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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency
27 January 2010

Russia, U.S. To Resume Start Talks February 1 - State Department

Russia and the United States will continue discussions on a new strategic arms cuts treaty on February 1, the U.S. State Department said Tuesday.

"The negotiations on START will resume on Monday in Geneva. And negotiating teams for both the U.S. and the Russian side will convene and hopefully will arrive at a quality agreement that meets the needs and interests of both sides," Assistant Secretary of State Philip Crowley told a press briefing.

Disagreements over verification and control procedures have prevented Moscow and Washington from signing a new deal to replace the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START 1), which expired on December 5.

President Dmitry Medvedev said Sunday the new arms cuts pact with the United States was "95% coordinated."

The new treaty's outline, as agreed by the Russian and U.S. presidents, includes cutting nuclear arsenals to 1,500-1,675 operational warheads and delivery vehicles to 500-1,000.

WASHINGTON, January 27 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20100127/157690600.html>

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Xinhua News - China
January 27, 2010

Obama Calls Medvedev On START, Talks Nearly Complete

WASHINGTON, Jan. 27 (Xinhua) -- U.S. President Barack Obama called his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev on Wednesday. The two presidents agreed the negotiations on a successor treaty for the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) are nearly complete, the White House said.

The White House made the announcement in a brief statement, saying Obama called Medvedev to thank him for his hard work and leadership on the negotiations, as the two sides have made steady progress in recent weeks.

The presidents agreed that negotiations are nearly complete, and pledged to continue the constructive contacts that have advanced U.S.-Russian relations over the last year.

The United States and Russia are to resume talks on the successor treaty for the START next Monday in Geneva. State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said the talks "hopefully will arrive at a quality agreement that meets the needs and interests of both sides."

Medvedev said Sunday that "95 percent" of the new treaty was agreed upon by Russia and the United States.

The United States and Russia have been working on a successor to the START that expired on Dec. 5, 2009. However, differences over verification and control arrangements prevented the two sides from producing such a document last year.

U.S. National Security Advisor James Jones and Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited Moscow last week to meet with Russian officials. Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Igor Lyakin-Frolov said earlier Wednesday the visit was successful, and it could take just a few weeks to work out a final document.

The START, signed in 1991 between the former Soviet Union and the United States, obliged both sides to reduce the number of their nuclear warheads to 6,000 and delivery vehicles to 1,600.

Medvedev and Obama agreed last July to slash each country's nuclear warheads to 1,500 and 1,675 and delivery vehicles to 500 and 1,000 respectively under a new START treaty.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-01/28/c_13153577.htm

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Reuters UK
January 27, 2010

Russia Says U.S. Arms Treaty Could Be Ready In Weeks

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russian and U.S. negotiators are likely to agree on a landmark nuclear arms reduction treaty within weeks, a Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Wednesday.

Productive meetings between top U.S. officials and their Russian counterparts in Moscow last week have brought the sides close to agreement on a successor to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I), Igor Lyakin-Frolov said.

"The talks were successful, and as a result we can hope that it will take just a few weeks for negotiators to come up with a document," Lyakin-Frolov told Reuters.

Forging a new pact is a key element of U.S. President Barack Obama's efforts to mend ties between Russia and the United States, which plunged to post-Cold War lows after Russia's war with pro-Western Georgia in August 2008.

The United States and Russia also hope it will boost efforts to curb global nuclear arms proliferation by sending a message that the countries possessing all but 5 percent of the world's arsenals are making cuts.

After failing to put a new treaty in place before START I expired last month, both sides have expressed hope for a signing before a non-proliferation conference starts in late April.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said Sunday that the treaty was "95 percent" agreed. U.S. officials have also expressed confidence a treaty could be ready in weeks.

U.S. national security adviser James Jones and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Admiral Mike Mullen held talks in Moscow last week. Full negotiations are to resume in Geneva Monday.

Last July, Obama and Medvedev agreed the new treaty should cut the number of nuclear warheads on each side to between 1,500 and 1,675.

Officials have said the sides were still negotiating over verification measures, which Russia wants to be much less strict than under START.

Lyakin-Frolov indicated that one issue still being discussed was telemetry -- the remote monitoring of missiles in launch and flight.

On the divisive issue of missile defence, Lyakin-Frolov said the United States must take Russia's interests into account in the negotiations but suggested the pact might not address the issue in detail.

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said last month that the United States should give Russia telemetry on anti-missile systems if it wants data on Russian offensive missiles, a potential deal-breaker because the U.S. Senate is unlikely to ratify a pact encompassing missile defence.

Medvedev said Sunday that Russia would raise the missile defence issue when talks resume.

(Reporting by Steve Gutterman; editing by Elizabeth Fullerton)

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKTRE60Q2FF20100127?sp=true>

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Prague Post –Czech Republic
January 27, 2010

Poland Will Deploy U.S. Missiles

Czechs say they are overlooked in U.S. foreign policy plans

By Benjamin Cunningham - Staff Writer

Amid ongoing criticism from Central European officials that the United States overlooks the region in its foreign policy, the Polish Defense Ministry confirmed Jan. 21 that it will deploy U.S. surface-to-air missiles just 60 kilometers from the Russian border.

After the Obama administration scrapped the Bush administration's missile-defense plans - which called for missiles in Poland and a radar base in the Czech Republic - charges of neglect grew louder, but the latest move, along with a series of diplomatic maneuvers, sheds light on a U.S. policy clearly focused on Poland, Central Europe's largest country, which shares a border with the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad.

Polish Defense Minister Bogdan Klich said a still undisclosed number of Patriot missiles will be deployed at a military base near the northern town of Morag by April. The location of the missiles came as a surprise as they were earlier slated for deployment closer to the capital, Warsaw. Klich denies the missiles were moved to Morag for strategic reasons, though U.S. troops to be stationed with the missiles could stoke tensions with Russia.

"The placement of the missiles is a surprise, but I would also argue that this is quite normal," says Petr Kratochvíl, a Russia expert with the Prague Institute for International Relations. "This is a direct reaction to Russian steps."

Kratochvíl pointed to Russian military exercises in November 2009 near the Baltic state borders and talk of deploying offensive Iskander missiles in Kaliningrad as motivating factors for moving the Patriot missiles.

The Obama administration promised missiles to Poland in October 2009 after it stepped back from the Bush administration's more ambitious missile-defense plan. The Czech Republic, which was also affected by the policy shift, has been promised increased cooperation in scientific and technical research, including a U.S. Navy facility. But, as the seat of U.S. ambassador to the Czech Republic has gone unfilled for more than a year, Kratochvíl says there is a clear sign that U.S. priorities have shifted elsewhere on the globe and that Poland is now considered a more reliable regional partner.

"The absence of an ambassador here is not an accident, but a sign the special relationship with the region from the Bush administration no longer holds," he said.

In Poland, Lee Feinstein was appointed ambassador in July 2009 and confirmed by the U.S. Senate in September. An international lawyer and former adviser to Newt Gingrich and George Mitchell, Feinstein was a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

On Jan. 20, Virginia-based publisher and Democratic Party fundraiser Theodore Sedgwick was appointed ambassador to Slovakia. The position had been vacant for a year. Sedgwick donated \$28,000 to Democratic candidates in 2008 and raised more than \$200,000 for the Obama campaign.

