



## **MATCHING POLICY WITH OUR SECURITY NEEDS** **Advocating for a Sensible Nuclear Weapons Policy**

**A Message Builder from the U.S. in the World Initiative**

*Prepared for the Peace and Security Initiative*

***This Message Builder is a resource for advocates of stronger, more coherent U.S. policies to deemphasize the role of nuclear weapons. It is a follow-on to the 2008 Peace and Security Legislative Strategy Retreat (PSLSR) and is based on recent public opinion research and consultations with the planning committee of the PSLSR and senior Capitol Hill staff.***

***It differs from previous USITW guidance due to its specific intent: To facilitate the preparation of messaging points for direct communication with Members of Congress and their staff. The recommendations in this guide, for example, use some words and phrases that would be considered jargon if the audience was the general public; this guide also urges a stronger focus on national interest than might be appropriate in talking with mainstream Americans, who are more likely to want a synthesis of interests and values. Additionally, this guide draws heavily on suggestions from senior Hill Staff about the messages that – in their experience and informed opinion – would be most likely to resonate with Members of Congress in this political season. The Hill Staff’s suggestions did not always coincide with the instincts and habits of peace and security advocates. Of particular note was the Staff’s strong recommendation that advocates not ask politicians to support abolishing nuclear weapons; instead, Staff recommended talking about deemphasizing the role of nuclear weapons and walking (not running) down a path toward a nuclear weapons free world.***

***The ideas and suggestions within are meant to be tailored to advocates’ own voices and needs. At the same time, the common messaging framework provided here should help diverse advocates communicate in consistent, mutually reinforcing ways, even if they disagree on policy details. It draws heavily on the Center for Nonprofit Strategies’ “Reframing Engagement: Interviews with Congressional Staffers - Summary of Results” commissioned by Citizens for Global Solutions<sup>1</sup> and it incorporates recommendations from USITW’s basic communicator’s guide U.S. in the World: Talking Global Issues With Americans<sup>2</sup> ([www.usintheworld.org](http://www.usintheworld.org)), and from other communications resources developed by or in partnership with USITW<sup>3</sup>. This Message Builder is a working draft, subject to further discussion, testing, and revision.***

***This Message Builder consists of the following sections:***

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<sup>1</sup> Center for Nonprofit Strategies, *Reframing Engagement: Interviews with Congressional Staffers*, commissioned by Citizens for Global Solutions.

<sup>2</sup> This message builder is meant to be a complement to, not a substitute for, the detailed guidance for talking about security issues provided in the *U.S. in the World* guide, developed through consultations with hundreds of experts and advocates over a two-year period. We urge you to consult the [Top 20 recommendations](#) and especially the sections on “America’s Role in the World” ([http://www.gii-exchange.org/guide/americas\\_role/](http://www.gii-exchange.org/guide/americas_role/)), “International Cooperation” ([http://www.gii-exchange.org/guide/international\\_cooperation/](http://www.gii-exchange.org/guide/international_cooperation/)) and “Terrorism, Weapons, and Force” (<http://www.gii-exchange.org/guide/terrorism/>).



- Cognitive scientific research tells us that people look for meaning at a conceptual level before they take in details. And when diverse messengers unite around shared themes and messages, the results can be powerful and mobilizing for a broader array of citizens. **Consider introducing or linking your specific points with big themes and ideas that are part of a shared, overarching story** (see The Big Story section below).
- **Help Members of Congress understand alternatives** to the policy approaches you criticize. It is easier to persuade people if you give them reason for hope and show that something can be done.

• **Understand and utilize the political system to underscore messages.** Many Americans are sick of partisan politics and “politics as usual.” You can -- on this issue -- point to the many overlaps that exist between the Presidential candidates’ proposed plans<sup>3</sup> (i.e. “Both parties agree...”, “The future is heading in this direction...”).

- **Focus on national interests while still linking your ideas and policies to the reality of an interconnected world** -- a world in which isolationism is unrealistic, teamwork is more a requirement than an option, and tackling complex problems, including national security and nuclear proliferation, with comprehensive solutions is a necessity -- while underscoring how your policy proposals also help the U.S..

