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Articles & Other Documents:

- | | |
|---|---|
| State Department: Russia Was Not Cheating On START | Iran Ready For Nuclear Talks |
| US Official Says Nuclear Treaty Disputes Lingered | China Urged To Press N. Korea To Stop Provocations, Abide By Denuclearization Pledge: State Dept. |
| The New START Treaty | N.Korean FM In Burma Amid Nuclear Worries |
| Republican Concerns Could Stall START Treaty | George Osborne: Trident Costs Will Be Met By Defence Budget |
| No Evidence Of Russian Cheating On START I - State Department | Defense Secretary Liam Fox Warns Over 'New Nuclear Arms Race' |
| Russia Goes Ahead With Iran's Nuke Power Plant Project | Russia's Defense Spending To Rise By 60% By 2013 – Paper |
| Mattis: Iran Is 'Destabilizing Force' | U.S. Faces Drop In Nuclear Forensics Capabilities, Report Says |
| Iran's Nuclear Armament Option Not Acceptable: German FM | How The CIA Got It Wrong On Iran's Nukes |
| Iran To Rethink Making 20 Percent Enriched Uranium | New START: Too Modest To Merit Partisan Bickering |
| Israel to Dispatch Nuclear-Armed Subs, Report Says | |

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Foreign Policy
The Cable

State Department: Russia Was Not Cheating On START

By Josh Rogin
Wednesday, July 28, 2010

The State Department does not believe that Russia has been cheating on its obligations under START I, the now-defunct 1991 nuclear reductions treaty and is confident that Russia will abide by the new treaty when it is ratified, according to the treaty's top negotiator.

Concerns about Russian behavior were spelled out in two articles Wednesday, both of which referred to a newly submitted State Department report on treaty compliance over the last five years. Both articles asserted that language in the report referring to disputes between the United States and Russia over compliance and verification mechanisms spell danger for New START, which the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is expected to vote on next week.

But in an exclusive interview with *The Cable*, State's lead negotiator for New START, Assistant Secretary of State for Verification, Compliance, and Implementation Rose Gottemoeller, said that nothing in the report accuses Russia of cheating or undermines the Obama administration's confidence that the new treaty can be enforced.

"Cheating implies intent to undermine a treaty. There's no history of cheating on the central obligations of START; there's a history of abiding by the treaty." Gottemoeller said.

"Generally the record for the major conventions is a good one. With regard to START, the Russians have been very serious and it has been a success."

The *Washington Post's* version of the story was originally entitled, "Report finds Russians may not be in compliance, could sink new START treaty," a headline that shocked State Department employees. The headline was later changed to "Report findings about Russia could complicate debate on new START pact." The *Washington Times's* version was entitled, "Russia violated '91 START till end, U.S. report finds," another headline multiple State Department officials said was misleading.

With regard to START I, Gottemoeller said that there were several disputes over compliance issues on both sides, many of which had been resolved over the last two years due to intensive work between the Obama administration and the Russians. Yes, there are some compliance issues that were not resolved, but those covered minor technical issues, she argued, not a deliberate attempt by Russia to circumvent the treaty.

The text of the report (pdf), obtained in advance of its release by *The Cable*, backs up that assertion.

"The United States raised new compliance issues since the 2005 Report (the most recent one before today)," the document states. "The United States considered several of these to have been closed. A number of the remaining issues highlighted the different interpretations of the parties about how to implement the complex inspection and verification provisions of the START Treaty."

"We think [the compliance report] actually tells a good story about Russia and its willingness to resolve compliance and verification issues and should help ratification," said Gottemoeller, citing a now-resolved dispute over re-entry vehicles as one example of constructive U.S.-Russia dealing over compliance.

The *Post's* story focuses on the report's criticisms of Russian compliance with two agreements not directly related to START: the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention.

"It remains unclear," the report states, "whether Russia has fulfilled its BWC obligations." Later on, it reads: "The United States is unable to ascertain whether Russia's CWC declaration is complete... and whether Russia is complying with the CWC-established criteria for destruction and verification of its CW."

