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The CIS and the International Nonproliferation Regime
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1. The socio-economic and political instability in the FSU is a factor of global significance, which will affect the historical geopolitical development until the turn of this century and well into the XXI century. The process of stabilization will include the search for and determination of the political identity of independent states which comprise the CIS. And this does not exclude Russia, which, through its new democratic political institutions, is also to find its new role and security posture in the changed world.

This situation presents now and for the foreseeable future tremendous challenges for the entire world community, especially since the maintenance of international peace and security and of the nonproliferation regime depends largely on the stability and safety of the nuclear assets, both military and civilian, of the FSU.

2. The nuclear weapons, as well as other atomic

facilities, being a high-risk factor, critically need stability. Maintaining such stability in the FSU is a task to be addressed through international processes, since it is a matter of universal concern, and also because the former Soviet republics, in view of their present and as yet uncertain relationships, can hardly sort out their problems without the assistance of the so called "capitalist encirclement". It is also important to bear in mind that internal instability prevails now and may emerge in the future in other NWS or other countries with significant nuclear activities (such as India, for example).

3. The post-confrontational period in world affairs offers a unique opportunity to attempt a genuinely international approach to controlling nuclear energy, both for military and civilian purposes.

At the time atomic energy was discovered and nuclear weapons were used, the cream of nuclear physicists, led by Robert Oppenheimer, proposed the establishment of international control over nuclear energy. This idea was, however, substantially distorted in the Baruch Plan, which proposed "managerial control or ownership of all atomic energy activities". Such a proposal could not be accepted by Stalin, quite naturally, while Stalin's proposal for the destruction of US atomic weapons within three months was equally unpalatable to Truman.

4. Now we have a chance to start working on a scheme of international control of nuclear energy which could be acceptable to most players. This should be a step-by-step exercise, gradually covering all stages of the fuel cycle and, hopefully, all nuclear weapons down to agreed minimal levels.

The heart of the system should be international custody and international safeguards, rather than international ownership or management, as proposed in the Baruch Plan.

Nuclear energy and nuclear weapons can not be uninvented, but they can be internationalized.

5. Should such a scheme prove practicable, it would have the distinct advantage of providing a mechanism for addressing the problem of political instability in nuclear states, thus dissociating the control of nuclear weapons from domestic political instabilities. After all, according to Paul Kennedy, empires rise, but they also fall.

6. International control of nuclear energy would, of course, require the establishment of an appropriate international agency with wide powers. Two options may be considered: a newly formed organization based, more or less, on a concept of an agency envisaged in the Baruch Plan; and an upgrading of the IAEA.

The unique experience accumulated by the IAEA over the years in a vast area of diversified nuclear activities, particularly in safeguarding, clearly indicates that the second option is by far more preferable. Naturally enough, a substantive upgrading of the Agency would be required, to cover military aspects. It would also be essential to provide a very close link to the UNSC in order to assure appropriate enforcement in case of non-compliance.

7. A significant step towards achieving this objective would be the establishment of international plutonium and HEU store or stores under the auspices and safeguards of the IAEA. A need to quickly provide safe and environmentally secure storage to hundreds of tons of Pu and HEU, released as a result of the dismantlement of nuclear warheads of CIS, US and other NWS and eventually of those countries that may keep nuclear warheads or weapons-grade materials in their basements, gives a new impetus to the concept of IPS, which is a still unimplemented provision in

Article XII.A.5 of the IAEA Statute.

In the late 70s and early 80s a useful pioneering job was done by an IAEA expert group on IPS, resulting in a report to the Board of Governors in November 1982. Some differences had emerged then, in particular over the determination of what should constitute "excess" plutonium that would have to be deposited in storage; where plutonium stores should be located; what decision-making arrangements should be, etc. The Final Declaration of the 1985 NPT Revcon reconfirmed international interest in IPS in urging that the "IAEA establish an internationally agreed effective system of international plutonium storage in accordance with Article XII.A.5 of its Statute".

8. The present international climate provides favorable opportunities for the revival of the IPS proposition, clearing away many of the difficulties which existed a decade ago.

The establishment of three regional IPS could be considered - in Russia, the US and Western Europe, located adjacent to existing weapons assembly/disassembly plants, reprocessing or storage facilities. The operators should continue to own their stores and to exercise their normal responsibilities in the areas of health, safety, etc., while the Agency should exercise custodial and safeguards duties.

In view of the huge amounts of weapons-grade materials in need of storage, the possibility of establishing a UN Protection Force should also be studied.

9. An IPS in Siberia would help to mitigate many complex problems that present grave proliferation concerns for the CIS and the world at large.