

**STATEMENT OF SAM NUNN  
ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE  
NUCLEAR THREAT INITIATIVE  
JANUARY 8, 2001**

I want to thank Ted Turner for taking on this important mission, and for the trust he has placed in me. I can think of no private undertaking of greater importance to future generations than the one we are launching today.

I have great admiration for Ted's tremendous accomplishments in the private sector and for his unique leadership in philanthropy. Ted is a visionary and a genuine catalyst for change. His leadership in communications has made the world smaller. He now challenges us to make the world safer.

The Initiative Ted has asked me to lead, which we are calling the Nuclear Threat Initiative, is committed to the mission of strengthening global security by reducing the risk of use of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, and by preventing their spread. We will also work to help build the trust, transparency and security that are preconditions to the fulfillment of the Nonproliferation Treaty's goals and ambitions.

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the world has faced a challenge without precedent in history – the collapse of an empire containing thousands of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, and thousands of tons of the materials needed to make additional such weapons. In addition, tens of thousands of scientists and engineers with the know-how to make these weapons can no longer provide for their families.

The U.S. Government, more than any other government by far, has responded to these threats with a program -- the Cooperative Threat Reduction program -- designed to help the Former Soviet States, including Russia, secure and safely dismantle their weapons and know-how. But after 10 years of hard work, and some significant progress in removing and dismantling some 4,000 nuclear weapons and building better safeguard systems, it is clear that our response, and the world's response, has not been proportionate to the threat, nor to the opportunity.

What we face today, ten years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, is a situation that, despite our efforts, may in fact be more dangerous. The Soviet successor state of Russia faces dire economic conditions that have forced a severe cutback in the government's maintenance of its nuclear infrastructure – including its nuclear warning, surveillance, and control systems. Nuclear workers – whether they be soldiers attending nuclear weapons deployed in the field, or the scientists who designed and built those weapons – often go months between paychecks, and without basic necessities like heat, food, and proper clothing. The cumulative effect of this deterioration has greatly increased the risk of a nuclear accident, or a dangerous and deadly miscalculation, or the prospect that a nuclear worker will compromise nuclear materials or sell know-how across borders or to a terrorist group out of economic desperation. Moreover, elsewhere in the world, after a nearly thirty-four gap, two new states entered the nuclear arena with the tests conducted by India and Pakistan in 1998.

Contrary to what many people believe, the threat posed by these weapons to our security, and the world's security, remains high. It is time for us, in cooperation with our friends and allies, to take the responsibility to address these urgent security threats in a renewed and invigorated way.

As our name implies, we intend to focus on the nuclear threat, which by scale and scope is the greatest of the threats posed by WMD. But as our mission statement provides, we intend also to address the biological and chemical weapons threat. Our work will be organized into three principal geographic program areas: the US, Russia and the Former Soviet States, and other regional areas of proliferation concern such as Northeast Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East.

In the US, we will work to generate greater public support, understanding and governmental attention to the subject of threat reduction, and to bring greater resources to bear both domestically, and internationally to meet these challenges. In Russia and the Former Soviet States, the Initiative will concentrate on projects to improve the safety, security, accountability, and transparency of WMD weapons, materials, and know-how. In the regional arena, we will help build international awareness about the dangers posed by WMD, by strengthening international NGOs and by promoting international dialogue on ways to reduce WMD dangers.

Education will also form an important component of the Initiative and is essential for our regional efforts. In this regard, we plan to support educational activities that inform and engage students, the public, and governmental leaders on issues related to nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

The emphasis of this Initiative will be on *action* – making real and significant progress on the most urgent threats. We intend to be a catalyst and encourage change -- in reducing the pressure on the nuclear trigger and increasing warning time for leadership decisionmaking, in stemming proliferation, in enhancing the safety, security and accountability of weapons and materials, and in reducing the chances of intentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We plan to focus on direct action activities, and not limit our role to making grants for studies, education or advocacy.

Over the last six months, we conducted a Scoping Study to examine the question of whether and how a well-funded private organization could contribute to threat reduction. We concluded that a private organization *can* make a difference in reducing threats from weapons of mass destruction, and we also identified a number of promising projects for early funding. Completing due diligence reviews on the opportunities, the obstacles, and the contribution to risk reduction of these action programs will be at the top of our priority list.