On this point, Gottmoeller acknowledged that there are some outstanding questions about what biological and chemical weapons programs were left over from the Soviet Union and said that the Russian government is working with oversight bodies to resolve open questions, but that is not directly related to START.

A State Department official, speaking on background, noted the irony of GOP senators worrying about compliance and verification while stalling on ratification of the new treaty. Since the old START agreement expired last December, all U.S. personnel working to monitor Russian nuclear stockpiles have been removed and until the new treaty is ratified, there isn't any verification at all.

"We need a treaty to comply with," the official said. "Until the new treaty enters into force, we don't know what they are doing."

This official also sought to correct the record about what State sees as another misleading criticism of the department's actions on START -- that the administration believes Russian cheating, if it were discovered, would not be a big deal.

That line of argument stemmed from a recent congressional hearing where Pentagon official James Miller said, "Because the United States will retain a diverse triad of strategic forces, any Russian cheating under the treaty would have little effect on the assured second-strike capabilities of U.S. strategic forces."

The State Department official said that Miller's remark doesn't mean cheating isn't a big concern.

"As far as State is concerned, cheating in any form would be a huge issue... so it absolutely would be something we would take very seriously."

http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/07/28/state_department_russia_was_not_cheating_on_start#

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Miami Herald

Wednesday, July 28, 2010

US Official Says Nuclear Treaty Disputes Lingered

By ROBERT BURNS, Associate Press (AP) National Security Writer

WASHINGTON -- U.S. complaints about Russian compliance with the 1991 START nuclear arms control treaty had not been resolved when the pact expired last year, but the disputes never amounted to allegations of cheating, a senior administration official said Wednesday.

Rose Gottemoeller, chief U.S. negotiator of the newly completed follow-on START treaty, said in an interview that the most significant compliance issues were settled before negotiations began.

"We solved a whole load of problems in the last two years or so," she said.

Gottemoeller's remarks appeared designed to rebut opposition to the treaty in the Senate, where it has attracted strong criticism from some Republicans. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee had hoped to vote on the measure before its August recess, but there now is a chance the treaty won't get a Senate vote until after the November elections.

Gottemoeller is scheduled to testify on New START before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday.

Meanwhile, seven former commanders of U.S. strategic nuclear forces endorsed the treaty in a letter to key senators Wednesday. Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also favor it.

In their letter, the former commanders said "there is little concern today about the probability of a Russian nuclear attack." The treaty, they wrote, sustains limits on Russian forces while allowing the U.S. to make needed reductions in its own forces.

President Barack Obama considers the pact a milestone for U.S.-Russian relations, but some Republicans in Congress have raised doubts about the treaty's value. Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed the pact in April.

When disagreements over implementing the START treaty arose they were handled by a special U.S.-Russia dispute resolution commission. None ever rose to the status of an alleged violation, Gottemoeller said.

Of the compliance disputes that remained when the 1991 treaty expired, "these were minor issues that went away when START went out of force," she said, adding there were "some concerns that we had about them, some concerns that they had about us."

The most significant disputes, like movement of Russian SS-27 mobile missile launchers and U.S. inspection of re-entry vehicles aboard certain Russian missiles, were resolved, Gottemoeller said.

"We put our priority on resolving the main issues," she said.

Gottemoeller said neither side accused the other of violating provisions of START at any point.

Senate ratification of New START initially seemed certain, but Republicans, led by Sen. Jon Kyl, R-Ariz., have questioned whether the administration has committed sufficient resources to maintaining the remaining U.S. strategic nuclear arsenal - missiles aboard long-range bombers and submarines, and land-based missiles.

Also in question is whether New START constrains U.S. options for improving its missile defenses.

Another potential problem for the administration is the Senate's request for the written record of the yearlong negotiations between the U.S. and Russia. The administration has balked, saying that could limit its ability to maneuver in future negotiations.

The State Department on Wednesday released an unclassified version of a compliance report to Congress, the first such assessment of compliance on a range of arms control treaties since 2005.

