Good morning, friends. Welcome. Please settle in so we can begin our program.

I’m Daryl Kimball, the Executive Director of the Arms Control Association. I want to welcome you this morning to the Carnegie Endowment and our Panel Discussion on “The Future of the U.S. Nuclear Weapons Stockpile.” This is the first part of our program today, which will also include our sold-out luncheon keynote address by Dr. Hans Blix on "Repairing the Nuclear Nonproliferation System."

We have many ACA members and friends here, but for those of you who are not familiar with the Arms Control Association, we are a non-profit, non-partisan organization which is dedicated to public education and research about the threats posed by nuclear, chemical, biological, and conventional arms, and promoting effective means to reduce and eliminate them. I am proud to say we are entering our 35th year and as you can see from today's turnout we're still going strong.

Since our founding to the present, ACA has been especially focused on the value—and the obligation under Article VI of the NPT—to verifiably reduce and eventually eliminate global nuclear weapons stockpiles.

Today's session is but the latest of ACA’s ongoing efforts to encourage fresh and forward looking thinking on these issues. As influential Congressman David Hobson said at this event one year ago, "I think the time is now for a thoughtful and open debate on the role of nuclear weapons in our country's national security strategy." On that I think there is now broad agreement.

But as of now there no consensus on what role, if any, the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile serves in U.S. security today and into the future, nor is there agreement on how the size and composition of the stockpile should be further adjusted given the overarching need to curb proliferation, reduce the saliency of nuclear weapons, and prevent nuclear terrorism.

Before we hear from our panelists, I want to highlight four key areas that merit closer scrutiny as we think about the shape of the U.S. nuclear stockpile a decade from now:

First, how do we advance progress on verifiable strategic nuclear disarmament beyond the 2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, which promises to reduce U.S. and Russian operationally deployed strategic warheads to no more than 2,200 by 2012. That represents progress in the relative sense, but keep in mind that those numbers are comparable to the warhead deployment levels of the United States in the mid-1950s and the Soviet Union in the late-1960s. And if the START agreement is allowed to expire in 2009, the ability of the U.S. and Russia to confidently verify compliance with their commitments will diminish considerably.

From ACA's perspective, there is no credible threat scenario that warrants maintaining such large numbers of strategic warhead on high alert 20 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall. As, the 2005 ACA report on "Restructuring U.S. Strategic Nuclear Forces" by Sidney Drell and James Goodby recommends, the U.S. should pursue faster and deeper reductions to 1,000 total warheads by 2010. And new negotiations either to extend START or its verification system should begin soon.
Second, how can we verifiably reduce excess stockpiles of Cold War era tactical nuclear weapons, of which Russia has at least 3,500. The U.S. maintains several hundred, including some 400 stationed at bases in six NATO countries in Europe. As the former head of DOE’s defense nuclear nonproliferation office told Congress last year, a lost tactical nuclear warhead is a "low risk, high consequence" terrorism threat that keeps him awake at night. While, both countries profess support for tactical warhead reductions, each blames the other for holding up progress.

As a result, the Congress and some European legislators are getting impatient. Last year, Congress tasked the Defense, State, and Energy Departments to provide reports on whether and how the United States should “reduce the number of U.S. and Russian nonstrategic nuclear weapons and improve the security of Russian nonstrategic nuclear weapons....” The U.S. could help break the impasse by drawing down its NATO tactical nuclear forces and retiring old systems, such as the W-80 warhead.

Third, should the United States continue to seek new nuclear weapons capabilities--such as the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator--for new nuclear missions, including the possible preemptive use of nuclear weapons or the use of such weapons against non-nuclear weapons targets? I hope that the administration's forthcoming budget request finally recognizes that the Congress does not support this course of action and will likely reject it again if asked to do so.

Finally, even though the Bush administration is reducing the overall number of deployed U.S. weapons, it is pursuing a costly and ambitious program to revitalize the nuclear weapons research and production complex. How can we get on track toward a more cost effective way to maintain a shrinking stockpile without resuming testing? Last year the administration proposed a new program – RRW -- to replace existing warheads with new ones that it says can improve reliability and reduce costs, without resuming testing or creating new nuclear capabilities.

From my perspective and for many in Congress, the jury is still out on the RRW program. It may be the wrong solution in search of a nonexistent reliability problem. Without proper oversight, it could create new uncertainties that could lead to testing, lead to new costs burdens, and create a means to develop new warhead concepts for new nuclear missions.

We have an excellent and diverse panel with us today to stir our thinking on these and other issues, beginning with Ambassador Linton Brooks, the administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration. Ambassador Brooks has held many high-ranking posts, not the least of which was chief strategic arms negotiator for the START I pact. I especially want to thank Ambassador Brooks for his willingness to engage with us on these issues today and maintaining good lines of communication with ACA in general.

Next we will hear from Dr. Raymond Jeanloz who is a professor of Earth and Planetary Sciences at UC Berkeley and is the chair of the National Academy of Sciences Committee on International Security and Arms Control. The Committee has published several authoritative studies on the Future of U.S. Nuclear Forces, earth-penetrating nuclear weapons, and monitoring nuclear weapons and nuclear materials, among other subjects.

David Mosher is currently senior policy analyst at the Rand Corporation and was for many years the principal analyst on national security issues for the Congressional Budget Office. He is the recent coauthor of a comprehensive study on Improving U.S.-Russian Nuclear Safety.

Following their remarks we'll turn to the audience for questions.

Ambassador Brooks, the podium is yours. Thank you for joining us.

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