



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Czech Republic



The Prague Agenda – Accomplishments and Challenges

Tuesday, April 17, 2012

Czernin Palace, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prague

The conference was officially opened by **Karel Schwarzenberg**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. Mr Schwarzenberg began by highlighting the importance of the conference in the context of the landmark speech on nuclear proliferation and disarmament which Barack Obama delivered in Prague in 2009, as well as the 2010 US-Russia Summit concluding the New Start Treaty and last year's Prague Agenda conference. He said that the conference would provide an opportunity to summarize the achievements but also the shortcomings of efforts to promote the Prague Agenda since Mr Obama's speech. The main features of debate at the conference would be agendas for nuclear security and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which he described as an essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and for the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

As regards recent developments on the Korean Peninsula as well as in Iran, Mr Schwarzenberg stressed that the right of any country to research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is not in question; however, it is entirely unacceptable if some countries, while ignoring approved and recognized international standards, endanger stability in their regions and raise the risk of proliferation. As head of the Czech delegation at the recent Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, Mr Schwarzenberg said that the outcome there robustly underlined the need for global action to protect against terrorism, illicit trafficking of nuclear and radioactive materials, and indeed terrorism targeted at sensitive nuclear information. He concluded by expressing his pleasure at seeing so many young faces in the audience, which he said shows that the conference agenda is still up-to-date and attractive for the younger generation; a great promise for the future.

Following Minister Schwarzenberg's remarks, **Camille Grand**, *Director of the Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, Paris*, presented a résumé of the workshop on nuclear transparency that had taken place behind closed doors the previous afternoon. The meeting discussed the diverse options and interpretations of transparency in the context of nuclear proliferation and disarmament. The issue of transparency is very sensitive for many countries. Mr Grand reported that it emerged from the conference that transparency is a vital component in the nuclear debate both globally and domestically. He said that transparency can take many different forms – bilateral or multilateral, full or partial, and he also distinguished between transparency on hardware and transparency on software.

The practice of transparency also varies greatly from one country to another, and it shouldn't be taken for granted that democracy is necessarily a driver of transparency. Referring to the evolution of transparency over time for example, Mr Grand recognised that openness has actually diminished following the emergence of the threat of terrorism. He then mentioned the motives behind various levels of transparency – are we making our country safer? Are we making the global situation safer? He also referred to the concept of balanced transparency, which involves a strategic retention of certain details without necessarily resorting to full nuclear secrecy. Turning to specific cases, Mr Grand mentioned the complications inherent in the Russia-NATO relationship, with Russia expecting quite a lot of transparency; an expectation which was perhaps not compatible with the strategy of balanced transparency practiced by others. He finished by mentioning the cases of certain Asian states withholding information, which he said could perhaps be a sign of weakness or a fear of revealing weakness.

Panel I: New NPT Cycle – Almost Halfway Through

Chair: Jiří Schneider, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

Camille Grand, Director of the Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, Paris

Gary Samore, United States National Security Council, Special Assistant to the President and White House Coordinator for Arms Control and WMD, Proliferation and Terrorism

Stefan Kordasch, Deputy Head of Division, Nuclear Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, Federal Foreign Office, Germany

Alison Kelly, Ambassador of Ireland to the Czech Republic

Gary Samore opened his contribution by saying he would focus his remarks on the NPT debate leading up to the 2015 NPT conference. The first preparatory meeting for this conference is to be held at the beginning of May in Vienna. He recalled the 3 pillars of the NPT [non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy] and the concept of transferring nuclear weapons from those with many to those with fewer. President Obama believes that more can be done, as he said at the recent Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul. Obama is also due to meet with Vladimir Putin in Washington in May where he looks forward to discussing the reduction of various nuclear capabilities as well as discussing missile defence.

This said, however, nuclear disarmament involves more than just the US and Russia. The US has urged China to join bilateral discussions and has also encouraged the 5 other nuclear states under the NPT to discuss issues of transparency. The most immediate challenge for the NPT, according to Mr Samore, is to strengthen confidence in compliance; rules need to be enforced and followed. Otherwise the entire regime will ultimately erode and crumble. Iran is very important in this respect; it has the right to develop a peaceful nuclear programme, but it is unable to convince the international community that it is doing this. The P5+1 are united in their objective and approach regarding Iran. A diplomatic window is currently open to Tehran

but it must act quickly to resolve the issue within this window, as Obama said in Seoul. The NPT meeting in Vienna next month will be an opportunity for the P5+1 to make a strong statement to Iran.