Billionaire cable TV magnate Marc Nathanson, a former ally of U.S. President Bill Clinton and a Democratic Party fundraiser, was rumored to be up for the ambassador's post in Prague, but his name has since faded, reportedly because of business conflicts of interest.

A spokesperson for the U.S. Embassy in Prague said they have no news on the appointment of a new ambassador.

"The absence of a U.S. ambassador to the Czech Republic is of course an internal matter for the United States," said Jan Vidím, a Civic Democratic Party (ODS) deputy and chairman of the Chamber of Deputy's Defense Committee. "But it cannot be viewed differently than the Obama administration's general policy. The Czech Republic is not a priority."

More consistent pro-U.S. attitudes across the Polish political spectrum make it an attractive ally for the Americans, Kratochvíl said.

"In the Czech Republic, the right-wing is close to the U.S., but the left, which is likely to win the next elections, is quite pro-Russian," he continued. "In Poland, both the left and the right are critical of Russia and place a priority on trans-Atlantic ties."

Russia and the United States are still negotiating a successor agreement to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which expired in December 2009. Near the close of 2009, rumors circulated that the two sides were close to clinching a deal and that the eventual agreement would be signed by U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Prague, the site of Obama's March 2009 speech urging a world free of nuclear weapons.

- Petr Cibulka Jr. contributed to this report.

<http://www.praguepost.com/news/3421-poland-will-deploy-u-s-missiles.html>

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Khaleej Times – U.A.E.
27 January 2010

Russia Warns ‘Will Not Wait Forever’ On Iran

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

LONDON - Iran cannot keep the world waiting forever in the standoff over its nuclear programme, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov warned on Wednesday after talks with his US counterpart Hillary Clinton.

Lavrov's comments are the latest sign of apparent growing Russian frustration over Iran's failure to agree a UN-brokered nuclear fuel exchange deal aimed at breaking the nuclear standoff.

"It is clear that it is not possible to wait forever," Lavrov said after the talks in London, where both he and Clinton are to attend an international conference on Afghanistan on Thursday.

"We are disappointed that Iran has not reacted constructively to the proposals" offered by world powers, he said in remarks broadcast on Russian state television.

A US official hailed the talks as "very constructive and collaborative."

The two ministers had an "open discussion of how to advance productively down the pressure track, including appropriate action within the UN," the official said.

The United States, Russia, Germany, China, France and Britain have been negotiating with Tehran over its nuclear programme amid concerns that it is secretly developing fissile material for nuclear weapons — which Iran denies.

Under the UN plan, Iran would hand over most of its stocks of low-enriched uranium in return for the supply by France and Russia of nuclear fuel enriched to the higher level required for a Tehran research reactor.

Russia, a veto-wielding permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, is one of the few major powers to have close relations with Iran.

The United States has over the last months actively looked for explicit backing from Moscow for tougher sanctions against Tehran should the Islamic Republic continue with its defiance.

An official with Clinton said earlier that Washington was "working on the possible elements of a (UN) Security Council resolution and to take stock of existing Security Council resolutions and what additional actions can be taken to implement those."

Russia has traditionally been wary of further Security Council sanctions against Iran, but Lavrov indicated moves for additional measures were already afoot in New York.

"Our partners are already talking about the necessity of discussing additional steps at the Security Council so that we can move forward to the goals set by the international community," he said.

Moscow's capacity to provide technical help for the Iranian nuclear drive is seen by some analysts as giving it an unmatched power of leverage in Tehran.

Russia is building Iran's first nuclear power plant in the southern city of Bushehr and the facility is due to finally come on line this year.

The West suspects Tehran is trying to develop an atomic bomb under cover of its civilian nuclear energy programme. Russia has said there is no evidence to support these accusations.

http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/international/2010/January/international_January1453.xml§ion=international

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Wall Street Journal
January 28, 2010

U.S. To Outline New Iran Sanctions

By JAY SOLOMON and JOE LAURIA

LONDON—The Obama administration will this week introduce a paper to the permanent U.N. Security Council members and Germany outlining Iranian individuals and firms to be targeted in a new sanctions regime, said senior officials involved in the diplomacy.

The U.S. paper specifically targets entities controlled by Tehran's elite military unit, the Revolutionary Guards, and marks an escalation of Washington's financial campaign against Iran for its defiance of international demands for a halt to its nuclear program.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and her top aides are selling tougher sanctions on Iran to key allies and Security Council members attending international conferences in London this week, specifically China and Russia.

Mrs. Clinton stressed Wednesday that Iran has clearly rebuffed the international community's calls for dialogue over its nuclear program. And she stressed that the international community must now make good on its pledge to increase pressure on Tehran.

"We believe there's a growing understanding in the international community that Iran should face consequences," Mrs. Clinton told reporters in London.

More on Iran

She was accompanied by the Obama administration's chief architect of financial sanctions against Iran, Under Treasury Secretary Stuart Levey.

To support this effort, the U.S. mission to the U.N. will present a paper by the end of this week to the five permanent members of the Security Council plus Germany with elements of the proposed new sanctions on Iran, according to U.S. officials and a senior Western diplomat. The six nations will then have a conference call on Friday to discuss the ideas, the officials said.

The U.S. ideas will build on three rounds of existing U.N. sanctions on Iran and will target individuals and business interests, particularly those tied of the Revolutionary Guards, said these officials.

U.S. officials believe the IRGC is playing a leading role in Iran's nuclear program, as well as the country's crackdown on democracy activists disputing President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's June re-election.

Mrs. Clinton met Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov Wednesday in London and both signaled afterwards that time was running short for Iran.

Russia has traditionally been reluctant to pursue sanctions on Tehran, due to extensive military and economic ties. But Mr. Lavrov voiced frustration that Tehran backed out of a nuclear-fuel agreement that Moscow helped design last October in a bid to reduce tensions.

"It is clear that it is not possible to wait forever," Mr. Lavrov said on Russian state television. "We are disappointed that Iran has not reacted constructively to the proposals" offered by world powers.

Mrs. Clinton will meet Thursday with her Chinese counterpart, Yang Jiechi, in a bid to push the sanctions issue forward, according to U.S. officials.

Beijing is viewed as the biggest obstacle to pervasive sanctions being implemented against Iran at the Security Council. Two weeks ago, the Chinese only sent a lower level delegate to a U.N. meeting designed to discuss the Iran issue.

U.S. and European officials, however, believe that Beijing will eventually agree to support some form of sanctions, due to fears China could be isolated at the Security Council. These measures would then be followed by more punitive unilateral U.S. and European Union sanctions, possibly targeting Iran's gasoline and liquefied natural gas imports as well as financial firms.

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704094304575029692904293082.html?mod=WSJ_WSJ_US_News_5

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Washington Post
January 28, 2010

Iran Faces Consequences Over Nuclear Program: Obama

By David Alexander
Reuters

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Barack Obama said his focus on nuclear disarmament had strengthened U.S. diplomacy in dealing with North Korea and Iran, and he warned Tehran faced "growing consequences" over its nuclear program.

In his State of the Union address to Congress on Wednesday, Obama touched on some of the thorniest foreign policy issues he has faced in the past year, including his effort to develop a new approach toward Iran and North Korea as they expand their nuclear programs.

