Bipartisan WMD Dialogue Project

The Arms Control Association and The Lugar Center have partnered to establish the Bipartisan Nuclear and WMD Policy Dialogue Project to help foster bipartisan discussion on timely security issues. The program does not seek any policy outcome or enactment of any legislation. Our mission is to provide a forum where senior national security staff across committee jurisdictions and party affiliations can establish relationships and a basis for working together more effectively, as well as increase the overall knowledge base and awareness of WMD risks and risk reduction strategies.

Established in November 2013, the Project organizes a series of private dinners and congressional briefings on specific topics of interest to Republican and Democratic congressional staff. These events are off the record, emphasize constructive dialogue, and provide a forum for staff to engage high profile speakers. Topics will include:

- Preventing a nuclear-armed Iran
- Preventing nuclear terrorism (Cooperative Threat Reduction)
- Reversing North Korea’s nuclear program
- Nuclear force modernization
- Engaging China and other nuclear armed states in the nuclear risk reduction process
- Controlling the nuclear fuel cycle

For more information, please contact Jay Branegan at jay@thelugarcenter.org.

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WMD Nonproliferation

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction remains the number one security threat facing the United States and the international community.

The Lugar Center is devoted to the principle that calamities involving weapons of mass destruction are preventable if responsible governments, organizations, and individuals dedicate themselves to the painstaking work necessary to constrain this threat.

The Lugar Center is inspired by the work of Senator Richard G. Lugar, who for more than two decades has been a leader in nearly every important non-proliferation and arms control initiative undertaken by the United States.
Senator Lugar was the co-author of the landmark Nunn-Lugar Program passed in 1991. This program has worked cooperatively with Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus and other nations to safely secure and dismantle vulnerable stockpiles of weapons and materials of mass destruction in the former Soviet Union. It has assisted in the deactivation of more than 7,500 nuclear warheads; the elimination of 2,000 intercontinental missiles; and the destruction of 1,000 missile launchers. The program has helped to secure innumerable biological pathogens, and it is proceeding with a project to destroy almost two million chemical weapons.

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Senator Lugar passed legislation expanding the scope of the original Nunn-Lugar program so that it could meet threats anywhere in the world. For example, Nunn-Lugar has destroyed chemical weapons in Albania, provided security to African research labs studying dangerous pathogens, and facilitated WMD security agreements in East Asia. The Program exists as an important resource for responding to proliferation emergencies and building ties to countries that want help contending with WMD stockpiles and infrastructure. Nunn-Lugar also has been a vital component of bilateral arms control agreements between Russia and the United States.

Senator Lugar was at the forefront of efforts to evaluate and pass arms control agreements including the START agreements, the INF Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Moscow Treaty and others. He was the lead Republican fighting for the successful ratification of the New START agreement with Russia in 2010.

Controlling WMD is essential, not merely because of the horrific loss of life that could result from a WMD attack. Such an attack carried out by a terrorist group or nation could shake the global economy, further burden national budgets, constrain investments in human development, and create instability in many parts of the world. This would increase the chances for nuclear proliferation and add disturbing uncertainty to future terrorist threats.

The Lugar Center believes that although the risk of a nuclear weapon being used is the most profound of the WMD threats, the risks associated with biological, chemical, and radiological weapons should not be underestimated. These WMD materials generally are surrounded by less security and are simpler to weaponize.

The Lugar Center seeks to educate citizens, students, and leaders on the risks of proliferation of nuclear, chemical, biological, and radiological weapons and materials. The Center emphasizes especially the security of these weapons and the construction of international agreements and norms designed to reduce their numbers and prevent their use. It works to ensure that the international community maintains the technological and human capabilities and political will necessary to peacefully inventory, inspect, safeguard, and deactivate weapons of mass destruction when such
opportunities present themselves.

The Lugar Center works with like-minded organizations to develop policy proposals that further these goals. The Center advocates for resources to support non-proliferation objectives and for measures to reduce the bureaucratic and political obstacles that sometimes inhibit national and international efforts to reduce the WMD threat. It fosters bipartisan dialogue on arms control issues and the future of the United States’ own nuclear weapons. It also promotes the U.S. government’s engagement with foreign officials and governments on securing their cooperation for protecting WMD materials.

In partnership with the Arms Control Association, The Lugar Center is conducting the Bipartisan Nuclear and WMD Policy Dialogue Project to overcome the slowing momentum in improving security of nuclear materials and weapons. TLC and the Arms Control Association are producing a series of roundtables on nonproliferation and arms control issues for Congressional staff to stimulate bipartisan dialogue on reinvigorating Congressional leadership on these issues. Learn more about this partnership here.

Events & Speeches

The Last Nuclear Security Summit: What it is, What to Expect, and What’s Next
March 15, 2016

Reducing the North Korean Nuclear Threat
January 27, 2016

Pakistan and the Nuclear Dilemma in South Asia
November 19, 2015

Options for Strengthening Nonproliferation After the Iran Nuclear Deal
October 19, 2015

The P5+1 and Iran Nuclear Deal: Implementation of IAEA Monitoring and Sanctions Relief
July 16, 2015

U.S. Policy Regarding Section 123 Agreements
May 28, 2015

The Role of Nuclear Weapons in the U.S.-Russia Relationship
April 21, 2015

The U.S. Nuclear Weapons Budget: Fiscal Year 2016 and Beyond
February 10, 2015

The P5+1 and Iran Nuclear Negotiation: Status, Prospects, and Congress’ Role
January 21, 2015
Arms Control Policy Dinner  
September 29, 2014

U.S. Missile Defenses: Plans for the West Coast, East Coast, and Europe  
June 3, 2014

Final Phase Negotiations with Iran: What Makes a Comprehensive Deal?  
April 4, 2014

US Nuclear Weapons Spending  
February 18, 2014

European Perspectives on the Nuclear Deal with Iran  
January 23, 2014

The First Phase Nuclear Deal with Iran and Next Steps  
December 9, 2013

Eliminating Syria’s Chemical Weapons  
November 19, 2013