In conclusion, Mr Samore reported that Obama believes that by sticking to its obligations under the NPT the US will encourage others to follow suit.

Stefan Kordasch began his contribution by alluding to the title of the conference [*New NPT Cycle – Almost Halfway Through*] which he said reminded him of the “glass half-full glass half-empty question – he thinks there is good reason to believe the former in this case. The renewed commitment to the NPT made at 2010’s summit was extremely important, as the lead up to that point had been plagued by various problems, such as North Korea breaking away and of course developments in Iran. Mr Kordasch agreed with what Obama said in his Prague speech; the basic structure of the NPT is sound, we just need to continue to adhere to it. He noted that there are no arms control mechanisms in place for short-range missiles and that this needs to be addressed, expressing his belief that the START Treaty can do this.

Moving to transparency, Mr Kordasch said that transparency regarding nuclear arsenals can lead to disarmament, and the US intention of releasing figures on the size and potency of the US arsenal (in line with the Prague agenda) is very important in this respect. A treaty banning the future production of fissile material for military purposes is also in the pipeline, he said, and he welcomed the arrival of Indonesia into this treaty as well as the US ambition to get the treaty ratified. He then alluded to the competencies of the IAEA, and expressed his desire to see this organization given an even more important role.

Mr Kordasch concluded with an optimistic appraisal of the future of the joint initiative that is the NPT. Non-proliferation and disarmament are joint objectives of NPT states, he said, and they should be pursued simultaneously. All NPT parties have a shared responsibility to make the most use of the next few years before the 2015 review to ensure that the glass is half-full rather than half-empty.

Ambassador of Ireland to the Czech Republic **Alison Kelly** began by speaking of her time spent working on OSCE issues during the early 1990s, when Prague was the centre of such affairs. She then said that the importance of Obama’s 2009 speech cannot be overstated; it was a seismic moment for those preparing for the 2010 NPT conference. Ms Kelly said there was a specific resonance for Ireland in Obama’s championing of the NPT, as efforts by Irish diplomats in the UN in the late 1950s were influential in leading to the discussions which paved the way for the NPT.

The Ambassador stated that 2010 was a make or break year for the Treaty, primarily due to the issues with Iran and North Korea. Despite problems regarding these 2 states, commitments adhered to by the 5 nuclear weapon states have nevertheless been promising. She mentioned the outcome of the 2010 summit – a forward-looking action plan across all three pillars as well as the Middle East resolution (to achieve a WMD zone) – and proposed that perhaps next month’s meeting in Vienna could be the time to set out what we want to achieve by 2015. Ms Kelly noticed that in terms of the Treaty, more has been done on non-proliferation than on

disarmament; rectifying this in addition to greater efforts towards transparency by the 5 is important. In terms of the Middle East resolution, this was previously centred on the Israeli question, but Iran has added a new dimension. In 2010 expectations were as low as they have ever been in this region, although a more pragmatic Arab position has emerged which is promising. She questioned whether all states in the region will participate; all are indeed welcome, she said, but no veto power will be offered to those countries unwilling to work towards progress.

Camille Grand opened his contribution in the first panel by saying that he would try not to be overly pessimistic but would stress the long-term importance of the Agenda. He was quite critical of the outcome of the 2010 conference however; with Iran not being mentioned in the outcome the NPT failed to address the most pressing issue, he said. Mr Grand said that he worries about what message this sends to countries that infringe the terms of the NPT. Nevertheless consensus on the treaty was fortified in the long-run which was welcome.

