

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

THE TRILATERAL PROCESS:
WASHINGTON, KIEV, MOSCOW, AND THE FATE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS
IN UKRAINE

Washington, D.C.
Monday, May 9, 2011

PARTICIPANTS:

Moderator:

STROBE TALBOTT
President
The Brookings Institution

Panelists:

PAVEL BAEV
Research Professor
Peace Research Institute Oslo

STEVEN PIFER
Senior Fellow and Director, Arms Control Initiative
The Brookings Institution

BORYS TARASYUK
Rada (Ukrainian Parliament) Deputy
Former Foreign Minister of Ukraine

* * * * *

P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. TALBOTT: (in progress) the United States with regard to the removal of nuclear weapons from the territory of Ukraine.

I want to just take a moment to put this into a contemporary context. I think it's fair to say that the threat of the proliferation of nuclear weaponry, nuclear technology, nuclear expertise is right up there with the threat of climate change, global warming in really calling into question whether we are going to have a survivable planet in the course of this century.

And the saga of the effort to control the spread of nuclear weapons has been a very mixed bag. There has been good news along the way and there has been bad news. What we're going to be talking about, I would contend -- and we'll see what the rest of you think and the panelists -- is a good news story. But it should be kept in mind against the backdrop of more recent bad news.

The essence of what happened in the tale that we're going to discuss here this morning is that thanks to the hard work and the foresight of Ukrainians and Russians with some help from their American friends and partners -- what might have been the birth of four nuclear weapon states on the territory of the defunct Soviet Union did not happen. And there was instead only 1 nuclear weapon state on the territory of what became 15 independent countries.

So that was in the win-some category. We averted the very real possibility that there would have been three additional nuclear weapon states --

unsanctioned by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which of course was intended to keep the number of nuclear weapon states at five with the obligation of those five states to draw down and eventually eliminate their arsenals.

Now of course in the years since that happened, there have indeed been three new nuclear weapon states outside the parameters of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty: India, Pakistan, and North Korea. And as we all know there is another country, Iran, knocking on the door. So I would just keep that in mind, particularly when we get to the part of the conversation that will draw some lessons from the experience.

Now let me very briefly capture the essence of what happened. It involves casting our minds back two decades, which reminds me a little bit of that line from the *Star Wars* movies. We're talking about a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away. The USSR had dissolved virtually overnight, leaving Ukraine with the third largest nuclear arsenal on the planet. I think it was 1,900 of strategic delivery vehicles, or warheads. That meant that Ukraine had a nuclear arsenal that was larger than those of the United Kingdom, France, and China put together.

It was a very high priority of the Clinton Administration when it came into office to do something to persuade both capitols, Moscow and Kiev, on the wisdom of coming to an agreement between them that would eliminate that arsenal outside of Russia. And of course, also to make similar arrangements with Kazakhstan and Belarus, which also had large contingents of these Soviet strategic rocket forces.

Now initially, what we had hoped would happen seemed to be happening, namely a productive bilateral process going on between the Ukrainian and Russian governments with the United States playing the role of what I would call a friend of the process, talking to each of them separately. And there was, in September of 1993, a Russian-Russian summit in Masandra, which is not far from Yalta in the Crimea. And it did reach an agreement, but it lasted a very short time and essentially came apart, convincing President Clinton and those working on the issue in his administration that we needed to engage ourselves more directly and if the two parties permitted, turn a bilateral process into a trilateral process.

And there were essentially four issues on which we were working hardest. One was the Ukrainians' understandable request -- rather imperative request, I would say -- for security assurances. Second was that Ukraine get some kind of compensation for the value of the highly enriched uranium in the warheads themselves. Third was assistance, both technical and financial -- and particularly financial assistance -- in eliminating the launchers or delivery vehicles for the warheads once they had been removed, as well as the nuclear weaponry infrastructure. And fourth, the agreement on the terms for the elimination of the weapons themselves.

The so-called trilateral process culminated in January of 1994, when President Clinton, President Kravchuk, and President Yeltsin got together and essentially reached a deal. And that deal was the following: With regard to the warheads themselves, they would move from Ukraine to Russia, where they

would be dismantled. With regard to compensation for the Ukrainians, fuel rods that could be used in nuclear power reactors would move from Russia to Ukraine. There was agreement on how to deactivate the ballistic missiles in Ukraine once the warheads had been removed, and there was also agreement on an intensive discussion between the United States and Ukraine on how Nunn-Lugar money could be used to deactivate the ballistic missiles, the bombers, and the nuclear infrastructure. So there would be financial assistance as well.

Now that left a very big and important question. Which was how to make sure that Ukraine joined the Non-Proliferation Treaty regime as a non-nuclear weapons state? In November of 1994, the Rada, the Ukrainian Parliament, did come to a resolution on accession to the NTP. But to make a long story and a complicated document short, it had some ambiguities in it that caused concerns in two of the three capitals, namely Moscow and Washington. I'm looking at Bill Miller, our former ambassador, who obviously remembers this episode very vividly. As does Jim Collins, who was working on this in several capacities, both in Washington and, of course, as ambassador to Moscow later on.

In any event, those ambiguities were resolved in due course, particularly when there was a summit meeting of what evolved from the CSCE to the OSCE in Budapest in December of 1994. At that meeting there was an exchange of the instruments of accession. There was also an affirmation of several things that were important to Ukraine, namely a firm American commitment to Ukraine's territorial integrity and its sovereignty. And also, an

agreement on how there would be discussions or assistance, as it was called, between the United States and Ukraine in the case that Ukraine felt that it was being threatened with aggression, particularly in the form of the use of nuclear weapons.

Now, as I'm sure Borys will touch on in a minute, that was a good deal less than the Ukrainian side originally wanted because it did not constitute the kind of firm alliance-type security guarantees that hold among NATO members. But it was sufficient to get the job done.

And moreover, that Budapest meeting enabled us to get entry into force on the part of the START I Treaty, which had been in abeyance until this question of Ukraine's unambiguous status as a non-nuclear weapon state under the NPT was resolved.

The last point I would make before introducing the panelists is that this was extraordinarily tough work. And a couple of the people -- a number of the people who did much of that tough work are here in the room today.

Moreover, each of the two parties in Eurasia had extremely strong both sentiments, convictions -- and, I would say in the case of Ukraine, anxieties. And I might add that were for historical and geopolitical reasons entirely legitimate.

Ukraine had just attained its independence. And it had had only fleeting experience in independence in the past, and it did not feel secure, particularly vis-à-vis the Russian Federation. It felt vulnerable and it wanted as much protection as possible as it gave up what it saw as a potential deterrent

force of its own.

With regard to Russia, I think I can summarize the strong views there by quoting something that Vladimir Lukin, who was Russian ambassador here in Washington at the time, said to me. He wasn't so much speaking for himself, but he was trying to get me to understand the way this whole issue was viewed in the United States.