Republicans had pressed for details on Russia's treaty compliance record.

Gottemoeller said the unresolved disputes cited in the new State Department report have no practical bearing on the New START treaty because all those disputes have been dropped. Nor should those disputes raise questions about Russia's reliable implementation of arms agreements, she said.

In releasing the report, State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said that throughout the life of the 1991 START treaty, Russia was in compliance with the pacts' "central limits."

The released report is a condensed 95-page version of a classified, more detailed document submitted to Congress. The document said implementation of the 1991 treaty was successful, but added that "a number of long-standing compliance issues that were raised" in a U.S.-Russia dispute resolution commission remained unresolved when the treaty expired Dec. 5, 2009.

The report did not describe any of the unresolved issues. Gottemoeller said both sides had agreed to keep them confidential. She described the disputes as minor, technical matters.

The State Department report also said it was unclear whether Russia fulfilled its obligations as a signatory to the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention, which prohibits development, production and storage of biological agents or toxins of types not used for peaceful purposes.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2010/07/28/1750709/us-russia-nuclear-arms-treaty.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

U.S. Dept. of State

The New START Treaty

Rose Gottemoeller, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Verification, Compliance, and Implementation
Statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee
Washington, DC
July 29, 2010

As prepared

Chairman Levin, Senator McCain, and members of the Committee, I want to thank you for this opportunity to appear before you. I am honored to be here to provide my perspective as chief negotiator of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, also known as the New START Treaty. I'm also pleased to be joined by Dr. Ted Warner, who served on the delegation as Secretary Gates' representative and as one of my deputies. We share a strong belief that the New START Treaty will make our country more secure, and we urge the Senate to provide its advice and consent to ratification. At the conclusion of my remarks, I will be pleased to respond to your questions.

I believe there is every reason for the Senate to provide its advice and consent to ratification of the New START Treaty. The Treaty is a continuation of the international arms control and nonproliferation framework that the United States has worked hard to foster and strengthen for the last 50 years. It will provide ongoing transparency and predictability regarding the world's two largest nuclear arsenals, while preserving our ability to maintain the strong nuclear deterrent. Indeed, this treaty imposes no constraint on U.S. efforts to modernize its nuclear enterprise or develop and deploy the most effective missile defenses possible to protect U.S. national security and the security of our allies and friends.

A little over a year ago, the Administration set out to negotiate the New START Treaty with the goal of replacing the expiring START Treaty with a new agreement for each Party to reduce and limit its strategic offensive arms. I want to underscore that the focus of these negotiations from beginning to end was strategic offensive arms. We were also determined to move beyond Cold War mentalities and chart a fresh beginning in our relations with Russia. The 2010 Nuclear Posture Review concluded that the United States could sustain a stable deterrent with significantly fewer deployed warheads and strategic delivery vehicles than permitted under earlier arms control agreements. It further recognized that we need to cooperate with Russia as our partner to meet these threats and other global challenges.

The New START Treaty represents a significant step forward in building a stable, cooperative relationship with Russia. But this Treaty is not just about Washington and Moscow. It advances the security of the entire world. By demonstrating that we are living up to our obligations under Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), we enhance our credibility to convince other governments to help strengthen the international nonproliferation regime and confront proliferators.

The New START Treaty will enhance U.S. national security by stabilizing the strategic balance between the United States and the Russian Federation at lower levels of nuclear forces. The New START Treaty preserves the United States' right to determine our own force structure, giving us the flexibility to deploy and maintain our strategic nuclear forces in a way that best serves U.S. national security interests. As long as nuclear weapons exist, the United States will maintain a safe, secure, and effective arsenal to deter any adversary and protect our allies.

