INTERNATIONALLY MONITORED RETRIEVABLE STORAGE SYSTEMS

A step toward world peace in the nuclear age

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I. Introduction: For the past five years, we have been proposing at meetings and workshops an international approach to the peacetime management of spent fuel from nuclear power plants. At this meeting, we will discuss various versions of such an approach. They all share many objectives and issues. We will discuss in this paper some of this commonality.

II. Objectives: We need to clarify the several societal, political, and international end-purposes of spent fuel management, and to recognize the differing priorities among various public sectors and governments. The three encompassing concerns are people's physical security and their environment, national security, and economic energy supply. The following specific targets for spent fuel management have been emphasized in past workshops and professional meetings.

1. Public health protection from harmful radiation exposure levels.

2. Avoid weapons Pu extraction from the civilian fuel cycle.

3. Create public confidence that the above risks are avoided.

4. Provide an operational closure to the nuclear fuel cycle.

5. Minimize the environmental "footprint" of these activities.

6. Minimize social costs of the fuel cycle back-end.

These objectives are key both for managing spent fuel and for supporting the continued growth of nuclear power. Regardless of nuclear power's trends, the global spent fuel accumulation will grow in the coming decades, and may become a serious hazard if left to ad-hoc and quick "fixes" worldwide.