

PROLIFERATION SECURITY INITIATIVE IS AN ACTIVITY, NOT AN ORGANIZATION

ARMS CONTROL & SECURITY LETTERS # 5(149), June 2004

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In his interview to PIR Center Director Vladimir Orlov, John Bolton, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, expresses opinions on the most topical issues of contemporary world politics. Topics include Proliferation Security Initiative issues, Global Partnership program implementation and possible ways of modernization of NPT regime.

Vladimir Orlov: Undersecretary, it is nice to see you. So, if I may, I start with the first one, not to lose time, one of the most interesting things for us here, experts on nonproliferation, is Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). I think it is a very interesting initiative but an initiative we want to know more about. You started with defining PSI some time ago as an Initiative against rogue states or states of concern and terrorist groups. Then it looked like it developed in something bigger, more comprehensive. Is my understanding of that correct?

John Bolton: PSI is really an outgrowth of President Bush's overall approach on issues relating to weapons of mass destruction during his administration. You know, from the beginning one his highest priorities was to establish a new strategic framework with Russia, adding a compass to a number of matters both of strategic offensive weapons and strategic defense and, as you know, your President signed by now legislation that ratified the Treaty of Moscow reducing over a ten year period operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads. We had moved beyond the ABM Treaty of 1972 which has between the two of us frozen an adversary relationship that no longer exists and yet prevented both of us from establishing missile defenses against new threats from rogue states and others possessing ballistic missile technology. The third leg in the new strategic framework in President Bush's view was always mutual efforts against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

When the President launched the Proliferation Security Initiative on the thirty first of last year, it was with the intention of broadening support for it, so we started with the relatively small number of core group countries. We have now got support for the Initiative from about sixty countries all around the world and we are very hopeful that Russia will join the core group perhaps at the first anniversary meeting of the PSI countries in Poland at the end of May. That would be significant because it would be in time for Russia to participate in the Sea Island Summit of G8 leaders in June as a member of PSI. The President announced in a speech a couple of weeks ago that indeed the scope of PSI would be expanding as well to cover not just the interdiction of shipments of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and WMD related materials, but that we should go after the full cycle of WMD production, including laboratories and financing networks in an effort to disrupt and ultimately bring to a stop the global trafficking in WMD related materials. So indeed the Initiative is expanding but based on a firm record of core nations with like-minded countries and of some initial successes already.

Vladimir Orlov: What would you say about enhancing the Initiative towards other countries, I mean, involvement of countries like India, Pakistan and Israel within the PSI?

John Bolton: I think the core group countries really focus their activities on countries that were aspiring to get a WMD capability that we felt posed the greatest threat to all of us collectively. In fact in Brisbane (Australia) last year we specifically named Iran and North Korea as two of the states we were most concerned with. But the PSI from the outset has been a global initiative and, I think, one good example of that is the most important publicly acknowledged success that we had and that was in the case of Libya. Following the PSI procedures, working with Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom, we were able to divert a ship carrying banned Uranium centrifuge equipment for Libya. We diverted the ship in Italy, the equipment was offloaded and confirmed to be Uranium centrifuge equipment. We judge that the fact that the ship never arrived in Tripoli made a very strong impression on Libya and, I think, ultimately led to the Libyan government's conclusion that it was going to have to give up pursuing weapons of mass destruction.

The Libyan government announced this in December of last year. That is a very good example of PSI in operation and demonstrated that we were focused on the state of real concern, Libya, which was moving aggressively to get a nuclear capability and we were able not only to interdict the particular shipment that had a profound effect on Libyan strategic calculations.

Vladimir Orlov: I would like to come back, maybe, to the region you have just mentioned in a couple of minutes. Speaking of PSI, of course, I understand that there is progress in this. At the same time, there are still some obstacles. What would you name as still existing obstacles to that and the second question here is how would you see Russia's position in PSI?

