



Policy Brief

Nuclear Non-proliferation at the G8

June 11, 2010

G8 Research Group

At the Muskoka Summit on June 25-26, 2010, the G8 will build on the Global Partnership against Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, created the last time Canada hosted a summit in 2002. The G8 will also build on the more recent nuclear security summit hosted by U.S. president Barack Obama in April 2010. G8 leaders will commit to reduce, disarm and prevent the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. They will follow-up on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) conference held in May.

Past G8 performance on arms control and nuclear non-proliferation has been successful since leaders first began discussing the issue in 1977. At the 2002 Kananaskis Summit, the G8 committed US\$20 billion to the Global Partnership. Members have largely complied with this pledge and have expanded the partnership in both region and scope since then. At the 2009 L'Aquila Summit, the G8 committed to "reduce the proliferation risks associated with the spread of enrichment and reprocessing facilities, equipment and technology." They welcomed the progress of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) on "mechanisms to strengthen controls on transfers of such enrichment and reprocessing times and technology." Pending a consensus among the members of the NSG, the G8 leaders agreed to implement their "clean" recommendations by 2010.

In January, Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper noted that "the spread of nuclear weapons to new actors allows the world no relief from anxiety." In March, he urged "a heightened focus, and stronger coordinated action, including sanctions if necessary, on the Iranian regime." In April he identified that it would be up to the G8 to deliver the "key outcomes of [the] Nuclear Security Summit."

In April, Canada announced it would contribute C\$5 million to the U.S. Department of Energy's projects to convert, in partnership with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a nuclear reactor in Mexico to use low-enriched uranium fuel, which has no nuclear weapons applicability. Since 2002 Canada has contributed C\$640 million to address the proliferation of weapons and materials of mass destruction and related challenges, of which \$330 million relates specifically to nuclear security.

On June 9, Canada, along with other G8 countries, welcomed the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1929, which imposes additional sanctions on Iran for its nuclear program. Harper declared that Canada would use its G8 presidency to maintain international focus on Iran, pushing the G8 to stand ready to support additional sanctions if Iran continues to refuse to comply with its international obligations. Canada will also urge North Korea to return to the Six Party Talks.

At the Muskoka Summit, the G8 leaders will focus on the threats associated with nuclear terrorism. They will enhance the physical protection of nuclear materials and facilities. They will work to secure all vulnerable nuclear materials worldwide. The G8 will encourage all states to cooperate fully with the IAEA and the International Energy Agency to ensure safe use of nuclear energy.

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