Obama, whose new initiative to curb nuclear weapons helped earn him the Nobel Peace Prize, said he was working with Russia to complete a major nuclear arms reduction treaty.

The two sides failed to reach an agreement on a replacement for the strategic arms reduction treaty, START, before it expired in early December. But they agreed to extend the protections of the treaty as they continue negotiations, which are due to resume on Monday in Geneva.

"To reduce our stockpiles and launchers, while ensuring our deterrent, the United States and Russia are completing negotiations on the farthest-reaching arms control treaty in nearly two decades," Obama told Congress.

"And at April's Nuclear Security Summit, we will bring 44 nations together behind a clear goal: securing all vulnerable nuclear materials around the world in four years so that they never fall into the hands of terrorists."

INTERNATIONAL APPROACH

Obama said his focus on an international approach to reducing nuclear arms and preventing proliferation had "strengthened our hand in dealing with those nations that insist on violating international agreements in pursuit of these weapons."

He referred specifically to North Korea and Iran, which says its uranium enrichment program is aimed at developing nuclear energy and not atomic weapons.

The focus on nuclear arms control "is why North Korea now faces increased isolation and stronger sanctions -- sanctions that are being vigorously enforced," Obama said.

"That is why the international community is more united, and the Islamic Republic of Iran is more isolated," he said. "And as Iran's leaders continue to ignore their obligations, there should be no doubt: they too, will face growing consequences."

North Korea detonated an underground nuclear device early in the Obama administration, its second test since 2006. And it test-fired short-range missiles on several occasions, rattling its neighbors.

Obama took office calling for a new relationship with Iran, including a more direct dialogue. The two countries have not had diplomatic relations since 1980, when Washington broke off ties during the hostage crisis at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran.

Iran has resisted initiatives by the United States and other major powers aimed at curbing its nuclear enrichment activity and building international confidence that Tehran is not trying to develop atomic weapons.

Tehran has so far rejected a proposal that would allow it to ship its partially enriched uranium abroad to be further enriched for use in a research reactor. The idea was proposed by a negotiating group that includes the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany.

(Editing by Chris Wilson)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/28/AR2010012800153.html>

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New York Times
January 29, 2010

Dialogue On Stalled Iran Atom Deal Goes On

By REUTERS

DAVOS, Switzerland (Reuters) - The U.N. nuclear agency chief said on Friday dialogue was continuing on a draft deal on enriched uranium between Iran and world powers despite Tehran's rejection of terms meant to prevent the material being used for atomic bombs.

Western diplomats have said Iran has effectively turned down the IAEA-brokered proposal and the United States and major European allies are pursuing broader U.N. sanctions against the Islamic Republic over its disputed nuclear activity.

"The proposal is on the table. Dialogue is continuing," said Yukiya Amano, director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, in his first public remarks on the standoff since he succeeded Mohamed ElBaradei two months ago.

Amano, who was attending the World Economic Forum, gave no further details to reporters.

Diplomats told Reuters last week Iran's envoy to the IAEA had notified Amano that it could not accept the deal's central provision for Tehran to ship most of its enriched uranium abroad in one go in exchange for fuel for nuclear medicine.

This followed months of dismissive or ambiguous remarks by Iranian officials made through the media.

The United States quickly dismissed Tehran's reply as "inadequate". In response, an IAEA spokeswoman said the proposal was still on the table, apparently cautioning the West not to write off the deal or more diplomacy to salvage it.

Western powers fear Iran's nuclear programme could be used to build atomic bombs. Iran says it is a peaceful project for power generation, but Amano said 20 years of undeclared Iranian nuclear work had undermined international trust.

The IAEA was struggling to maintain oversight of the Iranian programme because of restrictions on inspections, he said.

"Comprehensive safeguards should be fully implemented. That is what we are struggling (with) now," he told a panel on nuclear proliferation in Davos.

HOPE FOR AGREEMENT

"I hope agreement will be reached (on the fuel plan) and I continue to work as intermediary. This will ... help increase confidence in the (Iran) nuclear issue," Amano said.

Russia and China have also called for more negotiations, opposing further punitive sanctions which they believe may hinder a peaceful solution. Neither sees Iran as an imminent nuclear threat, unlike Western powers.

Under the draft plan, Tehran would transfer 70 percent of its low-enriched uranium (LEU) to Russia for further processing and then to France for conversion into special fuel rods to keep a Tehran nuclear medicine reactor running.

The arrangement, which envisaged Iran getting the fuel about a year after parting with LEU, aimed to cut Iran's LEU reserve below the quantity needed for the fissile core of a nuclear weapon, if the material were refined to a high degree of purity.

Western negotiators said Iran accepted the scheme in principle at Geneva talks with six world powers in October, only to back off after ElBaradei fleshed out details at a follow-up meeting at IAEA headquarters in Vienna.

Iranian officials have subsequently demanded amendments which would entail swapping its LEU for reactor fuel only in small, phased amounts and only on Iranian soil -- to avoid a significant reduction in the LEU stockpile.

Tehran has also said it will enrich LEU to a higher degree itself if the powers do not accept its conditions for the deal, raising concerns since it lacks technology required to turn the material into fuel rods for the medical isotope reactor. (Writing by Mark Heinrich; Editing by Louise Ireland)

<http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2010/01/29/world/international-uk-nuclear-iran.html>

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Yonhap News – South Korea
January 27, 2010

N. Korea Steps Up Call For Peace Treaty Amid Seething Border Tension

SEOUL, Jan. 27 (Yonhap) -- North Korea stepped up its demand Wednesday for a peace treaty to formally end the 1950-53 Korean War amid tension that spiked after it fired artillery into its waters near the western sea border with South Korea.

The firing, which prompted the South to respond with warning shots, occurred near the Northern Limit Line that has served as a de facto boundary between the divided states, according to South Korean defense officials. Their navies clashed in a brief gunfight there in November last year -- the third such incident since 1999.

Analysts point out that the latest act of saber-rattling that comes after North Korea threatened a "sacred" attack against the South could be aimed at pressuring the U.S. and South Korea into embracing the North Korean demand for a peace treaty.

The Minju Chosun, a paper run by the North's cabinet, said a peace treaty is also essential for guaranteeing the success of six-nation talks on its nuclear arms programs, and described the U.S. call for the North to first rejoin the talks as "an act of insolence."

"If a peace treaty is forged between the U.S. and North Korea and trust is built, measures for lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula will be created, removing the threat of war," it said.

"The reality shows that trust is needed to resolve the nuclear problem and other various problems," it said.

The commentary, dated Tuesday but released a day later, also reaffirmed the North Korean stance that the country will not return to the talks -- which also include South Korea, the U.S., Japan, Russia and China -- until sanctions on the country are removed.

The U.S. demand that the North first return to the talks "is an act of insolence that belies common sense," it said in the statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency, monitored in Seoul.

In a New Year's message, Pyongyang said it would seek to improve relations with the outside world, including the South, marking a reversal from its earlier behavior that led to its second nuclear test in May last year. The test, which followed a long-range rocket launch, caused the U.N. to toughen its sanctions on the North.

Following the New Year's Day message, North Korea has repeatedly called for talks to formally end the Korean War with a peace treaty, arguing the armistice feeds U.S. hostilities against it and impedes progress in the denuclearization talks.

