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Statement from Sam Nunn, Co-chairman of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, regarding HEU Recovery in Uzbekistan

I applaud Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham and his team for taking this important step to remove vulnerable nuclear material from Uzbekistan. There should be no higher security priority than keeping nuclear weapons materials out of the hands of terrorists.

If we are serious about preventing nuclear terrorism, we must work cooperatively and effectively with international partners to quickly secure or remove at risk and dangerous material, wherever it might be. I am pleased that the governments of the U.S., Russia and Uzbekistan and the International Atomic Energy Agency worked in close partnership on this important project.

This is a strong step in the right direction, but we are not working as fast as we can or as fast as we must. The upcoming Global Threat Reduction Initiative's Partner Conference this weekend in Vienna offers a critical opportunity to build international consensus for the "global clean-out" mission.

We are in a race between cooperation and catastrophe. Secretary Abraham, Presidents Bush and Putin, and the leadership of the G8 Global Partnership must work strenuously and continuously to lock up or remove this dangerous material around the world.

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