



Remarks at the 2007 Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism Law Enforcement Conference

Andrew Grant, Acting Director, Office of Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism

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I want to thank the FBI for your leadership in organizing this conference and in the Global Initiative. I also want to thank the city of Miami and other state and local representatives who either supported or were represented throughout the week. Thank you for your service. When President Bush and President Putin announced the Initiative on the eve of the G8 Summit last year, they emphasized the importance of seeking and creating opportunities where all federal, state, and local government organizations could work together to combat nuclear terrorism. Your continued service and presence here reflects the belief of our leadership that we have established a flexible and yet sustainable partnership reinforcing efforts already made to combat nuclear terrorism.

This morning, I want to tell you a little bit about the short history of the GI as so many of you here are new partners and this is your first GI activity. Secondly, I thought I might report to you a few highlights from Kazakhstan where I attended the third GI meeting, which included a live link to Miami on Monday. Finally, I will offer a few thoughts on the way ahead.

As you know, the very successful third Global Initiative meeting occurred earlier this week in Astana. You should consider the Astana meeting and this conference as building blocks on the foundations of the Global Initiative set in Rabat, Morocco last fall, and in Ankara, Turkey earlier this year. In Rabat, the partners endorsed the Statement of Principles, which include a political commitment to expand and accelerate our individual and collective efforts to:

- Develop and improve accounting, control and physical protection;
- Enhance the security of civilian nuclear facilities;
- Research and develop national detection capabilities that are interoperable;
- Enhance search, confiscation, and safe control capabilities;
- Deny safe haven and financial resources to those facilitating nuclear terrorism;
- Ensure adequate civil and criminal legal frameworks to deter nuclear terrorism;
- Improve response, investigation, and mitigation capabilities; and
- Promote information sharing among participants.

Later in Ankara, the 13 nations that met in Rabat again gathered and first shared as partners how our capabilities measured up to the Statement of Principles and whether there were – among partners -- significant capacity gaps where we should vector our efforts to prevent, detect, and respond to nuclear terrorism. In Ankara, partners also made over 20 contributions to the Global Initiative Plan of Work, which is where the FBI first presented its vision to the GI for this successful event.

We left Ankara with, among other commitments, two important goals. First, we would conduct a strong outreach campaign to bring on new partners before our next meeting. Secondly, we would extend our partnership to State and local government and to the private sector in recognition of their critical role in combating nuclear terrorism with us at the international and federal levels.

And now, we have over 50 partners in the Global Initiative and a confident expectation that we will grow in the near future, to include bringing on as partners some of the countries who attended this event. You have seen what the Global Initiative is about. Stand with us as partners to combat nuclear terrorism. And with the conclusion of this event, we will have completed three Plan of Work activities.

We are scheduled to conduct at least 25 activities through 2008, to include at least one covering every principle. Later this year, the U.S and Russian Federation with other willing partner nations will begin to develop a series of tabletop and field exercises in 2008 and beyond. These exercises will allow us to test capabilities, assess shortfalls, and develop new operational concepts. We have also included the EU as an observer like the IAEA, and as Advisor Townsend mentioned yesterday, the private sector is just beginning to provide statements of support and will more actively participate in GI activities.

We have also sustained interest and participation of the leadership of our countries as evidenced by remarks made at the recent G8 summit, by remarks made by President's Bush and Putin on the Initiative's success – and I want to highlight the important communication link established by this Initiative between our two nations. Russia has been our co-chair since the beginning and our work together in the Initiative offers a model for cooperation between our two nations. Interest is further reflected by the representation of 38 partners that traveled to Astana, and certainly by the attendance and remarks of Attorney General Gonzalez, FBI Director Mueller, Homeland Security Advisor Townsend and others here in Miami. And as many of you are aware, there is also an important public debate on nuclear terrorism, which this Initiative has fostered, to gain new insight about the threats we face, to encourage young minds to think about this grave threat as they enter advanced education and the work force, and to cause older generations to reflect on ideas they brought to reality that perhaps can be tailored and renewed to meet this distinctly 21st century challenge.

By all indications, including by your participation here and commitment to remain as strong partners, the partnership is strong and the seeds of success for the Global Initiative are well placed. This Initiative will continue to provide for a flexible framework that enables sustained international cooperation to prevent, detect, and respond to the threat of nuclear terrorism.

To date, the nuclear terrorism attacks which we fear the most have not occurred and every effort in the GI must be made to keep that important track record. To stay ahead of the threat, a clear GI goal, therefore, is to think and prepare for a bit beyond what we have seen but to measure that creative process with a healthy dose of our knowledge and experience combating terrorism, proliferation, and other threats.

With that in mind, I thought that I might offer you one scenario based both in our experience with terrorism and with a more expanded view of how a real nuclear terrorist capability might develop. These points are not exclusive, nor do they represent a single-held position by the U.S. government. But they are important to discuss for any deeper understanding of the threat.

Before talking about our most dangerous enemies, I know that we cannot prevent nuclear terrorism everywhere and all the time – particularly since we include radiological dispersal and other deliberate contaminations (if you will) as nuclear terrorism. There are simply too many opportunities for terrorists to use industrial, medical, or other commonly-found materials to enhance their conventional capabilities. That is not to say that we should not take steps to prevent local or low-impact terrorist attacks from occurring.

To the contrary, many local law enforcement organizations view the "homegrown" threat as most likely, believing that terrorists will judge the movement of material or other operational constraints as either too difficult or too revealing.