And what he said was, despite the fact that the USSR was a set of initials that had passed into history and CIS was a new set of initials that had come into being, and I stood for independent, most Russians -- and certainly a lot of Russians in positions of power -- regarded the relationship between the Russian Federation and Ukraine to be more or less identical to that between New York and New Jersey. So that made the point in a way that certainly got -- penetrated my brain and I remember to this day. And I think it was a credit to all sides that the two parties in particular, but the United States as well, were able to come to common ground.

What we're going to do today is talk about the bumps in the road, how it was that success was achieved. And coming back to the point that I made at the outset, what some of the lessons learned might be.

You have the biographies in your program. Borys Tarasyuk and I were just reminiscing about the first time we ever met, and boy, were there a lot of times after that. We lost a lot of sleep together and separately working on this issue. He is, of course, a deputy in the Rada, a former foreign minister, and was my counterpart in the process that I have described.

We're going to have a Russian perspective from Pavel Baev, who is a professor at the Peace Research Institute in Oslo, where he has been -- Pavel, for 18 years? Is that what you said? So he can offer a Norwegian perspective as well as a Russian perspective. A not irrelevant perspective, I might add.

And giving us a sense of how this looked from the U.S. Government is Steve Pifer, who I am lucky enough to have as a colleague here at the Brookings Institution as a senior fellow in our Foreign Policy Program, and in particular in our Center on the United States and Europe. He played an absolutely critical role in the American team working on this issue, and then subsequently from 1998 to 2000 was U.S. ambassador in Kiev.

And we'll start now with Borys offering his thoughts.

MR. TARASYUK: Thank you. Thank you, Strobe.

When the idea first emerged last year about this conference and possible my participation, I immediately responded yes to Steve, and later to Strobe when I received a formal invitation. And of course, for me, this was a very important event in both terms: In terms of personal affiliation to this process, and in terms of professional affiliation.

So in both terms, for me it was extremely difficult to participate in something which many people in Ukraine were considering as giving up the strategic interests of Ukraine. And before sorting it myself, before taking a decision as a professional, it took me quite a lot of work to come to a conclusion that it was in the best interest of Ukraine to get rid of nuclear weapons. Because

there were a lot of people, politicians in particular, who were insisting on keeping nuclear weapons in Ukraine.

And so this was quite a reality we, the diplomats, had to face. And we had to give the appropriate answers to the politicians, to the Parliament, and to the people. So it was extremely important and challenging task for us diplomats.

And needless to say that immediately after the disruption of the Former Soviet Union, we had to give the answer. What about the nuclear weapons in Ukraine? And everybody, both in Washington, in Moscow, in Brussels, were waiting until we gave a definite answer.

So I would like to say that how I see the nuclear weapons in Ukraine, we are perceived by different players. For Washington, nuclear weapons in Ukraine were an issue of geopolitical issue. And of course, we have to understand that for Washington, it was very important to have one partner on the nuclear disarmament issue rather than to have four partners. And without diminishing the role of Belarusians and Kazaks, I would say that these were the Ukrainians who were "troublemakers," because without Ukrainians it might have been impossible to reach a trilateral agreement. And in fact, there were three players -- Washington, Moscow, and Kiev -- who were an inseparable part of this trilateral process.

For Russia, of course -- Russia at that time was not a global power. But at the same time, Russia was looking at the nuclear weapons in Ukraine on strategic terms. And for Russia, it was very important psychologically that

Washington did not treat Ukraine as equal as Russians. Especially taking into account that from the very beginning, after the disruption of the former Soviet Union, Russia has had a way of asserting itself before the outside world as a continued state. So it is something different from a successive state, as is being defined by the international law. But a continuative state for us Ukrainians was unacceptable because we were as equal a successor state as Russia was, as any other former Soviet Union state. We were equal successors.

And intentionally, this was Ukraine, which made within the CIS only two -- made two proposals to make two exceptions from equality of successive states. That is to admit Russia be the permanent member of the Security Council, and admit Russia to be a successive state in terms of nuclear weapon states, according to the NPT. So these were only two exceptions we Ukrainians initiated within the CIS in order to prove once again that there are no, you know, distinct successive states in the former Soviet Union. All were equal but Russia and Ukraine; we intentionally initiated these two exceptions.

So how did we see this presence of nuclear weapons in the Ukraine? It was, for us diplomats -- for all those dealing with nuclear weapons at that time -- it was a serious challenge. Because we could not compare, at that time, neither with the manpower nor with the experience with the, you know -- such powerful diplomacies, like American diplomacy and Russian diplomacy, which used to be the Soviet Union diplomacy. And for us, this was a considerable challenge. We had to acquire knowledge, experience, you know, on the march.

Well, I would compare nuclear weapons in Ukraine at that period

of time in Ukraine as a kind of -- like a suitcase without a handle. It was, you know -- we were of the opinion that it was of value, a geopolitical, geo-strategic value. But at the same time, we came to a conclusion that we cannot control this value. That somebody in Moscow has the control over this value being stationed on our territory. And of course, we saw nuclear weapons as a kind of safeguard against any possible act of aggression against Ukraine. So this was a kind of asset for us.

And in this regard, before this conference, I would like to draw your attention to this book which was distributed recently, written by Steve Pifer, *The Trilateral Process: The United States, Ukraine, Russia, and Nuclear Weapons*. I must say that I read it through like a bestseller. You know, being the one who was in the middle of this process, I cannot find a better, more precise explanation of what had happened during these years, '91, '94. So I would like to praise what Steve has done in this regard.

And I took note of Strobe's remark that I have to do my job as well.

MR. TALBOTT: Write his memoirs.

MR. TARASYUK: Well. What were Ukraine's motivations behind this process of denuclearization? First of all, the denuclearization on state sovereignty when Ukraine was still a part of the former Soviet Union was a kind of political, I would say, message. You know, that in this declaration, for the first time Ukraine has declared that it is going to be a non-nuclear weapon state adhering to three non-nuclear weapons principles.

So for us, for Ukrainians, this declaration -- the whole declaration,

as well as these three non-nuclear weapon state principles -- were a kind of message to Moscow that we are not going to share with Moscow the Soviet legacy being in one state. So we separated ourselves from the Soviet Union, as such, and we were preparing ourselves for independent development. So this was the motivation behind the declaration on state sovereignty.

Well, we saw this process of nuclear weapons in Ukraine as -- and for me, it was very, very important, either independence or nuclear weapons. In order to keep nuclear weapons on our soil, we had to bow to Moscow and to ask Moscow to serve these nuclear weapons. Because we didn't have the possibilities to serve, especially nuclear warheads and tritium -- (speaking in Russian).

SPEAKER: Triggers.

MR. TARASYUK: Triggers, yes. So, either independence without nuclear weapons or nuclear weapons without independence. So this was the question for us in Ukraine.

Also, we faced a very harsh rhetoric from both sides, from Washington and Russia. So for us, it was extremely important at this very particular period to avoid confrontation in all directions. Because we had all -- well, we had negative messages from Washington, from Brussels, from all NATO capitols, and from Moscow. And we came to a conclusion at that time that it was impossible to reach agreement with Russia on a bilateral basis. So this was one of the concluding remarks, which led us to the understanding that without the United States as a third partner, it might have been impossible to reach

agreement with Russia alone.

