



THE VIEWS OF THE REPUBLICS OF THE FORMER SOVIET UNION ON  
THE NONPROLIFERATION AND THE NPT EXTENSION CONFERENCE

(AAAS Conference, San Francisco, 22 February, 1994)

Some basic facts. Of the 12 CIS countries 6 are NPT parties: Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Uzbekistan. Kazakhstan was the last one to join the NPT: its instrument of accession was handed over by President Nazarbaev to President Clinton on February 14. 2 more - Kyrgyzstan and Moldova - have ratified the treaty but not yet deposited their instruments of accession. Outside the treaty are Ukraine, Georgia, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan.

The other former Soviet republics, not members of the CIS, - Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia - are all parties to the NPT.

On January 14, 1994, Ukraine signed the Trilateral Statement with Russia and the US, under which President Kravchuk reiterated his commitment that Ukraine accede to the NPT as a NNWS in the shortest possible time. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in its resolution of February 3, 1994, stated that, "considering the concrete measures taken by the President and Government of Ukraine concerning the implementation of the provisions of the Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of 18 November 1993 (which attached 13 conditions to START I and the Lisbon Protocol) and the reciprocal steps by the USA and RF," it resolved "to remove the reservation"

concerning Article V of the Lisbon Protocol (this Article, which provides for the accession of Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan to the NPT, had been previously rescinded by the Rada decision).

In January 1994, Ukraine sent an observer to the meeting of the PrepCom of the 1995 Extension Conference, as soon as the Committee decided that representatives of states non-parties to the NPT be allowed to attend the meetings of the Committee.

Under the January Trilateral Statement, Ukraine is to conclude an agreement with the IAEA placing all its nuclear activities under the Agency safeguards, which, as the Statement says, "will allow the unimpeded export of fuel assemblies from Russia to Ukraine for Ukraine's nuclear power industry." Russia and the US, on their part, undertook to "promote the elaboration and adoption by the IAEA" of such an agreement.

The draft safeguards agreement with Ukraine, which is to be of a comprehensive, or full-scope, type, has been negotiated and basically agreed upon. It is expected that it will be submitted for the approval of the June session of the IAEA Board of Governors. Safeguards agreement with Belarus will also be approved in June. The Board's February session which opened yesterday approved the safeguards agreement with Uzbekistan.

Factors influencing Ukraine's attitude toward the NPT. The executive branch of the Ukrainian government is actively promoting the country's accession to the treaty, while the majority of the present parliament is not yet ready to go along with it. The last

decision of the Rada stopped short of approving Ukraine's accession to the NPT. With the parliamentary elections around the corner, the NPT ratification will be taken up by the new Rada.

The single most important factor affecting Kiev's position is an incertitude about the future of Ukraine's relations with Russia. Both were part of one and unitary state, an empire, for centuries. Throughout their history, both peoples maintained love/hate relationship being part of one though at times not a very friendly family. What happened in late 1991? Was it a final divorce, a separation, or a temporary parting? These questions and answers to them are now acquiring growing significance in the eyes of not only the majority of Ukrainians and Russians, but also of the populations of other former Soviet republics. Note, for example, developments in Belarus.

Secondly, a tremendous upheaval that has been going on in the former Soviet Union since mid-1980s has brought to the surface of political life large groups of activists that for decades, in view of Stalinist and post-Stalinist repressions, were denied opportunities to participate in any political activity. Their latent energies that have been accumulating for decades - since 1917 - have now burst out into the open. On the other hand, the old political guard, the so-called apparatchiks and old-time industrial plant and collective farm managers by no means intend to give up their positions. As a result, the struggle for political power has reached unprecedented dimensions all over the former Soviet Union - in Ukraine, in Russia, and other republics. And, as

we all know too well, political power gives economic and other advantages, perks and privileges, which at times of hardship are in particular demand.

Thirdly, historical and religious diversity of the Ukrainian population. Western Ukraine has had a different political and religious history, it has much stronger traditions of independence, than the rest of Ukraine, in particular Eastern and Southern Ukraine where there is a large Russian population.

To all this one should add an almost complete lack of democratic political culture and traditions in both Russia and Ukraine, which makes the process of transition from totalitarianism to democracy even more bumpy and stormy.

The political opponents of the government of President Kravchuk have a large variety of real or perceived problems and concerns which provide them with quite a number of opportunities of mounting resistance to Ukraine's accession to the NPT. To give a few examples:

- uneasiness with regard to the inviolability of Ukrainian borders, in particular in view of a strong separatist movement in Crimea;

- a perception that nuclear weapons on the Ukrainian soil are a "deterrence" against Russian potential aggressive impulses. The Zhirinovskiy factor is naturally feeding such a perception;

- demands for an additional compensation for fissile materials to be recovered from the weapons that are to be withdrawn and dismantled in Russia;

- demands for additional security assurances from NWSs.

