

## Executive Summary

*"One truth is undeniable: security in the 21st century is a common interest, and a shared responsibility."*

*—Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World, April 2005.*



*"There is no contradiction between Canada doing well and Canada doing good. Canada benefits directly when the world is more secure. ... If we are to take our responsibilities seriously to ourselves and the Canadian generations to follow, then we must take our responsibilities to the global community seriously as well."*

*—Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World, Foreword by Prime Minister Paul Martin, April 2005.*

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 represented a critical and memorable turning point in recent history, but it did not end the most serious threat from the Cold War era. In fact, it created new challenges, not the least of which stemmed from the formidable legacy associated with Soviet weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs. This legacy extended beyond the Soviet WMD arsenal to include associated materials and expertise that continue to pose serious security risks. Facilities across the former Soviet Union were home to an estimated

600 tonnes of highly enriched uranium and weapons-grade plutonium; this material was in addition to the significant quantities incorporated into nuclear weapons. Still other facilities contained the world's largest declared stockpile of chemical weapons, at some 40,000 tonnes. Apart from these materials, there were close to 200 retired and vulnerable nuclear-powered submarines from Russia's Northern and Pacific fleets awaiting dismantlement. These submarines, many with spent nuclear fuel on board, posed not only nuclear and radiological proliferation threats but also environmental risks. Beyond this material legacy, the dissolution of the Soviet Union also had a human impact as tens of thousands of former weapons scientists were suddenly left unemployed or underemployed. The difficulties these individuals faced were exacerbated by the atmosphere of political and economic instability that followed in the region and in other parts of the world.

Addressing this Cold War legacy was an enormous task and one well beyond the capacity of Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union. A few nations responded in the 1990s with a number of bilateral and multilateral projects to help deal with the