So, what were the complications for us in Ukraine with regard to this process? Of course, internal politics. I would like to remind you that this was the period when Kravchuk was about to finish his term -- an early termination of his term -- and Kuchma coming to power.

Kuchma, while being the opponent of Kravchuk, he was strongly against denuclearization. So I faced a very difficult time when Kuchma was in the opposition and he was criticizing position of the foreign minister, and my position, personally. So, there was a closed meeting of the Verhona Rada where we have discussed this issue, and Kuchma was very strongly opposing the process of denuclearization. Taking into account that he was a director of the most powerful nation in the former Soviet Union, (speaking in Russian) factory producing ICBMs, including SS-24. You can imagine what kind of authority Kuchma had in Ukrainian Parliament and in society.

So, reasoning for us to talk seriously about the fate of nuclear weapons in our territory was also that we have contributed -- Ukraine have contributed to the build up to the Soviet strategic potential. So we were not just, you know, a country inheriting this, you know, just because of historic facts. We were contributing to the creation of this strategic potential of the former Soviet Union. So for us, it was very important to have compensation in case we are giving up nuclear weapons. And so this was demand within the political elites and within the society.

So we were still keeping the capabilities of producing

intercontinental ballistic missiles, which we still are producing. But let me remind you that it was in the mid-'90s that Washington was demanding from Ukrainians to stop nuclear -- well, to stop missile -- intercontinental ballistic missile production in Ukraine. And needless to say, we were opposing this.

So, for us it was important, like Strobe told you, that in addition to the compensation, to have a guarantee, taking into account that this was not a hypothetical threat. Because we were facing the decision of Russian Parliament on 9 of July, 1993, claiming that Sevastopol is a part of Russia and had to be returned to Russia. So we also had, you know, a period like 2003, Tuzla Island.

And of course, we had to take into account that Washington from the very beginning, after the declaration -- after the proclamation of independence of Ukraine on August 24, 1991, declared that one of the major conditionalities for Ukraine to be recognized as an independent state was to give up nuclear weapons. So, these were the conditions under which we were proceeding to the trilateral process.

So, trilateral process I remember quite well. It proceeded with my meetings with Strobe. He came from President Clinton to Kiev, and he had a meeting with the President -- President Kravchuk at that time. And so how -- this was how we started the trilateral process.

The trilateral process was started in August '93, in London, and as a participant I must say that our partners from Russia were trying to convince me that there was no necessity to negotiate with Washington. Washington was very weak, and it -- well, President Clinton is about to quit the office because of some

internal delicate issues. So, you should not rely on Washington as a partner.

You have to deal with us Russians.

So this -- how was it in August '93? From August '93 until 5 December 1994, in Budapest, we went through very difficult and tough negotiations. Strobe and Steve and Bill will confirm that sometimes the emotions were too high during our negotiations. But we finally came to a conclusion due to the formula explained by Strobe.

So what is the meaning of memorandum on security assurances for Ukraine? For Ukraine, this was extremely important to have this document. Of course, we were seeking for the legally binding document, but Washington was not ready for this to take place. So this was a kind of compromise. Also, a kind of compromise was refraining from economic cohesion. This was something which was very difficult not only for Moscow, but for Washington as well to accept. And we were insisting on this phrase. So the later development of events proved that we were right in demanding these national security assurances, including the refraining from economic cohesion.

So what Russia did afterwards proved that it was unilaterally violating the provisions of Budapest memorandum on national security assurances. And unfortunately, the memorandum did not work although there was a separate article dealing with this situation.

And sometimes people say that why should we not use the trilateral mechanism, the Budapest memorandum, to resolve the issue of the Black Sea Fleet? It did not work. It did not work simply because Russians were

against. And well, I do claim that memorandum on national security assurances of '94 had nothing to do with Ukrainian-Russian deal on Black Sea Fleet. So these were absolutely two separate tracks, and one should not connect Budapest memorandum with the Black Sea Fleet.

And so, I would like to say that without any exaggeration, the trilateral process and the success of trilateral process had not only the merit for United States, Russia, and Ukraine. It had the merit for the global peace and stability, since we had contributed immensely to the global peace and stability, and denuclearization of the world.

Thank you very much.

MR. TALBOTT: Thanks, Borys. Pavel.

MR. BAEV: Well, thank you. I have to start with saying that I am very privileged to be part of this exercise. And I am very humbled by the company. I am probably the only one here who wasn't there, so I can't really give you the Russian perspective. I can give you only the perspective on the Russian perspective.

And probably the starting point has to be that at this moment when everything started -- when the Soviet Union imploded, Russia had a huge advantage of inheriting the state. Most of the structures, most of the institutions, and most of the people. But there was a downside as well. Because Russia inherited this need to prove that it is a superpower.

And nobody personified that need better than Boris Yeltsin. When the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreements were signed between him and

Kravchuk and Shushkevich, it was a deal of equals. And it was the last deal of the equals. Then he wanted to have his -- Boris to build dialogue as equals.

And there was a need -- desperate need -- to establish that Russia is not Kazakhstan or Belarus or Ukraine. And it was generally all right with Nazarbayev and Shushkevich. It couldn't sit well with Ukraine, and it didn't. That was very obvious -- very clearly the case there. And this urge to establish that is still very present in the Russian politics. Russia is always driven by the need to claim a state that is far above its economic weight, far above its soft power.

Yeltsin deserves credit in this story. It is entrusting the whole process to professionals. He brought with himself to the Kremlin, to the kind of corridors of power all sorts of characters like Burbulis and Shakarayan, Stankevich and Sherlofkevidiaev, all of them forgotten now, and rightly so.

His two key ministers -- Foreign Minister Kozyrev and Defense Minister Grachyov -- well, they were professionals of sorts; but in this particular matter, ignoramuses, completely. And they were not in the loop. None of them had anything to do with this process, essentially. Grachyov in particular had his hands full at that moment in time with the conflicts, with Russian interventions in the conflicts which were yet to become frozen conflicts. We should have kind of really attracted priority -- political attention -- to Moscow, and didn't. But that belongs to a different seminar.

What I want to emphasize here is really the role of three professionals to whom Yeltsin trusted, who didn't intervene very much in their

works. And the first of them is Shaposhnikov. He was an air force man. And at that moment in time, when Soviet Union imploded, he found himself to be the top military commander not only in Russia but also formally in the whole CIS space. And he was not very efficient in that role. Essentially he was a failure. But one thing he understood very well, as an air force man. It's tactical nuclear weapons.

He served most of his career in Ukraine, and he had an idea that it's exactly these weapons that could make Ukraine a nuclear state. It's very easy to operate with missiles. You need early warning system, and you need command and control, and you need targeting, you need all sorts of things. They essentially are very difficult to use. Tactical nuclear weapons, you take control and they are yours, and you are a nuclear power.