• Emphasize that **nuclear weapons do not make us safe**; link your arguments to the dangers that nuclear weapons present and stress that without nukes, the U.S. would still be the most powerful country in the world given our conventional weapons system.

- Remember that most of Congress, and most of the country, view the U.S. as an exceptional country, which comes with responsibility. Make the point that your **policy proposals will make us safer and preserve our exceptional global power and influence, while also fulfilling our responsibilities.** Becoming a global leader in deemphasizing the role of nuclear weapons will help secure our status in the world -- not lead to a downgrade.

- Recognize that many Members of Congress’ constituents are understandably anxious about today’s security threats. Encourage congressional allies who advocate downsizing our nuclear arsenal to respect their constituents’ fears but also to **appeal to citizen’s critical reasoning, put threats in context, and point to concrete steps that reduce risks.**

• **Focus on smart, practical, commonsense steps that we can take** (e.g., making Russian nuclear facilities more secure) and tell clear success stories. Highlight the **many successes** of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons materials -- remind congressional allies to do the same.

<sup>3</sup> Commonalties between Barack Obama and John McCain on issues of nonproliferation include strengthening the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; seeking to reduce the size of the U.S. nuclear arsenal (while retaining a strong deterrent); pledging to review (McCain) and ratify (Obama) the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; increasing the efforts to secure all nuclear weapons and nuclear materials (Nunn-Lugar) (please see the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation’s *Obama vs. McCain: A Side-By-Side Comparison on Arms Control* analysis at ([http://www.armscontrolcenter.org/policy/nonproliferation/articles/mccain\\_obama\\_arms\\_control/](http://www.armscontrolcenter.org/policy/nonproliferation/articles/mccain_obama_arms_control/)).

- **Know your audience.** Certain messages work better for different audiences; do some basic research to find out what issues the Congressperson with whom you are speaking cares about and works on, what motivates him or her, etc. □ select your lead-in message accordingly (e.g. a budget argument might go further than a morality argument with some Members and a values-based argument might open the way for conversation with others).

## Don't



• **Don't talk about "getting to zero" or "abolition"**, which makes most people and Members of Congress uncomfortable. Instead, use terms and phrases like "reduce reliance on", "turn away from" and "deemphasize". Assure the public and Members of Congress that it's a very long road to a world without nuclear weapons but that the public and the rest of the world wants to *walk* (not run) down this road.

• **Don't overpromise.** This is about doing everything we can to reduce the chance that terrorists can get their hands on materials and weapons, not about eliminating the threat altogether.

• **Don't make this just about peace and not about security.** The government -- including Congress-- has a responsibility to protect U.S. citizens and also have elections to worry about. Tell them how your policy proposals are both practical and ideologically sound.

• **Don't talk about treaties as the ultimate goal.** Instead, talk about them as a means to an end - not an end in and of itself. Explain the links between benchmarks in treaties and creating a more stable, peaceful world. Remind Congressional allies to do the same.

• **Don't promise that this will get them votes** but do reassure Members of Congress that the majority of the public supports deemphasizing nuclear weapons and that these weapons are one of the public's top foreign policy concerns (see Background section below).

• **Avoid making the U.S. solely responsible** for the lack of progress on nonproliferation. Make it clear that you understand the need for other countries to step up and do their part.

## Keep in Mind



• On this set of issues, all roads lead to **Iran and North Korea**; be prepared to talk about them in the context of your overall argument (see Tough Questions section below).

• **If you are calling for U.S. leadership on an issue(s), be clear about the kind of leadership you are advocating and about how you want the U.S. to be as a leader** (e.g., the kind of leader that works through international institutions and agreements, the kind that encourages other countries to work together). Simply calling for "more leadership" could inadvertently trigger the mindset that "the U.S. is already doing so much already" and it is someone else's turn to take the lead.

• Calling for cuts in military spending risks alienating large segments of Congress and the public. If you believe priorities need to be changed, **try framing your recommendations in terms of smart choices within the defense budget** - about how we can more effectively organize our military to address real and current threats.