North Korea had said in December that waters just south of the NLL in the Yellow Sea are part of its "peacetime firing zone." On Tuesday, it declared "no-sail" zones in the areas in a typical move ahead of military drills.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2010/01/27/9/0301000000AEN20100127009300315F.HTML>

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Japan Today
28 January 2010

Japan To Stick To Non-Nuclear Weapons Principles: Hatoyama

TOKYO — Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama on Wednesday expressed his government's intention to remain committed to the nation's three non-nuclear principles, including the much disputed one of not allowing the introduction of nuclear weapons into the country.

The effectiveness of this last principle has been called into question as Japan and the United States purportedly forged a secret pact to allow stopovers by U.S. military vessels carrying nuclear weapons without prior consultations. Tokyo is now investigating whether such a pact existed.

“We will continue to make sure that (government agencies) are kept informed about (the principles), including not permitting the introduction of nuclear weapons,” Hatoyama said at a meeting of the House of Councillors Budget Committee. “In other words, we will observe them.”

--Kyodo News

<http://www.japantoday.com/category/politics/view/japan-to-stick-to-non-nuclear-weapons-principles-hatoyama>

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Karachi News – Pakistan

28 January 2010 (ANI)

Pak Under Pressure From US To Sign Nuclear Material Cut-Off Treaty

Karachi News.Net

Washington, Jan. 28 : Pakistan is under tremendous pressure from the United States to sign the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT), American media reports.

While the US says the treaty must be signed in 2010, Pakistan maintains that India should also be asked to cut-down its nuclear stockpile.

The Obama administration is pushing the United Nations' disarmament body to persuade Pakistan to join the FMCT talks in Geneva, The Dawn reports.

Pakistan is of the view that India enjoys an undue advantage and is gaining disproportionate power in South Asia after the 2008 civilian nuclear cooperation deal with the US

The Geneva disarmament conference can move forward only by consensus. This allows Pakistan to block agreement on a US proposal for a work plan, the next step in the negotiation process.

The FMCT has largely remained in suspended animation at the UN for the past 12 years, but the Obama administration is now demanding that ban should be implemented exactly as it is proposed currently.

<http://www.karachinews.net/story/594278>

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Press Release of Senator Lugar

January 27, 2010

Nunn-Lugar Program Continued Substantial Reductions In 2009 And Will Begin A New Phase Of Global Security Cooperation

U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar today released a summary of the progress in Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction programs for 2009. Nunn-Lugar made substantial progress in destroying and containing the nuclear threat, neutralizing chemical weapons, combating the global biological weapons risk, and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

“Malefactors in the world want to use weapons of mass destruction to terrorize American citizens, harm our soldiers deployed around the world, and attack our partner countries. Proliferation of WMD remains the number one national security threat facing the United States and the international community,” Lugar said. “In 2009, the Nunn-Lugar program continued to make us safer by achieving meaningful progress in the destruction and dismantlement of massive Soviet weapons systems and the facilities that developed them. There is much more work to do in combating biological, nuclear, and chemical threats through Nunn-Lugar cooperative threat reduction and the global expansion of the Nunn-Lugar program.”

At a speech tomorrow in Washington, DC, (Strategic Weapons in the 21st Century Roundtable, sponsored by Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories), Lugar will say the program will enter a new phase, with more expansion beyond the former Soviet Union and better described as Nunn-Lugar Global Security Cooperation. Nunn-Lugar will be better able to meet unexpected threats around the world, have more flexible funding and authority, and have more latitude to work with other governments and organizations.

Lugar will say that he looks forward to a successor to the START Treaty and other initiatives that President Obama may bring forth. He will caution that arms control takes time, distinguishing between weapons reduction goals and steps such as Nunn-Lugar that are necessary to make reductions happen.

“Secretary of State Dean Rusk stated in testimony on the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) before the Foreign Relations Committee in 1968 that the only thing separating a nuclear weapon state from a non-nuclear weapon state was a choice. What was true in 1968 is still true today. These choices are greatly influenced by the regional security environments in which states exist, including proliferation in neighboring powers. I understand the appeal of seeking a world free of nuclear weapons, and would not dismiss its value as a long term goal. But until we address these regional dynamics, promotion of a world free of nuclear weapons is manifestly aspirational,” Lugar will say in the speech.

“We hope for and anticipate constructive movement in arms control on the world’s biggest stages. But we should be cautious in our estimates of the influence of U.S. arsenal cuts on the behavior of smaller nuclear powers and aspirants. I believe that our success in encouraging others to abandon weapons or limit their expansion will depend much more on the hard work of expanding arms control and non-proliferation tools and addressing regional circumstances that influence the choices of governments related to weapons of mass destruction.”

The 2009 Nunn Lugar Report Card includes:

Destroying and containing the nuclear threat

- **15 nuclear warheads deactivated (program total 7519)**

Each warhead was capable of destroying a city the size of Indianapolis.

- **24 Intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) destroyed (program total 768)**

Each ICBM was capable of carrying up to 10 independently targetable warheads.

- **2 ICBM silos eliminated (program total 498)**

Each silo was capable of launching deadly ICBMs.

- **5 mobile ICBM launchers destroyed (program total 148)**

Each mobile ICBM launcher was one of the most dangerous threats due to its maneuverability.

- **1 nuclear weapons carrying submarine dismantled (program total, 3 Typhoons, 32 total subs)**

The Typhoon-class submarine are the largest in the world, capable of launching 200 warheads each. The Nunn-Lugar program has now eliminated one half of the former Soviet fleet of Typhoon subs.

- **18 submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) destroyed (program total 651)**

Each SLBM was capable of carrying up to 10 independently targetable warheads.

- **44 nuclear weapons transport train shipments secured (program total 469)**

Transporting the shipments to secure locations to further consolidate Russian stockpiles.

- **24 nuclear weapons storage sites secured**

Enhanced security at sensitive nuclear weapons facilities as agreed to under the Bratislava Agreement.

- **3 missile launch control centers for SS-18 regiments eliminated**

The regiments, one of which was from Uzhur in central Russia and another at the now-converted space satellite launching facility in Dombrovskiy, were capable of launching 180 nuclear warheads.

Neutralizing chemical weapons

- **Began operation of the Chemical Weapons Destruction Facility at Shchuchye, Russia**

This facility will destroy nearly 2 million chemical weapons shells and nerve agent that has been stored here since Soviet days. It is arguably the largest facility in the world destroying chemical munitions, and is currently the only operating facility that can accommodate the destruction of 2 million munitions. On at least a dozen occasions over the past decade Lugar interceded to keep the Shchuchye project on track. He made several visits to the site including the opening dedication last may.

Combating the global biological weapons risk

- **3 biological monitoring stations built and equipped (program total 19)**

The biological monitoring stations are the front-line of defense in biological pathogen research and monitoring of potential dangerous outbreaks. Cooperation on biological threat reduction programs creates opportunities for

American scientists to work with colleagues from Georgia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Ukraine and helps prevent the intentional, accidental, and natural spread of dangerous diseases.

