



Transforming our Counterproliferation Efforts in the Asia Region

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Remarks to the Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies

Singapore

August 15, 2005

Text as Delivered

Good afternoon. It's a pleasure to be here and to talk to you today about the Bush Administration's diplomatic efforts to work with other countries to do all that we can do to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery, whether it be by rogue states such as North Korea and Iran, or by terrorists. As we have come to understand, the trade in WMD poses a deadly threat to the entire international community. In the post 9-11 world, the acquisition of a nuclear, or chemical, or biological device by terrorists would mean only one thing: the mass murder and devastation on a catastrophic scale, far worse than that of New York, or London, or Madrid, or Bali, or Egypt, or any of the other attacks from recent memory. Countering this threat is an immense challenge for all of us. It is an immense challenge which demands a diplomacy of action.

The strong and growing relationship of the United States and Singapore on these issues stems from a common dedication to take the steps necessary to stop proliferation. We are grateful that Singapore, a key international transshipment point, has understood the threat and has worked cooperatively to address it. Singapore quickly understood the need to engage in counterproliferation activities, and the devastating impact that WMD in the hands of terrorists could have. As Singapore's Ambassador in Washington, Ambassador Chan, said at the recent second anniversary meeting of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) in Washington: "For a small city-state like Singapore, any use of WMD by terrorists on us would result in untold consequences beyond what we saw on 9/11."

Today I'd like to outline three aspects of our efforts to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The first, what we call transformational diplomacy. The second, the Proliferation Security Initiative. And the third, some of the defense measures that we believe we need to take to protect ourselves against the threat of WMD. Following those remarks, I'd be pleased to take your questions. So let me begin by talking about what have described as transformational diplomacy.

Transformational Diplomacy

When Secretary Rice began her tenure at the Department, she challenged her colleagues to transform the way we think about diplomacy and consider how we might best use our diplomatic tools to better target our responses to meet today's threats, not the threats of yesterday. As Secretary Rice told the Department in her first town hall meeting: "Transformational diplomacy is not easy. It means taking on new tasks, breaking old habits, working with people who are also trying to make those transformations themselves, being partners with those around the world who share our values and want to improve their lives." This is clearly a challenging concept, but one that we know Singapore is actively engaged fully with us.

Contemporary diplomatic efforts related to countering the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery bear little resemblance to that of the past -- when we engaged in what were often ponderous and lengthy negotiations that were focused primarily on the strategic offensive forces of two antagonistic superpowers. That world is gone forever. The Cold War is over and our focus must also change. Today, diplomats are increasingly working to build a lasting basis of support for rapid coordination and action when proliferation-related intelligence and law enforcement information becomes available. We are building support in the international community, both on a bilateral and multinational basis, and are turning commitments into practical knowledge and into capabilities by holding exercises like Deep Sabre that begins today here in Singapore.

At home, in the United States, we are fine-tuning our ability to carry out diplomacy in today's threat environment by restructuring and reorganizing the State Department proliferation offices to deal with today's threats and today's realities, such as black markets, front companies, and global terrorist networks that must be met with a robust and focused response.

One of the lessons we learned in addressing the threat of terrorism is the need to create synergies and dialogue among policy makers, law enforcement, the military, and the intelligence communities. A key goal must be to ensure that -- in addressing the threats posed by the proliferation of WMD -- the State Department and other elements of the U.S. government are coordinating with the intelligence, law enforcement and military entities engaged in combating proliferation. We must fuse our operational and policy efforts to enhance our ability to understand how the networks work and their links to proliferators. We will strengthen our efforts to stop rogue regimes from acting outside international proliferation standards as well as their own commitments, and to prevent terrorist organizations from acquiring nuclear, chemical, biological, or radiological weapons, and their means of delivery. We must also, and will, do more to communicate with legitimate businesses to ensure that we can address today's WMD threats while fostering and expanding legitimate commerce.

However, we also must be mindful that the threats we're facing today will also evolve and will change as proliferators and others seeking WMD change their own tactics as well. For this reason, we must create new capabilities for strategic planning, to look at how we are addressing today's threats with a long-term strategic perspective. As a general rule, all of our governments have difficulty looking beyond the day-to-day, and near term requirements. As a result new challenges develop while our focus is elsewhere, and we are not ready to adapt to deal with unforeseen challenges -- sometimes waiting until it is too late to defeat or deter the new threats. Ensuring that we are looking appropriately at longer term strategic threats will be a key aspect of the Bush Administration's second term under Secretary Rice's leadership.

The Proliferation Security Initiative

The second aspect of our counterproliferation policy that I will address is the Proliferation Security Initiative. PSI has been an essential element of the Bush Administration's efforts to engage in transformational diplomacy. Trade in WMD-related technologies and capabilities partly consists of secretive networks that nevertheless trade in the open, using legitimate shipping routes and companies. While many treaty organizations have accomplished the very important task of setting international standards, they have tended to lack the flexibility for timely action when these standards have been violated. As part of a broad strategy to strengthen our collective capacity to prevent and protect against the threat posed by proliferators from shadowy networks like that led by AQ Khan, President Bush asked countries to join with the United States in launching the Proliferation Security Initiative two years ago.

Since then countries like Singapore have put their diplomatic, military, law enforcement, and intelligence assets to work in a multinational, yet flexible, fashion. They have begun applying laws already on the books in innovative ways and cooperating as never before to interdict shipments, to disrupt proliferation networks and to hold accountable the front companies that support them. And our efforts have yielded concrete results. As Secretary Rice noted on the 2nd anniversary of the Initiative in May, in the previous nine months alone, the United States and ten of our fellow PSI partners have quietly cooperated on 11 successful efforts. For example, PSI cooperation stopped the transshipment of material and equipment bound for ballistic missile programs in countries of concern, including Iran. PSI partners also have worked with others to prevent Iran from procuring goods to support its nuclear program. And bilateral PSI cooperation prevented the ballistic missile program in another region from receiving equipment used to produce propellant for missiles.