John Bolton: I think that perhaps the most significant obstacle we face is still a lack of familiarity with what PSI's objectives are and how we seek to accomplish those objectives. You know, one of the things that all of the members of the core group stress right from the beginning was that actions undertaken pursuing to PSI would be done based on existing national or international authorities. We were not going to seek to engage in activity that was not on some basis other than on national legal systems or that would be consistent with the applicable international authorities.

We are also going to say that the bulk of activity would be done on a fairly limited basis in the senses of not a big decision-making organization at all, it would be done through intelligence channels relying on law enforcement assets and military assets where appropriate. We have a saying about PSI, we say 'it is an activity, not an organization' and it is a little bit hard to understand for people who look at the UN system or existing international organizations, we want to keep it informal, we want to keep it quick moving. And so in the case of Russia, to use a specific example, we have had very extensive consultations between the two Presidents and then at lower levels as well to try and address a broad range of questions that the Russian Foreign Ministry had, the Russian Ministry of Defense and other Agencies that were interested and, I think, we have answered, I hope, adequately the bulk of the questions. I think, there are still others that need to be addressed. In that kind of consultation, particularly for a country like Russia, that is so important to us.

There is no doubt that the Russian state is one of the five legitimate nuclear weapons states and a prominent member of the Security Council as well. The important role that it plays in a number of the regional issues that we have been discussing make it important to have as a Russia full participant in PSI's activities. So we are pleased that direction at the decision-making seems to be taken, it is not finished yet, as I say, I am sure there may be additional questions but we are prepared to work with Russia to try to make it happen.

Vladimir Orlov: You mentioned Pakistan and we, certainly, all follow the situation with Pakistan but there is an impression that even with all the current statements by the Pakistani government it is still a country where we should be concerned about proliferation in two ways. First, nuclear security - security of nuclear weapons and materials in Pakistan and, second, it is a country – non-party to the NPT. Do you think we would be able to prevent further proliferation in Pakistan?

John Bolton: I think you have correctly identified there are two separate areas with respect to Pakistan that we should be concerned with. The first is the safety and security of their own nuclear capability. That is, certainly, something that we are quite concerned about. If, for example, President Musharraf's government were to fall and those weapons were to come under the control of a radical fundamentalist Islamic regime, that would be an enormous source of concern. If there were political instability in Pakistan and command and control over those warheads disappeared, that would be of enormous concern. So we have had discussions with the government of Pakistan to avoid that problem. And I would say, that while it is a matter of continuing engagement by us that we believe that at least under current circumstances the Pakistani nuclear capability at the national level is secure.

There are a whole range of questions dealing with the relationship between India and Pakistan. There is a risk that conventional conflict might escalate to a nuclear level, and we have been addressing that with many other governments over the past couple of years and, I think, it is particularly since the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament in December of 2001. I think that risk is reducing now, the Pakistani and the Indians are engaged in very substantial diplomatic dialogue. It is important but there is also an issue that we continue to follow. That sort of one issue – what is the state of play of the Pakistani nuclear capability. The second issue is outward proliferation and, if I may, I will just say a word about what we understand the relationship between the government of Pakistan and the A.Q. Khan network is. We have said publicly, and it is the case, that we were following the A.Q. Khan network for quite some time and it was a matter of enormous concern to us, as we saw this very sophisticated clandestine effort to sell various kinds of nuclear weapons related technology to a broad range of countries: to Iran, to North Korea, to Libya possibly, to others. And we were particularly concerned with whether Khan, giving his status as the Father of Pakistan's own nuclear capability, was engaged in these activities with the approval and support of the government of Pakistan.

