproliferation is a cardinal objective of current policy. The US Government's efforts to halt the spread of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them have three principal priorities: cutting supply; reducing demand; and strengthening existing international institutions and nonproliferation regimes. It was emphasized, however, that the overriding goal is not to create new sets of rules and norms but rather to enforce compliance with existing ones.

According to one participant, US nonproliferation efforts have achieved some successes, such as in securing strengthened export controls in a number of countries. However, the 'indisputable fact' is that ballistic missile and WMD capabilities have been spreading. This is having destabilizing effects which extend beyond regional contexts. In the wake of 11 September, it is clear that the links between proliferation and terrorism are real and that these pose a 'direct threat' to the USA and its allies.

By contrast, the majority of Russia's strategic and political elite does not consider nonproliferation to be the highest priority for Russian foreign and security policy, even in the wake of 11 September. The main focus is on 'older', pre-existing security issues: e.g., strategic relations with the USA; the consequences of NATO enlargement; organized crime and drug trafficking, etc. The prevailing view in Russia is that nonproliferation is not an objective toward which all policy should be geared. Rather, the various nonproliferation and export control regimes set out the 'rules of the road' within which states pursue wider commercial, military and geopolitical interests.

This approach to nonproliferation is evident in Russia's sale of nuclear power reactors to Iran. While there is no sentiment in Russia in favour of Iran acquiring nuclear arms, the sale of civilian nuclear power reactors to Iran is seen as being in Russia's commercial interest. It was pointed out that c. 50 per cent of the annual budget for Russia's Ministry for Atomic Energy (Minatom) comes from such deals. Furthermore, it was stated that there is

little understanding in Russia of the US charge that the sale of civilian power reactors, even if placed under appropriate safeguards, serves to assist a clandestine Iranian nuclear weapon programme. (In response to this statement, however, one participant pointed out that the US concern is not about the nuclear power plants being built at Bushehr but about the Iranian nuclear programme writ large—especially the progress that is being made in nuclear fuel cycle technology, thanks in part to assistance from Russian entities.)

More generally, there is a widespread view that Russia has already sacrificed its legitimate interests under US pressure without gaining commensurate benefits. This view is accompanied by deep scepticism about whether the USA would actually follow through on its offer to compensate Minatom for abandoning the nuclear reactor deal with Iran. There is also great suspicion about the sincerity of USA's professed commitment to nonproliferation. A specific complaint was voiced about the alleged hypocrisy of US opposition to Russian construction of a civilian nuclear power reactor for Iran, given the US-led deal to such reactors to North Korea under the 1994 Agreed Framework.

NATO, Russia and Nonproliferation

There was considerable discussion about differing transatlantic perspectives on the role of, and the priority to be accorded to, international institutions and norms. Some support was expressed for the view that we are witnessing the emergence of distinct US and European approaches to foreign affairs, especially with regard to addressing proliferation concerns.

However, others noted that there is a tendency for the current transatlantic debate to be reduced to a simple dichotomy: that is, that Europeans like international rules and institutions and norms and abide by them while Americans do not. According to one participant, many of the top officials in the Bush administration are in fact 'disillusioned multilateralists'. In the view of these officials, the nonproliferation norms, standards and regimes which the USA was instrumental in shaping have failed. Moreover, the administration's often-criticized preoccupation with strategic surprise and its emphasis on preserving flexibility in an increasingly uncertain security environment was fully validated—at least in the eyes of many of its officials—by the events of 11 September.

There was little disagreement that given the gravity of WMD proliferation risks and challenges, there needs to be a frank and critical reassessment of US and European approaches to managing them. This requires, *inter alia*, that we look anew at the role that can be played by existing transatlantic institutions.

It was suggested that the retooled NATO-Russia Council provides a forum in which proliferation issues can be profitably discussed. This could include, for example, discussions on harmonizing and co-ordinating national policies to address specific concerns, such the export of military and dual-use technology to Iran. The Council could also serve as a forum for discussing a range of other issues: e.g., expediting the implementation by the NWS of the 13 steps agreed to in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference; pursuing measures to control tactical nuclear weapons; and expanding the activities of the Co-operative Threat Reduction (CTR) programme aimed at consolidating and enhancing the custodial security of weapons-usable nuclear material.