To those who may have concerns regarding alleged back-room deals during the Treaty negotiations, let me state unequivocally today on the record before this Committee, as I have done previously before the Foreign Relations Committee, that there were no/no secret deals made in connection with the New START Treaty; not on missile defense or any other issue. Everything we agreed to is in the Treaty documents transmitted to the Senate on May 13. I also want to make clear that Article XV of the Treaty authorizes the Bilateral Consultative Commission to make changes in the Protocol without resorting to the Treaty amendment procedures only where such changes do not affect substantive rights or obligations under the Treaty. A similar provision was contained in, and successfully implemented under, the START Treaty.

Regarding the recently released 2010 Compliance Report, I want to point out that Russia was in compliance with START's central limits during the Treaty's life span. Moreover, the majority of compliance issues raised under START were satisfactorily resolved. Most reflected differing interpretations on how to implement START's complex inspection and verification provisions.

Let me speak briefly about verification of the Treaty. Verification and the State Department's recent verifiability assessment address the larger questions related to whether the United States could detect, in a timely manner, if Russia was preparing to move beyond the limits of the Treaty, or were cheating in a significant way on the Treaty well before such an attempt became a threat to U.S. national security. In addition, the verification regime will enable the United States to detect other activities inconsistent with the Treaty that, while they may not present an immediate risk to U.S. national security, could, if undetected, lead to a situation in which U.S. national security would be at risk. Last week, General Chilton testified before this committee that he agreed with this assessment, stating that the "New START retains sufficient flexibility in managing our deterrent forces to hedge against technical or geopolitical surprise." Dr. Miller also agreed, adding that, under New START, the United States is "postured well to first deter cheating, but then to minimize the significance should it occur." These assessments are based on the ability under the New START Treaty of the United States to retain a diverse triad of strategic forces, and in particular the fact that the survivability and response capabilities of strategic submarines and heavy bombers would be unaffected even by large-scale cheating.

It is important that the Department of State's verifiability assessment not be confused with Intelligence Community monitoring confidences. The Intelligence Community's monitoring efforts provide evidence, along with other inputs such as legal interpretations, information gathered from other sources, and compliance analysis, which contribute to the verification process.

New START's verification measures are designed to ensure that each Party is able to verify the other's compliance with the central limits in the Treaty, including:

- No more than 700 deployed ICBMs, deployed SLBMs, and deployed heavy bombers;
- No more than 1,550 warheads emplaced on deployed ICBMs and deployed SLBMs and counted for deployed heavy bombers; and
- No more than 800 deployed and non-deployed ICBM launchers, deployed and non-deployed SLBM launchers, and deployed and non-deployed heavy bombers.

The obligations and prohibitions of the New START Treaty are different from those in START, reflecting lessons learned from 15 years of implementing the START Treaty. The differences also reflect the spirit of the Moscow Treaty, by permitting each Party the flexibility to determine for itself the configuration of its strategic forces at the reduced levels of delivery vehicles and deployed warheads established in this Treaty. Like START, the New START Treaty contains extensive verification provisions that promotes strategic stability by ensuring transparency and predictability regarding U.S. and Russian strategic nuclear forces and confidence that the Russian Federation does not exceed the Treaty's limits throughout its ten-year term.

The START Treaty's verification regime was tailored to the specific obligations of the START Treaty, while the New START verification provisions are tailored to the specific obligations of the new treaty. The Treaty's

verification regime was designed to be effective while at the same time reducing the implementation costs and the disruption to operations at U.S. and Russian military facilities subject to the Treaty as compared with the original START Treaty. The regime is based on an extensive set of data exchanges and timely notifications regarding all strategic offensive arms and facilities covered by the Treaty, two types of on-site inspections, exhibitions, locational restrictions, and additional transparency measures, including the use of unique identifiers on each ICBM, SLBM, and heavy bomber. Although telemetry from missile flight tests is not required to verify the provisions of the New START Treaty, the Treaty includes provisions regarding the exchange of some telemetric information as a means of enhancing transparency and predictability.

Deterrence of cheating is a key part of the assessment of verifiability, and is strongest when the probability of detecting significant violations is high, the benefits to cheating are low, and the potential costs are high. We assess that this is the case for Russia cheating under the New START Treaty.

