

Assessing Progress on Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament: 2009-2010 Report Card

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On October 27, the Arms Control Association released [Assessing Progress on Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament: 2009-2010 Report Card](#) at a briefing at the National Press Club. A transcript of that event is below.

ARMS CONTROL ASSOCIATION

ASSESSING PROGRESS ON
NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT:
2009-2010 REPORT CARD

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DARYL KIMBALL: Good morning everyone. Welcome to the National Press Club on a rainy Wednesday morning. I'm Daryl Kimball. I'm director of the Arms Control Association, and for those of you who don't know, we're an independent nonprofit organization. We've been around since 1971 and we're dedicated to addressing the challenges posed by chemical, biological, nuclear and certain conventional weapons and today we are releasing a first of its kind study, or at least we think it's the first of its kind study, that grades the performance of 11 key states in 10 universally recognized nonproliferation, disarmament and nuclear security categories over the last 18 months.

With me this morning to explain the findings and to provide some commentary and perspectives on it are Peter Crail, who's the lead researcher on the report card. He is ACA's nonproliferation analyst. He's been with us since 2007 and previously he served as consultant with the U.N. department of disarmament affairs and has a master's degree in international policy studies from the Monterey Institute for International Studies.

Also with us, George Perkovich, director of studies and the nuclear policy program at the Carnegie Endowment of International Peace, a longtime researcher and thinker on nuclear weapons issues. So I'm glad that George has joined us.

To start, I'm going to explain the purpose of the report, the basis of the 10 categories of standards, as you'll hear us refer to these, and then I'm going to briefly describe what we see as some of the five bottom-line conclusions that we see coming out of the data, the information in this study.

So first, the purpose of this report card - this is the first time we have done this at the Arms Control Association and one of the reasons is that since the beginning of the nuclear age, governments have all agreed that there is a need to address the problems and the dangers of nuclear weapons but they have struggled to agree on a common strategy. Progress has been difficult to measure because in part there are differing perceptions on the nature of the threat and what constitutes responsible behavior regarding nuclear weapons, nonproliferation and disarmament.

So with this report, fundamentally we set out to document what constitutes the mainstream of nonproliferation and disarmament behavior expected of responsible states and to provide a simple, transparent tool to evaluate progress of key states in getting those responsibilities.

So what do I mean by the nuclear nonproliferation mainstream? What do we mean when we refer to the nuclear nonproliferation system or the nonproliferation regime? There is a body of obligations, standards and rules of behavior regarding nuclear weapons that has emerged and has been established over the decades. At the core is the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty of 1970. It went into force in 1970, and is now recognized by all but four states.

The system has been updated and expanded, reinforced through bilateral nuclear arms control and reduction agreements, U.N. resolutions, Security Council decisions, ad hoc coalitions of countries, standards of behavior for nuclear technology supplier states, for instance, and through concrete actions by individual states. So the report card organizes these various standards and commitments into 10 categories which we describe beginning on page three of the report and I won't go through the list. They're there for you to see but they range from banning nuclear weapons test explosions to criminalizing and preventing illicit nuclear trafficking and nuclear terrorism.

So I should note here that these standards and goals are, in our opinion, generally not adequate enough to address the overall nuclear weapons threat and we believe that additional measures are needed to reduce and eventually eliminate the nuclear threat.

But unlike other report card papers and reports that have been put together in past years, we are not grading states' work and progress in meeting the Arms Control Association's own preferred policy goals and initiatives but rather it assesses the key states' performance in meeting commitments they themselves have made at various points over time and that have been established in one form or another by the international community and the bodies that help establish what these norms and expectations are.

Of course, as the international community works on the problem of nuclear weapons and agrees on additional steps to strengthen the nonproliferation system, these standards that we have listed here today can be expected to evolve over time. Now, the other thing, as I said, we have set out to do is to develop a relatively simple and transparent system by which members of the public and policymakers can better understand how well or how poorly key states are meeting their nonproliferation obligations and Peter is going to explain a little bit more about the system that we have come up with in a few minutes.

But on this issue, I also wanted to note that it's clear from the nonproliferation system that we're

describing that every state has a responsibility to uphold and strengthen the system but it's clear that certain countries have a more critical role in upholding the system and executing it. So this report card focuses on 11 key states. It also would have been extraordinarily difficult, just from a practical standpoint, to try to extend this evaluation into the dozens of other states that are out there.

So what the report card does is it gives grades to China, France, Russia, the U.K., the United States, India, Israel and Pakistan, all of whom possess nuclear weapons, and North Korea, which maintains a nuclear weapons capability, as well as Iran and Syria, which don't have nuclear weapons but are under investigation - active investigation - for possible nuclear weapons-related activities.

So what does this comprehensive snapshot of the record of these key states over the period 2009, 2010 tell us? We believe that there are a number of conclusions that can be drawn. I'm going to focus on five and then we'll shift over to Peter who's going to talk a little bit more about some of the highlights and the lowlights with particular countries, as well as some other interesting points from the report.

So first, first bottom line conclusion is the global system that has been established over the decades to reduce nuclear weapons dangers is neither on the verge of collapse nor is it on the cusp of success. None of the states possessing nuclear weapons merit an overall "A" grade. Only North Korea, which has violated nearly every nonproliferation and disarmament standard over the past two years, warrants an overall grade of "F" and most states' grades are in the middle ranges.

