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What Are Nuclear Weapons For?

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Through the decades of the Cold War the prospect of a nuclear holocaust was all too real. With the demise of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, that threat to civilization as we know it had receded. But today we face a grave new danger, the acquisition of nuclear weapons by hostile or unstable governments and terrorists. What can and should we be doing to meet this challenge and prevent the world's most dangerous weapons from falling into very dangerous hands? Are there any reasons for us to still retain thousands of nuclear warheads in our arsenals? What are they for? Can we rekindle the bold vision of a world free of nuclear weapons that President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev brought to their remarkable summit meeting at Reykjavik twenty years ago, and define practical steps toward achieving such a goal?