We also considered what steps to take to deal with Khan's network. It was a dilemma because if you were to take steps to bring the network down, while you might be successful in bringing down what you knew, you might not get the entire network and when you lost the ability to follow it you might not be able to abrogate it for a substantial amount of time. So there was a constraint on acting too quickly.. So the very, very difficult, very serious, very intense preoccupation of ours over a number of years, not the circumstances of the revelation of Iran's nuclear enrichment program and the eradication of the *BBC China*, the ship I mentioned a moment ago, brought us to a successful conclusion that the bulk of the Khan's network had been rolled up and further investigation continues both by us, by the Pakistanis, by others, and the bulk of the network has been rolled up, I think, successfully. President Musharraf has assured us that none of Khan's activities in spreading nuclear technology would be done with the approval of himself, of the government of Pakistan. We have no evidence at the moment that contradicts that and, believe me, we have looked very carefully at this situation over a number of years. So, much remains to be learned about Khan's activities and we are pursuing that in cooperation with others and with the government of Pakistan. But when we talk about Khan's networks, I think it is important, at least based on what we know now, not to ascribe that to the national government of Pakistan, that it is not the government's proliferation

activity – it is A.Q. Khan`s. Let me close on that point by saying it does not necessarily make us feel any more secure.

In fact it is more frightening than that, I think, that this kind of activity can be carried out by a private network. The variety of kinds of activities, the scope of the production and financing that he had available to him, his ability to sell to so many different governments and to make a lot of money on it and to do it without approval, without the direction in the typical nation-state to show how dangerous international black-marketing of weapons of mass destruction is.

Vladimir Orlov: Thank you and actually congratulations with these results on A.Q. Khan`s network. Addressing this issue, I think, it is important, though many experts were not in a big surprise to understand something was going wrong there, the scale, I think, was really surprising. My question is about President Bush`s speech at the National Defense University where he presented an idea of the need to exclude violators of the nonproliferation regime from an international organization such as IAEA. Question here is what the mechanisms should be developed to do so, to promote this idea, whether it would require reexamining the Statute of IAEA or some other measures?

John Bolton: The President`s suggestions to plug the loop holes in the NPT regime globally fall into two categories. The first are a series of substantive proposals to prevent the spread of nuclear technologies and the second are what I would call governance suggestions to help the NPT members better administer the Treaty itself and the IAEA. The suggestions seek to limit access to sensitive nuclear technologies to countries that have signed or would sign and implement the IAEA`s Additional Protocol. I think that the Additional Protocol came as a result of what we learned about the IAEA`s failings after the first Persian Gulf War when they completely missed the Iraqi nuclear weapons program. Though many states by now signed the Protocol, it is not still being implemented. But, I think, our feeling is that it does give the IAEA the additional tools and some further level of comfort that countries that are willing to submit to the kinds of expectations that the Additional Protocol provides can be trusted with more sensitive nuclear technology. I think the more expensive suggestion President Bush made there was to stop further spread of enrichment and reprocessing technology at countries that have the capacity already. That has provoked debate about have and to havenots in terms of nuclear technology.

But I think we really need to learn from the fifty years of history that we have had since the Atoms For Peace arrangement was put in the place. I think most of us would agree that if we knew fifty years ago what we know now, the Atoms For Peace program would look very different. So a part of what the President is trying to do is to continue to make available the civilian peaceful benefits of nuclear technology but to reduce the risks that we all see that can come when that technology is used for weapons related purposes. And we are in discussion about both of these suggestions, both of these substantive policy suggestions that the President has made in the context of the G8 Sea Island summit. We have the Nonproliferation Treaty`s Review Conference coming up in New York in a couple of weeks we will be discussing it there, we have discussed it in the Nuclear Suppliers Group, at various meetings, we going to be discussing it in a number of forms over the next several months to try to build support for the President`s proposals and to listen to other ideas as well. I think we are encouraged that there is a common concern.

There is not yet agreement on how to address it but I think that is what we`re in the process of doing, as we consult about President Bush`s suggestion. On the governance front, you know we saw that very starkly over the past year at the IAEA in the case of Iran which we believe has a