- If offering critiques, it may be helpful to base them on the **pace of progress to help listeners understand what specifically you believe can be improved** (e.g., "at current rates, it would take X amount of time to lock down all the poorly secured nuclear materials in foreign research reactors; whereas if we did X...").
- If you assert that the U.S. is not abiding by Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, you open up an argument that allows opponents to point to the ways in which we are, in fact, complying. (*This is a technical point, but one that the Hill Staff felt was important for advocates' credibility.*) Therefore, instead of starting with a critique of the ways in which the U.S. has failed to abide by its NPT obligations, start by making the point that whoever is elected in November will need to move quickly and boldly to demonstrate America's determination to restore its moral authority and global standing. One of the most important things we could do is to take steps that signal to the rest of the world that we are **serious about our agreements, our promises, and our commitment to nonproliferation.**
- Remember to **make the distinction between nuclear energy and nuclear nonproliferation.** Some Members of Congress might support one, but not the other. Do not assume that you will have agreement across the board.

### **Background: Public Opinion and Insights about Congress' Perspective**

*Polling data and focus group findings show us that the public is looking for a new approach to national security and foreign policy. Additionally, some research also shows that Congress and congressional staff share many of the same viewpoints as the public when it comes to national security and foreign policy, specifically:*

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|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Americans rank the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons as the second or third most important foreign policy priority.</li> </ul> |
|---|
- The public is paying more attention to - and feels more invested in - foreign policy than ever before; Members of Congress know that.
  - The public has lost its confidence that military might alone can help much with complex global problems. Instead, Americans are listening with interest to arguments about the need for a more strategic mixture of military and nonmilitary policies.
  - Most Americans are deeply concerned about the deterioration of the United States' global image, hungry to believe that the U.S. can restore its moral authority in the world; Congress too is aware and concerned that our reputation has deteriorated.
  - The public is committed to the idea that our foreign policy should reflect core values, and Congress agrees, but also thinks that our foreign policy needs to be about balancing priorities and concerns and about protecting the national interest - Members tend to believe that short-term needs or strategic goals must sometimes take precedence over basic values. Congress does believe that, overall, our foreign policy should be about creating a better, more peaceful and stable world that preserves the U.S. and what we stand for.
  - Support is higher than ever for policy approaches that involve working with other nations and international institutions; in fact, the public sees cooperation as vital to our national security. This includes extremely strong public support for U.S. participation in international agreements addressing the spread of nuclear weapons. Congress also

supports working with other countries, both because it helps our image in the world and because it simply is more effective than going it alone.

- The public is fiercely angry about the downturn in the U.S. economy and government responses to it, which leads people to want less wasteful spending and more focus on efficiency and effectiveness. Additionally, the public currently trusts progressives more than conservatives on a number of issues including the overall economy and tackling the federal budget deficit.

*These trends represent opportunities for advocacy on behalf of reviewing -- and changing -- U.S. nuclear weapons policy and international nonproliferation policy. But there are some challenging trends in public thinking as well.*

- While Americans embrace the general notion that a more stable and peaceful world is safer for everyone, including the U.S., they are far less certain about the steps and policies that are needed to create such a world. And while Congress may also embrace this general notion, there is disagreement on specific policies that will lead us there.
  - Public skepticism about government effectiveness and accountability is deep and growing. In general, the public is also increasingly reluctant to see the United States as the "preeminent leader" when it comes to solving global problems. These are relatively new trends, and we do not yet know what the effects will be on Capitol Hill - or on the debate about nuclear nonproliferation.
  - Because people may not know about efforts in other countries to reduce and/or eliminate nuclear weapons, the public may assume that the U.S. is "doing it all," and others are playing minor roles or not playing by the rules at all.
  - The main topic of news coverage and political debate concerning nuclear weapons is about Iran -- a country that is considered by many to be an enemy of the United States. The only other story getting media attention is North Korea -- another member of the "Axis of Evil". This may leave people fearful and uncertain that anything can be done (other than war) to prevent "rogue nations" from obtaining the knowledge and materials needed to develop nuclear weapons.
  - Additionally, because the news media talks about nuclear weapons only when a country is, or is believed to be, developing them, the public may believe that many more countries have nuclear weapons, or are trying to develop them, than is actually the case. They may also believe that the nonproliferation regime is a system out of control, with few success stories.
  - On Iran, specifically, the public increasingly wants the U.S. to have direct talks with the Iranian government, but is not confident that we can do anything to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.
- Finally, there is a deep lack of understanding and misunderstanding by the public about U.S. nuclear weapons and accompanying policies. Most Americans believe that the U.S. has signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; they are unfamiliar with the commitments that we have undertaken to reduce the number of nuclear weapons that we have; and they severely underestimate the number of nuclear weapons in the U.S. arsenal.

