



**Statement of Former Senator Sam Nunn
Co-Chairman, Nuclear Threat Initiative
Re: DOE's HEU Blendeddown Announcement
April 24, 2008**

“I commend the U.S. Department of Energy, Will Tobey and his team at the National Nuclear Security Administration and their Russian counterparts for the successful conversion of ten metric tons of Russian highly enriched uranium (HEU) to low enriched uranium. This material, which had been enough for approximately 400 nuclear weapons, will be used to help fuel Russian power and research reactors.

“This work, done over the last nine years, is critical to U.S. and Russian efforts to reduce global nuclear dangers and is in both countries’ strong security interest. The U.S. and Russian governments are to be applauded for their continued cooperation in implementing the Bratislava Nuclear Security Initiative, announced by Presidents Bush and Putin in 2005. Today’s announcement is a significant accomplishment, but nuclear weapons-usable materials exist in dozens of countries and need to be eliminated or secured to reduce the risks of nuclear terrorism.

“Nuclear weapons material anywhere can be a threat to everyone, everywhere. Led by the United States and Russia, leaders around the world must work strenuously and continuously to lock up or remove and downblend at-risk and dangerous nuclear weapons material as quickly as possible, wherever it exists. There should be no higher security priority than keeping nuclear weapons materials out of the hands of terrorists.”

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