Panel: Nuclear Fuel Cycle: Debates on Multilateral Approaches (Grand Ballroom Ⅰ)
Date/Time: Tuesday, February 19, 2013 / 15:30-16:45
Talking Points for: William Tobey, Senior Fellow, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University

- Multilateral or unilateral, the arguments for a closed nuclear fuel cycle are not yet compelling:
    - Cost—MIT *Future of Nuclear Power Study* 2009, ". . . the cost of recycle is unfavorable compared to a once-through cycle, but, the cost differential is small relative to the total cost of nuclear power generation."
    - Waste management—FoNPS, "We do not believe a convincing case can be made on the basis of waste management considerations alone that the benefits of [reprocessing] will outweigh the attendant safety, environmental, [and] security considerations and economic costs."
    - Energy security—little evidence of a uranium shortage, with new discoveries and scaled-back plans for nuclear power plant use; producers of uranium are diverse, politically stable, committed to free trade.
    - NIMBY re storage—environmental and safety risks associated with reprocessing are at least as high—and likely higher—than medium-term dry cask storage, especially if new technologies   such as pyro-processing are involved.
    - Technological development—reprocessing is a technology cul de sac.

- Medium-term interim storage is a viable alternative:
    - Cost effective.
    - Flexible, allowing for implementation of better technologies.
    - Relatively safe, i.e. safer than alternatives.
    - In no other realm of public policy is a standard set that solving a problem for 100 years or so is insufficient.

- Multilateral approach is not a nonproliferation panacea.
    - Greatest nonproliferation disaster in history resulted from a multilateral program—A. Q. Khan at URENCO.
    - More significant driver is the disposition path chosen.

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