

Dear colleague:

There is a broad and growing bipartisan consensus that we must prevent nuclear terrorism at home by securing all vulnerable nuclear materials around the globe as quickly as possible. The Fissile Material Working Group (FMWG) supports this view and applauds the President's fiscal year 2011 (FY11) budget for including an additional \$320 million over the FY10 budget to support the four-year international effort to secure all vulnerable nuclear materials worldwide. We must close the fissile material security gap.

In mid-2009, the global stockpile of nuclear materials was large enough to build more than 120,000 nuclear bombs. This material continues to accumulate in unstable regions of the world.

This is an area in which the United States is leading but must work more urgently. President Obama has called for securing all vulnerable materials in four years and is convening an unprecedented heads-of-state summit in April to shore up international commitments to work together on this goal.

It is vital that Congress aggressively fund the U.S. programs that are implementing our fissile material security policy. In particular, the FY11 budget request includes:

- \$75 million for a new Global Nuclear Lockdown program spearheaded by the Department of Defense (DoD). This includes new funding for regionally located Centers of Excellence for Nuclear Security that will be implemented jointly by DoD and National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA).
- An \$18 million increase over the FY10 level for NNSA's International Nuclear Materials Protection and Cooperation program to improve the security of nuclear materials globally including an additional \$34 million for the security of nuclear materials in Russia.
- A major increase of \$211 million to accelerate the removal of high-priority, vulnerable nuclear materials under the NNSA Global Threat Reduction Initiative program.

We must ensure that these programs are provided adequate resources to execute this urgent agenda.

As you know, the 9/11 Commission and subsequent studies have confirmed that al Qaeda is actively seeking nuclear materials to use against the United States. As a result, bipartisan experts have uniformly recommended strengthening our efforts to limit the availability of nuclear material to terrorists by eliminating this material from the black market, locking down existing stockpiles, and reducing the number of nuclear weapons around the world that can fall into the hands of our enemies.

Organizations Represented

Arms Control Association
Cato Institute
Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation
Center for International Trade and Security, University of Georgia
Center for Science and Global Security, Princeton University
Council for a Livable World
Cypress Fund for Peace and Security
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Fund for Peace
Global Green USA
The Henry L. Stimson Center
Institute for Science and International Security
Natural Resources Defense Council
Nuclear Threat Initiative
Partnership for Global Security
Partnership for a Secure America
Peace Action
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Project on Government Oversight
Project on Managing the Atom, Harvard University
ReThink Media
Security Studies Program, MIT
The Stanley Foundation
Union of Concerned Scientists

Steering Committee

Matthew Bunn, Harvard University
Kenneth Luongo, Partnership for Global Security (co-chair)
Jennifer Smyser, The Stanley Foundation
Alexandra Toma, The Connect U.S. Fund (co-chair)
Elizabeth Turpen, Booz Allen Hamilton
Paul Walker, Global Green USA
Jim Walsh, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

The FMWG – a group of over 40 leading U.S. experts in this field – has formed to support and help implement the goal of securing all vulnerable fissile materials as quickly as possible. It is in the process of expanding its membership to include international partners. The FMWG will host its own nuclear security summit on April 12, 2010 in Washington D.C. to highlight the need for all nations to support and provide sufficient funding to accomplish the nuclear material security mission.

The U.S. has been funding threat reduction work for 17 years and yet fissile materials around the world remain vulnerable to theft. Steady as you go program budgets are not capable of meeting this global challenge.

If nuclear terrorism truly is the gravest threat facing our nation, we must act without delay to provide the funding necessary to reduce that threat and keep our nation secure.

Sincerely,

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