One participant warned that the NATO-Russia Council could play either a 'regressive' or a 'progressive' role in this regard. The Council's role would be regressive if it was used in effect to 'dress up' unilateral undertakings as multilateral co-operation. Similarly, it would play a regressive role if it were used to maintain the privileged position of the "nuclear

weapons club” and to ignore the concerns of other states, including NATO members. On the other hand, the NATO–Russia Council would play a progressive role if it were to apply pressure on issues such as the no-first-use of nuclear weapons or the implementation of the 1991 Presidential Nuclear Initiatives regarding tactical nuclear weapons: These are issues of pan-European concern that go beyond the interests of a narrow circle of great powers.

There was no agreement on the contribution that NATO itself can make to nonproliferation efforts. Some participants saw NATO as having little meaningful role to play in terms of taking the kind of concerted multilateral action, such as that now envisaged for the Group of Eight (G-8) countries, to address proliferation challenges. However, others suggested that NATO could play a useful role in combating terrorism, such as by establishing uniform security standards for nuclear facilities.

Challenges posed by tactical nuclear weapons

There was a considerable discussion of the proliferation dangers and risks of illicit diversion posed by tactical nuclear weapons. These arise from the weapons’ small size, mobility and their decentralized command-and-control arrangements. Despite hopes for the eventual elimination of tactical nuclear weapons raised in the early 1990s in the wake of the US-Russian Presidential Nuclear Initiatives, recent developments have raised concerns that increased reliance on and new missions for tactical nuclear weapons can be expected. Such concerns are exacerbated by the continued lack of transparency surrounding their numbers and operational status.

It was suggested that Russia and the United States need to make concerted efforts to reduce the dangers associated with tactical nuclear weapons. This would involve taking a number of steps by both countries, namely: a) work to ensure that tactical nuclear weapons are safely and securely stored; b) jointly reaffirm their commitments to the 1991 Presidential Nuclear Initiatives, providing updates on progress made with their elimination and pursue increased transparency; c) reassess the perceived utility of nuclear weapons in military and deterrence doctrines and prevent further modernization; d) unilaterally proceed with additional reductions; and e) consider ways leading to a cooperative framework that drastically limits the numbers and locations of TNWs.

It was generally agreed that effective long-term limitations on tactical nuclear weapons can only be achieved by directly imposing controls on the warheads (as opposed to their delivery systems). However, this will be a technically challenging task—one that will require a benign political environment, since it will involve an unprecedented degree of intrusiveness in what has hitherto been one of the most sensitive areas of national security. Several participants suggested that it will likely be too difficult to work out arms control arrangements covering only tactical nuclear warheads. A more fruitful approach would be to pursue an agreement covering all non-deployed nuclear warheads. Such a deal might be particularly attractive to Russia, since it would gain insight into the USA’s so-called responsive strategic nuclear force. This in turn might be the basis for a broader deal on nuclear transparency and accountability.

NGO Efforts to Promote Nonproliferation

A relatively small number of US foundations have traditionally funded arms control and disarmament-related research by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The total number of grant-making foundations has shrunk over the past thirty years from

approximately 74 to some 25 today. To a certain extent, the loss in numbers of funders has been compensated by greater amounts of money provided by a handful of large foundations.

The reduction in funding is partly due to several factors: governing boards do not necessarily see the relevance of such work in the post-Cold War international security environment; a perceived lack of concrete results from past funding; an increased prominence of environmental, trade and human rights-related concerns; and a failure by many in the NGO community to develop new paradigms which may be more attuned to the realities of the current international security environment.

Current topics of interest to funders include the weaponization of space, and aspects of the US-led war on terrorism and possible alternatives to it. It was said, however, that the old arms control and disarmament security agenda has not disappeared.

Participants agreed that greater efforts should be made to identify non-US funding sources, particularly in Europe. It was also suggested that researchers apply for grants on topics which no government or group of governments would be willing to fund or host. Foundations could, for example, host meetings of government representatives, including representatives from the Non-aligned Movement (NAM), which some governments might feel constrained from hosting on its own. Another area of possible research is on US Homeland Security programs.

There was disagreement on the implications of the current concern on terrorism for the more traditional multilateral arms control-related research. A view was expressed that arms control and disarmament-related research will be 'seamlessly linked' to terrorism issues from now on. Another view was that it is still too early to judge whether the current emphasis on terrorism is merely a passing 'blip' on the radar screen.