- **2 Central Reference Laboratories (CRLs) construction under way**

The CRLs being constructed in Georgia and Azerbaijan provide consolidated, safe and secure storage for pathogens and highly infectious disease strains inherited from the former Soviet Union and those which occur naturally in that part of the world. They also house near real-time detection and reporting of a bio-terrorist attack or naturally occurring pandemic, which helps allow for an effective and timely response.

Preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

- **Maritime surveillance assistance provided to Azerbaijan**

Nunn-Lugar provided the Coast Guard of Azerbaijan with comprehensive maritime surveillance capabilities to enable interdiction of weapons of mass destruction in the Caspian Sea, including high-traffic maritime areas near Iran and Russia as part of the proliferation prevention initiative.

- **Border and maritime security provided to Ukraine**

Ukraine's State Border Guard Service with a maritime and land border command and control network to secure a high priority border with Transdnistria and monitor key shipping lanes in the Black Sea, where the potential threat of WMD smuggling is a concern as part of the proliferation prevention initiative.

Combating global WMD threats

- **Critical new authorities passed into law**

The 2010 Defense Authorization bill contained provisions, similar to those found in the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Improvement Act of 2009, that will give the Nunn-Lugar program additional flexibility to meet unexpected threats in locations around the world. They provide the Defense Department with the authority to spend up to 10 percent of annual Nunn-Lugar program funds notwithstanding any other law to meet urgent proliferation threats. The Defense Authorization bill also included important authority that allows the Secretary of Defense to accept contributions from foreign governments, international organizations, multinational entities, and other entities for activities carried out under the Nunn-Lugar program.

In November 1991, Lugar (R-IN) and Sen. Sam Nunn (D-GA) authored the Nunn-Lugar Act, which established the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program. This program has provided U.S. funding and expertise to help the former Soviet Union safeguard and dismantle its enormous stockpiles of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, related materials, and delivery systems. In 2003, Congress adopted the Nunn-Lugar Expansion Act, which authorized the Nunn-Lugar program to operate outside the former Soviet Union to address proliferation threats. In 2004, Nunn-Lugar funds were committed for the first time outside of the former Soviet Union to destroy chemical weapons in Albania, under a Lugar-led expansion of the program. In 2007, Lugar announced the complete destruction of Albania's chemical weapons.

The Nunn-Lugar scorecard now totals 7,519 strategic nuclear warheads deactivated, 768 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) destroyed, 498 ICBM silos eliminated, 148 ICBM mobile launchers destroyed, 651 submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) eliminated, 476 SLBM launchers eliminated, 32 nuclear submarines capable of launching ballistic missiles destroyed, 155 bomber eliminated, 906 nuclear air-to-surface missiles (ASMs) destroyed, 194 nuclear test tunnels eliminated, 469 nuclear weapons transport train shipments secured, upgraded security at 24 nuclear weapons storage sites, and built and equipped 19 biological monitoring stations. Perhaps most importantly, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus are nuclear weapons free as a result of cooperative efforts under the Nunn-Lugar program. Those countries were the third, fourth and eighth largest nuclear weapons powers in the world.

Lugar makes annual oversight trips to Nunn-Lugar sites around the world.

<http://lugar.senate.gov/press/record.cfm?id=321817&&>

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Dismantling Of U.S. Nukes Leads To Increase In Excess Tritium

The disarmament of excess nuclear weapons in the United States last year resulted in a 25 percent growth in tritium extractions at the Savannah River Site in South Carolina, the *Augusta Chronicle* reported Monday (see *GSN*, Jan. 6).

"The increase is not from new manufacture," SRS spokesman Jim Giusti said. "It's mostly from recycling activities associated with dismantlement of old weapons."

All U.S. nuclear weapons contain tritium -- a hydrogen gas that boosts the explosiveness of the bomb -- and all maintenance work on reservoirs of the material is performed at Savannah River Site. The gas has a half-life of 12.5 years and has to regularly be refreshed at the facility.

Usually, the Defense Department strips the old tritium from the weapons and then transports it to a secured location at the site. Extra tritium from disarmed weapons is stockpiled at the South Carolina facility.

Savannah River Site handled 1,522 reservoir-equivalent units last year, up 25 percent from 2008, according to a Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board report.

At the end of 2008, the United States had 2,246 "operationally deployed" nuclear warheads, according to the State Department.

Under the 2002 Moscow Treaty, the United States and Russia both agreed to reduce their deployed strategic nuclear arsenals to 2,200 warheads by the end of 2012. Negotiations are reportedly almost finished between the two sides on a separate arms control agreement that would reduce each nation's nuclear stockpile even further (see *GSN*, Jan. 22).

The U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration in 2009 ordered the SRS Tritium Extraction Facility to stay at levels of optimum readiness.

"We don't man [the extraction facility] full time," Giusti said. "When we get a shipment of irradiated rods we will bring people over to operate the facility to extract the tritium out of it" (Rob Pavey, *Augusta Chronicle*, Jan. 25).

http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20100125_7869.php

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency
29 January 2010

U.S. To Increase Spending On Nuclear Complex - Biden

The United States will allocate \$7 billion in 2011 to maintain the country's nuclear complex, \$600 million more than Congress approved in 2009, U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden said in a *Wall Street Journal* article.

"We will spend what is necessary to maintain the safety, security and effectiveness of our weapons," Biden said in the article, entitled *The President's Nuclear Vision*.

He said the U.S. intended to boost funding for "these important activities", intended to "ensure our security" by more than \$5 billion over the next five years.

"Even in a time of tough budget decisions, these are investments we must make for our security. We are committed to working with Congress to ensure these budget increases are approved," the vice president said.

Biden said the country's nuclear facilities have been "underfunded and undervalued" for almost a decade and required "urgent attention."

"The consequences of this neglect-like the growing shortage of skilled nuclear scientists and engineers and the aging of critical facilities-have largely escaped public notice," he said.

U.S. President Barack Obama reiterated on Wednesday his pledge to work toward comprehensive nuclear disarmament.

"I have embraced the vision of John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan through a strategy that reverses the spread of these weapons, and seeks a world without them," Obama said in his annual State of the Union speech.

Biden said the increase in funding the U.S. nuclear complex "will strengthen the nonproliferation regime, which is vital to holding nations like North Korea and Iran accountable when they break the rules, and deterring others from trying to do so."

The Obama administration will present the 2011 budget proposal to the U.S. Congress on February 1.

Obama and his Russian counterpart, Dmitry Medvedev, agreed last year to reduce the nuclear warhead stockpile to 1,500-1,675 and delivery vehicles to 500-1,000 for each country.

A new document to replace the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START 1), which expired on December 5, has not been signed yet over disagreements on verification and control arrangements to be included in the document.

Obama and Medvedev agreed in a telephone conversation on Wednesday to order the speedy completion of the deal, which is almost ready to be signed, according to officials on both sides.

MOSCOW, January 29 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20100129/157711698.html>

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Washington Post

January 27, 2010

U.S. Is Unprepared To Handle Major Bioterrorism Attack, Commission Finds

By Joby Warrick and Anne E. Kornblut

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More than eight years after the deadly 2001 anthrax attacks, the United States is still unprepared to respond to the threat of large-scale bioterrorism, a congressionally appointed commission said Tuesday in a report that gave the government mixed grades overall for how it has protected Americans from weapons of mass destruction.