clandestine nuclear weapons program and yet at the very time the IAEA inspectors were in Iran trying to find what the Iranians were up to they were being harassed and impeded by the government of Iran. Iran was a member of the IAEA Board of Governors. I mean this is really amazing that a country that in effect is under investigation is sitting on the Board of Governors in the very Agency that is conducting that investigation. We need to fix that problem and I think it is important for the credibility and integrity of the IAEA itself and to give confidence to people around the world that the UN's Agency is trying to prevent proliferation is not being subjected to anything by the very country that is doing the proliferation. We also have an idea to set up a special committee of the IAEA to look at verification and safeguards issues. We really took that idea from the experience in the early 1990s again after the first Persian Gulf War, when people wanted to know what we could do to prevent another Iraq situation from arising where a clandestine nuclear program was being conducted even when the IAEA was certifying no violation of the Safeguards Agreement. The Special Committee was set up then that led to the Additional Protocol we have talked about. We do not necessarily have another treaty idea in mind but we think that people need to concentrate on the problem of inadequate adherence to the Safeguards Agreements, inadequate opportunities for verification in a context that is not linked to a specific problem (Iran or North Korea). There is a need to back away from the specific problem and get people thinking about what further steps we might want to take - a longer lines of some new step forward, as the Additional Protocol was in the early 1990s. We do not necessarily think that it has to involve an amendment to the IAEA Statute. It would be easier, if we could find suggestions that did not involve that but we want to get everything on the table again and get some creative thinking applied to the problem.

Vladimir Orlov: I would like to come back to Iran. From what you have just said I understand, if I am not correct, just correct me, that you still believe as of today not as of last year that Iran is still a country of very much concern from the proliferation viewpoint. Is that right?

John Bolton: That is correct. We believe that Iran has a clandestine nuclear weapons program, we believe the military is very heavily involved, we believe that they have undertaken a number of activities to screen their work from IAEA inspectors and from international scrutiny both in terms of getting a Uranium enrichment capability that would be able to produce weapons grade Uranium for a weapons program. And we are very concerned about their work on reprocessing spent fuel to get the Plutonium so they could follow the Plutonium route to a nuclear weapon. So the subject of Iran has been our major focus in our bilateral relationship with Russia. President Bush and President Putin have talked about it many, many times. I have been in this for about three years, and I have been to Moscow twenty three times. We did not raise Iran in every one of those visits and the early days but in every visit in the last couple of years it has been a subject of conversations with the Foreign Ministry, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Atomic Energy. I think it would continue to be so because of the issue of the Bushier reactor and what Iran might do with the spent fuel that it gets out of that reactors is one of major concerns to us. I would note that Russia has not yet shipped fresh fuel for the Bushier reactor and the completion date of that reactor is still being pushed off, That gives us time to continue to address this problem.

Vladimir Orlov: Mr. Bolton, would you think Russia should do some practical concrete steps in the near future - soon, now – to work cooperatively with the United States on addressing the Iran case?

John Bolton: I think we and Russia have worked cooperatively so far. We are not in complete agreement on the definition of the problem or the solution. But this has not been a case where we have approached these as adversaries. I think it is consistent with the New Strategic Framework that President Bush and President Putin have established that we have been able to walk through a

problem like Iran and see if we cannot reach agreement rather than approaching it from an adversarial point of view. We believe and we think the evidence is strong that Iran is pursuing nuclear weapons. I do not think Russia has yet come to that conclusion. But I do note from public statements that Russian officials have made that the position has changed in the light of the evidence. When perhaps a couple of years ago Russia might have said that Iran does not have a nuclear weapons program, today, I think, Russian officials choose their words carefully – ‘we do not know whether Iran has a nuclear weapons program’. From our point of view that has brought us closer together and that is important. I believe Russia is legitimately concerned that if it would abandon commercial opportunities like Bushier, the foreign competitors might take advantage of that. We, certainly, are prepared to work with Russia so that if we can establish that there is a consensus on what Iran is doing, that if Russia takes the point ‘we are not going to supply nuclear fuel or further sophisticated technology to Iran’ that some other country does not step in the gap and pick up that commercial opportunity. What we want to do is to prevent the Iranians from making further progress to a weapons status, I think, - I have been continuing very close consultations with Moscow – we have been quite positive, not yet what we wanted it to be but getting much closer in our assessment of the situation and making our tactics more parallel.

