

## The Age of Diplomacy

George P. Shultz\*

### International Conference on Achieving the Vision of a World Free of Nuclear Weapons

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Mr. Foreign Minister, I extend to you and your government my congratulations and my thanks for convening this important conference. The subject – achieving a world free of nuclear weapons – is of transcendent importance. I and many others believe that, so far as the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their potential use is concerned, we are at a tipping point. The danger is all too real. The simple continuation of present practice with regard to nuclear weapons is leading in the wrong direction. We need to change the direction.

You have all read the two essays in the *Wall Street Journal* signed by me with William Perry, Henry Kissinger, and Sam Nunn, along with many others. I will not repeat here the arguments made in these essays, but I do want to underline a central argument made in them. We set out a vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and we examined in some detail the content of steps that need to be taken if we are to attain that goal. These points are interrelated. As we say, “Without the bold vision, the actions will not be perceived as fair or urgent. Without the actions, the vision will not be perceived as realistic or possible.”

My objective here is to advance the argument by setting out some guideposts that will help us attain our objectives. I have entitled this paper “The Age of Diplomacy” because these guideposts all involve an immense effort in diplomacy, using that term in the broadest sense.

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