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**Labs Seek “Stockpile Modernization” Through Test Ban Ratification
“Updating” of Treaty “Safeguards” to Protect Nuclear Weapons Budgets**

Santa Fe, NM – Nuclear Watch New Mexico (NWNM) has discovered Los Alamos National Laboratory viewgraphs showing that the U.S. nuclear weapons labs want to leverage “stockpile modernization” through formal Safeguards attached to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty during Senate ratification. This modernization would include “large changes” made to existing nuclear weapons refurbished during existing Life Extension Programs, and/or complete “replacement designs” as early as 2015. Congress has rejected funding a new-design “Reliable Replacement Warhead” (RRW) for the last two years, but the labs have clearly not given up. Moreover, there is a danger that the Obama Administration might concede to some form of RRW in order to win the Congressional supermajority of 67 needed to ratify the CTBT. Further, Obama has just reappointed a formerly strong proponent of RRW to again head up the Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration.

A decade ago, under President Clinton, the Senate rejected CTBT ratification. This last April, while declaring that a world free of nuclear weapons is a long term U.S. national security goal, President Obama pledged, “my Administration will immediately and aggressively pursue U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.” The Treaty’s declared purpose has always been to cut off the advancement of nuclear weapons. But the American labs, now endowed with supercomputer simulated testing, obviously believe that a ban to physical tests no longer blocks the deployment of new nuclear weapons designs. In contrast, they now even seek to enshrine the capability for major modifications and possible new-designs in CTBT Safeguards.

Ratification of the CTBT by the U.S. will be viewed internationally as a concrete sign of America’s commitment to fulfilling the 1970 NonProliferation Treaty’s mandate for nuclear disarmament. CTBT ratification before the May 2010 NPT Review Conference at the United Nations would be a diplomatic victory, if the Obama Administration can win the necessary Senate votes. Ironically, possible CTBT Safeguards enshrining new or heavily modified U.S. weapons designs could derail the strengthening of the global nonproliferation regime by demonstrating to other countries that the U.S. is not really serious about nuclear disarmament.

Nuclear Watch’s Director Jay Coghlan stated, “We strongly support the Test Ban Treaty and urge the Senate to ratify it at the earliest possible opportunity. At the same time, we urge both the Administration and the Senate to show commitment by example toward a

world free of nuclear weapons and not hypocritically use the CTBT as a means to preserve nuclear weapons.”

Selected viewgraphs and comments - For necessary reference, please see <http://www.nukewatch.org/importantdocs/resources/SafeguardingModernization.pdf>

Title page “Briefing Book for 2009 Weapons Science Capability Review,” held at Los Alamos March 25-27, 2009. A subsequent viewgraph shows that participants were from the Los Alamos and Livermore Labs, Science Applications International Corp and five American universities.

Viewgraph “We are already slipping out [sic] our PCF pegposts.” PCF is “Predictive Capabilities Framework,” which briefly put is simulated testing as a surrogate for physical nuclear weapons testing (e.g., see <http://www.sandia.gov/NNSA/ASC/univ/psaap/kusnezov.pdf>). A graph for "2007 PCF" starts with "Initial Operational Capabilities to Support Current Stockpile." However, a graph for "2009 PCF" concludes with "Develop and benchmark advances in certification methodologies for large LEP [Life Extension Program] changes or replacement designs" in the 2015 to 2020 timeframe. We believe this is a clear demonstration of the labs’ intent to push the extensively tested, reliable stockpile of today into a future stockpile of major changes or new replacement designs that can’t be tested without serious global proliferation consequences.

Viewgraph “As we look out into our strategic horizon we can see possible refurbishment, reuse or replacement scenarios for the stockpile.” Significantly this is explicitly for the “Nuclear Explosive Package,” which could include the all important plutonium pit.

Viewgraph "There are several ways to sustain capabilities... Get more money." Since 1994 the nuclear weapons complex has received approximately \$100 billion through the “Stockpile Stewardship Program,” whose claimed justification is to maintain stockpile safety and reliability in the absence of underground testing. However, full-scale testing has historically had little to do with stockpile maintenance, and everything to do with advancing nuclear weapons designs. Despite all that past largesse, the labs are apparently seeking to leverage yet more money through this pending second round of CTBT ratification.

Viewgraph “Updating CTBT safeguards is key to sustaining a credible nuclear stockpile” states that the primary risk from a *ratified* CTBT is that “attention to the nuclear deterrent will likely erode” (emphasis in the original). It also explicitly states that “Technically: there is little difference between a ratified CTBT, and the current testing moratorium.” Therefore, the real risk to the labs must be that a ratified CTBT will diminish their political and financial leverage. In response, as a “mitigation measure” the labs want to “strengthen the language of the safeguards.”

Viewgraph "Stockpile risk under a CTBT decreases with increased flexibility" includes: 1) “Refurbishment alone cannot meet DoD [Department of Defense] performances, safety and security standards...”; 2) "Replacement is essential for a viable modernized

stockpile with increased flexibility and diversity...”; and 3) “Options for the stockpile: Do Nothing ® Refurbishment ® Reuse ® Replacement” above “Decreasing Stockpile Risk.” This demonstrates a clear bias toward replacement designs. Moreover, a “modernized stockpile with increased flexibility and diversity” (does that mean more usable?) seems obviously contrary to President Obama’s national security goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Viewgraph: "CTBT safeguards require continuing national support to ensure the safety, security and reliability of the deterrent" includes "Product realization capability: notably absent in current safeguards." This may indicate that the labs want to enshrine controversial new nuclear weapons facilities into the CTBT safeguards, such as a new plutonium “Nuclear Facility” at the Los Alamos Lab and a “Uranium Processing Facility” at the Y-12 production plant in Tennessee.

Viewgraph: "National discourse surrounding CTBT has provided a focus on the safeguards afforded to the nuclear stockpile." Under “Additional Risks” is "Modernization could be interpreted as precluded under the CTBT” (emphasis in the original). At the May 2000 NPT Review Conference the U.S. committed to “thirteen practical steps” toward nuclear disarmament, including CTBT ratification. Within the context of the NPT’s global nonproliferation regime and President Obama’s declared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, we not only agree but strongly advocate that the CTBT should preclude “stockpile modernization.” After all, the Treaty’s fundamental purpose has always been to cut off the advancement of nuclear weapons.

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The entire “Briefing Book for 2009 Weapons Science Capability Review” is available at http://www.osti.gov/bridge/product.biblio.jsp?query_id=0&page=0&osti_id=957025 <http://www.osti.gov/bridge/product.biblio.jsp?query_id=0&page=0&osti_id=957025> (62 MB)

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