However, two years after the conference we face a “sobering” picture, he said – Iran is stockpiling and indeed enriching uranium, and there is good reason to fear conflict in that particular region. Furthermore North Korea’s withdrawal from the NPT was legally legitimate but he felt that it could perhaps have been more criticized by the international community. According to Mr Grand, North Korea seems to be constantly taking the “wrong path”. He went on to talk about civilian participation in nuclear energy, particularly in the wake of the Fukushima disaster; in Europe this led to some soul searching and concrete measures, but in China for example it did not lead to any reappraisal of that state’s nuclear program.

As regards bilateral nuclear disarmament – the Russia-US relationship for example –it is unlikely that we will see another treaty in coming years that will lead to further reductions. In terms of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, which were mentioned in the NPT document of 2010, there remains a stalemate situation with Russia. This is also true in relation to transparency, a situation which Mr Grand described as unfortunate. He went on to highlight the non-compliance issue and the difficulty of sustaining a treaty that is flouted by several of its signatories (most notably Iran and Korea, but there were also several earlier cases).

Furthermore, how do we manage the risk of further nuclear proliferation? The Middle East conference is a step, but beyond that we really need to discuss concretely how to stabilise nuclear proliferation in the region, he said. Issues in Asia are similarly complicated and difficult to control. Mr Grand concluded by stating that the balance between proliferation and disarmament within the treaty is one which needs to be addressed, and ending on a pessimistic note, said that we should not take for granted that 2012 is “safer” than the last 60 years of the 20th century.

Open debate

The floor was then opened for general questions directed at one or all of the speakers. The first question related to Pakistan, and the perceived reluctance to discuss it in the nuclear context. In 2015 US troops will have left Afghanistan, where elections will also have taken place (2014), so why is Pakistan not being talked about? **Mr Samore** responded by stating

that this is primarily because Pakistan is not an NPT signatory, and that treaty is what this conference is specifically about. He did admit that the potential for nuclear war is stronger in South East Asia than anywhere else, but unless the underlying security issues are dealt with first, then the “symptoms” (such as a nuclear arms race) cannot be addressed. **Mr Kordasch** said that the bulk of the work needs to be done by these countries themselves, viz India and Pakistan. The NPT can encourage such developments but cannot *do* much. **Mr Grand** reiterated this onus on the countries to be responsible actors, as well as the fact that NPT regulations and logic cannot be used in relation to them. However, as had been stated beforehand, the treaty can encourage improvements.

The Iranian question was subsequently broached, with one audience member claiming that the attitude of Tehran is a result of the constant aggressive attitude of the US; something which has also been noted in Pakistan and Libya. If the US signed a security guarantee then Iran would be much more willing to relinquish its nuclear ambitions; if not then the US would invade, as has been the case in Libya. **Mr Samore** agreed that we will have to overcome the very deep suspicion that Iran holds regarding the US, but said that Iran simply refuses to speak to the US; it is thus impossible to convince them of US policy. Obama does *not* have the ambition to overthrow the Islamic Republic, he emphasised. He also said that Iran’s nuclear development is not only defensive but also ambitious. **Mr Grand** noted that most of the NPT member states which do not have nuclear capabilities maintain good relations with the US. He also noted the overall problem of Iran as an isolationist state which prevents its promising population developing. There is another option for Iran, he said; it is not inevitable that they *have to* nuclearize. He pointed out the example of Burma; as soon as they were willing to engage the West was immediately receptive.

The next question concerned the peaceful usage of nuclear energy; how can we keep this pillar of the NPT alive? **Mr Kordasch** answered that although Germany made the decision to phase out nuclear energy plants (in the wake of the Fukushima disaster), this does not mean that the state will be stepping out of the third pillar. **Ms Kelly** agreed with the fact that much of the NPT commitments focus on the first 2 pillars of non-proliferation and disarmament and peaceful usage does not feature prominently, but this could perhaps be a result of the effectiveness of the IAEA in taking care of this third issue.

A direct question for **Mr Samore** referred to the possible re-election of Barack Obama in this November’s presidential elections; what would Obama’s future strategy be in terms of the Prague Agenda? Mr Samore directed the inquirer to Obama’s recent speech at the Seoul summit, which focussed on 3 main issues: firstly, Iran and North Korea and the difficulties and fear factor which play a part there; secondly, Obama would continue to focus on the relationship with Russia, the reset of which was one of the major achievements of his first term in office; finally, the upcoming conferences on nuclear security (such as that in the Netherlands in 2014) would be a major part of Obama’s nuclear strategy.

