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Statement of Arjun Makhijani

on NATO and Nuclear Disarmament
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Tomorrow, October 8, the Defense Ministers of the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will meet in Colorado Springs, a city that hosts NORAD, the North American Aerospace Defense Command. The meeting comes at a time when the world is heading towards a deep security crisis around nuclear weapons. While the United States is far from the only one contributing to the problem, it is, unfortunately in the leading the world in the wrong direction. As the most powerful country in the world by far, it is disregarding its security treaty commitments and announcing by its actions that might is right. That is against its own the best traditions, which gave the world the first written constitution and the rule of law that went with it. The Institute for Energy and Environmental Research prepared the report, *NATO and Nuclear Disarmament*, because we believe that the United States needs a little help from its friends to extricate itself and the world from the nuclear morass that is developing rapidly.

The NATO allies of the United States are implicated in U.S. nuclear policy in several ways:

1. U.S. nuclear weapons are stationed in seven European countries, six of which are non-nuclear parties to the NPT (Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, and Turkey). If NATO is involved in a general war, NATO policy provides for the possible transfer of these nuclear weapons to these non-nuclear states. This NATO nuclear sharing is of dubious legality at best, under the NPT. The United States is the only nuclear weapon state to station nuclear weapons on other countries' territories.
2. All of the NATO allies of the United States have ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. If the U.S. tests, this will put them in violation of the spirit of their commitment to a complete nuclear test ban, especially in the context of the U.S.

policy of usable nukes.

3. While use of nuclear weapons by NATO is regarded as a very remote contingency, NATO policy does include a possible first use option, which could, in theory, be against non-nuclear parties to the NPT. This is in violation of commitments made in the context of the NPT that non-nuclear states will not be the target of nuclear weapons use or threats.

NATO acquiescence, or worse, participation in the potentially nuclear-tipped war policies of the United States is dangerous for European, U.S., and world security. The NATO allies of the United States, and particularly its non-nuclear NATO allies, like Germany and Canada, should formally inform the United States that its aggressive nuclear policies are producing conflicts for them between their NATO membership and their non-proliferation and test ban treaty obligations.

While the United States has shown its determination to act alone militarily, the costs of that strategy are becoming more evident with each passing day. Europe is beginning to move in a different direction, at least in part. For instance, the European Union draft security strategy, discussed last June in Greece, calls for "pre-emptive engagement" to promote justice, human rights, and the rule of law. The contrast between U.S. policy with its emphasis on pre-emptive war and the emerging European consensus on the rule of law and pre-emptive engagement is striking.

A policy of usable nuclear weapons, such as "bunker busters" and "mini-nukes," will lower the threshold of nuclear weapons use. Nuclear threats have been an engine of proliferation. For instance, during the 1971 India-Pakistan war, the United States sent a nuclear-armed aircraft carrier battle group into the Bay of Bengal in a "tilt" towards Pakistan. That U.S. nuclear threat was the final straw that tipped the balance in the internal political debate in India towards a nuclear test, which was carried out in 1974.

A world in which the leading countries do not abide by their commitments is an invitation to nuclear chaos. On the one hand, there are nuclear ambitions of North Korea, which has withdrawn from the NPT, and possibly Iran, which is a non-nuclear party to the NPT. On the other, the United States is in a 'do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do' mode that is quite contrary to the rule of law. As a result, the NPT is under severe pressure and might fall apart, if events continue to drift in the present direction.

The year-and-a-half before the next review of the NPT in 2005 is a particularly crucial time to try to save it. The NATO allies of the United States have a heavy responsibility to do their part to use their influence at least to remove themselves from complicity in U.S. nuclear policy. The goal should be NATO policy that has no role for nuclear weapons. A de-nuclearized NATO would not only mean a more secure Europe, but also a more secure

United States and a more secure world.

Our specific recommendations for achieving this goal are as follows. The NATO allies of the United States should:

1. Formally and immediately inform the United States that a nuclear test would put their obligations under the NPT and CTBT in conflict with their NATO membership. This communication should stress the need to make the nuclear test moratorium permanent and for the U.S. to ratify the CTBT to help stem the slide toward proliferation and nuclear chaos.
2. Make a binding and formal commitment that NATO will not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear NPT parties and express this commitment as part of an explicit and unconditional no first use nuclear weapons policy for NATO.
3. Work for a de-nuclearization of NATO including withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons now stationed in six non-nuclear member states of NATO and Britain, and for an end to the nuclear sharing arrangements, which are of dubious legality, at best, under the NPT.

NATO works on a consensus of its members. It is time for the NATO allies of the United States to take a stand for non-proliferation, disarmament, and security and help their most powerful friend onto the path of respect for its international treaty commitments. A de-nuclearized NATO will put the non-nuclear NATO allies in compliance with their NPT and test ban obligations. That, in turn, will put them in a sound position to advocate for a secure world order based on the rule of law, justice, and human rights.