No private effort can be a substitute for the strong role of government nor can the private sector provide substitute funding for activities that are the proper role of governments. Only by working with the U.S. and other governments, other nonprofits, and the private sector can we make meaningful progress toward mutual assured safety. We hope to add significantly to the existing resource base and bring additional actors and new thinking to this urgent task in a way that supplements -- not supplants -- the strong efforts already ongoing by organizations and foundations in the arena of peace and security.

I've just described to you some of the major conclusions of our six month Scoping Study effort. I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to thank a few of the terrific supporters we had in that effort – in particular I want to express my gratitude to John Hamre and Michele Flournoy of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, who supported our work by providing space and dedicating staff to the effort, as well as for their expert analysis. I also want to acknowledge the excellent assistance provided by Dr. Arnold Kanter of the Scowcroft Group for his role in helping to guide our efforts along the way, as well as Joan Rohlfing and Samantha Ravich, who led our great staff. My special thanks to the experts who wrote papers and participated in our discussions, sharpening our focus and helping to shape our recommendations.

Let me also mention here another matter of interest to the media -- on Wednesday the independent Task Force led by Howard Baker and Lloyd Cutler will hold a press conference to release their findings on the Department of Energy's Nonproliferation Programs with Russia. I believe the recommendations of this group to Secretary Richardson and the DOE will be of great assistance to the incoming Bush Administration, and we intend to use this work as a point of reference for our initiative.

Finally, I would like to make clear that this Initiative has not taken on the responsibility for achieving the elimination of nuclear weapons. We recognize that the complete elimination of nuclear weapons is the long-range goal of the Nonproliferation Treaty – which, with over 185 states parties, including the U.S., is the most widely adhered to arms control agreement in history. I have great respect for Ted's ambition to see the elimination of nuclear weapons. I believe, however, that the feasibility of the ultimate end-state goal of the Treaty cannot be resolved until much greater progress has first been made in addressing the current dangers of nuclear use and proliferation, and in transforming the world by building transparency, trust and new means of verification and security. I therefore believe that we have an obligation to focus our efforts on reducing the clear and present dangers posed by nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction -- Ted has agreed.

This objective is so compelling that it should unite people who are not unanimous on the feasibility or desirability of the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. We also recognize that our work on building trust, transparency and security will not only make the world a safer place, it will also make progress along the path to the fulfillment of the Nonproliferation Treaty's goals and ambitions. It is this recognition that allows Ted and me to move down the same road together in the years ahead.

Today, as we launch this Initiative, the timing is promising. Reducing the risk posed by weapons of mass destruction is not the agenda of only one political party. I know that it is a deeply held desire by leaders of vision and courage of every political stripe. We are acutely aware that there are widely divergent and intensely held opinions where the subject of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) is concerned. We also recognize that it is easy for these issues to become polarized across ideological lines. However, just as Ted and I have come together to embark on this mission of great importance, we hope that others of good will who are concerned about these issues will work with us on the large area of common ground that exists to find ways to reduce the risks associated with weapons of mass destruction.

Finally, Ted is committed to an initiative that is Board governed, and I agree. We intend to enlist the best creative minds from both the public and the private sectors as we take up the challenges ahead. We also recognize that the Board must have international participation if it is to have a global impact, and two of our new Board Members are international leaders. We intend to add additional international Board members in the months ahead.

Today I am proud to announce a group of outstanding individuals who have agreed to become members of our initial Board and who will help guide and shape this Initiative. I am particularly pleased to introduce several of the members of the Board who were able to join us today. Each of these individuals has the expertise, vision and experience to make a major contribution to this important mission and to guide the Initiative toward achieving real results. Because all of our Board Members are distinguished, I am going to introduce them in alphabetical order.

Let me start by introducing Charles Curtis. Charlie has served with me as the co-director of the Scoping Study that laid the groundwork for launching this Initiative today, and I am pleased to announce that he will be serving as the President of the Initiative, and its Chief Operating Officer. As a former Deputy Secretary of Energy, and a former member of the Nuclear Weapons Council, Charlie is very familiar with issues related to nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, and he and I worked closely together in these matters when we both last served in government. Charlie has a long and distinguished career in public service.

