

Keynote Address

**The Non-Proliferation Regime
in the "Second Nuclear Age"**

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**Forum of the Middle Powers Initiative on
Challenges of the Second Nuclear Age:
Preserving Multilateralism, Advancing Disarmament**

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Senator Roche, ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you very much for providing me this opportunity to speak to you and exchange views with you on the important question of nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation. I am also personally gratified to be able to see Senator Roche again after a number of years since I last saw him in Tokyo. I am glad to see Senator Roche and the other people associated with the Middle Powers Initiative who are so active in making significant contributions to the cause of

global nuclear disarmament.

It was right after Senator Roche took his initiative to form the Middle Powers Initiative that I saw Senator Roche and his delegation in Tokyo. It was the time when the world was reawakening to the threat of nuclear proliferation after India and Pakistan proved their nuclear capability by test exploding their nuclear devices. In fact, it was not the first wake-up call after the end of the Cold War. The earlier wake-up calls in the Second Nuclear Age came first when UNSCOM inspectors found a far-advanced clandestine nuclear program underway in Iraq. Next came the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, when the IAEA found serious discrepancies in its reported nuclear activities in that country. We thought things were taken care of by continued UNSCOM activities, the Agreed Framework between the U.S. and the DPRK and the strengthened IAEA safeguards. It was on these assumptions, and on the basis of a renewed commitment to nuclear disarmament, that as many as 182 non-nuclear-weapon States agreed to the indefinite extension of the NPT, pledging themselves never to acquire nuclear weapons.

But we were naïve to think the end of the Cold War would put an end to countries' ambitions to acquire and strengthen nuclear arsenals. The fact is many countries -- as far as I know, the DPRK, India, Pakistan, Iraq, Israel, and perhaps others -- continued to pursue nuclear weapons capabilities throughout this period.

After I saw Senator Roche in Tokyo, many things took place. The September 11 attack heightened the people's fear that terrorists may use nuclear or other WMD next time they attack. Years of Iraqi denial of UNMOVIC inspections led to a confrontation which eventually ended with the war. The DPRK declared they now have nuclear weapons. Concerns are mounting about an Iranian nuclear program. Against this background, there is a move in the U.S to develop small usable nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, several states still maintain a doctrine of the first use of nuclear weapons.

Now, once again one big debate is whether more emphasis should be given to nonproliferation or emphasis should be restored to global nuclear disarmament. This has been an almost perpetual debate since the NPT came into force. My answer is simple. We have to work on both fronts, and not only that, we have to give credibility to both of them.

In this respect, I highly appreciate the efforts being made by the Middle Powers Initiative to continue the strong appeal for global nuclear disarmament. It is still a valid high priority agenda for mankind and there can be no compromise about it. I think there is a lot we can do together, and I look forward to working closely with you. To those who say under the immediate threat of nuclear proliferation we have to give priority to nonproliferation over disarmament, I argue that you may work on nonproliferation but working on disarmament in the long run serves nonproliferation causes by lowering the value of nuclear weapons, raising the barriers against their use and thus lessening the appetitive of those who try to acquire them.

Still, the efforts to promote global nuclear disarmament face formidable challenges. After

the threat of massive nuclear confrontation subsided, there is general decline in the people's concern about disarmament. The memory of the nuclear devastation is gradually fading. I hear about the constant decline in the number of visitors to the Hiroshima and Nagasaki memorials. There is a general decline in the funding by foundations and donors for the cause of nuclear disarmament.

One of the areas in which we may work, therefore, is education, not only in its narrow sense of educating pupils and students in schools but also in the sense of informing the general public, and especially political leaders of the world, about the continuing validity and the need for nuclear disarmament. We have to do it with the limited resources available to us. I, therefore, highly appreciate the efforts to involve civil society, volunteer organizations and willing donors. We have to try to get the attention of those people who do not have much interest in peace and disarmament questions. So, we have to be smart and inventive.

