

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



"We are committed to building further our cooperation under the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. The Global Partnership has become a large-scale international initiative, which has contributed to the enhancement of international security and safety. The Partnership already demonstrates tangible results, and cooperation between our two countries has led to significant progress in all priority areas. We are particularly pleased with the excellent bilateral collaboration and spirit of partnership that has developed through working together on this program."

— *Joint Policy Statement by Prime Minister Stephen Harper and President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on Canada-Russia Relations, July 15, 2006.*

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 represented a watershed moment in history. The end of the Cold War brought an end to decades of East-West tension, and with it, the ever-present threat of a global military conflict in which weapons of mass destruction (WMD)—nuclear, biological and chemical weapons—might have been employed. The collapse of the Soviet Union, however, also created new challenges, not the least of which stemmed from the formidable legacy associated with Soviet WMD programs—the weapons themselves, their manufacturing facilities and the highly skilled workforce that developed and produced them. Facilities across the former Soviet Union (FSU) were home to an estimated 600 tonnes of highly enriched uranium (HEU) and weapons-grade

plutonium, in addition to the significant quantities incorporated into nuclear weapons. Still other facilities contained the world's largest declared stockpile of chemical weapons (CW), at some 40,000 tonnes.

Apart from these materials, there were close to 200 retired and vulnerable nuclear-powered submarines (NPS) from Russia's northern and Pacific fleets awaiting dismantlement. These submarines, many with spent nuclear fuel (SNF) on board, posed not only nuclear and radiological threats but also environmental risks. Of no less concern were the many institutes that had once been involved in the Soviet Union's various weapons programs and the