Two, while there has been widespread rhetorical support for the vision of a world without nuclear weapons, the record shows that the world's nuclear weapons possessor states all have more work to be done to get to that ultimate goal. The past two years have seen relatively stronger support from the five original nuclear weapons states for the international norm against nuclear testing, for an end to the production of fissile material for weapons purposes and there is clearly renewed progress to verifiably reduce U.S. and Russian strategic nuclear weapons stockpiles through the new strategic arms reduction treaty.

However, China for instance continues to build up its own nuclear arsenal. It's small but it continues to build up its arsenal. India and Pakistan continue to produce fissile material for weapons and the United States and Russia continue to maintain their weapons on a high state of alert.

Number three, the report card reflects the fact that over the past 18 months, the Obama administration has indeed affected improvements in the U.S. record in some key areas that we've measured here, such as verifiable nuclear force reductions, the U.S. commitment for the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty, nuclear material security with the April 2010 Nuclear Material Security Summit and negative nuclear security assurances which were updated in the 2010 nuclear posture review.

But progress has been slower and some U.S. grades lower due to the fact that several U.S. nuclear risk reduction measures require congressional action and support. The test ban treaty for instance, the new START treaty, which is still before the Senate, has not yet been ratified. There are four nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties that still must be ratified.

The Obama administration has said that they are going to pursue ratification of a couple of these but have still not forwarded the documentation to the Senate yet. All of these still require Senate approval for ratification and there are even two international accords that help address the problem of nuclear terrorism that require the adoption of implementing legislation. So clearly, U.S. leadership on these issues requires stronger congressional support and the grades in the future will reflect whether or not that exists or not.

Number four, India, Israel and Pakistan, the only three countries never to sign the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, earned slightly lower grades in the "C" range due largely to their policies on nuclear testing, their continued production of fissile material and the gradual increase of their nuclear forces, and Pakistan right now, in particular, is responsible for blocking multilateral talks on a verifiable fissile material cutoff treaty.

Although India claims to be a responsible nuclear power and its record is relatively better in some categories, it has not taken on many of the obligations that are expected of nuclear armed states. To move further into the nuclear nonproliferation mainstream, as we're calling it, both India and Pakistan have to take steps that would slow down their arms race, including codifying their current nuclear test moratoria.

Finally, number five, a few words about North Korea. It really is no surprise in a report like this that North Korea is receiving an overall grade of "F" because it's violated nearly every nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament standard in the past two years. But one thing to keep in mind, and we think is an important bottom line lesson, is that it could be even worse. There is in the nuclear nonproliferation world an overall grade that's worse than an "F".

Perhaps it's an "F-minus" or a "G," and that is because North Korea is not known to have transferred nuclear weapons material to other states or terrorists and preventing renewed North Korean fissile material production and preventing its sale to others needs to be a priority in future years in order to preserve the nuclear nonproliferation system and global security. So let me stop there and I'm going to turn it over to Peter and you can stay there if you want, Peter. You want to come up here?

PETER CRAIL: I can stay here.

MR. KIMBALL: Okay, and Peter is going to talk a bit more about some of the particulars in the grades for these countries and the methodology and I would just like to note before I turn it over to him that we think it's very important to take a closer look at the grades beyond the overall grades. As you all know from being college students, your grade point average might have been a 3 but you got a 3.7 in your major. So it's very important to take a look at the details in these grades I think in terms of the meaning of this report. That's just as important as the overall average that we've put together here. So Peter?

MR. CRAIL: Thanks, Daryl. Good morning everyone. Thanks for joining us. Now that Daryl has laid out what the report is looking at and has given some of the key takeaways, I wanted to share a little bit on how we arrived at the grades and talk a little bit about some of the trends that we've seen in the standards that we're measuring. Now, since the intention was to craft an actual report card, we worked on the basis of an "A" through "F" evaluation, based on how a state was adhering to each of the 10 standards.

So an "A" means that a country is essentially adhering fully to the international standard or has even gone beyond what the expectations are of the international community. "B" and "C" grades represent some degrees of steps being taken towards implementation of the standard and a "D" essentially means that no action has been taken. Now, that means that an "F" doesn't necessarily mean a failure to do something but it essentially means that the country is moving in the opposite direction or that it has violated its obligations in some way.

Now, of course these standards can't all necessarily be measured in the same way. They differ in terms of the types of steps that states are supposed to take, from ratifying agreements like the nuclear terrorism convention to carrying out specific actions like reducing nuclear weapons stockpiles. They also differ in terms of how clearly the international community has identified how these standards are supposed to be fulfilled. The comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty has been spelled out clearly as the standard for how states demonstrate their commitment to banning nuclear testing.

But when it comes to some other standards such as reducing nuclear weapons alert levels, you have a general principle of de-alerting nuclear weapons and increasing the timeframe for their use but you have fewer agreed steps about what exactly that entails. So in order to address some of these discrepancies between the types of expectations and the degree of specificity with which the international community has determined what those expectations are, we felt it was important to lay out beforehand what the specific criteria were for each standard to receive each grade and that's presented in one of the sheets that you have in your packet.

