

Talking Points for Harry Heintzleman's Participation in the

Shadow NATO Summit III's

Session VI on the future of U.S. tactical weapons in Europe

Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 10:45-12:15 a.m. (1.5 hours)

GWU's Linder Family Commons (1957 E St. NW), Room 602

Thank you again for inviting me to this very interesting conference on NATO Summit related issues and asking me to comment on the future of U.S. nonstrategic nuclear weapons in Europe.

Upon signing the New START Treaty in April 2010, President Obama stated his intent to pursue additional and broader reductions in U.S. and Russian strategic and nonstrategic weapons, including non-deployed nuclear weapons. The United States will do this in a way that supports stability, deterrence, and assurance. For its part, the U.S. Senate made clear its strong interest in addressing the large numerical disparity in nonstrategic nuclear weapons between the United States and Russia.

The United States has reduced its nuclear arsenal, including its nonstrategic or "tactical" nuclear weapons, dramatically since the end of the Cold War.

According to declassified figures released in May 2010, the U.S. nuclear stockpile

as a whole has been reduced by 84% since its peak in 1967. In absolute numbers, nuclear warheads in the U.S. active stockpile declined from 31,255 in 1967 to 5,113 on September 30, 2009. During this period, the United States has reduced its arsenal of nonstrategic warheads by 90%, and since 1994 the United States has dismantled more than 8,000 nuclear warheads.

Today, the United States keeps only a limited number of forward-based nonstrategic nuclear weapons in Europe, committed to NATO, plus a small number of nonstrategic nuclear weapons stored in the United States, available for global deployment in support of extended deterrence for allies and partners. Russia maintains a much larger force of nonstrategic nuclear weapons.

When looking towards U.S. arms control objectives following the Summit, I want to emphasize that strengthening and maintaining European security will remain a top U.S. priority. As Secretary Clinton said in 2010, “[a] strong Europe is critical to our security and our prosperity. Much of what we hope to accomplish globally depends on working together with Europe.” We are committed to working with our European counterparts to advance our mutual security.

Arms control is an important part of that effort. From robust multilateral conventional arms control arrangements to bilateral nuclear arms agreements like the New START Treaty, each element contributes to a stable and predictable security environment in Europe.

Strategic stability, cooperation, and transparency between the United States and the Russian Federation are important elements in maintaining European security. The United States and Russian Federation together still control over 90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons and the need to continue working on bilateral nuclear reduction efforts is essential. In addition, the United States continues to engage with all the P5 nuclear weapons states (NWS) on further diminishing the role of nuclear weapons, reducing the risk of nuclear war, and enhancing transparency and mutual confidence. These are necessary steps to create conditions for the eventual inclusion of other nuclear powers in future arms control agreements.

An important step in this process was the New START Treaty with the Russian Federation. The implementation of the Treaty is now well underway and proceeding in a professional and business-like manner.

The United States has made it clear that we are committed to continuing a step-by-step process to reduce the overall number of nuclear weapons, including the pursuit of a future agreement with Russia for broad reductions in all categories of nuclear weapons – strategic, non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed.

Nonstrategic and nondeployed nuclear warheads have never been subject to any treaty. Placing treaty limits on them will present major challenges for verification. When we think about monitoring nonstrategic or nondeployed warheads as well as eliminating nuclear warheads, we must tackle verification tasks that have never before been addressed.

At NATO's November 2010 Lisbon Summit, the Alliance reaffirmed that the strategic nuclear forces of NATO's nuclear-armed member states are the "supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies," and agreed that NATO should maintain the broadest possible level of burden sharing on nuclear matters. NATO Allies further agreed to seek to create the conditions for future nuclear reductions, and noted that the Alliance should seek Russia's agreement to increase the transparency of its nuclear weapons in Europe and to relocate those weapons away from the territories of NATO members.

NATO is nearing completion of a Deterrence and Defense Posture Review (DDPR), which provides NATO an opportunity to take stock of the challenges the Alliance is likely to face in the future and to determine the appropriate mix of conventional, nuclear, and missile defense forces that NATO will need to deter and defend against future threats to the Alliance and to ensure Allies' security. NATO is now working on a final report to present to leaders at the 2012 NATO Summit in Chicago. The DDPR will provide Allies with a focused review of NATO's deterrence and defense requirements; however, the process of adapting the Alliance to a changing world will be on-going.

NATO's nuclear weapons policy will be a key component of the DDPR. Any changes in NATO's nuclear posture will only be taken after review within, and decision by, the Alliance as a whole. We are currently consulting with our NATO Allies on reciprocal steps to increase transparency on U.S. and Russian nonstrategic nuclear weapons in Europe.

For example, as a first step toward future bilateral reduction talks, we are interested in reciprocal information exchanges and confidence-building measures with Russia. Building on the ideas set out in a non-paper circulated by Poland, Norway, Germany and the Netherlands that proposed nonstrategic nuclear

weapons transparency discussions in the NATO-Russia Council, NATO's WMD Control and Disarmament Committee has identified a range of potential transparency measures on nonstrategic nuclear weapons in Europe and submitted them to the North Atlantic Council for consideration. We look forward to reaching agreement within NATO on next steps.

We know that future agreements on nuclear reductions will require new and novel approaches to the challenges we face. I look forward to your questions and learning your thinking on how we can overcome these challenges. Thank you all for your attention.