

REMARKS BY GEORGIA TECH PRESIDENT G. WAYNE CLOUGH
Sam Nunn Policy Forum, March 23, 2004

Thank you, Bill. It is a great pleasure to welcome all of you to Georgia Tech, to the Georgia Tech Hotel and Conference Center, and to the Sam Nunn Policy Forum, which is co-sponsored by Bank of America.

Georgia Tech has a long tradition of developing technology to serve our nation's defense and national security needs. And more recently, we are proud to be on the forefront of developing the technology needed to improve homeland security in the face of terrorist threats. In fact, our efforts to develop first-responder technology and to train Atlanta's first responders in its use were already underway before the September 11 attacks, and attracted a visit from President Bush to campus soon afterward.

We are also convinced that scientists and engineers can make important contributions in the public policy arena, offering unbiased advice on the uses and abuses to which technology can be put, as well as innovative solutions to the problems we face. So we are engaged in educating scholars and engineers to serve as independent international security policy advisors through the Sam Nunn Security Fellows Program, which is supported by a \$1.3 million grant from the Mac Arthur Foundation.

In addition, we encourage and engage in policy debate and discussion through a variety of avenues, a very important one of which is the Sam Nunn/Bank of America Policy Forum. Over the years since the Forum began in 1997, we have considered a wide range of policy issues, from American leadership in a global economy to the challenges and opportunities of a much more open Russian scientific community. This year's very timely topic focuses on bioterrorism preparedness in an effort to assess our strengths and weaknesses and think about how to develop the public-private partnership that is essential to our security.

Terrorism is as old as history, but for much of history it was used as a tool to achieve a purpose, such as approval or power. Today, however, those who feel marginalized in our global, technology-based economy are increasingly using terrorism as an end in itself, with no goal beyond wreaking death and destruction. So far, they have used guns, bombs, and, on September 11th, airplanes – all with dramatic results. But the impact of these acts is small compared to the devastation that could be caused by bioterrorism.

We have already gotten hints of the incredible power that bioterrorism could unleash from our experiences with the West Nile virus and SARS diseases, and from episodes with anthrax and more recently ricin. The potential for widespread illness and death is alarming.

At the same time, scientists at universities across the nation face another set of concerns as they work to improve our ability to address bioterrorism. Last year, a biologist at Texas Tech who had reported that 30 vials of plague bacteria had gone missing from his laboratory was arrested and charged with 69 counts of theft, fraud, and illegally mailing samples of plague virus overseas. He

was acquitted on the most serious charges, but the case raised fears in the scientific community that researchers might be deterred from working with sensitive biological materials, handicapping our ability to prevent and respond to bioterrorism.

There are many questions that need answers, and many sensitivities that need thoughtful attention if we are to prepare ourselves adequately for a potential bioterror attack. And these questions and concerns will be on the table today at the Sam Nunn/Bank America Policy Forum. There is also a great need for cooperation and collaboration, and the issue of how to develop the necessary partnerships will be on the table as well.

So, we are pleased that you are here to participate in this important and timely discussion. We welcome your interest and participation, and we look forward to a productive and thought-provoking day.

The chairman of the 2004 Sam Nunn/Bank of America Forum is none other than Senator Nunn himself, and I know he needs no introduction to this group. His expertise on issues of defense and national security, and specifically bioterrorism, is widely recognized.

He became a respected national leader on issues of defense and national security during his days as chair of the Armed Services Committee in the United States Senate. Since retiring from the Senate and forming the Nuclear Threat Initiative with Ted Turner, he has emerged as a leading international voice of reason, caution, and expertise in the deterrence of weapons and terrorism. And for the past three years he has been a nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize.

At this time, it is my great pleasure to present Senator Sam Nunn...