

Nuclear Security Summit

This April 12 and 13, President Obama will host 44 heads of state in Washington, D.C. for a global nuclear security summit. Among the nations slated to attend are China, India, Pakistan, Israel and Russia. The event will draw together world leaders to address the problem of unsecured nuclear materials. This is the first time so many heads of state have gathered in Washington. It underscores the importance of addressing the greatest threat to global security: nuclear terrorism.



Last year in Prague, President Obama proposed an initiative to secure all loose nuclear material within four years. Today, there is enough weapons-usable nuclear material in the world – in states from Argentina to Vietnam – to build more than 100,000 nuclear bombs. Much of this material is unprotected, and securing it is essential to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear weapons.

Unfortunately, many nations have not committed the attention or resources to combating the threat of nuclear terrorism. This summit will draw attention to the issue and develop a plan of action to secure all these weapon-usable materials, prevent nuclear material smuggling, and deter, detect and disrupt attempts at nuclear terrorism.

The summit will be an opportunity to foster international cooperation and a forum for sharing best practices for curbing the dangers associated with nuclear materials. It is a crucial chance for all states to make progress on nonproliferation goals prior to the 2010 Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) review conference. If leaders follow through on commitments at the summit, the global effort could effectively prevent nuclear terrorism by stopping radicals from getting the one part of the bomb they cannot make themselves.

The two-day conference will end with a communiqué pledging the dedication of all participating nations to strengthening global nuclear security. A successful summit will pave the way for longer-term goals such as the creation of a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT), which would limit future production of the nuclear materials necessary to build nuclear weapons.

For further information on this summit and these issues, please see:

[The Fissile Material Working Group](#)

[Center of Non-Proliferation and Arms Control](#)

[United States Department of State](#)