In answer to a question regarding North Korea, **Mr Kordasch** agreed with the contributor and said that a strong international stance on North Korea is necessary. **Mr Grand** spoke about the complicated relationship between Beijing and Pyongyang, saying that it’s “a tricky one”.

Nevertheless the consensus among the speakers was that the North Korean question should be taken as seriously as the Iranian question.

The next issue to be brought up was that of Russia. One member of the audience outlined the pessimistic outlook emerging from Russia, where there is a sense that the reset has failed and that nuclear build-up is more in vogue than nuclear disarmament. What is the first issue to kick-start the breaking of the ice between the US and Russia? **Mr Kordasch** said that he does not necessarily share this “gloomy” outlook, and mentions as proof the almost blasé reaction of the secretary-general of NATO following a Russian threat to place missiles in Kaliningrad. He said that the Russians are concerned about a threat which doesn’t actually exist, and that the real threats which do exist must be faced together.

India was the next subject of a question by an audience member; do the speakers agree that flaws are inherent in the so-called 123 deal? **Ms Kelly** said that Ireland agreed to this particular deal very reluctantly, but the important thing now is that all sides adhere to it. **Mr Samore** said that the deal was finalized under the Bush administration, and stated furthermore that “anything with India takes a long time”. One of the biggest downsides of the India deal is that the Pakistanis are sore about having been left out, he finished.

Final thoughts

Mr Grand spoke about the Middle east question and the upcoming conference organized by Finland; various security questions are associated with this topic, for example the legitimate security concerns of Israel, he said. Any possible treaty will not take place in a vacuum; rather it is a highly security-driven issue. He continued to talk about Iran and wondered whether or not the West could offer some better incentives; however this will not happen unless or until the Iranians put something on the table as well.

In relation to the Middle East conference, **Ms Kelly** said that getting everybody into the same room and getting the process started is hugely important for now. She thinks that there is great scope for confidence-building steps, which can be taken on the multilateral level and not necessarily the bilateral level. She finished by highlighting that practical steps must be taken to reduce the global arsenal of 20,000 nuclear weapons. The question of complete disarmament can be tackled closer to the time, she said; a different set of rules apply there. We would love to be at the stage of negotiating a nuclear weapons convention now but that is simply not feasible.

Mr Kordasch’s final thought on Iran was that the next summit in Istanbul is more about finding out what Iran’s current mind-set actually is; it is unrealistic to expect huge progress, he said. As regards the push for a WMD zone in the Middle East, he agreed that simply beginning the process is a major step.

Mr Samore then talked about the question of complete nuclear disarmament; it is indeed a goal for the US *but* his country will nevertheless maintain an arsenal of nuclear weapons until other countries have reduced theirs. Thus it is a massively long-term objective; in today’s international politics maintaining nuclear force is essential for only for defence but also to

discourage proliferation. As regards Russia, the US does have several issues which it would like to discuss with Russia; furthermore both sides have too much nuclear force, he said; an unnecessary amount.

As regards Iran, Mr Samore said that no new incentives need to be put on the table; this has gone on for long enough without progress. As for the current situation, Iranian fears stem from a fear of sanctions rather than a desire for more incentives; this shows that the US or Western strategy is at least being somewhat effective. He continued to talk about the WMD conference, and noted that the event so the Arab Spring make things very complicated in terms of its organization. Egypt is just one example of a state which is currently occupied with building a new political system, he said.

Panel II: Nuclear Security – Challenges and Ways Forward

Chair: Dana Drábová, President of the Czech Republic State Office for Nuclear Safety

Hahn Choong-Hee, Sous-Sherpa of the ROK for the Nuclear Security Summit

Khammar Mrabit, Director of the Office of Nuclear Security, IAEA

Václav Bartuška, Ambassador at Large for Energy Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

Jason Tierney, Head of the CBRN Security Team, Counter-Proliferation Department, Directorate for Defence and International Security, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom

The first speaker, **Hahn Choong-Hee** said that he believes the Prague Agenda is a real success story, built on that all-important speech of Obama in 2009. He went on to make a detailed presentation of the achievements and decisions of the recent Seoul Nuclear Security Summit (NSS), at which he acted as Sous-Sherpa of the Republic of Korea.