Now, we thought that since transparency was important to make sure that readers knew exactly how we arrived at the grades but also as a bit of a check on ourselves to make sure we were fair and treated states as evenly as possible. In addition, I would say that since transparency is an important standard of the nonproliferation regime itself and we felt that if we were going to be issuing these grades, we should apply it to ourselves as well.

With that in mind, I'd like to turn to some of the key findings that we've seen from some of the standards. Now, since there is a lot to cover, I'm not going to go through each one step by step. You're certainly free to ask questions on any of them. I just wanted to give a sense of some of the highlights. On nuclear testing, unfortunately we did have a North Korean test last year. But thankfully I don't think we're going to see a new round of testing in response.

In fact, in the last 12 years, the only country to have tested a nuclear device has been North Korea and all of the countries with the capability to do so have pledged in one form or another not to. We see from the grades that they're fairly high across the board, which suggests that adherence to the standard remains quite strong.

But there are still key risks. India and Pakistan have declared testing moratoria but aren't willing to take the important step of signing the CTBT and India has been resisting calls to provide stronger assurances that it would not test as part of nuclear cooperation negotiations, including most recently with Japan. I would say that the "D-plus" that India and Pakistan receive are perhaps more serious than North Korea's "F" because, as we've seen, there is a bit of an expectation that North Korea has consistently violated nonproliferation obligations.

However, renewed testing by either India or Pakistan might have broader reverberations on efforts to ban nuclear testing in general. Turning to efforts to end fissile material, what we have is a standard in search of a treaty in that there have been longstanding international calls to negotiate a fissile material treaty and the U.N. secretary-general hosted a high level meeting just last month to try and kick start that process but Pakistan primarily is holding it up. So what we're measuring is not only whether or not countries have stopped producing but also whether or not they're working towards an FMCT.

The real issue separating the grades, though, is continued production. We see a stark difference between the five nuclear weapons states and the three other nuclear powers, two of which are producing more material and the last of which, Israel, which continues to operate its plutonium producing reactor. On nuclear force reductions, the situation overall is fairly poor according to the standards that we have. Now, much of that is due to the fact that China, India and Pakistan are still increasing their arsenals and North Korea has certainly gone in that direction since negotiations in the six-party talks fell apart last year.

But another reason is that where reductions are being carried out, they aren't being verified, they aren't being done irreversibly, meaning weapons are being destroyed, or both. The principles of transparency and irreversibility have been recognized as principles that should apply to nuclear arms reductions.

In one bit of good news, we have the new START agreement this year which not only carries out further reductions between the United States and Russia but also includes verification. We did not give the United States and Russia full credit because, as Daryl mentioned, they still have to go through their ratification process and of course I should mention that as the two countries with the largest arsenals, they should be expected to lead the way in arms reductions.

Now, if you look at the nuclear weapons state that is leading the way in terms of having the smallest arsenal, the U.K., it gets a 'D-plus', which may seem a little bit out of place. But since we're looking at ongoing reductions and not arsenal levels, the fact that the latest U.K. reductions took place - or were completed a few years ago meant that it wasn't credited for those reductions in this report. However, since we concluded the report, the U.K. has carried out its strategic defense review and announced that it intends to pursue additional arms reductions and so the picture will likely change in the near future.

Moving on to export controls, I think the fact that this can be called a standard at all is a positive thing. This is really just a recent development. It's only been in the past few years that there has been an international expectation that all states will implement controls to prevent the spread of sensitive nuclear and missile technologies. Much of this has been led by the Security Council, including efforts to address Iran and North Korea. But the main challenge, though, is still implementation and as we show in the report, certain critical countries such as China and Russia are believed to remain key sources of technology for proliferators because they don't have stringent enough enforcement in place. Of course we also have countries like Iran and North Korea that actively try and get around those controls.

Similar to export controls, you have more attention paid recently to efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism and the illicit trafficking in nuclear material. The profile of those efforts was raised just this year with the nuclear security summit. In fact, this is one of the few areas that none of the states receives an "F", which essentially, according to our standards, would mean that a state has transferred nuclear material to non-state actors or to other states.

Now, this is also an area where a few grades may also seem a little bit out of place, particularly for the United States, which has initiated a number of efforts in regard to nuclear security, including not only the nuclear security summit this year but also leading back to the '90s with the Nunn-Lugar program. In fact, some of the measurements that we're using for illicit trafficking and nuclear security are based on whether or not countries have agreed to join or adhere to some of the initiatives that the U.S. has led.

But, again as Daryl mentioned, there are two key international instruments that the United States has promoted, including during the summit this year, which it has yet to join because Congress has not yet adopted the implementing legislation. Now, the Congress has already provided consent to ratify. So these aren't controversial provisions and I would expect and hope that in a nonelection year next year it can finally be completed.

Now, the second is Pakistan, which is the one country that we included an asterisk by regarding efforts to implement nuclear security or regarding nuclear security commitments. Pakistan has been engaged in efforts to alleviate concerns regarding the security of its nuclear weapons facilities and materials by joining international and multilateral nuclear security initiatives. These positive steps do not mean, however, that it has taken adequate measures to address the particular concerns regarding the political instability and security situation in Pakistan and we had seen some events last year, including attack on the Pakistani army headquarters that still give some reasons for concern.