Related to this, we may also work on the scientists and engineers who may work on the weapons programs. I understand quite a number of them were educated in Western institutions of education before they went back home and were recruited to work on weapons programs. If we can instill in the minds of nuclear physicists, chemists and medical doctors a strong moral and legal norm of prohibition against the use of their learning for the purpose of weapons production, we will be able to build a higher wall around the political leaders who conspire to start clandestine weapons programs. We may go a step further to internationally criminalize their involvement in weapons programmes, as recently suggested by Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, former Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

The tools I have just mentioned, education and criminalization, are just a few examples of the tools that we can work on. And they are effective tools both for disarmament and nonproliferation. In my view disarmament and nonproliferation are not mutually exclusive themes. They are more often mutually reinforcing themes. I can understand very well the frustration and indignation of those who say undue emphasis is now given to nonproliferation, overshadowing the question of disarmament. But it is also true that the slow pace of disarmament is no justification to condone proliferation. To the contrary, if you allow nuclear proliferators to emerge one after another, you can never achieve the goal of nuclear disarmament.

I said at the outset that working on disarmament in the long run also serves the cause of nonproliferation. By the same token, working on nuclear nonproliferation will help the cause of nuclear disarmament as well, reducing the concern of nuclear weapon States about new nuclear acquisitions by state or non-state actors and foreclosing the arguments that you need to maintain the viable nuclear forces to face the new threats.

It was perhaps in the same vein that Secretary-General Kofi Annan -- in his statement to the General Assembly the other day -- stated his clear objection to unilateralism. He specifically urged all Member States to "face up squarely to the concerns that make some States feel

uniquely vulnerable, since it is those concerns that drive them to take unilateral action." The more the world is able to devise a cooperative, multilateral response to the difficult challenge of compliance and enforcement, the weaker will be the case for unilateral, self-help measures by States. It would not be enough to declare one's objection to unilateralism, or use of force to deal with perceived threats involving WMD. By showing an effective and credible way to prevent and deal with cases of proliferation multilaterally, one can make a strong case against unilateral use of force.

There are many multilateral tools we already have -- the NPT, IAEA safeguards, and export controls to name a few. The proponents of unilateralism argue that those multilateral tools failed to stop proliferation as clearly seen in the case of Iraq and the DPRK. That is true. But my answer is, instead of discarding them, we should seek ways to strengthen them multilaterally. I think the intention of the International Commission being organized by the Swedish government on the question of WMD is to come up with an answer to this exact question. I, therefore, very much look forward to the work of the commission. It will be also very useful if a group like the Middle Powers Initiative can speak out firmly against proliferation and come up with practical, effective and credible ways to strengthen both nonproliferation and disarmament.

It was exactly for this reason that I welcomed this opportunity to meet with you and exchange views on what we can do for the cause of nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation.

There is, in fact, enormous potential for constructive efforts to strengthen the existing nonproliferation regime. The world should, for example, remain steadfast in its demand to remaining countries to join the NPT, to consolidate nuclear-weapon-free zones and establish new ones, to strengthen safeguards by universalizing the Additional Protocol, to improve physical security of dangerous nuclear materials, to bring the CTBT into force and to strengthen export controls over nuclear materials, technologies and related dual-use items.

I have worked some years, for example, on export controls. It was an unsatisfying, frustrating experience. Countries participating in export control regime are supposed to work to close the loopholes for potential items and know-how. Unscrupulous traders and proliferators are increasingly relying on dual-use items to circumvent export controls. There is an arduous process of agreeing on a common list of goods to be controlled. But, in the end, everything is left to the sovereign discretion of participating countries. There is a huge commercial interest involved. But exactly for that reason I think there is a role for the civil society committed to nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation to play. By appealing to their governments for tighter export controls, the civil society can counter the corrupting pressure from commercial interests.

Last of all, let me quote from the recent address of Secretary-General Kofi Annan. In offering his vision about the "Second Nuclear Age" he said, "We cannot and should not shield (the future generations) from the dark vision of a world in perpetual and universal terror. But we must offer them an effective, more hopeful vision—a vision of a world without weapons of mass destruction." I am sure the Middle Powers Initiative shares this vision. I look forward to hearing

your own views on how we can work together to realize this great goal.

Thank you.