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Democratic Party 2016 National Convention Platform Committee
Washington, DC
June 9, 2016

This committee will deal with dozens of serious national security challenges. Of these, only two threaten destruction on a planetary scale: climate change and nuclear weapons. Climate change affects its destructive actions over decades: nuclear weapons can destroy human civilization in an afternoon.

The use of one nuclear weapon on one city would be a level of destruction not seen since the end of the Second World War. The use of ten nuclear weapons on ten cities would be a catastrophe unprecedented in human history. The use of 100 weapons on 100 cities could destroy all humanity has created over the millennia.

The United States currently has almost 5,000 nuclear weapons in our active stockpile. The Russian Federation has a similar amount. Each weapon is many times more powerful than the bombs that leveled Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Both also have around 2,500 additional weapons awaiting dismantlement. The arsenals of 100 to 300 each held by China, France, India, Israel, Pakistan and the United Kingdom, plus the small number of weapons North Korea may have, bring the global total to approximately 15,000. This is an insane level of destructive force.

One has to be irrationally optimistic to believe that we can keep these weapons in fallible human hands indefinitely and something terrible will not happen. We can and must steadily reduce the risk of nuclear explosions by accident, miscalculation or madness before it is too late. As Senator Sam Nunn warns, "We are in a race between cooperation and catastrophe."

President Obama's Legacy

I was privileged to have served as a member of then-Senator Barack Obama's national security team during his first presidential campaign and to have helped develop the nuclear policy plan that he ran on and won on. It was the most ambitious, realistic nuclear policy anyone has ever carried into the White House.

President Obama's vision at Prague in 2009 was bold, his strategy sound. But the results of the past eight years have fallen short of his expectations.

Thwarting Nuclear Terror. Through his Nuclear Security Summits, Obama created an innovative new tool to raise the threat of nuclear terrorism to the highest level of global leadership and inspire scores of voluntary actions to reduce and secure nuclear materials. But it is, as *The New York Times* editorialized, "a job half done." Instead of securing all the material in four years as originally planned, after eight years we still have 1,800 tons of bomb-usable material stored in 24 countries, some of it guarded less securely than we guard our library books.

If a terrorist group could get their hands on just 100 pounds of enriched uranium, they could make a bomb that could destroy a major city. In October of last year, an Associate Press investigation revealed that nuclear smugglers were trying to sell weapons grade uranium to ISIS. Smugglers were overheard on wiretaps as saying that they wanted to find an ISIS buyer because "they will bomb the Americans."

More recently, we learned that the extremists connected to the attacks in Paris and Belgium had also been secretly filming a Belgian nuclear scientist, likely in the hopes of forcing "him to turn over radioactive material, possibly for use in a dirty bomb."

President Obama's initiatives changed our thinking about nuclear weapons and reoriented us in the right direction. But when you are fleeing a forest fire, it is not just a question of direction but also of speed. Can we get to safety before catastrophe engulfs us?

Preventing New Nuclear States. The President's greatest success has been the agreement with seven nations that blocks Iran's path to a bomb. This is the most significant national security victory in decades. There are only two nations in the world with nuclear programs that threatened to become new nuclear-armed states: Iran and North Korea. North Korea now has a small nuclear arsenal; our challenge is to contain and even push back that threat. Thanks to the Iran Agreement, however, the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran has been neutralized.

President Obama will be the first president in 24 years not to have a new nuclear nation emerge on his watch.

President Bill Clinton saw India and Pakistan officially enter the nuclear club in 1998, (though India first tested in 1974 and Pakistan may have had a weapon as early as 1998). President George W. Bush watched as North Korea conducted its first nuclear test in 2006. Barack Obama achieved a diplomatic agreement that has blocked all of Iran's pathways to a bomb. Thus far, Iran has complied with the agreement, cutting its program to a fraction of its original size and submitting to the toughest inspection regime ever negotiated.