## **The Big Story**

As suggested under the “green light” above, cognitive scientific research shows that people rely on familiar ideas and stories that already exist in their minds to make sense of new information; our communications interact with these preexisting ideas or stories. Which of these ideas is activated by your communications and begins to guide your listeners’ thinking will therefore play a large role in determining whether your audience pays attention or tunes out, accepts or rejects your arguments, comes to a new understanding or finds that its preconceptions have been confirmed. When diverse advocates reference some of the same big ideas and themes, they reinforce one another’s messages – and bring new coherence to the cacophony of voices that policymakers often say they hear from the advocacy community.

Given the Do’s, Don’ts, and Keep-in-Minds and the trends in public opinion described above, what kind of broadly shared big story (i.e. telling your audience what you are about) will take people down a thought path that enables them to see the logic and feasibility of your policy approaches and lay the groundwork for effective advocacy?

USITW believes that a big story that contains some or all of the following elements is likely to help Members of Congress and Hill staff “hear” you. This big story also happens to describe an approach to global engagement that the American public would like to see.

### **De-emphasizing the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. defense policy is about:**

- **Developing *security* policies and approaches that reflect today’s security threats and the realities of an increasingly *interdependent world***, because nuclear weapons are bad weapons that make everyone on Earth less safe -- including Americans. Global cooperation to reduce the nuclear weapons risk is in our national interest and the world’s interests.
- **Being *smart, effective and accountable***, because we need to have smart defense spending that addresses our current needs.
- **Acting *in partnership with others***, because the U.S. isn’t alone in its concern about nuclear weapons proliferation; other countries can and must do their parts. No single country will be able to solve this problem alone -- and we don’t expect the U.S. to.
- **Putting our *principles into practice and giving tribute to our moral heritage***, because it’s the right thing to do and it’s pragmatic -- if we want others to follow our lead, we first need to lead by example.
- **Taking a *balanced, integrated approach to U.S. foreign policy***, because effective nonproliferation agreements and programs are linked to an array of important national objectives -- enhancing our security, affirming our values, fostering shared prosperity, and rebuilding America’s image abroad.

## **Building Your Message**

The “gateway” themes and arguments that are suggested below tell the kind of big story detailed above. They are designed to create openings that allow Members of Congress and Hill staff to hear the more detailed arguments and facts you present. These themes and arguments represent a scaffolding, not a script or a collection of slogans; nor are they designed to be presented in sequence. They can be the basis for a wide variety of communications efforts, in a wide variety of voices. But messages built around these themes and ideas are likely to resonate more broadly and are therefore more likely to help change the terms of the debate.