And that's why in the first months of '92, before everything here, before the trilateral process, when everything was in flux and it was possible to do things or not to do things, he opted for doing things. For withdrawing the tactical nuclear weapons from Ukraine as fast as possible. And this kind of scale of the whole thing, you might imagine from the fact that this process was about, essentially, 1,600 nuclear warheads. And with tactical nuclear weapons, it was at least twice as much.

And immediately, from day one, echelon after echelon, tactical nuclear weapons were being taken off Ukraine. In Kiev, after a few months there was kind of a thing, we probably need to regulate somehow this process. Yes, says Shaposhnikov, certainly. That's the draft protocol about how the whole thing is conducted, and we're ready to take every comment you have. Protocol is

signed in April; in May, the process is completed. Three thousand and a half, probably -- we don't know exact figure -- nuclear weapons were taken out of Ukraine before anybody noticed, essentially.

And that really made everything else which came after much easier. Because that was probably the most dangerous, the most crucial part of the problem. Resolved and generally unheralded achievement by Shaposhnikov at that stage.

Very soon after, he disappeared from the arena and two other professionals came in. And one of them was Sergeyev, who in some years would also become Russia's defense minister and again, not a very successful one. At that particular moment he was a missile man, through and through. And one thing he understood perfectly was the intercontinental ballistic missiles. And tasks with them were enormous because, you know, missiles produced in Russia were deployed in Ukraine, missiles produced in Ukraine deployed in Russia. You need to service all these missiles. You need to make sure that missiles deployed in Ukraine are unusable and, at the same time, safe. All these technicalities, he understood them perfectly well.

It was probably -- and he knew less well the things about the strategic air bombers. But at least it was very fortunate that the bombers of both types deployed in Ukraine were produced in Russia in Kazan and Samara, and missiles for these aircraft were produced in a plant in Moscow. It was very difficult for Ukraine, really, to service them. But with nuclear missiles, Sergeyev was the man who understood the situation perfectly well and really kind of step

by step was there through the whole process.

And the third professional I would want to praise is Dubynin -- Ambassador Dubynin. And he is a career diplomat. He was an ambassador to the United States, the pinnacle of a career as a Soviet diplomat. And after that, head of the Russian negotiating team with Ukraine, which looked like a big step down for a diplomat. And it was probably, in fact, the main achievement of his diplomatic career.

He was a superb negotiator, and he was able on every turn of the talks to outplay his Ukrainian counterpart, Kastyenka, showing him, you know, that's your declaration of independence and that was written here, that's what you're saying now. And that's what your president said a few months ago, that's what you're saying now. If this is your personal opinion, it's very interesting one. I'm not discussing personal opinions here. So this kind of game continued very forcefully, but he played a crucial role through the whole process. But probably I don't need to praise him very much because he is perfectly able to do it himself, and he does. (Laughter)

What I want generally to kind of wrap up my short presentation here with is the point that unlike in Ukraine, in Russia this issue was never enmeshed in internal political struggle. And internal political struggle in Russia generally was far more intense than Ukraine. They never thought about shooting Parliament with tanks. And in Russia that was indeed the case, in the middle of all this process. In October '93.

SPEAKER: We saw TV.

MR. BAEV: Yes. So you might imagine that that particular kind of struggle of this intensity could have touched on any matter. This essentially was outside. No political force in Russia showed any interest in interfering in this talk. Dubynin had a free hand to play his game, and even Yeltsin himself was too much preoccupied with these domestic things to interfere in these talks. And it also helped.

And I probably will stop here. There are other professionals -- Michailof probably should be mentioned, the head of Rosatom. But I generally want to emphasize how much personalities matter in this regard.

MR. TALBOTT: Thank you very much, Pavel. And we'll get you back for that other seminar, by the way, in due course -- that you promised us in the course of that.

Steve.

MR. PIFER: Thanks, Strobe. First of all, let me thank Borys for the kind words about the paper. I think that I go back 18 years and think about some of the difficult times of the trilateral negotiation; it would have been hard for me to imagine him congratulating me on a paper. I think there were a couple times I was thinking, is he going to come across the table and try to strangle me. But I think in the end, the process did work.

What I'd like to do is, make a few observations on the American side and then talk about some lessons learned.

I mean, I think first of all when the United States entered this process there was a strong view on the United States side that it wanted to see --

it shared the Russian desire for the outcome, which is to get all the nuclear weapons out of Ukraine. But there was also sympathy for and, I think, recognition that Ukraine had legitimate demands in terms of security assurances, compensation for the highly enriched uranium in the nuclear warheads, and also the need for assistance, particularly at a time when the Ukrainian economy was contracting, for outside help in terms of eliminating the nuclear weapons and the nuclear structure.

So when the United States entered this process, I mean, I think it was as an equal partner. But also recognizing that there was an inherently unequal relationship between Moscow and Kiev, at a time when Kiev was still struggling to develop its international identity and the institutions of conducting an informal -- conducting an independent foreign policy. So there was, I think, in some cases a United States readiness to help balance that relationship and lean towards Ukraine on some of the specific conditions.

Both Strobe and Borys have mentioned how things went in a bilateral channel up to Masandra. You had the first trilateral meeting with Strobe and Borys and Yuri Mamedov on the Russian side in August of 1993. In September of 1993, when Presidents Kravchuk and Yeltsin met in Masandra, the initial report was they've resolved the issue. That report lasted about two or three days before it collapsed, and I think in the aftermath of that collapse there was a much stronger view in Washington that the United States needed to engage more energetically. Because otherwise, differences between Moscow and Kiev on issues such as the Black Sea Fleet, Crimea, dead issues would push the

sides farther apart on the nuclear weapons question.

So in the fall of 1993, you had a much more energetic U.S. engagement. I think a key point was when Vice President Gore was in Moscow in December of 1993, and met with then Prime Minister Chernomyrdin to talk about this question. The result was a decision on the spot that Deputy Secretary of Defense Perry and Strobe and others would go to Kiev to meet with Borys, and also they took along Yuri Mamedov. And I recall when they came back to Washington, there was a sense that after those meetings in both Moscow and Kiev, you could see all of the pieces that needed to go into the trilateral statement. And the question was then assembling them. And that took place January 3, January 4 here in Washington in 1994, when all three sides sat down and basically worked out the text of both the trilateral statement and the annex.

Let me talk about 4 or 5 lessons learned from the process, looking back on it after 16, 17 years. You know, first of all the importance of finding a win-win-win solution where each side came away believing that its minimum requirements were addressed. And this was made possible first and foremost by the fact that Ukraine was, in the end, prepared to give up the nuclear weapons. And once that was clear, then that created a negotiating space, there was common ground where the United States and Russia could work on the actual conditions to make that happen.