The Iran nuclear agreement is by any measure a major national security triumph. By some measures, it is the strongest nuclear non-proliferation agreement in history. It advances U.S. security and the security of our allies, including Israel. Moving forward, we must ensure implementation of the agreement by supporting effective verification and monitoring. If Iran moderates its behavior in the region, we should explore dialogue with Iran on other issues where our strategic interests coincide, particularly defeating ISIS, stabilizing Afghanistan and ending the conflicts in Syria and Yemen.

Reducing Global Arsenals. Obama could not match these gains when it came to the dangers from the existing arsenals. The New Start Treaty he negotiated with Russia kept alive the intricate inspection procedures that allow two nuclear superpowers to verify the step-by-step reduction process set in motion by Ronald Reagan and continued by every president since.

However, the New START Treaty made only modest reductions to each nation's nuclear arsenal. The United States and Russia account for almost 95 percent of all the nuclear weapons in the world, with about 7,000 each. The treaty was supposed to be a holding action, until the two could negotiate truly deep reductions. That step never came.

The "Three R's" blocked the path: Republicans, Russians and Resistance.

First, the Republican Party leadership in Congress fought any reductions. Though many Republicans supported the treaty, including Colin Powell, George Shultz and Senator Richard Lugar, the entrenched leadership did not want to give a Democratic president a major victory, particularly in the election year of 2010. They politicized national security, putting the interest of the party over the interest of the nation. It took everything Obama had to finally get the treaty approved on the last day of the legislative session in December.

By then, the administration had to turn its attention to other pressing issues. Plans to “immediately and aggressively” pursue Senate approval of the nuclear test ban treaty were shelved and never reconsidered.

Worse, when Russia’s Vladimir Putin’s return to power, Obama lost the negotiating partner he had had in President Medvedev. Putin linked any future negotiation to a host of other issues, including stopping the deployment of US anti-missile systems in eastern Europe, cuts in conventional forces, and limits on long-range conventional strike systems the Russian claimed threatened their strategic nuclear forces. Negotiations never resumed.

Finally, the president faced resistance from the nuclear industrial complex. Those with a vested financial, organization or political interest in the thousands of contracts, factories, bases and positions within what is now termed our “nuclear enterprise” seem more concerned with preserving those dollars, contracts and positions than in balancing national security missions. Our nuclear policy seems less determined today by military necessity or strategic doctrine than by self-interest.

Today’s Nuclear Challenges

These three risks - nuclear terrorism, new nuclear states, and existing global arsenals - were reduced under Obama’s tenure, but are still present today. And they have been joined by a fourth problem that threatens our national security: vast amounts of new, and unnecessary, nuclear spending.

President Obama pledged that as he reduced the role and number of nuclear weapons in U.S. policy, he would maintain a “safe, secure and effective” arsenal. He increased spending on nuclear weapons, in part to make much needed repairs to a nuclear weapons complex neglected under the Bush administration, and to respond to severe morale and discipline problems among the officers operating our strategic nuclear missile force, extending to the highest level of the command. But these programs morphed into a plan to reproduce our existing Cold War arsenal at the cost of at least \$1 trillion over the next 25 to 30 years. This plan is both unnecessary and unaffordable.

If we do not change course soon, we will have initiated the largest procurement of new nuclear weapons in U.S. history. Our fleet of nuclear bombers, ballistic missile submarines, and intercontinental ballistic missiles — will be completely

replaced by a new generation of weapons that will last well into the later part of this century. It is a new nuclear nightmare.

Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Brian McKeon said last October, “We’re looking at that big bow wave and wondering how the heck we’re going to pay for it, and probably thanking our stars we won’t be here to have to answer the question.”

“The current nuclear shopping list is long,” warns nuclear policy expert Tom Collina, “The Navy wants to buy 12 new ballistic missile submarines with a total production cost of about \$140 billion. The Air Force is seeking up to 100 new, nuclear capable strategic bombers that would cost about \$100 billion, as well as land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles at roughly \$60 billion, and new air-launched cruise missiles up to \$30 billion. The Energy Department’s National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) is pursuing a \$60 billion plan to upgrade five nuclear warhead types, including the B61 gravity bomb.”