Let me emphasize that PSI is not a treaty-based approach. There is no formal organization with a budget or with a headquarters. Rather, it is a partnership among participating steps, consistent with their respective national legal authorities and international law and frameworks, to deter, disrupt, and prevent WMD proliferation.

One key aspect of our efforts to enhance capacity and interoperability to deter and stop more of these shipments has been our PSI exercise program. Begun soon after the launch of the Initiative, we and our partners have engaged in 17 multinational exercises, including this latest exercise hosted by Singapore. Today's start of Deep Sabre is perhaps the most complex exercise to date, as it integrates maritime operations (with military and law enforcement assets from Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, the United Kingdom, and the United States) with a detailed port search and seizure by Singapore law enforcement authorities. Singapore's expertise in this area is vital because it hosts one of the world's busiest ports.

In addition to our focus on shipments of proliferation concern, we have been working to impede proliferators from access to banking systems, from partnerships with legitimate companies, and from access to financial markets. UN Security Council Resolution 1540, adopted unanimously in April 2004, called on all States to take cooperative action to prevent trafficking in WMD-related items. It also mandated that states put in place laws designed to prevent the financing of proliferation. At the G-8 Glen Eagles Summit last month, the Leaders emphasized the need for further cooperation, by calling for "enhanced efforts to combat proliferation networks and illicit financial flows by developing, on an appropriate legal basis, cooperative procedures to identify, track and freeze relevant financial transactions and assets." This work has already begun within the framework of the Egmont Group, which brings together our respective experts on tracking financial information.

As part of the U.S. effort to this end, President Bush signed Executive Order 13382, which authorizes the U.S. Government to freeze assets and block transactions of entities and persons engaged in proliferation activities and their supporters. It also denies persons designated under the Order access to U.S. markets and financial systems and prohibits U.S. persons, wherever they are located, from engaging with such entities. Currently eight entities -- including three from Iran, four from North Korea, and one from Syria -- have been designated under the Order, and the Secretaries of State and Treasury have the authority to designate additional proliferation-related entities and those that provide support to these entities. This Order provides the United States with a new tool to defeat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by cutting off financial and other resources that support these proliferation networks. We believe that our partners should also look at how they might implement similar authorities, consistent with UN Security Council Resolution 1540, and encourage their citizens not to do business with the entities designated under the U.S. Executive Order.

On a regional level, in the Asia-Pacific region, there has been positive cooperation on PSI as well as other nonproliferation efforts. In addition to Singapore, active participants include Thailand, Canada, Australia, Russia, Japan, New Zealand and the United States. We also are in dialogue with a number of other countries about regional engagement in PSI efforts and are pleased that Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam have been invited to attend as observers of various PSI exercises. Continuing to build cooperative relationships in the Asia-Pacific region will be essential to our ability to stop the trade in WMD materials and their means of delivery. We hope that, as a first step, other nations in the Asian region will demonstrate their resolve not to provide safe haven for proliferators by endorsement of the PSI Statement of Principles.

Defensive Measures

The third aspect of our counterproliferation approach that I want to mention is what we call defensive measures. Even as we work to impede individual shipments, financial transactions, and the people that are engaged in proliferation networks, we must be prepared to protect ourselves from adversaries armed with WMD capabilities -- again, whether they are hostile states or terrorists. This threat has transformed the security landscape of key areas, including the Asia-Pacific region, requiring us to adjust our mutual deterrent and defense policies.

Early in office, President Bush articulated a comprehensive strategy of counterproliferation, enhanced nonproliferation, and effective consequence management. Part of this vision embodied a new concept of deterrence predicated on both offensive and defensive capabilities. Modern deterrence encompasses the full range of defensive measures we can bring to bear on difficult operational problems. One element of the solution set is missile defense, which we have been discussing with our Japanese colleagues, among others. Other elements, such as improved counterforce and passive defense capabilities, have long been part of the counterproliferation equation. We continue to evolve our military and civilian capabilities to meet 21st century security challenges. We have worked extensively with our allies and with our partners in South Korea, Australia, Japan, and elsewhere in the region to help bolster our collective defense posture.

In some cases, the defensive component of deterrence requires that we seek to establish, build upon, or adapt capabilities more properly residing in the non-military sphere. For example, establishing an effective disease surveillance system -- one of the many laudable measures Singapore undertook during the SARS outbreak -- both contributes to sound public health and builds one component of a potentially effective defense-in-depth against biological attack. Similarly, many of the same detection and response assets that enable operations in the military context benefit from, or build upon, and support related civilian investments. At the international level, we need to redouble our efforts in this critical area. While SARS encouraged substantial and sustained regional cooperation in infectious disease-related matters, one lesson from al-Qaeda is clear: we must collectively do more to counter the growing threat posed by terrorist development and prospective use of biological agents or other weapons of mass destruction. The security of all of our nations demands it.

Deterrence in the twenty-first century context requires visible and effective offensive, defensive and mitigation capabilities. Those capabilities are further strengthened by strong partnerships formed to meet common challenges. To be truly effective, such measures must also be complemented by appropriate nonproliferation measures, such as President Bush's proposals with respect to developing broad-based support for the Additional Protocol, supplier restraint for enrichment and reprocessing technologies, or civil nuclear cooperation with India as a way to bring that important non-NPT state into the nonproliferation mainstream.

The WMD proliferation landscape is dynamic; our responses must similarly evolve. We look forward to continuing to work cooperatively with Singapore and our other partners in the region to refocus and retool our responses to address these challenges.

Let me just stop there, and take your questions. Thank you.

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