The second lesson was the importance of doing whatever worked and looking outside the box. So as Borys mentioned, I mean, the Ukrainian desire originally was for a treaty with legally binding security guarantees. And

that was a bridge too far in Washington. But what Washington could do was bundle security assurances for Ukraine that, while not having legal meaning, had political meaning in a Ukraine-specific document that Washington believed was important for Ukraine in terms of giving Ukraine greater freedom of movement vis-à-vis Russia.

A second example of doing what was worked came up in early January of 1994, at the negotiation here in Washington, where all the pieces were together except for two issues of difference. First of all, the Russian side wanted Ukraine to commit to a date certain when all the nuclear weapons were going to be out of Ukraine. The Ukrainian side said that could happen by the middle of 1996, but for domestic reasons we can't make that public now.

The other issue was that the Ukrainians wanted compensation not only for the highly enriched uranium in the strategic warheads that were going to be transferred, but also some compensation for the highly enriched uranium that was in the tactical weapons that had already been withdrawn in 1992. The Russians said, we're prepared to do that, but we aren't going to make that public now because we don't want to get a demand from every other post-Soviet state for similar treatment. And so, you know, from the American perspective it would have been nice to have those things recorded in the trilateral statement, but the answer was, we don't need that public now. We can do it in exchange, and this was the exchange of letters among the three presidents that, at the time, was kept in a classified basis.

The third area of doing what was worked was in November of

1994, when the Ukrainian Rada voted to exceed the Non-Proliferation Treaty in language that was, at best, ambiguous as to whether Ukraine was acceding as a non-nuclear weapons state. And this was very problematic for the Russians. The Russians said, we cannot accept this. And the solution -- which took us I think until about 4 o'clock in the morning the night before the final meeting in Budapest to work out was an agreement where the Ukrainian government, when it handed over the instrument of accession, would do it under the cover of a diplomatic note in which the Ukrainian government said, this means we accede as a non-nuclear weapon state. So basically, the executive branch of Ukraine clarified the ambiguity in the Rada statement in a way that was acceptable to the Russians.

A third lesson is the ability or the utility of presidential engagement. We had President Clinton going to be in Moscow on January 14 to meet with President Yeltsin. You know, it was an easy trip to get President Kravchuk to come there in January 1994, so we defined a couple months before that, let's set that as a target. And once you had that sort of penciled in on all three president's agenda, it became much easier to make the American bureaucracy, the Russian bureaucracy, and the Ukrainian bureaucracy come together to do what was needed to meet that deadline.

Likewise, at the end of 1994, when we noted we're going to likely have all the presidents in Budapest for the CSCE summit, that's a good opportunity. Once that got fixed on calendars that was, I think, the driver that led to a push by then-President Kuchma to get the Rada to vote through the

instrument of accession to the NPT. That would let now Budapest be the closing episode.

Fourth lesson is never underestimate the value of money to grease the skids. The American ability to commit \$175 million as a down payment on Nunn-Lugar assistance, I think, was important as a signal to Ukraine that there would be outside assistance to Ukraine to help Ukraine eliminate the missiles, the missile silos, the bombers, and all of the nuclear infrastructure it inherited. And that was a down payment on what was ultimately probably about an \$800 million program in Ukraine.

And then the fifth lesson is the importance of understanding the other side's needs. And this is one where I think probably both the United States and Russia could have done better vis-à-vis Ukraine. Borys has mentioned sort of the internal politics. You know, I'm not sure that we were smart as we could have been, or that we reacted as we might have to the internal situation. That it was -- there were problems, there were issues that the president in Ukraine had to deal with in terms of elements of the Rada that wanted to hold onto these nuclear weapons. You know, and we might have been a bit more thoughtful about that.

Likewise, I think in retrospect the American emphasis, particularly in 1992 and the first half of 1993, on getting the nuclear weapons out of Ukraine, while understandable, we probably failed to create in Ukraine a sense that there would be much of a relationship with Washington after the nuclear weapon issues were gone. In fact, there were lots of reasons for a very dynamic

relationship in terms of Ukraine's place in the overall European security model, economic relations, and Ukraine's role in terms of promoting non-proliferation in other areas. So there was that basis.

You know, but probably in the first 18 months we were not as smart as we could have been about making that clear to Ukraine. And I think one of the important visits, when Strobe went to Kiev in May of 1993, and then when Secretary Christopher went there in October, was beginning to describe there is this broader relationship. There will be a relationship between Washington and Ukraine after the nuclear weapons are resolved.

And likewise, I think on the Russian side. I remember a conversation a couple years back with a former very senior Russian foreign ministry official where he basically said, you know, in 1992, in 1993, we really did not understand the political situation in Ukraine. We did not understand what President Kravchuk was having to deal with. And you know, had we, we might well have been smarter in terms of our approach.

So those are lessons that were learned. I think that they might have some application if you had a situation where either North Korea or Iran were to move off of what are called -- I would now call as maximalist positions. But if they were moved to a position where they would create some space, that they might be prepared to give up nuclear weapons, you know, some of these lessons might be applied in different ways. Because I think that the Ukrainian situation was unique. But they might have some applicability in the future.

So, stop there.

MR. TALBOTT: No, that's terrific, Steve.

In just a moment I'm going to turn the conversation over to all of you. And everybody in the room, including in the far back if I can see you, is more than welcome to join.

I do hope that the -- I'll call them the Gang of Four sitting in the front row here -- might have some things to contribute. I've already mentioned Ambassador Miller and Ambassador Collins. We're very lucky to have Ambassador Olexander Motsyk here with us from the Ukrainian Embassy. And we also have Angela Stent, who is in many ways connected to the Brookings Institution and also had a distinguished stint in government herself studying this part of the world.

I do want to add one additional point as I listen to my three colleagues here. And it's a fairly basic, even simplistic point as to lessons learned.

What individuals, what personalities, occupy key posts at times of crisis is really important. I think this is one of many examples of the last 20 years, and particularly the relationship between the U.S. and the former states of the Soviet Union, where I think it was Thomas Carlyle's Great Man theory of history prevails over Leo Tolstoy's notion of large, impersonal forces that we have no control over.

Remember that the issue of what the consequences would be of a state disintegrating was playing out in two arenas during the period we're talking about. There was a country once upon a time; you may remember it from your

history books, called Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was coming apart at the seams almost simultaneously with the USSR. Those two stories unfolded in very dramatically different ways. And I can remember President Clinton and others sitting around as we watched the horrors unfolding in the Balkans, saying something along the following lines. What a terrible tragedy for Yugoslavia that it had these particular leaders -- in quotation marks, but maybe not in quotation marks -- at this particular time. Where you had people like Milosevic and the -- even some of the leaders of Bosnia and certainly Tudman and Croatia -- who were using the collapse of the state of Yugoslavia to try to redraw what had been inter-republic borders in ways that would allow them to bring, as they saw it, their ethnic kinsmen into their country from the other side of those borders. That was the essence of why Yugoslavia turned into such a horror for its own people.