There is no realistic solution as to how to pay for these weapons. Pentagon Comptroller Mike McCord warns, “I don’t know of a good way for us to solve this issue.” Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work said that if funding for new nuclear weapons “comes out of our conventional forces, that will be very, very, very problematic for us.”

The impact on the Navy budget of the force build-up illustrates the core problem. The new nuclear submarines now planned will devour half of the Navy’s shipbuilding budget in the next decade. According to the Congressional Research Service, to build 12 of these new subs, “the Navy would need to eliminate... a notional total of 32 other ships, including, notionally, 8 Virginia-class attack submarines, 8 destroyers, and 16 other combatant ships.”

These are ships we use every day around the world on real missions to deal with real threats. They provide disaster relief, support peacekeeping efforts and protect the world’s trade lanes. They are on the front lines of the fight against ISIS, Al-Qaeda and Al Shabab. It is foolish and dangerous to cut our conventional forces to pay for weapons built to fight a global thermonuclear war. The Air Force will suffer similar draconian cuts to its front-line weapon systems.

Nor is there a strategic justification for a force this large. Former STRATCOM Commander and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General James Cartwright, concludes, “no sensible argument has been put forward for using

nuclear weapons to solve any of the major 21st century problems we face.” Russia, China, and North Korea can be deterred with a fraction of the force we currently maintain.

The conventional military's mission is vital to international security and stability. A massive nuclear arsenal is not.

The Emerging Consensus to Right-Size Our Nuclear Force

There is not a realistic path to the immediate elimination of nuclear weapons. Nor does anyone seriously propose unilateral disarmament. However, there is a strong consensus emerging among Democratic leaders that these relics of the Cold War fail to address any of the serious national security challenges we face today. In fact, they may put us more at risk.

Representative Adam Smith (D-WA), Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Committee, warns, “There's a reckoning coming here. Do we really need the nuclear power to destroy the world six, seven times?”

Senator Ed Markey (D-MA), wrote “The United States already has the world’s most powerful military capabilities; it does not need any new nuclear weapons. Instead of lighting the match that could ignite a new nuclear arms race, the United States should lead the world in reducing the threat of nuclear war.”

Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) wrote, in arguing against the new \$30 billion nuclear cruise missile, “We can never forget the consequences of nuclear weapons, nor can we fool ourselves into believing that so-called “limited” nuclear wars are possible.” She added, “Instead of devoting our resources to a new powerful nuclear weapon the next administration would be wise to follow one of the main conclusions of the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review and reduce the role of our nuclear arsenal by developing advanced conventional capabilities.”

Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes said June 6, “I can promise you today that President Obama is continuing to review a number of ways he can advance the Prague agenda over the course of the next seven months. Put simply, our work is not finished on these issues... it is a simple fact that the modernization plan was put together in a different budget environment, with a different Congress and varied expectations about our future arms control efforts. Our Administration has already made plain our concerns about how the modernization budget will force difficult trade-offs in the coming decades. And the

President will continue to review these plans as he considers how to hand the baton off to his successor.”

The President himself warned of the perils of a new arms race during his historic visit to Hiroshima: “We do have to guard against, in the interim, ramping up new and more deadly and more effective systems that end up leading to a whole new escalation of the arms race.”

Fortunately, there are some immediate steps that the United States can and should take to address the threat of a new arms race. Eight U.S. Senators - Senators Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Patty Murray (D-WA), Ed Markey (D-MA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Al Franken (D-MN) and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) - recently wrote to President Obama recommending several practical steps, including significant reductions to our nuclear arsenal. “We encourage you to reiterate that the United States has one-third more deployed strategic nuclear weapons than required to deter threats to the United States and its allies, and propose, in tandem with Russia, further, parallel steps to reduce each side’s deployed strategic arsenals to 1,000 warheads and 500 delivery vehicles by 2021.”

