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PRESIDENT
GEORGE W. BUSH

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Statement by the President on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Forty years ago today, the United States joined 61 other nations in signing the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Today, almost all nations are party to the Treaty. The NPT represents a key legal barrier to nuclear weapons proliferation and makes a critical contribution to international security. I reaffirm the strong support of the United States for the Treaty and our commitment to work diligently to strengthen it further.

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NPT Parties must take strong action to confront noncompliance with the Treaty in order to preserve and strengthen its nonproliferation undertakings. We cannot allow nations to violate their commitments and undermine the NPT's fundamental role in advancing international security. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), through its safeguards system, plays a vital role in supporting the Treaty by uncovering and reporting violations of nuclear safeguards. The United States is committed to ensuring the IAEA has the tools and access it needs to do its work, especially in support of universal adherence to the Additional Protocol.

The United States remains firmly committed to continued compliance with our own obligations under the NPT. Our record demonstrates this commitment, including to the disarmament goals expressed in the Preamble and Article VI of the Treaty. Because of the nuclear reductions I have directed and the Moscow Treaty I signed with Russia, the U.S. nuclear weapon stockpile already has been reduced by half since I entered office and is at its smallest size since the 1950s.

The United States supports the global expansion of peaceful nuclear energy as a means of meeting growing energy demand and utilizing this zero-emission source of energy to help meet the challenge of climate change. This expansion of nuclear energy must be safe, secure and not contribute to nuclear proliferation.

It is essential in these times of great challenges to the security of the international community, particularly when terrorists and state sponsors of terrorism seek to acquire weapons of mass destruction, that NPT parties work together to confront the dangers of nuclear proliferation. I call upon all Parties to act promptly and effectively to meet these challenges and ensure that the Treaty remains an effective instrument of global security.

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