### ***Suggested Gateway Arguments:***

- ***Smart defense policy starts by addressing current and real threats. Nuclear weapons do not make us more secure.***
  - *According to conversations with Hill staff, the security argument should be the lead argument. Be sure to cast this argument in terms of making us safer -- and NOT in terms of “giving something up.”*
  - Emphasize what the U.S. is good at - we have the most powerful conventional weapons system in the world.
  - Point out that there is no plausible threat in years to come that requires us to maintain our current nuclear arsenal.
  - Stress the fact that not only do these weapons not address our current threats, but they take a lot of money to store and maintain -- money that could be used to modernize our armed forces to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century threats, should it become necessary to resort to force; to keep our men and women in uniform safe; and to maintain a level of military superiority that helps us to advance our interests, including our interests in creating a better, safer world (see If Talking about the Budget section below).
  - Talk about the crossroads in which we currently find ourselves: if nuclear weapons states do not begin turning away from their nuclear arsenals, several other countries may want to enter the nuclear weapons state ranks (in fact, some countries are already talking about developing them). With the spread of terrorism, coupled with an increase of nuclear weapons and weapons states, the prospect of a nuclear weapon being stolen also increases.
  - Discuss how nuclear weapons -- even in the hands of our friends and allies -- are dangerous. Use examples in the recent past of nuclear weapons being flown across the U.S. by our own Air Force as a way to illustrate that accidents happen and that the best way to prevent accidents is to reduce our reliance on the weapons themselves.
  - Remind your audience that the vast majority of the public sees nuclear weapons as a real danger and are supportive of reducing the number and role of nuclear weapons.
  - Reinforce the notion that there is broad support for reducing the number and role of nuclear weapons - from international allies (e.g., Great Britain) and former Presidents on both sides of the aisle (e.g., Carter, Reagan, H.W. Bush), to Secretaries of Defense and State and, finally, to their own colleagues.

➤ ***If we are to be effective in controlling the spread of nuclear weapons, it is important for the rest of the world to understand the United States' commitment to nuclear nonproliferation.***

- *According to conversations with Hill staff, the international agreements message should be framed in terms of inspiring others to live up to their treaty commitments by living up to ours, and enhancing our security and our standing in the world - not just in terms of U.S. failures to live up to agreements.*
- Emphasize that it is important for the rest of the world to see our commitment to international agreements as being serious. This is the only way that we will have credibility and leverage to strengthen the international nonproliferation regime and convince others to do their share in reducing the role of nuclear weapons in the world and helping with outliers (see Iran and North Korea Tough Questions below).
- Reinforce the fact that the U.S.'s recent cavalier attitude toward international agreements and cooperation has isolated us, undermined international goodwill, and hurt our national security. Taking leadership on this issue and strengthening the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty would be a positive and strong signal to the world and would help reverse all of these concerns.
- Remind your audience that following the rules set forth in international agreements benefits everyone including the U.S.
- See "Keep in Mind" section above re: talking about the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

➤ ***There is no justifiable use of nuclear weapons. As the most powerful country on Earth, the U.S. has a moral obligation to lead the world in reducing the number and the risk of these weapons.***

- *According to conversations with Hill Staff, this argument may work well with conservative and/or religious Members of Congress. Try making parallels with fighting HIV/AIDS, providing debt relief, etc. (i.e. the right thing to do).*
- Highlight the fact that as the country who led the world in shaping the cooperative security arrangements that have made the world a safer place for decades, our moral heritage calls on us to lead the world in addressing today's biggest threat -- the spread of nuclear weapons.
- Remind people that global teamwork to limit the spread of nuclear weapons only works if the country with the largest arsenal -- the United States -- does its part; without our commitment it is unlikely that progress can be made.
- Discuss the fact that history shows that U.S. global leadership has been most effective when we have led with the power of our example, not just with the example of our power.
- Remind Members of Congress that this is not something that we need to do alone; many of our allies -- including our most trusted friend, Great Britain -- have expressed strong support for moving toward decreasing, and even eliminating, nuclear weapons.

