

## Nuclear Proliferation

### Stemming Nuclear Proliferation

#### Prevent and Manage the Rise of New Nuclear Powers

##### Background

North Korea's October 9, 2006, nuclear test serves as a sharp reminder that preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction must stand at or near the apex of America's foreign policy agenda. The twin proliferation-control challenge is to prevent more countries, such as Iran, from acquiring nuclear weapons and, at the same time, to manage the consequences of proliferation by coping with those states, such as India and Pakistan, that already have them. Meeting this double challenge requires skill and commitment in assembling a full menu of diplomatic techniques, military instruments, assurance of sustained high-level attention, cooperation with foreign governments, and development of a domestic policy consensus.

History draws three key lessons about proliferation. *First*, the more insecure or aggressive the regime and neighborhood, the greater is the incentive to proliferate. *Second*, deeply insecure or aggressive states find nuclear weaponry ideal in building popular support, extorting concessions from the international community in aid and attention, and deterring the use of force by other countries. *Third*, these regimes have less compunction about sharing nuclear technology with others. Such exporters of nuclear technologies care little about global non-proliferation norms, even though they are quick to cite violations of global norms by others to justify their own nuclear programs.

##### Recommendations

To meet the twin proliferation-control challenge, the next President should enhance U.S. and other nations' adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and related international agreements. At the same time, the new President should expand threat reduction efforts, and place less emphasis on the role of nuclear arms in protecting America. Specifically, the next President should:

- undertake a major international push to convince North Korea to abandon external threats and internal repression by attempting to negotiate a "grand bargain" that begins with its nuclear program but goes well beyond



- develop more tools to ultimately be able to employ economic coercion to move a country such as Iran off its nuclear course
- make the Bush Administration's recent agreement with India the basis of explicit terms for supporting civilian uses of nuclear energy in nuclear states, especially democratic and open ones

## **Key Facts**

- Fifteen years ago, there were three undeclared nuclear weapons states (NWS)—Israel, India, and Pakistan—in addition to the five declared NWS: the United States, Russia, Britain, France, and China
- In 1998, the two South Asian states tested nuclear devices and declared themselves possessors of nuclear weapons
- Pakistan subsequently was revealed to have aided the nuclear programs of several countries
- North Korea and Iran have flaunted their violations of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the latter is on track to become the 10th NWS

A full version of this proposal, as well as supporting background material, is available at [www.opportunity08.org](http://www.opportunity08.org).

## **About the Authors and the Project**

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