

Policy Forum 03-37A: Chairman's Statement: From Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) meeting in Brisbane on 9-10 July



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by Paul O'Sullivan

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I. Introduction

This statement by Paul O'Sullivan, the Chairman of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) at their meeting in Brisbane on 9-10 July

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II. Essay by Paul O'Sullivan

"Chairman's Statement: From the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) meeting in Brisbane on 9-10 July"

by Paul O'Sullivan

Chairman of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)

Introduction The participants in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) meeting in Brisbane on 9-10 July reiterated their strong political support for the initiative, and underscored that the PSI is a global initiative with global reach. They agreed to move quickly on direct, practical measures to impede the trafficking in weapons of mass destruction (WMD), missiles and related items.

This was the second meeting of the eleven PSI countries. The first meeting was in Madrid on 12 June. Participants are Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, the UK and the US.

The Madrid meeting was unanimous on the need to take active measures to stop the flow of WMD, missiles and related items to and from proliferators. This reflected the international alarm at the growing trade in WMD, missiles and related items, including the risk that these might fall into the hands of terrorists.

Under Australian chairmanship, the Brisbane meeting built on the results from the Madrid meeting and moved forward in translating the collective political commitment of PSI members into practical measures.

The Brisbane meeting focused on defining actions necessary to collectively or individually interdict shipments of WMD or missiles and related items at sea, in the air or on land. Participants emphasised their willingness to take robust and creative steps now to prevent trafficking in such items, while reiterating that actions taken would be consistent with existing domestic and international legal frameworks.

The Brisbane meeting made good progress in considering interdiction modalities, particularly in the information sharing and operational arenas. Participants emphasised that effective information sharing is vital to interdiction, and agreed to strengthen and improve capabilities for the exchange

of information and analysis between participants as a basis for cooperative action to impede WMD and missile trade. Participants acknowledged that although interdiction efforts have been under way for some time, there is a need to further develop and enhance the capabilities of PSI nations to conduct actual air, ground and maritime interdiction operations in partnership against WMD and delivery systems. To that end, they agreed in principle to the concept of a series of interdiction training exercises, utilising both military and civilian assets as appropriate, and that such exercises should take place as soon as practicable.

Participants agreed on the importance of building a broad and effective partnership of countries prepared to play a part in disrupting and stopping the trafficking in WMD, missiles and related items. They agreed effective implementation of the PSI will require the active involvement of countries around the world. As the PSI moves forward, they aim to involve all countries that have the will and ability to take action to address this menace. It also will be crucial to involve countries that are key flag, coastal or transit states, and others that are used by proliferators in their WMD and missile trafficking efforts.

Participants underlined that the spread of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery, and related materials and equipment is a serious threat to national, regional and global security. Participants expressed concern that WMD and missiles are increasingly being acquired by states of concern which reject international standards against the acquisition, use and proliferation of such weapons.

PSI participants considered the question of states and non-state actors of proliferation concern.

They referred to the relevant statements of the G-8 Evian summit on 1-3 June and the EU-US Joint Statement on the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction of 25 June which addressed countries of proliferation concern and non-state actors with particular reference to North Korea and Iran.

The Brisbane meeting strongly supported the strengthening of the existing framework of national laws and export controls, multilateral treaties and other tools which remain the international community's main means for preventing the spread of WMD and missiles. They emphasised that the increasingly aggressive and sophisticated efforts by proliferators to circumvent or thwart existing non-proliferation norms, and to profit from the trade of WMD and missiles or related items, requires new and stronger enforcement action by law-abiding nations. The PSI was therefore welcomed as a necessary and innovative approach to the problem of countries which cheat on their international obligations, refuse to join existing regimes or do not follow international norms, and for non-state actors seeking to acquire WMD.

Participants acknowledged that the PSI is a fast-track initiative that will require continued interaction among experts and policy makers in the days and weeks ahead, and agreed to a next high-level meeting in early September.

III. Nautilus Invites Your Responses

The Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network invites your responses to this essay. Please send responses to: napsnet-reply@nautilus.org . Responses will be considered for redistribution to the network only if they include the author's name, affiliation, and explicit consent.

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