



Since its successful April 2010 [NGO summit and side events](#), the Fissile Materials Working Group (FMWG) has propelled itself as the “go to” group for policy expertise on the issue of global fissile material security. The FMWG grew from approximately twenty U.S.-based non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in 2009 to over forty U.S. and international NGOs working in collaboration on this important issue. The below is a summary of our work since our successful NGO summit in April 2010; for more information about that event and side-events, please click [here](#) or contact FMWG co-chair Alexandra Toma (atoma@connectusfund.org or +1-202-728-8686).

Media/Messaging Work

In partnership with ReThink Media and the Stanley Foundation, as well as input from FMWG experts, the FMWG was able to:

- Generate [91 media hits](#) for our members between April 1, 2010 and March 31, 2011.
- Draft and update Talking Points on the importance of fissile material security. These talking points are being used by FMWG experts when they talk with the media and public, and are being adopted by the media as well. For example, in March 2011, MSNBC’s Rachel Maddow featured a segment on radio ads placed by FMWG member Council for a Livable World; when talking about this issue, Maddow was “pitch perfect” and used many of the talking points our group has been utilizing with the media and public.
- Successfully distribute and place op-eds on a weekly basis from the beginning of our concerted “op-ed campaign,” beginning in February 2011 through the present. In March 2011 alone, we were able to place six op-eds on the fissile material issue in both national and local press outlets. Last year, FMWG members placed op-eds almost monthly and were [quoted](#) in a variety of articles on the issue.
- Draft press releases and expert “availabilities” around newsworthy events (e.g., Fukushima, budget battles on the Hill, one year anniversary of the Nuclear Security Summit).
- Maintain a [regular column](#) in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* that features articles written by FMWG members on fissile material security.

Meetings with Obama Administration Officials

The FMWG is a strictly non-governmental coalition and completely separate from the U.S. Government. However, the FMWG enjoys a positive relationship with the current administration, including officials at the Departments of State, Defense, and Energy, as well as the White House. We believe in transparency, so we share information about our activities and products with our U.S. Government colleagues. Because our non-governmental coalition and our governmental colleagues are working towards the same “four-year goal” of securing all vulnerable fissile materials, we believe collaboration – as appropriate – can benefit all involved.

NSS Commitments Questionnaire/Survey

In fall 2010, the FMWG sent a questionnaire/survey to the 47 NSS countries, asking them about their commitments at the 2010 NSS and progress towards or plans for fulfilling the commitments. The goal of conducting this survey is to track commitments and continue to shine a light on the NSS process and progress towards the goal of securing all vulnerable materials worldwide. As of March 30, 2011, we

received survey responses from nine (19%) of the NSS countries. FMWG members Arms Control Association and Partnership for Global Security produced a report on the status of commitments, “*The 2010 Nuclear Security Summit: A Status Update.*” It can be found [here](#).

Foreign Embassy Meetings

Embassy meetings have taken place with representatives from over 20% of the countries participating in the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit. The FMWG’s goal is to engage all 47 countries before the 2012 Seoul NSS in order to continue to make the case about the importance of fissile material security to global security and encourage governments to focus on fulfilling the commitments they made at the 2010 NSS. As an international civil society coalition, we are able to shine a light on both action and inaction of these NSS countries, including the United States. Additional goals for these meetings are to urge countries to fill out an FMWG questionnaire on NSS commitments and to invite embassy personnel to use the FMWG and its “go to” group of experts for resources on this issue.

International Partner Engagement

When it launched in April 2009, the FMWG comprised approximately 20 U.S.-based fissile material expert organizations; however, the groups always sought international partnership. As a build up to the 2010 NSS and the parallel NGO event organized by the FMWG, the group conducted concerted outreach to civil society expert groups worldwide. As a result of this outreach and the catalyzing event of the NSS, the FMWG has grown to include thirteen [international partner](#) organizations. The U.S.-based core of the FMWG strives to engage international partners on the fissile material security agenda by sharing information through inclusion by teleconference in the monthly group meetings, the FMWG listserv, and via the website. International partners are also called upon to play a role in regional events (e.g., Cairo event in October 2010, Vienna event in April 2011). Our FMWG international partners also add an invaluable international perspective to the nuclear terrorism/fissile material debate – an important voice especially when some perceive the effort as a “Western” one. Through the FMWG, our international partners are able to share their perspectives on the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* FMWG column. In fact, the upcoming columns include the following international partner contributions:

- Institute for Defense Studies, India (May);
- China Disarmament and Arms Control Association (June); and
- NPS Global, Argentina (July).