1. Mr Hahn firstly addressed the *successes* of the summit. The various technical and diplomatic achievements of the Seoul NSS came under the broad headings of: minimizing and securing nuclear materials; converting research reactors and medical isotope production facilities from using HEU (highly enriched uranium) fuel to LEU (low-enriched uranium) fuel; strengthening the global nuclear security architecture; emphasizing and strengthening the central role of the IAEA; strengthening the management of radiological materials to prevent radiological terrorism; addressing nuclear security and safety in a coherent and synergistic way; preventing the illicit trafficking of nuclear materials; fostering a nuclear security culture. In total, said Mr Hahn, 53 countries announced over 100 commitments.

2. He then went on to outline the *Seoul communiqué*, a document which itself provides an overview of what was discussed at the summit. The major themes expanded upon in the communiqué are: the global nuclear security architecture; the role of the IAEA; various agreements on nuclear materials; policies for radioactive sources; nuclear safety and security; transportation security; illicit trafficking; nuclear forensics; nuclear security culture;

information security; international cooperation. The communiqué finishes with a conclusion and looks forward to the next NSS summit, which will take place in 2014 in the Netherlands.

3. The *significance* of the Seoul summit was then outlined by Mr Hahn, who discussed: maintaining the highest-level commitment to nuclear security; setting prioritized tasks with target dates to advance nuclear security objectives; addressing comprehensive areas of nuclear security; national progress reports which serve as de facto implementation review mechanism; the concept of a gift basket which sets out a new model for nuclear security cooperation.

4. Next Mr Hahn briefly outlined the *Republic of Korea's contribution* to the Seoul summit. Financial and cooperative commitments include the establishment of the Nuclear Safety and Security Commission (NSSC) as well as a promise to contribute \$1 million to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund.

5. Finally Mr Hahn discussed the *future tasks* which must be taken in order to continue progressing. These included: implementing national commitments, joint statements and agreed measures in the Seoul communiqué; increasing transparency and outreach activities; establishing standards and common rules for nuclear security; establishing an efficient review mechanism; the need to develop long-term global nuclear security governance. .

Khammar Mrabit began by explaining the structure of global nuclear oversight. It is primarily the responsibility of each nation state to monitor and decide on its own strategy. A second level of enforcement is provided by various global agreements and conventions – UNSCR 1540 for example. The IAEA is an interim body which deals with both, and which helps and provides information to states on nuclear matters; by verifying the effectiveness of security systems for example. Mr Mrabit then spoke about the IAEA's nuclear security plans; the current plans have been established since 2002 (effectively the birth of the global terrorist threat) and the third plan (which runs until 2013) is currently in place. The basic structure of the plan can be broken into 4 categories.

1. Needs assessment, information collation and analysis: INSSP (Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plans); ITDB (Illicit Trafficking Database); NUSEC (Nuclear Security Information Portal)

2. Contributing to the enhancement of a global nuclear security framework: Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (not yet entered into force); Nuclear Terrorism Convention; UN Resolutions 1373 and 1540; Code of Conduct for the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources; various publications and coordinated research projects; NSGC (Nuclear Security Guidance Committee)

3. Provision of nuclear security services: nuclear security peer review and advisory services; education and training – INSEN (International Nuclear Security Education Network), centres of excellence.

4. Risk reduction and security improvement: physical protection upgrades; enhanced capabilities for border control in 56 states; security at major public events.

Mr Mrabit finished by speaking about the way forward and future priorities for the IAEA. Some of these priorities include increased participation in all areas by all member states, the organization of the International conference on nuclear security in June 2013, a fully operational Nuclear Security Guidance Committee and the desire to see the services of the IAEA become the de facto norm. He concluded by saying that a global threat needs a global response. Both recognition and adequate financial resources are imperative for the continued success and growth of his organization.

