

Statement on the 45th Anniversary of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
March 5, 2015

Forty-five years ago today the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty entered into force. At the time that the treaty was signed, it was widely predicted that dozens of countries would develop nuclear weapons, a prospect that threatened to disrupt global stability and security. Instead, thanks to worldwide collective efforts and commitment, the NPT has become the cornerstone of the nuclear nonproliferation regime, reinforcing international peace and security and preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons, while promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Today, global nuclear stockpiles are at their lowest levels since the 1950s.

As I stated in Prague in 2009, reinforced in Berlin in 2013, and again reaffirmed last month in my National Security Strategy, the United States seeks the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. We encourage all states to strengthen the NPT as a basis for international cooperation to achieve that shared goal. The NPT remains essential today, and our efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament cannot succeed unless we stand together to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and work for full compliance with the NPT. Our commitment to nonproliferation is at the center of our efforts, along with our P-5-plus-1 partners, to reach a diplomatic agreement that prevents Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon and ensures that Iran's nuclear program is peaceful.

The United States is meeting its NPT obligations and is committed to further strengthening the nonproliferation regime. During my administration, the United States has reduced the role nuclear weapons play in our security and reduced the size of our arsenal. Earlier this year we marked the fourth anniversary of the entry into force of the New START Treaty. Under New START and in conformity with our NPT obligations, we are reducing our strategic nuclear weapon stockpile to the lowest levels in more than a half century, and we are prepared to negotiate further reductions, while protecting our security and that of our friends and allies around the world.

We can only realize the full benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy to advance development and protect the environment if we are confident that civil nuclear energy will not be diverted for weapons. For that, we depend on the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to promote the safe, secure uses of nuclear energy and to ensure that it remains exclusively peaceful. As we prepare for the Ninth Review Conference of the NPT, the United States stands ready to work with other NPT parties to achieve a successful outcome that reinforces the vitality of this treaty which is so fundamental to global security.

Categories: Statements by the President : Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, 45th anniversary.

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