

NON-PAPER: SUSTAINING THE NUCLEAR SECURITY MISSION BEYOND 2016

Introduction

As the Nuclear Security Summit process draws to a close, with the 2016 Summit likely to be the final Summit, states must consider what happens next in a post-Summit world. In the absence of a biennial Nuclear Security Summit, as currently structured, states must ask themselves the following questions: How will states sustain high-level attention on nuclear security as a priority issue that remains at the top of the agenda for heads of government? How will momentum be sustained to ensure implementation of the commitments made at the Summits? Who will track progress and hold states accountable for meeting those commitments and, more importantly, their security responsibilities more broadly? How will states build confidence in the effectiveness of their nuclear security? What body or process will drive efforts to further strengthen the global nuclear security system and to close existing gaps in the system that have not so far been adequately addressed by the Summit process, such as building international confidence in the security of military materials or addressing the need to minimize, manage, and eliminate plutonium?

To answer these questions and ensure sustainability of the nuclear security mission beyond 2016, the international community and, in particular, states participating in the Nuclear Security Summits must think strategically about *what needs to be sustained* for an effective nuclear security regime once the Summits end, both in terms of process needs and substantive needs; consider which *existing bodies or processes* meet those needs; and *identify gaps* where new bodies or processes might need to be created or existing bodies and processes strengthened. For every process or substantive need identified, one of the following three types of architecture must be in place: legal (i.e., binding instruments); institutional (i.e., responsible organizations or “homes”); or implementation (i.e., procedures or mechanisms to implement commitments, provide accountability, and build confidence).

Without a careful analysis of both needs and gaps—what we are trying to sustain and where we will fall short of doing so without implementing change—it is impossible to propose solutions to ensure sustainability. Strenuous efforts by states participating in the Summits will be needed to

¹ Through the Global Dialogue on Nuclear Security Priorities, leading government officials, international experts, and nuclear security practitioners engage in a collaborative process to build consensus about the need for a strengthened global nuclear security system, how it would look, and what actions would be needed at the Nuclear Security Summits and beyond. The Global Dialogue discussions are conducted on a not-for-attribution basis; where individuals and governments are free to use the information obtained during the meeting, but that information should not be attributed to a specific individual or government. For more information: <http://www.nti.org/about/projects/global-dialogue-nuclear-security-priorities>.

build the international political support and consensus among non-Summit states to do what is necessary to successfully implement any proposals.

During the September 17-19 meeting of the Global Dialogue on Nuclear Security Priorities in Prague, participants will be asked to consider the following questions:

- What needs to be sustained for an effective nuclear security regime beyond 2016?
- What gaps exist in the current governance landscape?
- What new or existing bodies or processes are required to ensure sustainability of an effective regime beyond 2016?
- How can we collectively build the international political support and consensus needed to fill gaps in the existing governance landscape?

This paper and accompanying resource, “Nuclear Security Primer: The Existing System,” provide background to support the discussion.

What Needs to Be Sustained?

While it is tempting to immediately begin to identify gaps or consider proposals for sustaining the nuclear security mission beyond 2016, any proposals to ensure sustainability must begin with a structured analysis of *what needs to be sustained*. If we do not know what must be sustained, how can we hope to sustain it?

There are both *process needs* and *substantive needs*. A starting point for identifying process needs is to consider which characteristics of the Summit process have made the Summits successful. These include: maintaining high-level attention and momentum; providing a forum for promoting action and international cooperation; creating opportunities for networking and relationship-building among states; and providing some measure of accountability through political pressure. However, beyond characteristics of the Summit process, truly strengthening the global nuclear security system will require other characteristics, including: stronger accountability mechanisms; a better means of tracking progress; and mechanisms for building confidence in the security of nuclear materials. Global Dialogue participants will be asked to develop a list of process needs, using those suggested above as a starting point for discussion.

There are also substantive security requirements that have not been adequately addressed by the Summits and that require more work, including the need to build international confidence in the security of military materials, and the minimization, management, and elimination of plutonium.

Participants in the Global Dialogue will focus their attention at the September meeting on whether the legal, institutional, or implementation architecture exists to support the four overarching objectives of an effective global nuclear security system. These four objectives were developed by Global Dialogue participants in meetings leading up to the 2014 Nuclear Security Summit:

- All weapons-usable nuclear materials and facilities should be covered by the system;
- All states and facilities with those materials should adhere to international standards and best practices;
- States should help build confidence in the effectiveness of their security practices and take reassuring actions to demonstrate that all nuclear materials and facilities are secure;
- States should work to reduce risk through minimizing or, where feasible, eliminating weapons-usable nuclear materials stocks and the number of locations where they are found.

What Gaps Exist in the Current Governance Landscape? What New or Existing Bodies or Processes Are Required to Ensure Sustainability?

The accompanying resource, “Nuclear Security Primer: The Existing System,” provides an overview of organizations, agreements and guidelines, multilateral engagement mechanisms, and implementation mechanisms related to nuclear security, and identifies their benefits and limitations in terms of scope, mandate, or other process or substantive gaps. Not included in the primer are regional organizations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the European Union, for whom there is also a significant role.

Using this resource, what needs to be sustained can be mapped against existing bodies or processes, and gaps in the legal, institutional, and implementation architecture required to support these needs can be identified.

Global Dialogue participants will attempt to map the four objectives of an effective global nuclear security system listed above against five organizations and mechanisms that could sustain the nuclear security mission: the IAEA, the United Nations, INTERPOL, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT), and the G8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (G8 Global Partnership). Each of these five organizations is described in the Nuclear Security Primer.

As the Nuclear Security Primer makes clear, however, there are numerous other bodies and processes in addition to these five that have the mandates, guiding principles, and structures to

allow them to bridge some gaps. In some cases, these other mechanisms are not fully implemented and remain underutilized. Effectively empowering and resourcing these mechanisms to reach their full potential will require political support from their memberships and the international community broadly.

How Can We Collectively Build the International Political Support and Consensus Needed To Fill Gaps?

At the 2016 Summit, participants must present a plan for sustaining the nuclear security mission beyond 2016 together with a strategy for collectively building international political support for implementing the necessary reforms to fill gaps in the existing architecture. Approximately 50 states participate in the Summits, but all states have a responsibility for global nuclear security. Therefore, non-Summit states must be convinced of the need to sustain the nuclear security mission beyond the Summits, the existence of gaps, and the need to fill those gaps. Indeed, Global Dialogue participants from Summit states will need to build support among Summit states that have not taken part in the Global Dialogue.

At the September meeting, Global Dialogue participants will begin to outline a strategy for building this support and identify potential roadblocks and challenges. In future Global Dialogue meetings, participants will further develop this strategy as well as begin to outline proposals for sustaining the nuclear security mission beyond 2016.