

## NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

### Where do the 2008 presidential candidates stand on nuclear nonproliferation?

The Council on Foreign Relations provides us a resource for information and analysis regarding the stances of the various presidential candidates:

[http://www.cfr.org/publication/15279/candidates\\_and\\_nuclear\\_nonproliferation.html?breadcrumb=%2F](http://www.cfr.org/publication/15279/candidates_and_nuclear_nonproliferation.html?breadcrumb=%2F)

The Council makes the following observation: "The Democratic candidates have all pledged to decrease the U.S. nuclear arsenal and to push for ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Some Republican candidates have in the past voted against the CTBT. Republican contenders generally favor initiatives like increased spending on missile defense as well as maintaining a strong U.S. nuclear arsenal as a deterrent."

The following is a summary of where the leading Democratic and Republican presidential candidates stand on the issue of nuclear nonproliferation based on research by the Council on Foreign Relations.

#### POSITION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES

**Hillary Clinton's position:** Clinton says she will support "efforts to supplement the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty," and advocates the establishment of an international fuel bank guaranteeing "secure access to nuclear fuel at reasonable prices." She also says she opposes building a new generation of nuclear weapons."

**Barack Obama's position:** Obama says if elected he will make ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty a priority. Though he says the United States should "lead the international effort to deemphasize the role of nuclear weapons around the world," he has stopped short of opposing the building of a new Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW). Instead, he said he is against a "premature" decision to build an RRW.

**Mike Gravel's position:** Gravel was an outspoken critic of nuclear proliferation. He opposed nuclear testing under the seabed at Amchitka Island, Alaska, in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The testing, which many environmentalists claimed had a detrimental environmental effect, was eventually stopped, due in part to Gravel's campaigning.

#### POSITION OF THE REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES

**Mike Huckabee's position:** In a September 2007 speech, Huckabee expressed concern about the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran. He said that "faced with a nuclear Shiite Persian Iran, the Sunni Arab regimes to the west will feel the need to match them." Huckabee said he would "not take the military option for Iran off the table" as a means of prevention. But he emphasized using the tool of diplomacy in both containing Iran and seeking to engage in dialogue with its leaders to try to resolve the dispute over its nuclear program, which Iran says is peaceful. His views on other aspects of nuclear nonproliferation policy are unknown.

**John McCain' position:** Sen. McCain (R-AZ) would convene a "summit of the world's leading powers" to discuss nuclear nonproliferation and to revisit the notion that "non-nuclear-weapons states have a right to nuclear technology," he wrote in a November/December 2007 *Foreign Affairs* essay. Another agenda item at that summit would be the "automatic suspension of nuclear assistance to states that the agency [International Atomic Energy Agency] cannot guarantee are in full compliance with safeguard agreements." McCain also says the IAEA's annual budget should be "substantially increased so that the agency can meet its monitoring and safeguarding tasks." In 2005, McCain cosponsored the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Act. In 1999, McCain voted against the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

**Ron Paul's position:** Rep. Paul (R-TX) says the U.S. posture toward nuclear proliferation is hypocritical. "If countries do have a nuclear weapon, they tend to be left alone, or possibly get a subsidy, but if they do not gain such a weapon then we threaten them," Paul wrote in December 2007. His stance on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty is unknown.

**Mitt Romney's position:** Romney has often stressed the importance of preventing states like Iran and "jihadists" from obtaining nuclear weapons. Romney was asked about the prospect of using tactical nuclear weapons against Iran's nuclear facilities at a June 2007 Republican debate. He said "you don't take options off the table" but stressed the importance of an invigorated broader policy for engaging moderate Muslims to counter extremism in Muslim-majority states. Romney has said little on the issue of reducing the U.S. nuclear arsenal, and has not indicated whether he favors a nuclear test ban. He has said enforcement of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty is "often lacking." Romney says if elected he will appoint a senior "ambassador-at-large" to rally nations to prevent nuclear terrorism. Romney called the Bush administration's Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism "a good start," but in an April 2007 speech said it should be accelerated and expanded.