FACT SHEET – "PREVENTIVE" WAR, "USABLE" NUKES AND UNILATERALISM

Broken Promises:

- For over 50 years the U.S. has promised never to attack non-nuclear states with nuclear weapons.
- Throughout the Cold War the U.S. worked with the Soviets and other governments to achieve a number of arms control treaties, especially concerning nuclear weapons
- On December 13, 2001, President George W. Bush announced that the U.S. will withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty to pursue deployment of a new national missile defense system.

The U.S. Administration now has plans to increase, not decrease, the nuclear arsenal by:

- Revitalizing U.S. nuclear weapons infrastructure.
- Putting into place new facilities to build nuclear weapons.
- Testing, producing, and using new nuclear weapons for specific threats.

The Bush Administration's Nuclear Posture Review (also called the Bush Doctrine), revealed in Jan. of 2002, introduces significant changes in U.S. military, especially nuclear, policy. Citing the need for new approaches in an era of terrorist threat, and focused on the "axis of evil," U.S. policy is now based on:

- Unilateralism (rejecting multilateral treaties).
- First Strike (the possibility of using nuclear weapons against an adversary, including non-nuclear states).
- "Pre-emptive," or more correctly, preventive, military action (attacking if a possible threat is perceived).

The stated goal of the new policies based on the Nuclear Posture Review is to "reassure" allies, dissuade potential enemies from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, deter those who already have weapons of mass destruction, and defeat *any* adversary *anytime* they are *perceived* as a potential threat.

In violation of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, this new policy supports:

- Development of new so-called low yield "usable" nuclear weapons like the megaton "City Buster," and battlefield tactical weapons including the robust nuclear earth penetrator (RNEP) or "bunker-buster,", low-yield (less than 5 kiloton) or "mini-nukes," and neutron bombs that can destroy chemical or biological agents stored above ground.
- New, more powerful conventional weapons designed to blur the difference from nuclear weapons.
- ***Use*** of new nuclear weapons, such as the RNEP to attack emerging nuclear, chemical and biological weapons states or terrorist groups.

The Precedent set by the Nuclear Posture Review is dangerous and destabilizing because:

- Mixing nuclear and conventional fighting capability, makes the use of nuclear weapons more likely.
- If the world's most powerful nation can ignore treaties and initiate first strikes, it signals a return to the law of the jungle for all nations.
- Breach of the promise to never attack first with a nuclear weapon is likely to act as an incentive for threatened countries, such as North Korea and Iran, to develop their own nuclear weapons.
- International trading of nuclear arms technology is likely to increase such as that seen between Pakistan and North Korea.

Nuclear weapons are the ultimate threat to global security.

- The threat to environmental and human health from nuclear weapons testing and production is well known.
- It is irresponsible of the world's greatest military power to do anything that makes such use more likely.
- Survival of the human species is at stake.

Resources:

Global Security.Org -- Nuclear Posture Review. [Excerpts] Submitted to Congress on 31 Dec. 2001
http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/policy/dod/npr.htm
Physicians for Social Responsibility (www.psr.org) –New nuclear weapons and strategies:
http://www.psr.org/home.cfm?id=nuclear_weapons