

N A T O ———— O T A N

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NATO STATEMENT ON NPT ACCESSION

Allies are firmly committed to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The NPT is an essential element of our non-proliferation policy, and of international security.

The strengthening of this Treaty by the accession of all new States of the former Soviet Union and the furtherance of all possible efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction are matters of highest importance for the Alliance and for global security.

When Allies recognized and established relations with the new States of the former Soviet Union, an important expectation at the time was that they would accede to the NPT as non-nuclear weapon States. Lack of progress to date is a cause of concern.

For its part, we look to Russia to fulfil the role of the former Soviet Union as a depositary and nuclear weapon State under the NPT. Allies further consider it essential that all new States of the former Soviet Union uphold their commitments made in the Alma Ata and Minsk accords. These arrangements are totally consistent with the accession of the other new States to the NPT as non-nuclear weapon States.

Neither the mere physical presence of nuclear weapons in these States nor the locus of past Soviet nuclear testing activities constitute grounds for regarding these States as nuclear weapons States under the Treaty. Moreover, in the present circumstances the rapid withdrawal and destruction of systems from those States is an internationally agreed goal. Nevertheless, Allies recognize the importance of the requirement for transparency regarding the disposal of these systems as called for in the Alma Ata and Minsk accords.

Allies fully expect that Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan will accede to the NPT as non-nuclear weapon States and initiate relevant discussions with the IAEA. This will facilitate their further integration into the international community and will promote the security interests of all concerned States.