I can remember President Clinton saying, just imagine what we would be dealing with now in the early 1990s if the leaders of the former Soviet Union had been like the leaders of the ex-Yugoslavia. And how lucky we are that we had Yeltsin and Kravchuk and Shushkevich and Nazarbayev in those positions who agreed that the inter-republic borders were going to become international borders and no screwing around with them. And that even though for Yeltsin that meant recognizing that this wasn't a birthday present that Krushchev had given to Ukraine in 1955, or something -- called Crimea, with an ethnically Russian population. That was going to remain part of Ukraine, as far as Boris Yeltsin was concerned.

And had it been otherwise, had there been a Milosevic-like figure

in Russia, had there been a Tudman-like figure in Ukraine, you could have had the USSR come apart in a way that would have mimicked across 11 time zones what happened in Yugoslavia with 30,000 nuclear weapons in play and catch as catch can. And what a nightmare that would have been.

And that gets to the point -- and Pavel, I would submit that you add to your list of the good guys in this story -- Boris Yeltsin himself.

MR. BAEV: All right.

MR. TALBOTT: Because he was under horrendous pressure from his Rada called the Supreme Soviet. In fact, he went to war for several days with the Supreme Soviet, which contained a lot of sentiment that Russia should go back and snatch Crimea. It wasn't just (inaudible). So that, I think, is something to be kept in mind.

And the last point there is the importance of personal relationships among leaders. And here I'm thinking particularly of the Bill and Boris relationship. The relationships with Kravchuk and Kuchma were important, but they didn't last long enough and they weren't as deep. And of course, Vice President Gore got very deeply into this issue as well.

So with that, I would ask for a show of hands from any part of the room. And we'll carry the conversation forward.

I see two hands and I think one up here. There are some microphones; there are two colleagues right back in there if you could give those to them. And then Bill will bring you in in a moment. Please identify yourself.

MS. MCCONNELL: Nadia McConnell, U.S.-Ukraine Foundation.

MR. TALBOTT: I don't think we're --

MR. TARASYUK: Nadia McConnell.

MS. MCCONNELL: Question for Steve and Borys. Steve, I haven't read your bestseller yet.

MR. PIFER: It came out like two hours ago, so there's still time. We'll make sure you get one. (Laughter)

MS. MCCONNELL: I didn't get an advance copy.

MR. PIFER: And it's short.

MS. MCCONNELL: Would you deny any linkage between the Chernobyl accident and Ukraine's position to be a non-nuclear state? We're commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl accident. But I believe that the cover-up which continued not only for days, weeks, months had a great deal to do with Ukraine's position and the population to be anti-nuclear.

And then for Borys, I believe that the organization that you now chair, Ruch, had in its founding declarations also the position to be a non-nuclear state. Which I think came out in '88 or '89.

MR. TALBOTT: Maybe Borys, you want to go first? And then Pavel, perhaps you on Chernobyl? Or Steve?

MR. TARASYUK: Well, Nadia, you are quite right. Chernobyl left a wound in Ukrainian psychology. And this wound worked when we were to resolve the issue of nuclear weapons. So I think that Ukrainians, because of Chernobyl, were in principle, in majority ready to accept a non-nuclear weapon state.

I think that, you know, the very fact that Ruch as one of the founding fathers of Ukraine's regained independence, was a responsible political force for the policy of Ukraine in the future, although Ruch was almost always in the opposition. So, thank you for reminding this.

MR. TALBOTT: Steve?

MR. PIFER: I would think that the experience of Chernobyl was one of the reasons that contributed, for example, in the declaration of state sovereignty where Ukraine declared its desire to be a non-nuclear state. So, I think it did have an impact.

But I think that there was also -- there were some questions. I do recount in the paper an episode which took place probably in early 1992 where the commanders of the 43rd Rocket Army, which manage the ICBMs that were deployed in Ukraine, were called to a key meeting with the foreign ministry and the defense ministry.

And the question was posed, in essence, our policy is to be non-nuclear. But what if we change that? What if we decided to keep nuclear weapons? What would be some of the issues that we would have to deal with? And over the course of a fairly long seminar, basically the discussion was, you know, there are huge costs. I mean, in terms of our ability -- Ukraine's ability to maintain an independent nuclear deterrent, things it did not have, and things they would have to build. And basically, I think you had a combination of a lot of technical reasons why this would be very hard and hugely expensive to maintain an independent nuclear force, combined with the recognition that I think the foreign ministry

brought to the meeting, which was the political costs that this would impose in terms of Ukraine's ability to develop a normal relationship with Europe and the United States.

And I think one of the big payoffs for Ukraine's decision that was not reflected directly in the trilateral statement was, once Ukraine clearly went down the non-nuclear route, which removed what would have been a huge obstacle in terms of its relations with the West. And within a couple years of the trilateral statement, you had a strategic partnership declared between Washington and Kiev. You had a Gore-Kuchma Commission established. You had Ukraine and NATO concluding its distinctive partnership document. And I think those sorts of things -- which I would argue were politically important for Ukraine at that time -- probably would not have happened had Ukraine made a different decision on nuclear weapons.

MR. TALBOTT: I would be interested whether Pavel would agree with this. I would even suggest that Chernobyl had an important and perhaps even crucial role in the series of events that led to the very collapse of the Soviet Union.

There is plenty of evidence that Gorbachev derived from the Chernobyl experience the systemic failure and threat to the Soviet state of the big lie. And moved him faster towards a policy of glasnost, which was accompanied by a policy of relaxing the big fist of -- or the -- now, of course, it was far from his intention to break the Soviet Union up. He was trying to save it. But this is a classic case of unintended consequences. And I would say

Chernobyl was important to that.

Would you agree, Pavel?

MR. BAEV: I agree absolutely. And as well, with unintended consequences. I think from Chernobyl, lessons Gorbachev drawn was about the need of greater openness. And about the need somehow reinvigorate the system, somehow to shake it up, and to get it going in a more dynamic way. And it wasn't able to get going in a better way.

I might probably also add that the lessons from Chernobyl, which Ukraine was able to draw, are not that strong, unfortunately, in Russia. Because overall, the criteria of unacceptable risk even after Chernobyl, in Russia is still far above what would be considered kind of a norm in Europe or in the United States.

So the readiness to take these risks was visible, for instance, in the same operation on withdrawal tactical nuclear weapons, which were done very fast. Whatever the risk, somehow the goal was more important than the risk. And in many other instances.

And it's still there. And testing the Bulava missile with this new generation of submarines, it's, again, pushing up the limits of unacceptable risk. And here, lessons of Chernobyl are essentially lost.

MR. TALBOTT: There was another question in the back and then we'll come up to Ambassador Miller.

MR. HUNTSMAN: Thanks. And again, thank you to all of you for hosting this panel. My name is Steve Huntsman and I just wanted to follow up

the previous question with asking about maybe the wider context of Chernobyl.

In particular, I know the president Shushkevich was -- had a particular concern with this. And I was wondering what it meant in the broader context of regional de-nuclearization.

MR. TALBOTT: Could we -- the acoustics are not terrific up here. This was a suggestion by who? And how does it relate to regional de-nuclearization?