During the negotiation of the New START Treaty, negotiators on both sides drew on the lessons learned from START implementation. Both sides benefited from having experienced START Treaty inspectors serving on their respective delegations. Much was learned over the 15 years in which the START Treaty verification regime was implemented, and the United States and Russia sought to take advantage of that knowledge in formulating the verification regime for the new Treaty – seeking to maintain elements which proved useful, to include new measures where necessary, improve those measures that were an unnecessary drag on our strategic forces, and eliminate those that were not essential for verifying the obligations of the New START Treaty.

Mr. Chairman, as Secretary Clinton stated in her testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and in a similar statement made to this committee: “The choice before us is between this treaty and no treaty governing our nuclear-security relationship with Russia, between this treaty and no agreed verification mechanism on Russia's strategic nuclear forces, between this treaty and no legal obligation for Russia to maintain its strategic nuclear forces below an agreed level. We cannot turn a blind eye to Russian nuclear force developments, which would be a step in the wrong direction from our burgeoning relationship with Russia.” Secretary Gates noted that the Treaty “has the unanimous support of America’s military leadership;” Admiral Mullen said that the “conclusion and implementation of the New START Treaty is the right thing for us to do;” General Chilton reminded us that, “Without New START, we would rapidly lose some of our insight into Russian strategic nuclear force developments and activities, and our force modernization planning and hedging strategy would be more complex and more costly” and Secretary Chu testified that “the New START Treaty will serve the interests of the United States without jeopardizing our ability to sustain the safety, security and effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile.” The entire Administration is united behind this treaty.

Mr. Chairman, in sum, I believe that the New START Treaty is in the national security interests of the United States, is the right treaty for today and the coming years, and will restore the transparency and predictability that START provided while it was in force. The combination of improved U.S. understanding of Russian strategic forces resulting from the implementation of the START Treaty, U.S. NTM capabilities, the New START Treaty’s verification provisions, and a favorable posture deterring cheating or breakout, results in a New START Treaty that is effectively verifiable.

Thank you and I will be happy to respond to any questions.

<http://www.state.gov/t/vci/rls/145336.htm>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

MSNBC.com

Republican Concerns Could Stall START Treaty

By Reuters

July 29, 2010

WASHINGTON (Reuters) -Senate Republicans voiced objections on Thursday to the new START nuclear arms treaty with Russia, raising concerns that could delay efforts to hand President Barack Obama a foreign policy victory ahead of the November elections.

At a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, Republicans said the accord could impede U.S. plans for an anti-missile defense system and pressed the Obama administration to release the full treaty negotiating record to answer their questions.

"We originally were told that there would be no references to missile defense in the treaty and no linkage drawn between offensive and defensive weapons," Senator John McCain said, adding that one section included a "clear, legally binding limitation on our missile defense options."

"Why did the administration agree to this language after saying they would do no such thing?" he asked. "We're insisting on an opportunity to review the negotiating record for ourselves, specifically those parts dealing with the ambiguous references to missile defense."

With U.S. mid-term congressional campaigns heating up ahead of the November 2 vote, some Republican groups have moved to put the START treaty on the broader national agenda, hoping to use the issue along with healthcare to fire up voters against Obama's Democrats.

Mitt Romney, a potential 2012 Republican presidential contender, called the treaty Obama's "worst foreign policy mistake yet" in a Washington Post opinion piece. Heritage Action for America, a conservative group, is rallying opposition to the treaty with an online petition.

Assistant Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller, the chief negotiator for the treaty, told the Armed Services Committee that the new START would "enhance U.S. national security by stabilizing the strategic power between the United States and the Russian Federation at lower levels of nuclear forces."

"The choice before us is between this treaty and no treaty governing our ... nuclear security relationship with Russia, between this treaty and no agreed verification mechanism on Russia's strategic nuclear forces," she said.

CUTS IN WARHEADS, LAUNCHERS

Under the treaty, each side agreed to reduce the number of deployed nuclear warheads to no more than 1,550 within seven years, about 30 percent lower than the 2002 Moscow Treaty on nuclear weapons.

