

The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 28, 2010

Statement by the National Security Advisor, General James L. Jones, on the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference

The United States welcomes the agreements reached at the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference to strengthen the global non-proliferation regime.

The final document broadly supports our strategy to strengthen the NPT, which is essential to stopping the spread of nuclear weapons around the world and pursuing the ultimate goal of a world without them. The document includes balanced and practical steps to advance nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which are critical pillars of the global nonproliferation regime. In particular, the document calls for measures to strengthen inspections and compliance with the treaty, which will support our efforts to deal with countries like Iran who are seeking a nuclear weapons capability in violation of their international obligations. For this reason, we believe the document serves to strengthen the national security of the United States and our allies, including Israel.

Despite our agreement to the final document, we have serious reservations about one aspect of the Middle East resolution it contains. The final document includes an agreement to hold a regional conference in 2012 to discuss issues relevant to a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems. The United States has long supported such a zone, although our view is that a comprehensive and durable peace in the region and full compliance by all regional states with their arms control and nonproliferation obligations are essential precursors for its establishment. Just as our commitment to seek peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons will not be reached quickly, the U.S. understands that a WMD free zone in the Middle East is a long-term goal.

The proposed regional conference, to be effective, must include all countries of the Middle East and other relevant countries. The United States will insist that this be a

conference for discussion aimed at an exchange of views on a broad agenda, to include regional security issues, verification and compliance, and all categories of weapons of mass destruction and systems for their delivery. The conference would draw its mandate from the countries in the region in recognition of the principle that states in the region have sole authority regarding any WMD free zone in the Middle East.

To ensure the conference takes into account the interests of all regional states, the United States has decided to co-sponsor the conference, along with the UK, Russia, and the UN Secretary General. Together, we will identify a host for this conference and an individual to facilitate its preparation. In addition, we will insist that the conference operate only by consensus by the regional countries, to include agreement on any possible further discussions or follow-up actions, which will only take place with the consent of all the regional countries.

The United States will not permit a conference or actions that could jeopardize Israel's national security. We will not accept any approach that singles out Israel or sets unrealistic expectations. The United States' long-standing position on Middle East peace and security remains unchanged, including its unshakeable commitment to Israel's security.

In this respect, the United States deplores the decision to single out Israel in the Middle East section of the NPT document.

The failure of the resolution to mention Iran, a nation in longstanding violation of the NPT and UN Security Council Resolutions which poses the greatest threat of nuclear proliferation in the region and to the integrity of the NPT, is also deplorable.

As a cosponsor charged with enabling this conference, the United States will ensure that a conference will only take place if and when all countries feel confident that they can attend. Because of gratuitous way that Israel has been singled out, the prospect for a conference in 2012 that involves all key states in the region is now in doubt and will remain so until all are assured that it can operate in a unbiased and constructive way.