To conclude, given what we've seen over the past 18 months and even before then, I wouldn't think that many of these grades are too surprising and I think that they do help to give a fairly decent snapshot of where things are in the disarmament and nonproliferation regime and delve a little bit into what needs to be done and by whom. But I'd echo a point that Daryl made. Even though we're just looking at these 11 states as some of the states that are most critical for making progress in the regime, all countries have their roles to play and have important steps to take as well and in one of the chapters that we include at the end of the report are many of those efforts for states beyond the ones that we're looking at. With that, we appreciate George joining us to comment.

GEORGE PERKOVICH: I'm going to stand here only just because I couldn't see those guys, so I hope - I want to commend Peter in particular for this project and ACA for doing it. It's not as easy as you - it's not easy being a teacher. Okay, we kind of know that because we've all had teachers. But anybody trying to do this, it's actually really not so easy and I think the way that they went about it makes a lot of sense in terms of taking what are already agreed and internationally recognized commitments and then defining how you would get a grade on each of those.

So I commend the effort and I hope that it will stimulate discussion. Obviously that was the intention, is to stimulate further discussion, perhaps international consideration amongst the relatively few people in the world who pay attention to these things, about, well, was this grade deserved or what do grades mean. So that's a useful purpose.

I only have a couple of comments. One is that there is another obligation and it'd just be interesting

to hear Peter on why you guys didn't include it. It comes out of the 13 steps that were agreed in 2000. But I think it was to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in national security policy and so forth. I think that one's harder to quantify, so I can imagine that you considered it and didn't do it because it's very hard to set up what an "A" would be, what a "B" would be, et cetera.

But I do think it's very important for a variety of reasons but in particular because of the point that you alluded to in the last page of the report where you talk about other countries and in a sense that gets to a second point, which again you guys recognize, and you just did in your concluding remark, Peter, which is—if part of the point of this exercise is to perhaps stimulate all of the relevant states and actors to improve their grades, then one of the questions is how states that weren't graded but are key actors, as you guys recognized at the end, how they will react to all this.

So I think the issue of the role of nuclear weapons is one that the other states feed off a lot. So it's not a critique of the report card but it's just kind of saying as we interpret or go forward, the thinking about how to use it, that issue would be there. Second of the three points I would make is, again, I think you guys did a great job in explaining why you focus on the 11 states that you did and there are kind of objective reasons for having done that.

Then as you acknowledge, the future of the nuclear order, especially the nonproliferation regime, is going to be determined by a bunch of states that aren't graded and aren't on the list and you list them in the back and I think do a nice job encapsulating some of the things they did. I would highlight Egypt, Brazil, South Africa, Japan, South Korea, Turkey. There are others.

So my question, again, and this isn't about the report card but it's what happens after the report card or the further kind of consideration is how would those states grade the states you all graded because, again, they're key actors in the international discourse. But also, if you guys were going to grade them, you'd have to use different criteria in many ways but kind of a sense of have they been contributing even though they're not nuclear arms states.

In many ways they're good students or however the metaphor would work. But what are their obligations because in many ways, as we all know, whether it's Article 6 or any other article, all states are obligated to do that. That's another project or it's a way to gauge reaction to this project.

But as I read it, I thought, gee, I wonder how they would do this. Then my last point is context. I mean one of the things when one sees grades, like in the report card kind of structure, I always – I think personal experience – my father got hit for getting a "B". His father was a tough guy and, Georgie, what is this "B", bam – and my son got hugged for getting a "C" because he had difficulty in school.

So the question is what's the expectation, whether we have it or others in the world have, what are they expecting. I think where the report card metaphor also works more clearly is you're always looking for trajectory. Is there improvement and what you really don't want, whether it's an "A" student or a "C" student, is a downward trajectory. They're doing bad. You go, oh, there's trouble.

But so then the question is, and again this is kind of going forward and building on this, the question is what do people do if their trajectory is downward or if you conclude and the world concludes "C" is about as good as we're going to get, given the states that are out there, and then at some point – this is extending the metaphor too far I'm sure – at some point you say, well, maybe Johnny's not cracked up to be a student and he ought to drop out of school and go do something else. So where do you go, and I mean this seriously, where does the world go if we're just getting "C"s because the average grade was a "C" if you take it all together, of these states.

MR. KIMBALL: Or if there are dropouts.

MR. PERKOVICH: And if there are dropouts, then the average must get lower. So where does everybody go? What do people decide to do? I don't have remotely the answer to that question and that's part of why, again, I would go ask other states how they would do the grading. But is "C" enough to keep you in school or does it suggest something else and if so what's the equivalent of driving a lorry or trade school or whatever that you then do to still try to have a productive life.

Again, that's not part of the report card but you can tell I was stimulated in meaning to think of kind of ways that you can kind of riff off this and think about its implication. So I applaud the effort and thanks for having me.

MR. KIMBALL: Thank you, George. Well, perhaps what we might do is Peter, if you want to kind of address a couple of George's points and then we can turn it over to the audience for questions that you might have in any aspect of the presentations of the report. But why don't you briefly take your pick on some of the several points that George raised, particularly the one on the reduced role of nuclear weapons, which we did discuss.