## Special Considerations:

### **If Talking about Global Leadership, Keep this in Mind:**

- *Congress tends to believe that our foreign policy should be about creating a better, more peaceful and stable world, in which we preserve the U.S. and what we stand for. In fact, Congress focuses more on our national interests, while the public seems to be looking for a synthesis of interests and values. We can remind Members of Congress that the public accepts that we may not get everything we want in the short term as we pursue the long-term benefits of a safer world, but we need to acknowledge that this attitude may not prevail in the face of fear - and we can't expect Congress to change its calculus overnight. You will still need to reinforce the notion of national interest on the Hill; we need to stress "what is in it for the U.S." without using language that reinforces the notion of an "us vs. them" mindset. And while Members may broadly share the same vision of what U.S. foreign policy should stand for, they disagree on the steps needed to create such a foreign policy; reinforce why the steps you suggest are on the right track in creating the vision that Members espouse.*
- *Remember most Members of Congress - and the public - believe that the U.S. is an exceptional nation, but there is disagreement in Congress on approaches to how this affects our foreign policy. Most, however, believe that responsibility comes with our unique role in the world. The public agrees and wants us to use our role to have a positive impact (this is directly tied to how we are viewed by others, see below). The public and Congress are interested in shared leadership, but neither want us to get rid of our sole superpower status.*
- *Americans - including Members of Congress - are deeply concerned about our declining image in the world and the erosion of our moral authority; reinforce why your policy proposal will help restore America's power and prestige and help get other countries to support us.*
- *Style of leadership is as important to the public - to Americans and to the global public - as substance of leadership. Congress understands that the world is watching and that we have a very big public relations problem. Talk about a style of leadership that focuses on problem-solving and gets beyond politics and partisanship (which is how Americans say they want the government to work, at home and abroad). Remind Congress that the leadership qualities Americans most value include honesty and the ability to communicate with others, the ability to take charge AND the willingness to cooperate.*

### **If Talking about International Cooperation, Keep this in Mind:**

- *Most Americans understand that international cooperation is fundamental to our security; they want the U.S. to be a team player. Congress also understands that cooperative solutions work better and they understand that cooperation looks better to the rest of the world. You can reinforce this understanding by promoting cooperation as a pragmatic, effective way to solve the kinds of problems we face - and by evoking whenever possible the shared nature of today's security threats, since common challenges are more readily seen to require collaborative solutions.*
- *Americans want to share the burden of leadership, though they also want to maintain leading power and influence (i.e., superpower status). These ideas may seem conflicting and at times are conflicting; basically, though, it seems that Americans are looking to play a major role in the world but not THE leading role (see If Talking about Leadership above). Reinforce the part that others are playing, and should play, as much as U.S. leadership.*

- *The trouble is that the public is uncertain about what this kind of shared leadership actually looks like; they may not be aware that effective, multilateral, nonmilitary strategies exist for addressing some critical global problems. Let Congressional allies know that we all need to tell the story of what we can accomplish through teamwork and use success stories from the past to illustrate your point. Talk about successes in which other countries played a leading role and U.S. support helped lead to a solution. Talk about using our influence - in partnership with other countries and international institutions - to advance the common good and to be a positive force in the world. Point to successful multilateral programs - like Nunn Lugar - as smart and effective examples.*
- *Congress understands the value of respecting other countries - listening, acknowledging different perspectives, and being willing to compromise. And, for the most part, Americans want to play by the same rules as every other country; they do not want special favors for the U.S. By overwhelming percentages Americans support participating in a range of treaties and they do not want the U.S. to claim an exception for our compliance.*

**If Talking about the Budget, Keep this in Mind:**

- *According to conversations with senior Hill staff, the budget argument should be saved for those Members that are fiscally conservative (i.e. Blue Dogs Democrats, moderate Republicans) and/or those on the appropriations committees.*
- *Frame arguments in terms of "reasonable financial cuts" and provide justification for each budget cut that you are proposing. Point out those weapons programs that are outdated and simply don't make sense.*
- *Advocates and congressional allies still need to be careful not to call for cuts in military spending without helping people understand the bigger picture of more effectively organizing our priorities and expenditures to address threats. Make your argument about the trade-off between spending money on a nuclear weapons system and spending money on other defense budget items (be specific) that keep our country and men and women in uniform safe.*
- *The public is very angry over the downturn of the U.S. economy and places the blame both on the Administration and the Congress and they want something done; frame your arguments in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. Make the case that maintaining out-dated weapons systems does not make sense from a financial or economic standpoint.*
- *Pairing the budget argument with the need for international cooperation can underscore both messages - if we work with others, and they do more, there will be positive returns on U.S. investments and the financial burden of the U.S. will decrease.*

## **Answering Tough Questions**

### **What about Iran and North Korea? Aren't they going to develop nuclear weapons no matter what the United States does?**

- The issue of Iran and North Korea can only be dealt with by working with other countries. Therefore, we need to do all that we can to show our allies that we are putting less emphasis on nuclear weapons; we must do what is needed so that the rest of the world believes in our commitment to nonproliferation in order to get the help we need to address Iran and North Korea.
- With moral authority and leadership we can once again develop the needed cooperative relationships and get other countries to do what we ask (i.e. halting shipments, asserting pressure and influence) to address these threats.
- If we continue to be perceived as a country of "do as I say and not as I do", we continue to allow other countries, like Iran, to make us an "easy villain" and gain domestic political popularity and success by ignoring the United States.