Vladimir Orlov: A question on Global Partnership. In a week from now we here in Moscow, my institute PIR Center will sponsor an international conference on Global Partnership. We will have more than two hundred people, more than twenty countries - all the parties to the Global Partnership including not only G8 countries but also others who joined it. What do you think is important and are enhancing and improving and, maybe, speeding up the Global Partnership efforts? Your words would be interesting not only for me, I think, for the readers of the journal but also for the participants of the conference and I will bring your words about what you think about the key global issues of the Global Partnership to them too.

John Bolton: My best wishes everybody at the conference. I think it is significant you brought such a diverse group together because Global Partnership is a very important priority of G8 as a whole and of President Bush in particular since much of the thinking that went into the creation of the Global Partnership was a stem of suggestions that the President Bush had made, that he and President Putin had talked about even before the Kananaskis summit. We are looking to move closer to achieving the goal that we set in Kananaskis of raising a total of twenty billion dollars over a ten-year period. The United States remains committing to supply half of the amount, ten billion dollars over ten years. We are still depending on exchange rates.

Between about three and four billion are short from the other G8 partners, we have been in discussions with them about that trying to increase their pledges. It is also why we have thought of new partners outside the G8 - six countries joined last year, we are hoping for additional countries to join it at Sea island to bring their contributions into the Global Partnership as well. President Bush addressed Global Partnership in his speech at the National Defense University and called on the G8 to consider expanding the Global Partnership because we have programs now in many of the states of the former Soviet Union, and it is appropriate to bring the Ukraine and others, I think, formally into the Global Partnership to give them a seat at the table as well so they benefit from the programs, they are to participate in our decision-making. The President also suggests that we consider using what we have learned in the Global Partnership in states outside the former Soviet Union, like Libya, like Iraq. Some of the programs have very successful in Russia, and the international science centers have been providing former weapons scientists and technicians with new productive legitimate economic activities so that they are not hired away by Iran, North Korea, other rogue states. I think, it is going to be very important. So, we will have a full agenda to discuss at the Sea

Island. I can say in the preparatory discussions we have had all of the G8 countries remaining fully committed to the Global Partnership. I think, it, certainly, has issues that still need to be resolved. But it has been a very successful effort, we are pleased with the way it goes on and we look forward both to completing the objectives that were set two years ago in Kananaskis and we are also moving beyond that as well.

Vladimir Orlov: And the last question. I have here the draft Resolution on Nonproliferation by the Security Council. I understand that more is to be done on that but it is another example of cooperative work between countries like Russia and the United States. What do you believe is the role of the Resolution when hopefully it is adopted? What do you think are the critical issues for us to have in that Resolution?

John Bolton: The Resolution was suggested originally by President Bush in his speech to the General Assembly last September where he had laid out a couple of suggestions that the Council needed to consider to call on countries to enhance the domestic criminal law enforcement systems to make sure that efforts to produce, sell or traffic in weapons of mass destruction were made criminal offenses under their national laws. He also called on countries to enhance their law enforcement powers to be able to go after the people who were doing that sort of thing, like the A.Q. Khan network in places like Malaysia, Middle East or Europe. Second, he wanted to strengthen the international export controls systems that already exists but which, obviously and unfortunately, are not sufficient to prevent WMD traffic. Some other ideas have been added to the Resolution in the course of the deliberations of the five prominent members.. We, certainly, hope that the Security Council adopts the Resolution before the Sea Island summit but I can say there has been good work of the US and Russian missions in New York and excellent negotiations with Sergey Kislyak who has been involved from the Russian side both in person and over telephone over the past several weeks. We are making progress. We worked together with Russia in lobbying the other non-prominent members of the Council. So, I am hoping when it does get adopted it will be very confident, hopefully before Sea Island, that it will represent another successful effort both in our bilateral cooperation but also in the work of the Security Council as a whole.

Vladimir Orlov: Thank you very much, Mr. Bolton. It was very nice to see you, to talk to you. I thank your colleagues at the State Department, at the US Embassy in Moscow for organizing this.

John Bolton: I am glad to do it. I hope to see you in Moscow soon.

John Bolton - Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security

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