



CENTER FOR ARMS CONTROL AND NON-PROLIFERATION

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Fact Sheet on Strengthening Arms Control and Nonproliferation

By Kingston Reif*

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In a welcome and much-needed shift from the policies of the Bush administration, both presumptive nominees for President in 2008 have stated that they intend to strengthen the global nonproliferation regime and pursue further legally binding and verifiable reductions in the number of U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons. In order to achieve progress on effective nuclear arms control and nonproliferation, the next President will need to construct a bureaucratic structure that enhances the capacity of the United States to pursue bold measures.

The following are options that the next administration might consider when thinking about how to reorganize the national security apparatus to further a new agenda:

1) A Separate Agency for Arms Control and Nonproliferation

Establishing a separate agency would ensure that arms control and nonproliferation issues are represented at the highest levels of government. Such an agency could take two forms:

- *An independent agency outside the State Department.* Perhaps modeled after the previous Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), such an entity would be independent of the State Department, have a separate seat at National Security Council (NSC) meetings on arms control and nonproliferation policy, and have direct access to the President. This type of restructuring would guarantee that the agency's views are considered at the highest levels, even when the Secretary of State disagrees, and would ensure a key role for the agency in interagency policy formulation on national security.
- *A separate agency within the State Department.* While the agency would remain within the State Department, it would have an independent voice and additional budgetary and personnel resources. The agency would represent the view of the State Department on arms control and nonproliferation issues. The agency's director would coordinate regularly with the Secretary of State and be able to communicate directly with the President. This structure would mirror the quasi-independent National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) within the Department of Energy.

Congressional legislation would be required to create a separate agency and would likely take several years. It could be pursued in parallel to recommendations for more short-term and incremental arms control and nonproliferation measures.

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2) Organizational Changes

An alternative to creating a separate agency would be to implement less-sweeping organizational changes. Such changes might include:

- Creating separate bureaus within the State Department that are focused solely on arms control and nonproliferation, respectively.
- Ensuring that these bureaus have a role to play in interagency policy formulation by restoring the right of the Under Secretary responsible for arms control and nonproliferation to have a separate seat at NSC meetings considering arms control and nonproliferation policy.
- Guaranteeing an independent voice for arms control and nonproliferation issues within the State Department. The Under Secretary should also have the ability to communicate directly with the President.

The downside of this approach is that the bureaus for arms control and nonproliferation would remain part of the State Department's traditional bureaucratic structure, which prioritizes regional cooperation and the prominence of regional bureaus over functional bureaus. Arms control and nonproliferation issues would thus be more difficult to promote than if they were represented by a separate agency.

3) Special Advisors within the Executive Office of the President

An even less-sweeping change would be to appoint special advisors within the Executive Office of the President to deal with arms control and nonproliferation issues. These advisors would hold the position of Special Representative of the President or deputy national security advisor and would be responsible for leading interagency coordination of U.S. policy, strengthening U.S. commitment to international regimes, and improving cooperation with other countries.

Congress recently took a welcome step in this direction by mandating that the President establish an "Office of the United States Coordinator for the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism," though the position remains unfilled.

4) Personnel Reform

The loss of personnel with legal and technical experience and expertise in arms control and nonproliferation within the State Department in recent years has been a result of both the reorganization undertaken by the Bush administration that followed the ACDA-State merger, and the Department's general organizational bias in favor of regional and country affairs. The options available to retain and recruit qualified personnel include:

- A more robust recruiting program that is attractive to candidates with appropriate scientific and technical backgrounds.
- Encouraging civil servants to select and prolong a career in the field of arms control and nonproliferation by creating opportunities for upward mobility above and beyond what currently exists.

- Requiring that Foreign Service Officers undertake assignments in arms control and nonproliferation.
- Submitting for Congressional consideration for the position of Director (in the case of a separate agency) or Under Secretary (in the case of a reorganization of the State Department) only those individuals who have significant experience with, and are supportive of, arms control and nonproliferation.