### **If we get rid of all of our nuclear weapons, won't that hurt our standing in the international community? Won't we lose our superpower status?**

- This is about making America safer and about being smarter about our defense by reducing our reliance on costly, outdated nuclear weapons that don't address today's security threats. This is not about eliminating nuclear weapons - it's about taking steps to ensure that our military remains the most modern, effective military in the world.
- We know that our standing in the world reflects not only our military strength, but also on our moral authority and the power of example. The United State's international image has been severely tarnished. Taking steps to address the most dangerous weapons on Earth is one way to restore the U.S. as a credible world leader.

### **Haven't nuclear weapons been an effective deterrent against another world war? If we got rid of them, wouldn't we be risking World War III?**

- Again, this is about making America safer and about being smarter about our defense by reducing our reliance on costly, outdated nuclear weapons that don't address today's security threats. This is not about eliminating nuclear weapons - it's about taking steps to ensure that our military remains the most modern, effective military in the world.
- We are talking about strategies to restrain the spread of nuclear weapons - which is a real problem; and we are talking about working with others to reduce the number of nuclear weapons that currently exist in order to help prevent accidents and the potential of a weapon or weapons material from getting in the hands of terrorists.

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## **Additional resources:**

- TALKING ABOUT SECURITY, Public Opinion Highlights and Implications for Communicators, *U.S. in the World Initiative*, contact [sue@usintheworld.org](mailto:sue@usintheworld.org)
- MAKING SENSE OF SECURITY, How are Americans Making Sense of Security? A Meta-Analysis of Public Opinion, *Commissioned by the U.S. in the World Initiative*, Author: Meg Bostrom, Public Knowledge LLC, contact [sue@usintheworld.org](mailto:sue@usintheworld.org)
- TEAM PLAYER, NOT LONE RANGER, A Meta-Analysis of Public Opinion, *Commissioned by the Stanley Foundation*, Author: Meg Bostrom, Public Knowledge LLC, contact [sue@usintheworld.org](mailto:sue@usintheworld.org)
- FACETS OF AMERICAN LEADERSHIP, A Meta-Analysis of Public Opinion, *Commissioned by the Stanley Foundation*, Author: Meg Bostrom, Public Knowledge LLC, contact [sue@usintheworld.org](mailto:sue@usintheworld.org)
- REFRAMING ENGAGEMENT: Interviews with Congressional Staffers, Summary of Results, *Commissioned by Citizens for Global Solutions*, Author: Center for Nonprofit Strategies, [http://www.freewebs.com/connect-us/in-depth\\_interview\\_report.pdf](http://www.freewebs.com/connect-us/in-depth_interview_report.pdf)



US in the World  
TALKING GLOBAL ISSUES WITH AMERICANS

The U.S. in the World Initiative, a project of D□mos: a Network for Ideas & Action, is a state-of-the-art resource for communicators, advocates, educators, experts, and anyone else who wants to talk with Americans about a cooperative, constructive and effective role for the U.S. in the world. Working with a range of partners and drawing on the latest public opinion and communications research, U.S. in the World develops messaging advice that helps communicators build mainstream public support for this vision of responsible global engagement and for policy approaches that reflect it. The initiative's first multi-issue communicators' guide, entitled *U.S. in the World: Talking Global Issues with Americans* ([www.usintheworld.org](http://www.usintheworld.org)), was published in late 2004, to wide and bipartisan acclaim. Since then, U.S. in the World has played an active role in helping advocates and experts meet the communications challenges of promoting responsible U.S. global engagement in a dynamic international and domestic policy context. D□mos is a non-partisan public policy research and advocacy organization.

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