This list could of course be continued.

The political struggle in Kiev around the issue of Ukraine's accession to the NPT is by no means over. A new factor of uncertainty are the forthcoming parliamentary elections at the end of next month. However, quite a number of factors seem to be pointing in the direction of eventual accession of Ukraine to the treaty. The following is no way an exhaustive inventory of such factors:

- a deteriorating economic situation and growing dependence on assistance and supply of badly needed resources from Russia, the US and other countries;

- increasing centripetal trends in Ukraine and other former Soviet republics;

- a growing desire not to stay outside but rather to integrate into the world community.

- a growing understanding that the process of NPT extension is in fact the process of deliberating and elaborating the new post-Cold War nuclear world order which will be different from the world order in which we all lived during the last several decades. Ukraine as an important European power, which would retain nuclear weapons on its soil for some time to come, cannot stay away from this process, but would rather participate in it and influence the decisions which are to be prepared and worked out soon, and then taken in 1995;

- the last but not the least, the mere idea of Ukrainian-

Russian nuclear hostility or rivalry is nonsensical, absurd and totally unacceptable to the vast majority of both the Ukrainians and Russians, with the exception of some politicians in Kiev, Lviv or Moscow, who can hardly continue for a long time their polemic without losing completely any touch with the reality and forfeiting the patience of their constituents. I believe that recent developments in Kiev support this analysis.

CIS views on the Extension Conference. Most of the CIS states party to the NPT would, as it seems at least at this moment, follow Russia in their attitude towards the extension formula and other major issues before the conference.

Russia strongly supports the indefinite and unconditional extension, which was most recently recorded in the Clinton-Yeltsin joint statement of January 14, 1994. It is my understanding that both Belarus and Kazakhstan would also support such an extension.

Now, if Ukraine joins the treaty before the conference starts next year, my guess would be that Kiev's diplomacy would be favoring such decisions at the conference that would place more onus on the NWSs for their lack of efforts to implement Art. VI of the NPT, especially if NWSs fail to deliver the CTBT by the time of the conference.

Ukraine is carefully watching any changes in the Russian nuclear doctrine. Last year Russia announced, for the first time, that it now adheres to the doctrine of nuclear deterrence. At the same time, Russia abandoned its non-first use policy promulgated by

the Brezhnev administration in 1982. Although this declaration was never accepted by military strategists at its face value, the fact that the Russian government chose to relinquish its non-first use policy at a time of serious frictions with Ukraine over nuclear weapons, could not fail to arouse in Kiev quite natural concerns. More reliance by Russia on nuclear weapons, as perceived by Kiev, would, in all probability, prompt Ukraine to side at the extension conference with those delegations which would oppose the indefinite prolongation of the treaty.

If this assumption is correct, it would be in Ukraine's interests to try to retain the leverage of treaty extension in order to continue to press the NWSs, and Russia in particular, to adopt far-reaching measures of nuclear disarmament. And here Ukraine will find quite a few allies and partners from among the Third World (and not only Third World) non-nuclear-weapon states.

One could also anticipate that Ukraine would be supporting those countries (e.g. Egypt and Nigeria) that favor more binding security assurances to be provided by NWSs to NNWSs. The end of the Cold War has created new opportunities for giving stronger assurances to NNWSs. Together with my colleague George Bunn of Stanford University we recommend that NWSs consider the adoption of a new UN Security Council resolution which would offer NNWSs in one legal document emanating from the most authoritative world body, responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, both so-called "negative" and "positive" security

assurances.

We also support an effort by five avowed NWSs, who are now all parties to the NPT and therefore, for the first time, are all committed to implement Art. VI of the treaty, to agree, in time for the extension conference, on a set of substantive steps leading to nuclear disarmament as is required by this treaty provision. One of the first among them should be the adoption of a non-first use doctrine. If the US takes the lead, and there is a good chance that it will be supported by China, which has espoused this policy since its first nuclear explosion in 1964, all other NWSs, including Russia, will fall in line.

Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons should be the highest priority of the five NWSs. What the five do to increase or decrease the role of nuclear weapons as instruments of national policy would affect the incentives of others for acquiring them and would thus determine the future of the nonproliferation regime.

The most persuasive tool the five nuclear powers have to decrease the motivation of NNWSs to go nuclear is to de-emphasize the role of nuclear weapons as instruments of national policy.

The 1995 NPT conference is not just a conference to extend the life of a treaty, it is a watershed event that may usher in a new nuclear era, an era of hope or an era of despair.