Senators Ed Markey, Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Pat Leahy (D-VT), Al Franken (D-MN), Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Barbara Boxer (D-CA) sent a similar letter calling for the cancellation of the new nuclear cruise missile. “Outdated and unnecessary nuclear weapons are relics of the past,” the Senators wrote. We should not revive and waste money on the security tools of the past and rob future generations who will have to bear the burden of this useless spending.”

Smart reductions to the nuclear arsenal would save U.S. taxpayers billions of dollars. The Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures (SANE) Act, co-sponsored by Senators Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), and Al Franken (D-MN), would reduce the purchase of replacement submarines from 12 to 8, cancel construction of new nuclear weapons processing facilities, defer development of new ICBMs and cut warhead life extension programs, cancel the new nuclear cruise missile, and make other strategic cuts, for total budget savings of \$100 billion.

Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) introduced an identical bill in the House of Representatives. This bicameral legislation, as Rep. Blumenauer said, would align “our nuclear weapons spending with what the Pentagon has said is necessary to maintain a strong and credible deterrent, which is a one-third

reduction in deployed nuclear weapons, not a complete \$1 trillion rebuild above and beyond existing capacity,”

The one-third reduction refers to the findings of the Joint Chiefs of Staff that we could safely reduce to 1000-1100 operationally deployed strategic weapons no matter what the size of the Russian force.

President Obama, referencing this conclusion in his 2013 Berlin speech said, “After a comprehensive review, I’ve determined that we can ensure the security of America and our allies, and maintain a strong and credible strategic deterrent, while reducing our deployed strategic nuclear weapons by up to one-third.”

This emerging consensus is beginning to cross party boundaries. Senator John McCain, whose proposal on nuclear weapons were very similar to those of then-Senator Obama in the 2008 campaign, said May 19, "If you look at some of the estimates as to what it would take to update the triad -- would it be long range bomber, or missiles, or new submarines -- it's very, very, very expensive. I mean, you look at the cost of this new submarine they want, it's extremely high. You look at the long-range bomber, we're looking at tens of billions of dollars, and so we're going to have to grapple with this. Do we really need the entire triad, given the situation?"

This consensus is by no means limited to U.S. policymakers. Pope Francis said, “Spending on nuclear weapons squanders the wealth of nations.” The Pope condemns both the use and possession of nuclear weapons for any reason. “Nuclear deterrence and the threat of mutually assured destruction cannot be the basis for an ethics of fraternity and peaceful coexistence among peoples and states,” he wrote in a thoughtful message to the December 2014 International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact. of Nuclear Weapons.

Proposed Platform Language

While most of us have forgotten that nuclear weapons still exist today, national security leaders have not. They take seriously former Secretary of Defense Bill Perry warning that we “are on the brink of a new nuclear arms race” with all the perils, near-misses and terrors many thought ended with the Cold War.

The Cold War is over, but the weapons live on. The nation needs a new plan to accelerate the elimination of nuclear material. We need a new strategy for North Korea. But most of all, we need a new strategy for America. It starts with us. As

long as we keep a stockpile of nuclear weapons far in excess of any conceivable need, how can we convince other nations to give up theirs?

Below are suggestions for nuclear policy, building on the strong stands taken in the past two platforms. I have modified and updated the previous language.

Preventing the Spread and Use of Nuclear Weapons

In our continuing efforts to keep America safe, the Democratic Party believes we must address the threat that nuclear weapons pose to our security and to peace in the world. Despite the twenty-five years that have passed since the end of the Cold War, large stockpiles of nuclear weapons remain, and efforts to rebuild these weapons threaten to undermine higher defense priorities and initiate a new arms race. Nuclear testing and black-market trade in sensitive nuclear materials continue. And terrorists remain determined to buy, build, or steal the ultimate weapon.

The Democratic Party is committed to preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons, reducing global stockpiles, and seeking a world without nuclear weapons and taking concrete actions to move in this direction. This goal will require patience, but real progress has already been made.