MR. HUNTSMAN: I was wondering about the broader context and in particular vis-à-vis the impact of Chernobyl on Belarus as a region and President Shushkevich in particular.

MR. TALBOTT: In other words, was President Shushkevich more amenable to allowing the removal of the Soviet missiles from Belarus? Is that what you're asking?

MR. HUNTSMAN: Right. Did that help contribute to the overall regional strength?

MR. TALBOTT: My own sense -- I'll take a crack at that myself, because President Clinton did make a visit -- a brief and somewhat harrowing visit since there were some security concerns -- to Minsk at the same time that he went to Moscow and Kiev. And two factors led us to put Belarus in a rather different category, shall we say, from Ukraine and even Kazakhstan.

One is that those were missiles that were very easy for the Russians to get out of Belarus in a hurry. And second, Shushkevich -- this is a rather melancholy memory -- was among the most reformist, liberal, pro-Western

leaders in the entire former Soviet space. Speaking of far away galaxies a lot time ago.

Does anybody want to add anything on that?

MR. TARASYUK: Yes. I would like to add to your observation, Strobe. Something I got out from, you know, communicating and being present during the negotiations -- different negotiations -- with the participation of Shushkevich.

In principle, my impression is looking back to those years, that Belarusian -- Belarus was not ambitious enough, you know, to play one of the leading roles in the former Soviet Union after the disruption of the former Soviet Union. Shushkevich and Belarus as such was rather, you know, embraced by the process rather than creating the process.

Thank you.

MR. TALBOTT: Well, keep in mind that Shushkevich -- well, first of all, Belarus had an intimate, shall we say, relationship with Russia that gave it very little room for maneuver. And Shushkevich was, along with Akayev, I think of Kyrgyzstan, pretty much the only leader in that space who didn't come out of the old political structure, which made him full of new thinking, if I can put it that way. But deficient in old contacts and knowing how to really work the power system. So, there were those circumstances as well.

Could somebody bring a mic up here for Bill Miller?

MR. MILLER: Thank you. Thank you all for an inspiring presentation.

I'd like to add some footnotes. Being present in Kiev while all of this was happening --

MR. TALBOTT: Is the mic working in the back? Can everybody hear him? Is that a yes?

SPEAKER: No.

MR. TALBOTT: Is this mic working here? I just want Bill to be --

MR. BAEV: There is no connection between the mic and the loudspeakers.

MR. TALBOTT: Yes. Just step there, if you would, and just use that, Bill.

MR. MILLER: Can you hear me? I'd like to add some footnotes, because I was there in Kiev --

SPEAKER: (inaudible)

MR. BAEV: Not working.

MR. TALBOTT: What are we going to do?

MR. MILLER: I was there in Kiev while --

MR. TALBOTT: Is that still not audible in the back?

SPEAKER: No.

MR. TALBOTT: Boy, I apologize on behalf of the Institution here. Go ahead. Just sit there for a second. Just hold it in front of you.

MR. MILLER: Can you hear me?

MR. TALBOTT: I'm not giving up the seat.

MR. MILLER: All right.

MR. TALBOTT: You can sit here and I'll go sit (inaudible).

MR. MILLER: Just some footnotes. On August 18, 1993, before I went to Kiev as ambassador, I received a delegation from the Ukrainian Parliament, led by the Horen brothers. And it included Pavlychko, Kostenko -- it was Ruch, essentially.

And their position was, we want you as the future ambassador to Ukraine to understand what our position is. We want you to believe us, that we will become a non-nuclear weapon state. That is our fundamental belief, and we have established this in our principles of 1988. But we must be recognized as a weapon state, as a successor nation, and then we will give them up. This was the logic.

Believe us, we will give them up. But we want assurances from you, the United States, that you will stand by us because we will have many pressures from Russia. We have difficulties in Crimea, we have the gas problem, and we have the Black Sea Fleet. We need your help over the long term. And nuclear weapons that are on our soil that belong to -- and after all, many of the parts if not all of them were created in Ukraine -- we man the silos. We were part of the system that poised these weapons against the United States in the event of a cold war. But believe us, we want an agreement.

Well, that was the logic I went out with. Although Washington saw it very differently, that Ukraine was a very difficult negotiating partner. They were bloody-minded. They failed on their promises, they withdrew from agreements. And that I was going to face a very tough situation in Kiev.

After I got there, I found that on the contrary, that everyone wanted to come to an agreement; even the communists, even Kuchma at that point. Kuchma had concluded internally, and he expressed it to me when I met with him at the time, that Ukraine couldn't maintain these weapons. That it had no strategic value any longer. And in fact, I found in canvassing the political spectrum that the Democrats, our closest friends, were those who wanted to keep nuclear weapons as a hedge against us, the United States, because we might waver on our commitment. And also, fear of the Russians. So the major act of persuasion really was with the Democrats, our closest friends.

Borys played a very key role, as did all the Ukrainian leaders at this point. In November, when the Parliament passed approval of the agreement, they put four reservations. The reservations were essentially what Borys described earlier of assurances and help of the kind that the Ukrainians understood was necessary.

I immediately telephoned Washington and I was told, go back and tell them -- tell Borys that the conditions are unacceptable. They should agree to give up nuclear weapons first, then we'll talk about the other parts later.

My answer, in essence -- and Jim Collins will know this, and Strobe will know this -- was essentially, come out and see for yourself. I think you have a deal, and you should come and see. And you came. You came with Christopher and Bill Clinton, and Clinton and Kravchuk worked it out. They understood, they looked each other in the eye. And you decided to go to agreement. And in Moscow, certainly, the agreement was celebrated.

But before that time, the role of Talbott and Mamedov and Tarasyuk was crucial. Absolutely crucial in coming to an understanding that the substance of an agreement was there. And I want to thank you two for this brilliant act of diplomacy, which I think has done such great benefit to the world.

MR. TALBOTT: Well, I'm glad I gave you the chair. (Laughter)
Thank you, Bill.

And I think that since we're into more -- I'll come to you in a second, Ambassador. The moral of the story that Bill tells is, first of all, that in issues as complex as this there is a lot of dialectic, to use a Marxist term. Not only between and among the parties but also within the individual governments.

And the other point, of course, as Bill emphasized. There is no substitute, A, for having the best possible people representing their governments thousands of miles away in the capitol of the countries included in the discussions. And we certainly had that in Bill, as we did subsequently with Jim in Moscow and Steve in Ukraine. And as he also said, there is no substitute for those who are carrying out the negotiations to log a lot of air miles, not get any frequent flier points for them, incur a lot of jet lag, and go out and sit down with the people who are -- whose fate is in the balance here. And understand -- not only master your own talking points, but understand how the world looks from their standpoint and accommodate that as much as possible.

So speaking of ambassadors, we'll give the Ukrainian ambassador a chance. And I hope that the -- let's try this again. See if we can -- yes. That sounds good.

MR. MOTSYK: Thank you very much. Well, for first of all for invitation to this very important event. Steve, thank you very much for your paper. I promise that I will read it as carefully and thoroughly as Borys did.