Vaclav Bartuška outlined the various problems with which the world is confronted in 2012. On the international stage, nuclear weapons bring prestige and respect, he said, and no amount of diplomatic talk can change this. Iran and North Korea are prime examples of this drive for international respect and recognition. The West is also faced with another problem; it was the West which designed the global nuclear security architecture but it is fast losing its nuclear design capabilities (both private and public, resulting from a public disapproval of nuclear and other factors). It is losing its “know-how” in this respect; Mr Bartuška mentioned Germany as an example, where 17 nuclear reactors but all likely to be discontinued.

However, there have been 3 success stories of non-proliferation negotiations, according to Mr Bartuška; Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Each of these states gave up their nuclear ambitions because of a feeling of security; this is one of the biggest achievements of non-proliferation tactics. South Africa also gave up its nuclear project in the 1990s, again for reasons of security; South Africa does not feel threatened by its surroundings. Mr Bartuška concluded by asking the rhetorical question; is this the same for some other countries which are contemplating the development of a nuclear bomb?

Jason Tierney began by outlining the 3 reasons why nuclear information security is such a priority: the catastrophic consequences of nuclear war; the spread of technology and materials; a growing demand for nuclear power. The first NSS summit in Washington in 2010 started the commitment to prevent nuclear material getting into the hands of terrorists and non-state actors. The UK proposed certain action to transform this from political vision to practical commitments, such as actions by government and industry. The challenge is to make use of the huge range of multilateral agreements and forums to promote this, and also to use industry, academia and regional associations. This calls for effective communication and efficient cooperation, said Mr Tierney. In conclusion, he stated that the recent summits have reaffirmed information security as a key element of nuclear security and the UK is delighted to play a part.

Open debate

The perceived idea that “people who work in non-proliferation have a job for life” [due to the permanently important nature of nuclear security] was questioned by a member of the audience who claimed that funding is in fact quickly drying up. The contributor also queried whether the fact that the IAEA is 80% funded by voluntary contributions is perhaps the reason why it is as successful as it is. **Mr Mrabit** said in response that one of the issues with voluntary contributions is that contributors often desire their funds to be used to a certain

effect. What the IAEA needs and is actively pursuing is less constraints and conditions on its funding; hence the desire to have a predictable and consistent source of funding.

Another audience member asked what the strategy would be vis-à-vis a “failed state” which had nuclear material? Would it be treated as a non-state actor? **Mr Hahn** said that this is a grey area, but that we need to be vigilant in striving to control the link between state and non-state actors. We will have to tackle this area in the future, he said.

The next question was what action is South Korea taking to combat or prepare for a possible nuclear attack by North Korea? **Mr Hahn**, in answer to this latter question, said that South Korea is proud to continue its non-proliferation policy despite the threat emanating from its northern neighbour. The Republic of Korea continues to be a model state in the usage of nuclear material for peaceful means without ceding to the temptation to develop weapons, he said. He thanked the audience member for his concern but assured him that South Korea is ready to respond, with its allies, to any action by North Korea.

The next query was about the position of the EU in the nuclear security arena; why is the EU not acting or negotiating with a single voice? **Mr Bartuška** agreed that he does not hear a unified voice whatsoever from the EU, perhaps because there is such a discrepancy between the know-how and capabilities of each member state. **Mr Mrabit** said however that he sees excellent cooperation within the EU in terms of nuclear security, and that the EU is in fact playing an important role. **Mr Tierney** added that the EU’s complicated structure plays a role here; the unwieldiness of the Treaties for example can be a hindrance. He said 2 main strands of thought currently exist within the EU: the safety tests demanded after Fukushima by the March European Council; and “best practice” policies. He said that secrecy still poses a problem, and that nuclear security safety is still seen as a member state competence. **Mr Hahn** stated that he wished to highlight the importance of the EU’s role in nuclear security efforts, and the fact that the next summit will be held in the Netherlands is welcome. Also, the UK is at the forefront of information security, he said, and Germany and France undoubtedly play a role.

The concluding comments came from **Mr Mrabit**, who stressed the global nature of nuclear security issues. What we need is to have a unique reference when it comes to standards, he said; global standards that can be followed by everybody. He is thus grateful for the important role accorded the IAEA in the Seoul communiqué.