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Input Luncheon Discussion, November 17, 2009:

New Geostrategic Challenges for Disarmament – what Role for the UN?

Ladies and Gentlemen, its an honor and a pleasure for me to speak here in front of high ranking round of experts. I would also like to thank Marc Saxer and the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation for their excellent work.

After years in the doldrums, there is once more wind in the sails of nuclear arms control. Important aims and proposals of the arms control community, which in recent decades have been worked out by nongovernmental organizations, think tanks, and commissions are once again an integral part of world politics. During the eight years of the George W. Bush administration the arms control and disarmament process was systematically neutered and reversed.

I welcome the negotiations between U.S. President Obama and Russian President Medvedev to cut the American and Russian nuclear arsenals by as much as a third, laying out a path to replace the **Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START)** that will expire in December 2009. President Obama's decision to cancel the deployment of ABM systems in Poland and Czechia facilitates the conclusion of negotiations which would send out a signal that nuclear weapon states are prepared to follow their obligations to disarm under Art VI of the NPT.

At a historic summit meeting presided over by President Barack Obama and addressed by 13 other Heads of State and Government, the Security Council adopted **Resolution 1887 (2009)** and pledged its backing for broad progress on long-stalled efforts to staunch the proliferation of nuclear weapons and ensure reductions in existing weapons stockpiles, as well as control of fissile material.

The resolution wants “to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons” and endorse many of the measures laid out in President Barack Obama’s speech in Prague. The resolution also lays the political groundwork for strengthening the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty regime and tightening nuclear export controls. It also demands that Iran and North Korea comply with the obligations of previous Security Council resolutions.

The council further called on all states to implement an additional protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The 1997 Model Additional Protocol provides the agency with greater inspection authority than it has under the standard safeguards agreements signed with NPT parties. This improves the IAEA’s ability to detect undeclared nuclear activities. Additionally, the council urged states to take measures that would allow the export of nuclear technology and material only to those countries that have an additional protocol in place.

The resolution calls for further progress on nuclear disarmament, while welcoming the ongoing negotiations between the United States and Russia to replace the expiring START. It calls on all states, not just parties to the NPT, to pursue negotiations on “effective measures” related to disarmament. India, Israel, and Pakistan are not parties to the NPT, while North Korea withdrew from the treaty in 2003. All four are nuclear armed. So far, the international community has not been able to integrate these »nuclear outsiders« in a limitation regime or to extract a disarmament roadmap from them.

The council also called on all states to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) at an early date and to conclude negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

Furthermore the resolution “welcomes and supports” efforts to conclude nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties. These zones will help to realize the objective of nuclear disarmament. Six such treaties are currently in force, covering Africa, Antarctica, Central Asia, Latin America, the South Pacific, and Southeast Asia. The creation of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East has been a long-standing goal of the NPT community, formally endorsed at the 1995 review conference.

The council also recalled statements issued by the five nuclear-weapon states in 1995 promising not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states.

And last but not least the Geneva-based **Conference on Disarmament** agreed in May to begin negotiating a fissile material cutoff treaty (FMCT) but has been stalled by procedural wrangling. Both the CTBT and FMCT are considered crucial steps on the road to nuclear disarmament by the non-nuclear-weapon states. I think it would also be helpful, to discuss how we could expand the agenda of the CD.

The aims of the Obama administration are ambitious. The extent to which it proves possible to bring round the nuclear bureaucracy and the – currently regrouping – Republicans to a reduction in the role of nuclear weapons in the twenty-first century and a ban on first-use will be decisive. If the future planning of nuclear arsenals is determined solely by the core function of nuclear weapons – namely deterrence – reductions well below 1,000 warheads on either side are possible and achievable. This is however, if the two nuclear superpowers manage to overcome their Cold War mentality.

Ladies and gentlemen: Thank you very much for your attention. I'm looking forward to a lively discussion.