Senator Pete Domenici does not need an introduction. He is one of our nation's primary champions for reducing the threats of weapons of mass destruction, and a strong leader in the Senate in creating and sustaining programs focused on this important mission. Pete has been a sponsor of virtually all the important legislation on these issues, and was a partner with Dick Lugar and me in writing both the Nunn-Lugar legislation of 1991 and the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Act of 1996 which provided the framework for homeland protection against weapons of mass destruction. Senator Domenici, as a leader on the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committees, has led the way in providing crucial funding for some of the most significant projects our government has undertaken, including the purchase of 500 tons of Russian Highly Enriched Uranium, and the disposal of excess plutonium.

Ambassador Rolf Ekeus of Sweden, who could not be with us today, will also be joining our Board. Ambassador Ekeus has a long and distinguished career in working to make the world safer. From 1991-1997 he headed the UN Special Commission on Iraq which was responsible for elimination of the Iraqi infrastructure for nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. Ambassador Ekeus has also served as Ambassador to the United States, and is currently serving as the Chairman of the Board of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

Susan Eisenhower, who is with us today, is currently the President of the Eisenhower Group, Inc., a Washington based consulting firm that provides political, economic, trade, and marketing analysis. Susan has concentrated almost fourteen years of her career on US-soviet and then US-Russian relations, and will be a valuable partner in helping us develop our relationships and projects in Russia and the FSU. Susan also serves on the DOE Task Force on Russia that I mentioned earlier, and was a tremendous help in formulating recommendations because of her extensive knowledge of Russia.

We are proud to be joined by General Eugene Habiger. As a former Commander in Chief of Strategic Command, General Habiger was responsible for all US strategic nuclear forces, and as such brings a unique in-depth understanding of nuclear policy and operations. General Habiger will be invaluable in bringing his insight and experience from the actual world of nuclear operations to our deliberations and decisionmaking. General Habiger, while in command of our nations nuclear forces at Strategic Command, had unprecedented exchanges with his counterpart in Russia and gained much insight into Russian strategic thinking.

We will also be joined on the Board by Dr. Andrei Kokoshin of Russia. Dr. Kokoshin was not able to join us today. Andrei Kokoshin brings to us an extensive and broad background in international security, technology, industry and political affairs. He has served as First Deputy Minister of Defense in Russia, a member of the Russia's Security Council, and is currently serving as a member of the Russian parliament. Dr. Kokoshin served with former Defense Secretary Bill Perry as a co-chairman of the Russian-American Committee of Defense Industry Conversion. He is also a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

I also have the great honor of introducing Senator Richard Lugar – an outstanding leader on the Senate Foreign Relations and Intelligence Committees. Dick Lugar is one of the Senate's most effective leaders in reducing threats of weapons of mass destruction. Dick and I co-sponsored the 1991 Threat Reduction Act (Nunn-Lugar), which has provided the framework in our efforts to safely dismantle and destroy nuclear weapons, as well as secure nuclear materials and know-how in Russia and the former Soviet Union. Dick has worked tirelessly since that time to champion and strengthen this national security cause, and has been a leader in every aspect of U.S. foreign policy. Dick and Pete and I were partners in the Senate, and I am thrilled that we can now continue this partnership.

Jessica Mathews, is President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, an international research organization with offices in Washington and Moscow. Dr. Mathews, who holds a Ph.D. in molecular biology, brings a broad range of experience to this endeavor from previous service in senior positions at the White House, the State Department, and the Congress. She has been an active leader in the world of ideas and research in foreign policy, science and environmental policy, and is also a prodigious writer. Jessica knows Russia well and will make a great contribution to our deliberations and decisions.

Finally, I am pleased to say that William Perry, former Secretary of Defense will also be joining our Board. Dr. Perry is a well-recognized and accomplished leader in the national security and high technology fields. He is currently the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Technology Strategies and Alliances, and is also associated with Stanford's Center for International Security and Cooperation. Among his many other accomplishments, Bill has long been a champion of nonproliferation. He accompanied Dick Lugar and me to Russia immediately after passage of the Nunn-Lugar legislation, and made the successful implementation of this legislation one of his top priorities as Secretary of Defense.

We are very proud of this initial Board. I want to thank Ted again for the tremendous opportunity to serve in the creation of this new Organization, and for the trust he has placed in

me. I'm looking forward to the challenge. Thank you all for coming today. We are pleased to now take a few questions.