MR. CRAIL: Yeah, thanks again, George. I guess I would just start with talking a bit about the last point that you mentioned in terms of what the expectations are and in terms of the trajectory. As Daryl had mentioned in the beginning, I think that one of the things that we hope to do with this is to do it on a recurring basis and I think that one of the - part of the value of it will essentially be seeing where the changes occur and in what direction are the changes and in what particular standards.

So I think over time, while this was certainly difficult to put together in the first case initially, I think the value increases over time as we see where states are going in each of these areas and I think that's part of the point of creating a report card is that it's an easy way to measure that. We can all explain the events over, say, a five to 10-year period and what states have done what. But in order to try and come up with some kind of consistent measure to see the - just to find what the trajectory is, I think was an important component of it.

In terms of expectations, I would say that some of the standards I think were - the expectations were higher than others. I think for some, like banning nuclear testing, you have a clear expectation that states are going to ratify the comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty. For some others, like negative security assurances, providing assurances to non-nuclear weapon states that countries with nuclear weapons wouldn't use weapons against them, to get an "A", essentially we have - states have to provide legally binding assurances and I think that that's a prospect that isn't something that we're likely to see soon. So that's one area where the standard is fairly strong.

So across the standards, the different grades may mean different things. Now, on the point of reducing the role of nuclear weapons, yeah, we certainly did consider that. In fact, for a lot of these categories, basically we settled on 10 but these could be expanded out to any number. What we tried to do was not only to highlight specific key standards but also look at some that are - that might encompass other standards more broadly. So in terms of reducing the role of nuclear weapons, since that's something that's difficult to really measure and quantify, but some of these standards like reducing alert levels, security assurances and things like that, the level of commitments that states show demonstrate what the role of nuclear weapons are for that country.

MR. KIMBALL: Just one other brief point to address some of your very good observations, George, one of the other things that we were really trying to do here is we were trying to establish a baseline of measurements on some things upon which there is relatively little argument in the international community. It is difficult to quantify, as Peter just said, whether a country is reducing roles. We also chose not to try to measure, for instance, leadership efforts. How do you measure leadership efforts? The Obama administration, for instance, has devoted a lot of attention to this subject in the last 18 months and yet it's virtually impossible to measure that in any straightforward objective fashion.

Arguments can be made back and forth about it wasn't enough, it was the wrong kind of leadership, et cetera. So we're trying to measure results and create a baseline and there are all of these intangibles that you do rightly point out that have to be taken into consideration when one is looking at what is needed to reduce the dangers from nuclear weapons. Then one other final note on the methodology that I think is important to just keep in mind is we did not attempt to try to rank these 10 standards, sets of standards and commitments.

One could do that. Everyone has their view. Every country has their own particular perspective on is it more important that there are nuclear weapons reductions, is it more or less important that there is effective efforts to end nuclear trafficking, et cetera. We have not tried to rank those. But

there is an averaging when we come out with the cumulative grade that is just the collection of all of these as if they were all equal in weight for the international security system.

So with that, let's turn to your questions, comments, observations about this study and its implications. If you could just – Matt, if you could bring the microphone to the person and if you could identify yourself before you – thank you.

Q: Thank you very much. I'm Vladimir Karamozov with RTV Television. I'd just like to ask you to comment on three countries with three different grades: Russia, "B-minus," Israel, "C-minus", and Iran, "D". If you could just quickly on those three in particular? Thank you.

MR. CRAIL: Certainly. Starting with Iran, I think that particularly looking at the timeframe of this report, we saw a number of – there's been increasing concern regarding efforts to address Iran's nuclear program. Just last year, you had revelations regarding a secret facility, an enrichment facility being built at Qom. You have increasing difficulties by the International Atomic Energy Agency to investigate Iran's nuclear program and most recently you have another U.N. Security Council resolution.

Now, I think that one of the – one of the more interesting things with Iran is that given all of the concerns that we have, you'll see that its best grade was actually for banning nuclear testing. Iran actually has signed the CTBT and while there are some concerns about some studies that the Iranians may have carried out, which could potentially suggest that they were considering or are considering a nuclear test, Iran has tried to make good on its claim that it is following the nuclear nonproliferation regime and therefore it has been willing to make some efforts to join certain international commitments. So I think that's one thing I'd like to point out.

In regard to Israel, while it, like all of the states that haven't signed the NPT, has tried to present itself as a responsible power, and has tried to take steps to address its nuclear programs responsibly, it suffered most from a lack of transparency regarding its nuclear program.

So in efforts like ending fissile material, Israel hasn't made any commitment or even really much comment on its efforts to end fissile material for nuclear weapons. It has also wavered a bit in its support for concluding an FMCT. But it's not believed to be producing plutonium. It's not believed to be producing materials for weapons. But because it doesn't provide the additional assurance, its grade still suffers for that. Similarly with reducing nuclear weapons alert levels, its weapons are believed not to be mated with its delivery systems but because of its policy of opacity, that's not an assurance that it's provided the international community. So even where Israel might be acting responsibly, the benefits of that responsibility are not seen by the outside world in the form of clear assurances, so how can we credit it with doing so.

