

FACT SHEET

The White House
Office of the Press Secretary
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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

A few weeks ago President Boris Yeltsin and I agreed to the most far-reaching reductions in nuclear weaponry since the dawn of the atomic age. Yet even as our own arsenals diminish, the spread of the capability to produce or acquire weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them constitutes a growing threat to United States national security interests and world peace. In a world in which regional tensions may unpredictably erupt into war, these weapons could have devastating consequences.

That is why this Administration has fought so hard to stem the proliferation of these terrible weapons. We look back with pride on a solid record of accomplishment. Membership in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty has grown. The Missile Technology Control Regime and Australia Group have broadened their membership and expanded their controls against trade useful to the development of missiles and chemical and biological weapons. We have toughened our non-proliferation export controls, and other nations have followed suit. We have seen remarkable progress in building and strengthening regional arms control arrangements in Latin America, the Korean Peninsula, and the Middle East.

Yet we need to do more. The demand for these weapons persists and new suppliers of key technologies are emerging. Export controls alone cannot create an airtight seal against proliferation. In an era of advancing technology and trade liberalization, we need to employ the full range of political security, intelligence, and other tools at our disposal.

Therefore, I have set forth today a set of principles to guide our non-proliferation efforts in the years ahead, and directed a number of steps to supplement our existing efforts. These steps include a decision not to produce plutonium and highly-enriched uranium for nuclear explosive purposes and a number of proposals to strengthen international actions against those who contribute to the spread of weapons of mass destruction and the missiles that deliver them.

While these steps will strengthen the barriers against proliferation, success will require hard work and, at times, hard choices. The United States, however, is committed to take a leading role in the international effort to thwart the spread of technologies and weapons that cast a cloud over our future.