Terrorists are opportunists and often are more practical than they get credit for, and where material remains uncontrolled or lacks security, there remains opportunity. Our

role is to work closely with industry members and local governments to manage nuclear terrorism risk to the point where a terrorist will be relatively disappointed by the cost of doing business and by the impact of their attacks.

I would argue, however, that "transnational" terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda will not be satisfied to conduct attacks that cause mere low impact disruption and not catastrophe. For "transnational" terrorists, I would like you to consider a couple general principles that, if identified, would cause me to believe that a "transnational" terrorist organization was taking the critical steps to develop a catastrophic nuclear threat. First, I would be gravely concerned if it were determined that the leader of a known and capable transnational terrorist organization had a decisive role in the development of a nuclear terrorism capability. The leader's participation goes far beyond showing interest or general intent. It means that a leader is actively managing the effort by prioritizing resources, recruiting and vetting expertise, and pooling funds and other measures, to include perhaps identifying or communicating directly with smugglers to acquire material – all steps that good managers do to support a project leader. As with any organization, such participation by a leader sends a strong signal that the boss will not be satisfied until the final goal is achieved. Secondly, and as part of the overall project, I would also be concerned if a terrorist organization placed strong emphasis on figuring out how to preserve and then transform their acquired material and expertise into a weapon through a concerted effort to deepen their own understanding of the nature of the nuclear material and expertise and to introduce well-recognized industry measures to develop a more sophisticated approach to managing their acquired nuclear resources. Finally, as part of the organization's overall capability development process, it would concern me to see indications that a terrorist organization developed the sophistication to draw lessons about the use of nuclear or radiological material from its often widely dispersed activities and to be able to impart that knowledge across a greater span of its organization. To use a military term, the terrorist organization would be finding ways to both measure and accelerate its nuclear attack readiness – a goal that far exceeds having only isolated and limited pockets of expertise which could be identified by authorities and defeated. The combination of leadership support, a richer understanding of the material, its effects and expertise, and finding ways to improve the organization's readiness presents a truly formidable transnational terrorist threat.

Unfortunately, for us, Al Qaeda already proved its ability before 9/11 to institutionalize similar measures in support of attacks that did not include nuclear material. As Pulitzer Prize winner Steve Coll, who spoke earlier this week, and the 9/11 Commission reported, we only afterward 9/11 began to appreciate just how far Al Qaeda went to achieve its goals.

As part of our way forward, therefore, we should approach the recent attacks in Iraq involving chlorine with a concern that we might be seeing something new and equally dangerous developing that may not end with chlorine or chemical material. As you might know, Al Qaeda leaders in Iraq remained interested over a long period to develop a chemical-weapons capability. It was only through the good efforts of Jordan and our forces in Iraq that we began to see the interest more clearly. The important takeaway from this event and others is the role of the Al Qaeda-affiliated leaders and the persistence and organizational learning that has occurred in Iraq – which is having an increased effect in each attack. One of the most vexing challenges we face is determining just how close we really are to a tipping point of sorts for attacks like these or others that are developing without our awareness.

Whether dealing with local or transnational threats, we must deny terrorists any and all avenues to achieving a nuclear-terrorism capability. That means that a focus on the threat alone will not defeat nuclear terrorism. Effective nuclear terrorism risk management also includes reducing our vulnerability to nuclear terrorism and establishing effective crisis and consequence management steps that limit the outcomes of a nuclear terrorist attack.

Effective nuclear terrorism risk management also means establishing the right policies and implementing those policies effectively to combat nuclear terrorism. When implementing one policy or another, we must in particular place emphasis on building the right partnerships to combat nuclear terrorism so that the steps we take are extended far beyond the reaches of any single government or other organization and are conducted with the necessary depth and local approaches that make partnerships so effective.

To manage all three elements of nuclear terrorism risk, we must increase the strength of our current partnerships and establish new partnerships, including within our respective ministries and local governments in ways that use the strengths of our relationships to focus on gaps in our defenses.

As an extension of the priorities that you have heard about from others in this conference, I look for each GI activity to include at least one or more of the following elements. First, we should have at least more than one agency participating in each GI event. Secondly, we should strengthen our capacity to work together – to establish transnational capacity to combat transnational threats as opposed to only improving our own internal or domestic capacities. Finally, we need to practice – operations, information-sharing, communicating (which includes risk communications), the list goes on. Exercises are certainly an important forum to allow for practice and the co-chairs Russia and the United States' initiative to establish the GI Exercise Planning Group will include development of Global Initiative Planning Scenarios. We encourage all partners to participate in this important process. When exercises are neither feasible nor necessary, we should none-the-less improve our communications habits. Perhaps we should consider more as rule than exception the video feed between here and Kazakhstan conducted earlier this week. So that you are aware, we are also developing a Global Initiative Information Portal – which looks to break through some of the challenges faced by sharing sensitive and rapid information. As a start, we intend to provide to all partners voluntary information from each Plan of Work Activity and the GI meetings conducted to date. Perhaps in the future, through the use of NetMeeting or similar net-based communications platforms, we can move towards these goals that will demonstrably improve our information-sharing capacity.

The way forward for the Global Initiative is to combat nuclear terrorism in a deeper, more sustained and creative way. The framework for our partnership – a shared understanding of the threat, the principles we must implement, the political commitments we have made, the scheduled activities – are either established or set in motion. As for the future of the GI, I am looking forward to it.

Again I want to thank the FBI and others who provided me the opportunity to share in this important event. If time permits, I can take a few questions.

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