In regard to Russia, of course some of the highest grades are in regard to nuclear testing, in regard to basically agreeing to many of the – agreeing and ratifying many of the nuclear nonproliferation agreements that are standards for the international community. In terms of issues of particular concern, I would note the issue of reducing nuclear weapons alert levels it shares with the United States, the fact that both countries still maintain weapons on fairly high alert status.

In addition, another issue that I'd point out would be on – as I mentioned, on export controls. There are still concerns that technology is coming out of Russia to states of concern and that it isn't necessarily because of policies by the Russian government but because of a lack of the capability or will to really enforce the laws on the books to make sure that this technology doesn't spread.

MR. KIMBALL: So let me just note that in the packet there is on the right side a short summary of some of the country-by-country highlights which is just kind of a distillation of what's in each of the chapters in the report itself. George, did you have any thoughts about those?

MR. PERKOVITCH: (Off mike.)

MR. KIMBALL: Okay. Yes, please?

Q: Hi, I'm Lauren McGauhy from the Asahi Shimbun. It's a Japanese newspaper. Specifically on the DPRK, which I guess is kind of the kid in class that's gotten held back a couple of times, they had a couple of "D"s. So not all of it was "F"s. Which of those do you think they could or would improve, maybe is most likely to be improved in the near future or the middle term?

MR. KIMBALL: Let me just respond quickly and then Peter maybe you can explain what the "D-plusses" are about. I mean, the place in which North Korea could clearly improve its record is to return to implementation of some of the basic obligations of the six-party agreement, beginning with ending the production - further production of fissile material for weapons and resuming the process of trying to bring either U.S. or international inspectors back to their nuclear facilities to verify that they are implementing the obligations in the six-party arrangement. Currently they are not. That would be the most important, the most meaningful. But Peter, if you could just explain the "D"s on North Korea?

MR. CRAIL: Right. Well, there were three "D"s for North Korea for reducing nuclear weapons alert levels, and that's essentially because North Korea hasn't said anything about what its nuclear posture may be other than a lot of very scary statements that it likes to issue from time to time. The two that I think are perhaps the most interesting and the areas where North Korea might be able to do something are on nuclear security and illicit trafficking.

First of all it's important that those don't go further, that those don't become "F"s because those are fairly clear red lines which if North Korea were to cross I think we would be really faced with a very dire situation and perhaps dire choices to make. When the negotiations with North Korea were ongoing, the North Koreans actually had expressed some interest in cooperative threat reduction programs, essentially some sort of effort to say if it were to scrap its nuclear program or at least certain facilities, what would happen with the nuclear scientists, what would happen with some of the work that it had been doing.

If the talks were to start again and were to make progress and certain key North Korean facilities were to actually be scrapped, even if that didn't get us all of the way to dealing with the North Korean situation, if certain interim steps were done to address North Korean nuclear materials and nuclear scientists, I think that's an area where things could improve.

MR. KIMBALL: One final note on North Korea as it relates to some of the countries not specifically addressed in this report, I mean we've all mentioned the importance of other states providing leadership in strengthening, supporting, implementing the nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament system. North Korea is a country that - to use the academic analogy a little bit here and my wife warned me against doing this but I'm going to do it anyway - a no-child-left-behind policy is very important with respect to the nonproliferation system. We can't have countries dropping out.

Really, it's not something that can happen because the country is still going to be in the international system. It is not just the responsibility of that individual country to fulfill its obligations but it is the responsibility of other countries throughout the world and particularly in its region to take actions that help move that country to a place where it is complying with its obligations regarding nuclear weapons.

So in that regard, the six parties - or the five parties other than North Korea - in the six-party process have a huge role to play and while the United States has been the leading partner, countries like Japan and South Korea as well as China and Russia have a huge role to play in not simply watching a situation deteriorate but to take proactive steps to restore some order to what currently is a very worrisome situation.

Other questions that we have here? Yes, why don't we start in the back and we'll - I'm sorry Alexis. Thank you.

Q: Thank you. My name is Sam Kim Sun from Voice of America. I have a follow-up question on North Korea. It's not in the report but I want to ask your analysis on current development related to North Korea. First, North Korea is in the transition period of leadership change. So do you think that the risk of this worse scenario is higher in this situation? My second question is there is some

movement in Yongbyon which is captured by satellite, new construction, and also there are some reports that North Korea might be preparing the third nuclear test. So I just want to ask your analysis on this current, recent movement. Thank you.

MR. KIMBALL: Peter, do you want to -

MR. CRAIL: Yeah, I can address this quickly. In terms of how the succession process is playing out with North Korea's nuclear program, I think we don't know. So I think it's difficult to say whether or not things will improve in any of these areas as the succession process takes place. But I think that what we can basically expect is that things will essentially remain the same. A lot of the key players now are still going to be the key players.

In terms of some of the recent news about movement at Yongbyon, clearly they're doing something at the site of the reactor. But it's not clear what exactly they're doing. It doesn't look exactly like they're rebuilding the cooling tower that they destroyed last year but again, it's still not clear. Hopefully we'll know in the coming months. In terms of reports of a nuclear test, I think we hear reports about a possible nuclear test intermittently. So I'm not sure that there's enough to really make anything of it at this point.

