



Political Punch

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The No Nukes Dream

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President Obama today became the first U.S. president to ever chair a meeting of the UN Security Council.

The meeting topic -- nuclear non-proliferation – could not have been more important.

“Just one nuclear weapon exploded in a city, be it New York or Moscow, Tokyo or Beijing, London or Paris, could kill hundreds of thousands of people,” Obama said, to co-members France, Russia, China, and the U.K.

The Security Council voted unanimously for a resolution that calling for disarmament among existing nuclear powers, beefed up security for nuclear materials and punishments for nations that violate the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

George Shultz, President Reagan's Secretary of State, was on hand today, and his former boss's work on nuclear non-proliferation, acknowledged.

President Obama quoted Reagan from approximately a quarter century ago, saying, "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought."

“This was his dream, to find a world without nuclear weapons, so I can imagine right now, Ronald Reagan smiling,” Shultz said.

Many observers say a world without nuclear weapons is not realistic, but that working towards the goal is important in order to discourage other countries from obtaining the weapons.

“Many countries want to control this dangerous technology, prevent it from falling into the hands of terrorist, but many countries also still believe in the value of nuclear weapons as a deterrent,” said Christopher Preble, director of foreign policy studies for the CATO Institute.

But beyond the lofty language are major questions about the real impact of today's resolution -- Iran and North Korea are both believed to be pursuing nuclear weapons, and neither are signatories of the Nuclear Non Proliferation treaty.

Today the leaders of the US, France and England were all pushing for more sanctions on Iran. “We must now consider far tougher sanctions together,” said British Prime Minister Gordon Brown. China pushed back, saying sanctions were not the answer -- making future action by the UNSC

questionable.

Also unresolved - US allies that are nuclear powers that are also not signatories to the Treaty, such as India and Pakistan.

In fact, with some irony, President Obama headed from the UN to an event honoring a democratic Pakistan, where he heralded cooperation in fighting religious extremists.

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