The report, which measured the government's performance in 17 key areas, gave the White House and Congress "F" grades for not building a rapid-response capability for dealing with disease outbreaks from bioterrorism, or providing adequate oversight of security and intelligence agencies.

Within hours of the report's release, the Obama administration revealed plans to fill gaps in the nation's public health defenses with a series of initiatives to be announced in Wednesday's State of the Union address. The proposals, which administration officials said had been in the works well before the report's findings were known, will seek to speed up delivery of drugs in the event of a major attack, addressing one of the principal shortcomings identified by the Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism.

President Obama's speech will include a "call to action" to various government leaders to redesign the way medical countermeasures are mass produced, White House spokesman Nick Shapiro said. "The goal is a national capability for the rapid, reliable and affordable production of an array of medical countermeasures against public health threats."

The WMD panel cited the government's faltering response to the swine flu epidemic as evidence of a lack of preparedness for a large-scale crisis, adding that the blame for the failures is shared by various administrations and branches of government.

"Each of the last three administrations has been slow to recognize and respond to the biothreat," said former senator Bob Graham (D-Fla.), who co-chaired the panel along with former senator James M. Talent (R-Mo.). "But we no longer have the luxury of a slow learning curve when we know al-Qaeda is interested in bioweapons."

The panel's "report card" comes 13 months after the congressionally appointed body warned that a major attack using weapons of mass destruction somewhere in the world was "more likely than not" to occur by 2013, unless significant steps were taken.

The panel gave "A" grades for government programs that secured dangerous viruses and bacteria, and for the administration's reorganization of the National Security Council to better deal with WMD threats. The report cited the White House's efforts to strengthen international controls on nuclear technology and components, but said there had been "no equal sense of urgency displayed towards the threat of a large-scale biological weapons attack."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/26/AR2010012601265.html>

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Wall Street Journal
OPINION
January 27, 2010

START-ing Without China

Disarmament talks between the United States and Russia should include Beijing.

By GORDON G. CHANG

On Sunday, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev told reporters his country was close to agreement with the United States on extending the landmark Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, better known as START I, which expired in early December. Whatever one thinks of the proposed arrangement, there is a fundamental problem: China will not be a party to the deal.

As Beijing is fond of saying, we live in a multipolar world. If that is true, then bilateral-weapons agreements are out-of-date. Yet the Chinese, when it comes to arms-reduction matters, play the count-me-out card, even though they are supposed to dominate this century. Their position is that they will talk about limiting their strategic weapons only after the U.S. and Russia have in fact reduced theirs.

When Washington and Moscow each had tens of thousands of nukes and China only had dozens, that position was sensible. But START II will reduce American and Russian arsenals to the point where China's weapons become a factor in the global strategic balance. That will be especially true if that agreement ends up limiting weapons to the lower ranges that have been disclosed by the Russians: 1,500 operational warheads and 500 launchers for each nation.

How big is China's arsenal? Beijing, sticking to its long-held policy of ambiguity, is not telling. Western analysts have been guessing, with wildly divergent assessments. Older estimates had put the number at around 400, though the current consensus is much lower. The highly respected Federation of American Scientists, for instance, believes the People's Liberation Army now has 240 nuclear devices, of which 180 are strategic in nature.

Yet the smaller numbers are probably way off. For one thing, the lower estimates do not take into account the possibility that China loaded its older DF-5 missiles with multiple warheads, something the Pentagon alluded to in 2003. If half of China's 30 or so DF-5s carry between seven to 10 newly miniaturized warheads as some analysts believe, that's 105 to 150 weapons for that missile class alone.

Moreover, the lower estimates mean the Chinese have expanded their nuclear forces at a much slower pace than their conventional ones. Yet if there has been one thing we have seen recently, China has consistently surprised us with its advances in military capabilities. As Admiral Robert Willard, commander of the U.S. Pacific Command, noted in October, "In the past decade or so, China has exceeded most of our intelligence estimates of their military capability and capacity every year."

However many warheads the Chinese possess at this moment, it's clear they have substantially upgraded the capability of their nuclear missiles in recent years. Last October, at its massive National Day parade in Beijing, China rolled out ballistic missiles of the Second Artillery Force, the country's "core force of strategic deterrence."

The most noticeable feature of these weapons, which official media describe as China's "trump card," is that they were carried on mobile launchers, thus making them survivable in the event of an attack on Chinese soil. This gives Beijing a critical second-strike capability, which is not only a powerful deterrent but also a temptation to launch a first strike on a non-nuclear state. Although Chinese leaders have maintained a no-first-use policy and promise not to launch nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states, they are the only people in history who have threatened to nuke territory they consider their own, specifically non-nuclear Taiwan.

The People's Liberation Army, characteristically, did not show all its new missiles on National Day. Not displayed were the JL-2 submarine-launched missile and a new land-based one that might carry more than 10 warheads. As China military analyst Richard Fisher points out, the latter weapon potentially gives Beijing the ability to reach parity with the U.S., especially if President Obama, who favors complete disarmament, reduces American warheads to the much-discussed 1,000-level.

Are any arsenal reductions a good idea at this time? Last week, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Washington would like to hold regular and comprehensive discussions with Beijing about its nuclear weapons program. The call came after U.S. officials met recently with their Chinese counterparts to discuss strategic matters. China's representatives, as they have in the past, firmly rebuffed the American attempt.

"That kind of dialogue with China would be most productive and frankly in the best interests of global stability," Mr. Gates said, after noting the benefits of similar interchanges with the Soviet Union over strategic arms.

So if the Chinese are not willing to talk with the U.S. about their nuclear weapons, how can the U.S. sign START II with Russia? Because we only have the vaguest idea about the size and capabilities of the Chinese arsenal, we do not know how many weapons we really need to deter an attack on the U.S. and our allies.

A global reduction of nukes and launchers may be a good thing, but China, which appears to possess the third largest stockpile of nukes and is the only major power increasing its arsenal, needs to be a part of any deal. So let's stop the START talks until all parties are at the negotiating table. This is not just about America and Russia anymore.

Mr. Chang is the author of "The Coming Collapse of China" (Random House, 2001).

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703906204575027821767691054.html?mod=WSJ_latestheadlines

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency
27 January 2010

Patriot Games

Tom Balmforth, Russia Profile

Whether Despite or Because of Russia's Realpolitik, There Are Modest Signs of Cooperation in U.S.-Russian Relations

As the United States last week agreed to station Patriot missiles in Poland only 100 kilometers from Russian soil in order to bolster Polish air defense, the international community braced itself for a return to hostile U.S.-Russian relations. But apart from some initial tough talking, the arrangement has elicited an uncharacteristically indifferent reaction from Russia. Is this a triumph for warmer relations, or is the Kremlin still formulating its reaction? Elsewhere the "reset" still looks fragile - the overdue arms reduction treaty remains unsigned, and the promised U.S. transit route to Afghanistan over Russia is still not functional.