Well, Ukraine really gave -- Ukraine really contributed greatly to international security, peace, and stability by giving up its nuclear arsenal. I am not an expert in disarmament, but it seems to me that we gave up something like 2,500 tactical nuclear warheads and more than 1,600 strategic nuclear warheads and something like 170 silos. And every silo is like a city in the city. From the engineering point of view, it's construction more complicated than, well, infrastructure -- engineering infrastructure of a middle-sized town.

So, really 15 years ago we were striving for legal guarantees. But as somebody pointed out here, that Washington at that time was not ready to provide legal guarantees. But still, we feel that it would be good for us to have such guarantees, legal guarantees. And my question is whether Ukraine can hope today for legal guarantees.

Thank you very much.

MR. TALBOTT: I'm going to suggest since we're just about out of time that each of the panelists offer a very concise last point. And if you want to address the ambassador's question in the course of that, fine.

We'll go in the opposite order, back this way.

MR. PIFER: Well let me address that question about legal guarantees. I think it's still probably too difficult. Because when you're talking about legal guarantees in a treaty you're talking about something that ultimately

requires Senate ratification. And at least the conclusion back in 1992, 1993 was that would be too far to go.

I would also, I guess, caution Ukraine that while I can understand why Kiev would still like to have this treaty, don't approach it in a way that ends up unintentionally undercutting the value of the security assurances that you do have. I mean, I do think that there is a concern here that if there is a big push to get something new, it suggests that the security assurances are deficient. And that may undercut the value of that document, which I think still holds political value. It's still something that's backed by the United States, Britain, and Russia. There are parallel assurances that were extended by both China and France. So, you right now have assurances from the full UN security council of five. That has value. So in the push for the perfect, you know, don't undercut what I think is still something very useful.

MR. TALBOTT: Thank you. Pavel.

MR. BAEV: Two very brief points. I was struck by the questions about Belarus. And indeed, there is a lesson to draw there. Belarus was really trying to not to be a hard partner in all these negotiations and to be very nice; to give up its nuclear weapons, asking nothing in return; and a very reformist leadership, which was essentially neglected. And it was essentially kind of forgotten by everybody. And what has come out of it is Lukashenko, who wasn't even there in Chernobyl because he wasn't invited -- it was not possible to invite him to this anniversary.

And second point, I do agree with the importance of win-win-win,

in any negotiations. That's on kind of which kind of atrocities build on further talks and further developments. But I'm not sure that was the perception in Moscow. I think very much the perception in Moscow was, we had a very tough negotiation and we won and they lost. And that heritage is still very much present there, in many other deals including the heart of the deal last year. We won and they lost. You might find that kind of aftertaste in many of these negotiations.

Thank you.

MR. TALBOTT: Borys?

MR. TARASYUK: If you're coming to legally binding guarantees, I would like to refer to the earlier points indicated about the tactical nuclear weapons in Ukraine.

I cannot but agree with Pavel Baev about his assessment of this whole story about tactical nuclear weapons in Ukraine. And a lot of people in Ukraine were of the opinion that tactical nuclear weapons were the most suitable deterrent for Ukraine -- for independent Ukraine ---- rather than ICBMs in silos.

But let me say to you, as a person who was very closely involved into all negotiations, most delicate negotiations. I must say that this was an operation which was conducted by Russian military at that time in a kind of stealing like perfect operation. Nobody, including the minister of defense, was aware that the tactical nuclear weapon warheads were transferred, day after day, from Ukraine to Russia. So this was, in this sense, the operation one should, well, praise. But not from the point of view of Ukrainians. I do not praise this

operation. I regard it as a stealing-like operation. Russia stealing from Ukraine.

About the legally binding guarantees I must say that -- I must assure you, and probably those present here can confirm, that we were fighting vigorously for having legally binding guarantees. But finally, at a certain stage we came to a conclusion that Washington is not ready at all to go forward. And looking from this, today's perspective, I think that today's -- one of the foreign policy objectives of Ukraine are not well-designed.

I don't think and I don't expect that, you know, nuclear powers are ready to go along with these assurances. So the best assurance Ukraine might have received -- that is, Article 5 of Washington Treaty of NATO membership.

Thank you.

MR. TALBOTT: Well, maybe that day will come. The door has certainly opened on the NATO side. Public opinion, not to mention leadership opinion, has changed considerably on the Ukrainian side. So we'll have a chance to revisit that issue, including when you make further visits back to Washington.

I wanted to make two points in conclusion. First, picking up on what I just said. We, the planet -- we the human enterprise, we the United States, we the U.S.-Russian partnership were very, very lucky to have Borys Tarasyuk where he was during that whole period.

I may have called you bloody-minded, and you probably called me something equivalent to that.

MR. TARASYUK: Civil.

MR. TALBOTT: But you were a terrific partner in every respect. You were part of the solution to a big problem, Borys. And we're grateful for that and we're grateful for you being here today.

I wanted to go back to something I said in opening this program as I close it. And I'm going to try to connect the dots between Eurasian arms control and non-proliferation, and South Asian arms control and non-proliferation. A perilous thought, I might add, but I'm going to do it anyway.

There are myriad and vast and profound differences between the Russia-Ukraine relationship and the India-Pakistan relationship. There is, however, an interesting similarity. And that is in both cases, you have two sovereign -- or in each case, you have two sovereign, independent states that emerged from a collapsing empire. And there seems to be, perversely, something unique about the neuralgias, the anxieties, and the resentments associated with twins born of the same wound, as it were, who then are at loggerheads for decades afterwards.

In the case of South Asia, it is probably too much to hope for and it's almost certainly too much to hope for that either India or Pakistan will ever become a non-nuclear weapon state under the NPT, which Ukraine had the wisdom to do. But, it is not impossible -- in fact, it's devoutly to be hoped for -- that India and Pakistan will come to terms, both with respect to non-proliferation and arms control in the way they pursue what they see as their legitimate interests in deterring conflict and protecting their national security.

Whether there is a role for other countries, the United States or

anybody else in that, is itself an extremely controversial issue or question to raise. Let's hope that it will be possible for the U.S. and, indeed, other countries - - including, I might add, Russia and China -- to play the role that the United States tried to play at the very beginning of the trilateral process. That is, a friend of a bilateral process. That would be, by far, the best. And certainly the most desirable from the standpoint of Delhi and Islamabad/Rawalpindi, I'll call it. But we'll have to see. Because that is, today, one of the most dangerous bilateral relationships on the planet. And fortunately, thanks to people like Borys Tarasyuk and others -- including Yuri Mamedov, whose name has come up in this conversation -- whatever the troubles between Ukraine and Russia today, they are not in anywhere near the kind of danger zone that we were once upon a time worried about.

So thanks to all of you for being part of this discussion. And thanks particularly to the panelists. (Applause)

* * * * *

CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

/s/Carleton J. Anderson, III

Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia

Commission No. 351998

Expires: November 30, 2012