



United States Department of State

*Under Secretary of State  
for Arms Control and International  
Security*

*Washington, D.C. 20520*

September 10, 2004

Mr. John W. Wood  
Dr Evgeny Velikhov  
Directors  
NATO Workshop: Illicit Trafficking - Detection,  
Deterrence & Interdiction

Dear John and Evgeny:

Congratulations to the Trilateral Group and NATO for putting together this timely workshop to engage in an in-depth review of mechanisms to detect, deter, and intercept the trade in weapons of mass destruction.

The policy of the United States has been to make effective and robust use of our international and national legal authorities, regimes, and alliances, to address the major challenge to peace and security posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. UN Security Council Resolution 1540, initiated by President Bush and unanimously adopted by the Council, "calls upon all states to ... take cooperative action to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, their means of delivery, and related weapons." We are working on a variety of fronts to meet this challenge.

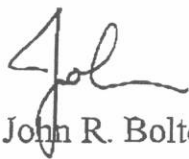
Our most prominent initiative is the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), which involves the high level political commitment of participant nations to take robust action to interdict suspect shipments. By working together to make maximum use of national assets and capabilities, consistent with national and international legal authorities, PSI participants are interdicting illicit shipments and denying traffickers and other facilitators the means to trade in nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, their means of delivery and related materials. Through the PSI, like-minded countries are training together on land, air and sea, working with industry, reviewing their respective legal authorities, and sharing information and lessons learned, so

that when timely information presents itself, nations have the capacity and the will to respond quickly and effectively.

Complementary to the PSI, at NATO we are working with our treaty partners to improve the ability of our NATO Alliance to address more actively the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction. While Operation Active Endeavor is directly targeted at interdicting maritime vessels carrying terrorists and items of support for terrorism, it presents opportunities for NATO to engage more aggressively to halt the traffic in weapons of mass destruction by terrorists in its area of operation. This concept has been under consideration at NATO, and we encourage NATO to continue to think creatively about how it might appropriately include WMD interdiction efforts as part of its mission. Similarly, we are encouraging regional leaders to work with their neighbors to develop such capabilities. For example, Japan is playing a leadership role in Asia and is inviting other ASEAN nations to participate in a maritime exercise it is hosting next month; Poland has been playing a leadership role with its neighbors in Europe; and Portugal has engaged with countries in Africa.

The threat posed by an unhindered trade in weapons of mass destruction is clear. For the first time the UN Security Council stated explicitly that such proliferation is a threat to international peace and security. How we respond to this threat will set the stage for the kind of world we will leave for future generations. I know it will be a successful and insightful three days. I look forward to hearing about the recommendations proposed by your distinguished participants.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Bolton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "B".

John R. Bolton