MR. KIMBALL: I think all of those signs and signals at the reactor site is just another reminder that this is a situation that needs to be addressed proactively by the North Koreans and by the other parties. We don't want to see - we can't afford to see another regression in some of these areas. Why don't we come over here?

Q: Hi, Alexis Morell from the French Embassy. I had a question and a comment. My question is related to a criteria you alluded to but apparently that you didn't retain as to grade the countries and this is transparency, which is a very important step on the road to disarmament and again, this question is not meant to improve the grade of my country. But this is an area in which we think that there is a huge progress to be done and huge discrepancies including among nuclear weapon states.

Then my comment was to emphasize George's point on expectations. I think it's critical to measure not only the progress of a country but the general situation and to take into account the expectation in this regard and I feel very comfortable to comment about it because it's not relating to my country, but to me, the "D" for the U.K. doesn't make sense compared - I mean, if you take the size of the British arsenal, I don't think that our expectation - giving a "D" to the U.K. gives the impression that you have a strong expectation towards U.K. reduction, U.K. arsenal reduction, whereas we all know which countries we would like to reduce their arsenal in priority. So this is just to echo the comment about the necessity to take a good measure of expectation. Thank you.

MR. KIMBALL: All right, well thank you. Those are good observations. I mean, let me first mention that the report does take into account, to the best we can, the importance of transparency and we do note, and I'm not just saying this because you asked the question, but France has taken some steps with respect to transparency that other countries have not and is a good example that go beyond the existing expectations for nuclear armed states - the closure of its weapons material processing facilities and allowing the IAEA to verify that, also the closure of the nuclear test sites in the South Pacific, a step that goes beyond and that is a step in the direction of greater transparency.

But one of the things that we struggled with is clearly from an analytical standpoint and a nonproliferation advocate's standpoint, it is useful - it would be useful for all nuclear armed countries to declare how many nuclear weapons they have and yet one of the things that we could not do is to say that that is an expectation that has been established by the international system for all countries. It just doesn't exist. It is not a norm that has yet been established or that we can identify.

So for instance, at the nuclear nonproliferation treaty review conference last May, the United States made a declaration that it has 5,113 nuclear weapons in active service. That's a good useful step and yet that goes beyond any step that the international community has demanded or asked of the nuclear weapons states. So for that reason, that's not in the report and perhaps in a future edition we need to kind of take note of some of these things that are not on the official list of expectations and standards.

Finally, with respect to the U.K., I mean we have acknowledged in various places in the report the estimates of the numbers of nuclear weapons that various countries have. But we have very deliberately tried to put together a report that is a snapshot of progress towards the goal and the goal is reducing nuclear weapons. Perhaps we could have added an eleventh category that is simply a grading scale of the total number of nuclear weapons in which "A" is zero.

But that would have been pretty obvious and it doesn't take the Arms Control Association to figure that out really. So what we have tried to do is we have tried to take a snapshot of progress because it is progress that the international community has established as the expectation and the norm and the United States and Russia are the ones, though they have the largest arsenals, about 90 percent of the world's arsenals, that are actively reducing. So that's why we have organized the grades in that way. When we do this report in 2012 or so, hopefully the U.K. will have implemented its reductions and it will move up to the "B" category. Any other questions, comments? Yes, sir?

Q: Hi. I'm Gabe Joselow from Voice of America. I'm wondering about Pakistan and the decision-making that went behind giving it an asterisk next to its security commitments. Obviously you note the political situation is a serious concern there. So why separate it that way? Why acknowledge it without including it in the grade? Secondly, they got an "F" in weapons-related export controls and yet this "A" in security commitments. Those seem to be at odds to me. If they're maintaining this illicit procurement network, how can they be effectively securing nuclear material?

MR. KIMBALL: Peter, why don't you - I think you're best able to take those on.

MR. CRAIL: Yeah. In terms of your last question, the security commitments and the export controls are two different things. Essentially for the export controls, that's a measure of whether or not states are violating controls abroad or illegally importing things for their programs or are illegally exporting things to other countries. The "F" essentially reflects the assessments that Pakistan continues to rely on illicit procurement networks in order to acquire materials for its nuclear program.

For nuclear security commitments, one of the things that we wanted to cite for both nuclear security and illicit trafficking was to - we made sure to include the word commitments because we're not necessarily measuring how far states are implementing different types of controls to secure nuclear material or prevent it from getting abroad. It's a measure of what kind of initiatives have they joined for that purpose.

So that's essentially where Pakistan's "A" comes from for nuclear security commitments is that as part of its efforts to provide assurance that, look, all of our assets are safe, nothing is going to get to the terrorists or anything like that, they've joined a number of U.S.-led efforts, a number of international agreements and things like that, which have the expectation that if implemented, they'll do the job. They'll prevent nuclear material from getting where it - from spreading.

Particularly since we had really started putting this report together after last year there were a lot of events in Pakistan that had given rise to increasing concerns about its abilities to secure its program, to secure its facilities and material, we felt that while according to our standards it had met - it basically had met the standards for the commitments that it had made, whether or not it had addressed its sufficient situation adequately was something that we felt was reason enough to highlight this special case.

