

April 13, 1995

Letter, Al Gore to Thabo Mbeki

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Summary:

The letter congratulates Mr Thabo and South Africa for pledging to the NPT agreements and offering suggestions during the revision process. Gore also says that he will be able to meet Foreign Minister Nzo in New York on 19th April.

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Washington, April 13, 1995

Dear Thabo:

I greatly appreciate your letter of April 10, 1995, and welcome its expression of your government's support in principle for the indefinite extension of the NPT. We certainly share your conviction that the NPT must not be placed in jeopardy and that the upcoming conference in New York must strengthen the Treaty, not weaken it.

In your letter, you raised the issue of strengthening the review process as provided by Article VIII of the Treaty. This strikes me as a matter that our delegations could probably discuss at the Conference. We certainly would be interested in hearing the specifics of your government's views on how best to strengthen these reviews. We, of course, will have some ideas of our own.

I understand that a number of other countries also share your concern about the review process; they will consider South Africa's views carefully in developing their own positions. Perhaps our delegations, working together, can foster a convergence of views that these other countries will find reassuring. One possibility is that the closing statement of the Conference could speak to this issue. We must ensure, however, that efforts to strengthen the review process do not unintentionally encumber the Treaty or in any way put it at risk, or cloud its duration.

I plan to be in New York on April 19 to address the Conference; I understand that Foreign Minister Nzo will also be there at that time. If you think it would be useful in advancing our dialogue, I would be happy to meet with him.

Just as you in South Africa have had the courage and leadership to craft a new nonracial democracy as a legacy for your children, I believe we all must ensure that we leave a strengthened NPT as a bulwark against nuclear proliferation as a legacy for all our children. For this reason, I welcome your willingness to work with us and other like-minded nations to convince members of the NAM, OAU and SADC that indefinite extension offers the best opportunity to fulfill the goals of the NPT.

Mr. Thabo Mbeki
Executive Deputy President
Republic of South Africa
Pretoria

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Once again, thank you very much for the hard work that went into your government's consideration of this important matter and for your agreement to support, in principle, indefinite extension of the treaty. I look forward to continuing our dialogue.

Warmest regards,

/s/

Al Gore