On January 20 Polish Defense Minister Bogdan Klich announced that U.S. Patriot surface-to-air missiles would be deployed in the outskirts of Morag, a town in Northern Poland approximately 100 kilometers from Russia's Kaliningrad exclave. True to the form established during the tense George Bush-Vladimir Putin era, a high-ranking Russian naval officer issued the aggressive response that Russia would redress the military imbalance by strengthening its Baltic Fleet. The situation was immediately reminiscent of the fiasco surrounding the proposed U.S. missile defense system (MDS) in Poland and Czech Republic, when Russia said it would install Iskander ballistic missiles in Kaliningrad. Washington then tried to calm a nervous Poland by offering to deploy Patriots close to Warsaw to offset this second threat.

Last year, however, significant strides were made away from this military stand-off. Barack Obama shelved MDS plans, ushering in a period of "reset" relations, and Russia subsequently scrapped its plans to put Iskander missiles in its European exclave. Nonetheless Poland, felt that it emerged the loser from the "reset," and continued to seek the missile installations. Many analysts see the deployment of the surface-to-air Patriots in Poland, scheduled for June, as a symbolic act to prove the United States is not shunning its East European ally. But this symbolic act is not without an aggressive subtext, say critics.

While initially the missiles were to be deployed near Warsaw in central Poland, they will now be deployed only 100 kilometers from Russian soil. Edward Lozansky, the president of the American University in Moscow, yesterday questioned the wisdom of such a provocative "symbolic" gesture, suggesting this somewhat tongue-in-cheek alternative: "The easiest and most obvious gesture to make would be faxing or e-mailing to all and sundry the text of Article 5 from the NATO Charter," which equates an attack on one NATO member (i.e. Poland) with an attack on all. The proposal is even more senseless, he adds, given that Washington and Moscow are currently in the middle of negotiations on new START Treaty.

"A symbolic gesture is a good thing when you create goodwill, but why make a symbolic gesture that creates bad will?" asked Lozansky. The Russian press, for one, saw little positive potential for the decision in the "reset" relations. "When it comes to Patriots, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov is always a patriot," ran yesterday's Kommersant's headline. But the Foreign Ministry's response has been surprisingly muted. Speaking at a press conference on Friday to assess the foreign policy results of 2009, an unusually laid back Lavrov said: "incidentally, I haven't heard all the information on it yet, but if what I've heard is correct, then it raises the simple question: why is

it necessary to do something that creates the impression that Poland is strengthening itself against Russia? That, I don't understand."

Aleksandr Golts, a military analyst and the deputy editor of the Russian news weekly *Yezhenedelny Zhurnal*, said Russia's reaction has been unprecedentedly calm. "The reaction has been modest. All Lavrov has said is that he doesn't understand the sense of these actions and that it is counterproductive if Poland gives the impression that it is preparing to defend [itself] from Russia. But that is all – I think it shows that Russia doesn't want things to escalate from this issue," said Golts.

Asked why Russia's reaction has been so muted, Golts said it was due to improved relations and Russia's desire not to upset today's improved status quo. "I think it's because of the reset and it's because Russia thinks that it's more important that America rejected the idea of installing missile defense elements in Poland - we don't want to spoil the situation," said Golts.

Both Golts and Lozansky stressed that the missile deployments would not affect the strategic balance in Europe, which is why Russia is not opposing it more vigorously. Nonetheless, Lozansky said the Patriot installation would harm the "reset" because of its political implications. "Once we've signed a new START, we need to sit down and agree in general: 'are we partners?', 'are we allies?'. In this case, coming back to the Patriots, it certainly doesn't look like we're moving toward partnership and definitely not alliance. After all, why would you install missiles against a country, if you want to build a strong relationship with them?" said Lozansky.

Elsewhere the "reset" has brought few dividends. The flight path over Russia for the transit of U.S. military equipment and troops, agreed by Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev in July last year, is still not functional. Even though the United States is increasing troop numbers in Afghanistan by 30,000 and therefore needs all available routes, it has still only been used by one symbolic test flight. The *New York Times* in November reported that the delays were simply due to a bureaucratic bottleneck in Russia, but on January 13 Viktor Ozerov, the chairman of the Federation Council Defense and Security Committee, told Radio Liberty that it is simply not in Russia's interests to help coalition forces in Afghanistan.

According to Ozerov, when troops leave, the Taliban will return to power in Afghanistan and will look to punish Russia for helping the U.S./NATO war effort. "When the Americans go, their continent is far away. But for us, Central Asia is right there. We still have to live with these people in peace," Ozerov told Radio Liberty.

But Golts played this version down. "This is mostly speculation. Officially the Americans insist that everything is okay. If we understand that the general Russian approach to foreign policy is the 'realpolitik' of the nineteenth century, then the Afghanistan air transit is a very strong card which we can play in very different games. Therefore I think it would be foolish for Russia just to stop this transit at the very beginning," said Golts.

Realpolitik aside, Lozansky said there was tangible evidence of better U.S.-Russian relations, as both sides have made concessions. For its part, Russia has signaled it is ready to do more in Afghanistan, such as training, and the United States has stopped lobbying against the North and South Stream gas pipelines, both of which have a positive impact on relations, Lozansky said. "So far, I would give the reset a C, maybe a C-plus. But we can do more – we need to expand cooperation from the areas of anti-terrorism and nuclear non-proliferation," he said.

This comment first appeared on RussiaProfile.org

<http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20100127/157693148.html>

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China Daily – China

OPINION

28 January 2010

New US-Russian Nuke Treaty So Near Yet So Far

By Teng Jianqun (China Daily)

The US and the erstwhile Soviet Union signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) in July 1991, which stipulated that they had to reduce their offensive strategic weapons by 30 percent in seven years. The treaty said neither side could possess more than 1,600 delivery systems and 6,000 nuclear warheads.

This important cornerstone of US-Russian (previously Soviet) strategic weapons talks, expired last month. Though the two countries have not yet signed a new treaty, they have promised to follow the principles of START and negotiate a new one. Washington and Moscow both attribute the delay to disagreements over "technical" issues.

One of the most crucial issues in the proposed new treaty is the precise number of delivery systems and warheads to be reduced. In July last year, the US and Russia agreed to a preliminary range of capping: each side keeping 500 to 1,000 delivery systems and 1,500 to 1,675 warheads. Now the bigger stumbling block is not warheads, but the delivery systems. Russia is estimated to have an operational deployment of 620 delivery systems and 2,787 warheads, and the US, 1,176 and fewer than 2,200. Since both countries want to maintain their respective advantage and restrain the other, Russia has been arguing for more cuts in the delivery systems, while the US insists on more delivery systems and fewer warheads.

Another contentious issue is transparency and inspection of a new treaty. The old treaty had detailed rules on inspection, such as data exchange, reports, on-site inspections, ban on telemetry encryption and uninterrupted monitoring of missile assembly factories. Now Russia wants the procedure simplified and intrusive inspections reduced. The two countries disagree on the monitoring of factories and the ban on telemetry encryption, too.

The US once had its on-site inspection spot at Russia's missile factory in Votkinsk, where the "Topol" intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and the "Brava" sea-based missiles were assembled. And Russia had its spot at America's Hercules missile assembly factory in Magna, Utah. Since no new missiles were being developed at the Hercules factory, Russia withdrew the spot in 2001. Moscow argued that such measures were unnecessary because the US and Russia were no longer antagonistic toward each other and inspections had become unilateral for Russia. After hard bargaining, the US withdrew its inspectors from the Russian factory last month.