MR. KIMBALL: Yeah, one example here on the nuclear security category where - I mean, the international standards for behavior expected of responsible states is probably not sufficient to deal with the problem and this is a relatively new standard, if you will. So as Peter said, the asterisk was put there to make it clear that we're not somehow measuring with our Arms Control Association inspectors in Pakistan whether Pakistan is actually executing these commitments or not. So I mean that's - this is just one of many examples of some of the tricky methodological issues here and there are ways in which I think reasonable people could disagree with how we went about this but what we have tried to do is to show our work so that you can see how we arrived at these results. Any other questions? Yes, we've got a couple more.

Q: My name is Pieter Etravan (ph), ITAR-TASS News Agency and my question is if the new START treaty is ratified by the legislature in Russia and in the U.S., will these countries move up into a high category?

MR. KIMBALL: They would move up slightly with ratification, according to our scale, I think, Peter, right? That's how we -

MR. CRAIL: (Off mike.)

MR. KIMBALL: I think it also would depend in the 2011-2012 period on whether the two countries indicate further movement or progress in reducing beyond what the new START agreement calls for and the United States at least has expressed an interest in pursuing further discussions with Russia following the ratification, implementation of new START on all types of nuclear weapons, strategic and nonstrategic, deployed and non-deployed.

That certainly would be a qualitative improvement in the U.S.-Russia nuclear arms reduction process which has to this point been focused on strategic nuclear weapons and primarily deployed strategic nuclear weapons. We have a couple more questions here. Why don't we go with Martin and then we'll come back to you?

Q: Martin Matishak with Global Security Newswire. I'm just curious about reaction to this report card. Have you shared it with the folks in the administration or in Congress or with representatives from countries that you have named in it and so far to date what has their reaction been?

MR. KIMBALL: We have shared the report with a number of people in the U.S. government, the executive branch. This still has to make its way to the Congress. It's on its way to other government representatives and it would be interesting to see what their views are upon seeing the grades in all these different categories.

Q: Michelle Nelbondi (ph) from NTI. You mentioned that you decided not to rank or weigh each standard. What was the reasoning behind that?

MR. KIMBALL: Let's see. I'm just trying to think back here months, Peter. I think the main reason why we didn't do this, and feel free to add or correct, is that there simply is no objective way to rank these 10 major categories. What we were trying to do, as I said at the very beginning of this session, is to describe in a straightforward fashion what are the standards, what is the mainstream, what are the expectations of responsible states without making a judgment about which of these is more or less important.

The fact is all states are responsible in one way or another, to perhaps a lesser or greater degree or another, to help support and implement all of these standards and commitments. If you're in one corner of the world, you might consider one of these or two of these more important than others. If you're in another corner of the world, you might see it a little bit differently.

So we chose not to apply our opinion, our perspective to this issue by somehow ranking these 10 in order of importance. I mean, this is meant to be a tool for people to see how well states are making progress in each of these categories and perhaps someone else can come up with some interesting ranking system.

MR. CRAIL: I would just add to that, that's the substantive reason that we didn't decide to weight the different standards and essentially the thing that put it over the top to make the decision for us. The other answer is that we felt it was complicated enough at this point. We tried to strike a balance between something that was fairly rigorous and something that would be fairly accessible. Hopefully we managed to do that. But if we were to get into trying to weigh different things, it might not be as accessible and transparent as we hoped that it would be.

MR. KIMBALL: All right. Any other questions, comments? If not - yes, sir?

Q: I just had an out-of-the-box question. I'm curious about the rest of the class. These are some of the most important members of the class for the subject dealt with. But is there any way one should get right now for all those other countries for the standards that apply to non-nuclear weapon states, like the CTBT members, members of nuclear-weapons-free zones. If you averaged out everyone who is not on this table, would they be getting - is "C" an average or is "B" an average? Is there any way at this point to kind of characterize all those not specifically mentioned?

MR. KIMBALL: Well, I don't think we could tell you what the average would be because we didn't attempt to grade the dozens of other countries that have significant responsibilities beyond this group. In the additional states section on page 46 of the report, we discuss some of the developments and the actions of other states in other areas that are important for the nuclear nonproliferation system.

We talk about the importance of Indonesia's commitment to ratify the comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty. It's one of the 44 countries that must ratify for the treaty to enter into force. Egypt is another one of those countries. We discuss developments related to the ongoing goal of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, which is going to take the action and support of many more states outside of the ones discussed in this report.

Likewise, other countries have made commitments and have responsibilities in connection with nuclear-weapons-free zones. The entire Southern Hemisphere today is a nuclear-weapons-free zone. So there are hundreds - over a hundred countries that are involved there and they do have responsibilities as members of a nuclear-weapons-free zones that you might not think about, such as the South Pacific nuclear-weapons-free zones countries have committed as part of that treaty not to sell nuclear technology to states that are not members of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty. So that means Australia is not supposed to be selling uranium to India, for sentence.

So there are a lot of other countries that were discussed in this section, not necessarily in totally comprehensive fashion but we've tried to touch on some of the key developments, another one of which is the role that NATO members can play in changing NATO policy with respect to the tactical nuclear weapons - U.S. tactical nuclear weapons still deployed in Europe. All right, thank you all very much for being here and with that we'll conclude and there will be a transcript of this event on our website in a few days. The full report is also available online. Thank you for coming.

(END)

- [Peter Crail](#)

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