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**STATEMENT BY THE
UNITED STATES NUCLEAR INFRASTRUCTURE COUNCIL**

JANUARY 29, 2010

NIC

**REGARDING TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF A
"BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION ON AMERICA'S NUCLEAR FUTURE"
TO PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS ON
MANAGING USED FUEL AND NUCLEAR WASTE**

The appointment of a Commission led by co-chairs with the stature, integrity and independence of Congressman Hamilton and General Scowcroft -- along with a balanced bipartisan mix of talent and expertise -- is encouraging.

We also welcome the Commission's linkage with America's nuclear future as embraced in its charter as well as continued recognition by the Obama Administration of nuclear energy as "clean, safe, reliable power" that plays a "vital role" ... as the world moves to tackle climate change and diversify our National energy portfolio..."

There is no question that tangible action on a consensus National strategy for the resolution of back-end nuclear fuel cycle management issues is paramount to new nuclear development, energy and national security, as well as economic competitiveness and environmental progress. Moreover, the Federal government clearly has a long standing statutory and contractual obligation to meet its obligations under the U.S. Nuclear Waste Policy Act in the face of mounting financial liabilities.

In general, we believe the way forward is best achieved by focusing on tangible steps and emphasis on creating more options for a sustainable fuel cycle, not less.

We look forward to constructive engagement with the Commission on a number of practical, commonsense approaches, including, but not limited to:

- Creation of a Federal authority with responsibility for implementing an integrated management program for the back-end of the nuclear fuel cycle in order to overcome funding and implementation issues that have impeded progress to date;

- Closing the fuel cycle by deploying available next-generation recycling into the current U.S. fuel cycle paradigm with reliance on proven technology and a commitment toward research, development and demonstration to further advance recycling technology;
- Central interim storage options;
- Consummation of a National repository, which is required under any fuel cycle scenario, including a full-review of the current Yucca Mountain option; and
- Addressing infrastructure readiness including transportation and other key building blocks inherent in any expanded strategy.

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Please note that -- while the above views represent the consensus of the Council -- they do not necessarily represent the specific views of every individual member.

The United States Nuclear Infrastructure Council (NIC) has emerged as a leading national think-tank advocate for constructive outreach, public policy consensus and business issues especially relevant to new nuclear-build including infrastructure necessary for the next fleet of plants, building the industry base, regulatory and financial surety; and sustainable fuel cycle strategies as well as education, transportation and non-proliferation initiatives. NIC is a successor organization to the US Transport Council.