Congressional Education and Engagement

Even though the FMWG, as a coalition, is a strictly non-partisan, non-lobbying entity, we realize the importance of educating Members of Congress and their staff on the fissile material/nuclear security issue. From the beginning, the FMWG worked with Hill colleagues to offer additional issue expertise, through individual meetings with Hill staff and expert panel events.

This year has been a particularly important one for engagement with our Capitol Hill colleagues, particularly regarding the current debates in Congress over the budget. To this end and through information sharing, the FMWG conducted a series of educational and information-sharing meetings with Hill staffers working on the nonproliferation programs budget. FMWG members FCNL and the Center for Arms Control and Nonproliferation led these effort.

Another outreach and educational tool has been a series of [letters](#) from FMWG member groups to Members of Congress, administration officials, and the interested public on the importance of the nonproliferation programs to the four-year effort. Recognizing the national security importance of these

nonproliferation programs, the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic Forces sent a letter on March 23, 2011, to the Chairman of the House Budget Committee urging him to maintain NNSA funding for nonproliferation programs.

FMWG Events

After last year's successful NGO summit, the FMWG set out to continue to bring to the forefront nuclear material security on the global agenda. To this end, the FMWG is holding a series of regional meetings to strategically advance the policies necessary for effective global nuclear material security. At these meetings, we seek to highlight region-specific concerns, challenges, and perspectives as they relate to nuclear material security. The purpose is to draw continued attention to and build increased awareness of the commitments made by leaders attending the 2010 NSS. Through regional discussions, the FMWG continues to develop a network of NGO experts throughout the world who are engaged, educated, and advocating collaboratively for the four year goal. Finally, the series generally provides momentum for the FMWG and its members in the period before the next heads-of-state level meeting on the issue in South Korea in 2012. The FMWG is happy to partner with embassies in Washington DC to elevate critical yet neglected fissile materials issues.

Regional Meetings

Our [first](#) regional event took place on October 21, 2010, in Cairo, Egypt, as part of the larger event, "Prospects for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament: Beyond the 2010 NPT Review Conference and Nuclear Security Summit" co-organized by Partnership for Global Security (an FMWG member), the Arab Institute for Security Studies (an FMWG international partner), and the League of Arab States. This event highlighted regional and multilateral roles in the NSS process; included a nuclear terrorism threat briefing from the FMWG; presentations by the Jordanian Sherpa and the South Korean sous-Sherpa on the Nuclear Security Summits; a presentation by the FMWG on the outcomes of the 2010 summit and recommendations for the 2012 summit. The event allowed the 85-plus experts to exchange views and perspectives from the Middle East and African regions, as well as build relationships and explore potential collaborative opportunities for future projects.

Our second [regional event](#) coincided with the one-year anniversary of the Nuclear Security Summit, and took place on April 13, 2011, in Vienna, Austria. At this meeting, we engaged our European and FSU partners, as well as the IAEA and diplomatic corps in Vienna. During this conference, we explored progress on the NSS commitments, and challenges and opportunities for further improvements in nuclear material security in Seoul 2012. At all regional meetings, the FMWG brings together civil society, government representatives, and media to engage on this issue.

Ad Hoc Events

On March 11, 2011, the FMWG co-hosted a half-day, high-level [symposium](#) with the Embassy of Canada in Washington, DC. This event focused on the G8 Global Partnership and the NSS process, and featured speakers from the Russian, Korean, Norwegian, and French Embassies, the National Security Staff and State Department, and the FMWG. More than 100 experts, senior congressional staff, USG officials, embassy representatives, and others attended this symposium. The FMWG continues to be willing to partner with DC-based embassies to hold similar events.

Monthly FMWG Meetings

The FMWG coalition meets monthly to strategize about how to implement the group's work plan, which was adopted in September 2010. Meeting agendas also often include brainstorming on how to continue to raise the profile of fissile material security with relevant stakeholders.