America will be safer in a world that is reducing reliance on nuclear weapons and ultimately eliminates all of them. We will make the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons worldwide a central element of U.S. nuclear weapons policy.

Reducing Nuclear Weapons Stockpiles. The United States will maintain a safe, secure, and effective arsenal to deter any adversary and guarantee the defense of our allies as long as nuclear weapons exist. But the Democratic Party is committed to further responsible reductions.

To reduce our stockpile, lower the threat of a nuclear exchange, and lay the foundation for future progress, President Obama negotiated and signed the landmark New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with Russia, producing cuts in each side's deployed nuclear stockpiles and allowing us to monitor and verify Russia's arsenal. Moving forward, the next president will seek deep, verifiable reductions in United States and Russian nuclear weapons and work with other nuclear powers to reduce global stockpiles dramatically. We will also work to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban

Treaty and seek a new Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty that prohibits the production of fissile materials intended for use in nuclear weapons.

Preventing a New Arms Race. We will maintain a strong and reliable deterrent as long as nuclear weapons exist, but we do not need and cannot afford to rebuild the entire nuclear force that we had during the Cold War. Doing so, according to former Secretary of Defense William Perry, would risk a new nuclear arms race as U.S. actions force unwelcome responses by others. Excessive nuclear spending, at a time of budget constraints, would also undermine higher priority investments in conventional weapons.

We will work with Russia to take as many weapons as possible off Cold War, quick-launch status, and extend key provisions of the START Treaty, including its essential monitoring and verification requirements. We will not develop new nuclear weapons. The United States should cancel plans for a new nuclear cruise missile and lead the world in negotiating a ban on all nuclear-armed cruise missiles. The United States should also cancel plans for new land-based missiles, which are redundant, expensive and destabilizing, and scale back purchases of new nuclear-armed submarines and bombers. By doing so, the United States could maintain a strong nuclear force and save hundreds of billions of dollars to address more pressing needs.

Preventing Nuclear Proliferation. The Democratic Party is committed to strengthening the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as the bedrock of international efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries. As we work to uphold our obligations under the treaty by reducing stockpiles and recognizing the rights of all rule-abiding states to peaceful nuclear energy, we will insist that countries without nuclear weapons comply with their obligations not to develop them, and we will ensure that violators face real consequences.

Iran. President Obama, working closely with our international partners and Congress, has put in place an historic agreement to avoid an Iranian nuclear bomb and prevent another war in the Middle East. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action has rolled back Iran's nuclear program, blocked all its pathways to a bomb and put all Iran's nuclear activities under the most rigorous inspection regime ever negotiated. The agreement is working and has greatly reduced incentives in the region for

any other state to pursue nuclear weapons or enrichment technology. The Democratic Party is committed to upholding this agreement and making sure that Iran delivers on its promises. Going forward, the party is committed to seeking an agreement to ban all weapons of mass destruction in the region.

North Korea. The next president will continue to confront North Korea, a regime that ignores its international obligations by developing nuclear weapons and missile technology, with a stark choice: take verifiable steps to stop building nuclear weapons and engage in genuine negotiations or face increasing isolation and costs from the United States and the international community. That is why the Obama administration worked with international partners to impose harsh multilateral sanctions on North Korea. And it is why the President has made clear that the transfer of nuclear weapons or material by North Korea to states or non-state entities would be considered a grave threat to the United States and our allies, and we would hold North Korea accountable for the consequences of such action.

Securing Loose Nuclear Materials. The United States has led a global effort to secure loose nuclear materials around the world, hosting nuclear security summits in Washington, and making concrete progress in locking these materials down. This is an important goal because the prospect that ISIL, al-Qaeda or another terrorist organization might acquire a nuclear device represents an immediate and extreme threat to global security. At the same time, the United States will continue to work with international partners to break up black markets, detect and intercept nuclear materials in transit, and use financial tools to disrupt this dangerous trade.

I thank the Platform Committee for allowing me to offer my suggestions. I wish you well in all your deliberations.