The US now plans to load conventional warheads on its ICBMs in order to boost its "prompt global strike" capability, saying a new treaty should not limit ICBMs carrying conventional warheads. Russia contends that the ICBMs could be reloaded with nuclear warheads, and hence should be included in the total number of delivery systems. But the US is not likely to make concessions on this front because the project was finalized during the George W. Bush administration and could reach combat capability in five years. A possible compromise would be for Washington to meet Moscow's demand of raising the ceiling on the delivery systems and excluding America's ICBMs with conventional warheads from the proposed limit.

Another heatedly debated topic is the missile defense system (MDS). America's MDS will break the balance of strategic arms and increase its military advantage over Russia. In response, Russia could develop new strategic delivery systems, and link nuclear arms control to the MDS.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin have stressed many a time the significance of the issue for the strategic arms talks with the US, and asked it not to extend its MDS deployment beyond the existing level. The US argues that a new treaty should deal only with the strategic offensive arms, and MDS should be discussed through another channel.

In fact, US President Barack Obama has been assailed at home for scrapping the plan to deploy MDS in Central and Eastern Europe. The US Congress and Pentagon are not likely to accept any further substantial restraint on the MDS.

The delay in reaching a new treaty highlights the rough side of US-Russian ties. Washington and Moscow both insist that they are no longer enemies and that the reduction of strategic weapons is mutually beneficial. When bargaining over the details, however, they inevitably disagree on how to maintain strategic balance and keep the effectiveness of nuclear deterrence on their side.

One of the reasons why Washington is eager to have a treaty with Moscow is that it wants to avoid unilateral reduction. Russia, on the other hand, cares more about the balance of strategic capability, and argues that nuclear arms reduction must consider elements such as outer-space weapons, MDS and conventional forces. This shows it is still vigilant against the US. The small number of reduction agreed to by the two nuclear giants indicates that they have not yet rid themselves of the traditional mindset of assured mutual destruction.

Since Russia has recovered from the ebb of 1991, the Medvedev-Putin government is not ready to make infinite concessions. Instead, it is seeking equal status with the US at the negotiations table. During the Cold War era, NATO relied on nuclear weapons to offset the Soviet Union's advantage in conventional forces. The situation has now reversed: Russia is dependent on nuclear arms to guarantee its security.

Obama's vision of a nuclear-free world is appealing, but it is still not a universally accepted idea. And though Medvedev agrees to Obama's concept of a nuclear-free world, Russia does not trust the US totally; it even suspects America to have hidden agenda. If Medvedev and Putin do not respond positively to Obama, his vision would remain only a vision.

In a word, though the US and Russia claim a new treaty has been delayed because of "technical" reasons, the fact is more than technical issues are to blame. It reflects the fierce competition and mutual distrust between the two nuclear giants. And unless the two overcome them, a new treaty will remain elusive.

The author is director of the Center for Arms Control and International Security Studies, China Institute of International Studies.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2010-01/28/content_9389130.htm

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Wall Street Journal

OPINION

January 29, 2010

The President's Nuclear Vision

By Joe Biden

The United States faces no greater threat than the spread of nuclear weapons. That is why, last April in Prague, President Obama laid out a comprehensive agenda to reverse their spread, and to pursue the peace and security of a world without them.

He understands that this ultimate goal will not be reached quickly. But by acting on a number of fronts, we can ensure our security, strengthen the global nonproliferation regime, and keep vulnerable nuclear material out of terrorist hands.

For as long as nuclear weapons are required to defend our country and our allies, we will maintain a safe, secure and effective nuclear arsenal. The president's Prague vision is central to this administration's efforts to protect the American people—and that is why we are increasing investments in our nuclear arsenal and infrastructure in this year's budget and beyond.

Among the many challenges our administration inherited was the slow but steady decline in support for our nuclear stockpile and infrastructure, and for our highly trained nuclear work force. The stockpile, infrastructure and work force played a critical and evolving role in every stage of our nuclear experience, from the Manhattan Project to the present day. Once charged with developing ever more powerful weapons, they have had a new mission in the 18 years since we stopped conducting nuclear tests. That is to maintain the strength of the nuclear arsenal.

For almost a decade, our laboratories and facilities have been underfunded and undervalued. The consequences of this neglect—like the growing shortage of skilled nuclear scientists and engineers and the aging of critical facilities—have largely escaped public notice. Last year, the Strategic Posture Commission led by former Defense Secretaries William Perry and James Schlesinger warned that our nuclear complex requires urgent attention. We agree.

The budget we will submit to Congress on Monday both reverses this decline and enables us to implement the president's nuclear-security agenda. These goals are intertwined. The same skilled nuclear experts who maintain our arsenal play a key role in guaranteeing our country's security now and for the future. State-of-the-art facilities, and highly trained and motivated people, allow us to maintain our arsenal without testing. They will help meet the president's goal of securing vulnerable nuclear materials world-wide in the coming years, and enable us to track and thwart nuclear trafficking, verify weapons reductions, and to develop tomorrow's cutting-edge technologies for our security and prosperity.

To achieve these goals, our budget devotes \$7 billion for maintaining our nuclear-weapons stockpile and complex, and for related efforts. This commitment is \$600 million more than Congress approved last year. And over the next five years we intend to boost funding for these important activities by more than \$5 billion. Even in a time of tough budget decisions, these are investments we must make for our security. We are committed to working with Congress to ensure these budget increases are approved.

This investment is long overdue. It will strengthen our ability to recruit, train and retain the skilled people we need to maintain our nuclear capabilities. It will support the work of our nuclear labs, a national treasure that we must and will sustain. Many of our facilities date back to World War II, and, given the safety and environmental challenges they present, cannot be sustained much longer. Increased funding now will eventually enable considerable savings on both security and maintenance. It also will allow us to clean up and close down production facilities we no longer need.

Our budget request is just one of several closely related and equally important initiatives giving life to the president's Prague agenda. Others include completing the New START agreement with Russia, releasing the Nuclear Posture Review on March 1, holding the Nuclear Security Summit in April, and pursuing ratification and entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

We will by these initiatives seek to strengthen an emerging bipartisan consensus on how best to secure our nation. These steps will strengthen the nonproliferation regime, which is vital to holding nations like North Korea and Iran accountable when they break the rules, and deterring others from trying to do so.

Reflecting this consensus, Sen. John McCain has joined the president in endorsing a world without nuclear weapons—a goal that was articulated by President Ronald Reagan, who in 1984 said these weapons must be "banished from the face of the Earth." This consensus was inspired by four of our most eminent statesmen—Messrs. Henry Kissinger, William Perry, Sam Nunn and George P. Shultz.

Some critics will argue that we should not constrain our nuclear efforts in any way. Others will assert that retaining a robust deterrent is at odds with our nonproliferation agenda. These four leaders last week in these pages argued compellingly that "maintaining high confidence in our nuclear arsenal is critical as the numbers of these weapons goes down. It is also consistent with and necessary for U.S. leadership in nonproliferation, risk reduction and arms reduction goals."

This shared commitment serves our security. No nation can secure itself by disarming unilaterally, but as long as nuclear weapons exist, all nations remain ever on the brink of destruction. As President Obama said in Prague, "We cannot succeed in this endeavor alone, but we can lead it, we can start it."

Mr. Biden is vice president of the United States.

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