The sides also would limit their deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine ballistic missiles and heavy bombers to no more than 700.

Gottemoeller resisted pressure to provide lawmakers with the full treaty negotiating record, saying it had been done only rarely before, generally to clarify the treaty after its approval and not as part of the ratification process.

She said the treaty would not impair U.S. plans for an anti-missile defense system. The only prohibition on missile defense in the treaty bars both sides from converting ballistic missile launchers for use as defensive missile launchers.

Administration officials have testified that is cheaper -- by about \$20 million -- to build a launcher for a defensive missile than to convert an offensive launcher for use with missile defense.

They also have questioned the prudence of placing defensive missiles at an intercontinental ballistic missile site, where a launch of defensive missiles in a tense situation could be misconstrued by Russia as an attack.

Although the Armed Services Committee holds hearings on the treaty, it is the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that ultimately will vote on whether to send the treaty to the full Senate for a vote.

That vote could come as early as next week. Senator John Kerry, who chairs the Foreign Relations Committee, has put the treaty on the panel's agenda for August 3.

Democrats, who are expected to see their House and Senate majorities shrink in the November elections, have been pushing for a vote on the New START treaty before the end of the year. The treaty needs 67 of 100 votes in the U.S. Senate for ratification.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/38474176/>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

No Evidence Of Russian Cheating On START I - State Department

30 July 2010

The United States does not believe Russia cheated on its obligations under the 1991 strategic arms reduction treaty, a State Department official said.

Rose Gottemoeller, assistant secretary of state for the verification, compliance and implementation and chief negotiator on the new START treaty, said the State Department is confident that Russia will abide by the new treaty when it is ratified.

Her comments came in response to U.S. media speculation on a State Department report on treaty compliance over the past five years that allegedly pointed to disputes between the United States and Russia over compliance and verification mechanisms.

A number of media outlets said this spelt danger for the new START treaty that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is expected to vote on next week.

Gottemoeller said nothing in the report accuses Russia of cheating or undermines the Obama administration's confidence that the new treaty can be enforced.

"Cheating implies intent to undermine a treaty. There's no history of cheating on the central obligations of START; there's a history of abiding by the treaty," Gottemoeller said.

"Generally the record for the major conventions is a good one. With regard to START, the Russians have been very serious and it has been a success."

The new START treaty was signed on April 8 in Prague, replacing the START 1 treaty that expired in December 2009. The new pact obligates both nations to cap their fielded strategic nuclear weapons to 1,550 warheads, while the number of deployed and non-deployed delivery vehicles must not exceed 800 on either side.

The Russian and U.S. presidents have agreed that the ratification processes should be simultaneous.

The State Department report, entitled Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and Commitments, says Moscow had remained within the "central limits" of the now-defunct 1991 START pact.

"Notwithstanding the overall success of START implementation, a number of long-standing compliance issues" persisted until the treaty's expiration last December, according to the document.

Gottemoeller told Foreign Policy magazine the report neither indicates Moscow was "cheating" under the 1991 pact nor places in question the U.S.'s ability to monitor Russian compliance with its successor.

As for questions raised in the report over Russia's compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention, she said they were not specifically relevant to the nuclear treaties, but Moscow is working with implementing organizations for those pacts to address concerns.

"It remains unclear," the State Department said, "whether Russia has fulfilled its BWC obligations."

One critic of New START argued it could hamper the U.S. ability to improve its missile defense system.

Senator Jim DeMint (R-S.C.) wrote in the National Review that "the treaty favors Russia when it comes to tactical nuclear weapons, which are developed for use on the battlefield."

"It's no secret that the Russians do not want the United States or her allies to be protected by missile defense, and believe that New START forbids further development of missile defense," he said.

WASHINGTON, July 30 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100730/160011577.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Xinhua News Agency – China

27 July 2010

Russia Goes Ahead With Iran's Nuke Power Plant Project

MOSCOW, July 27 (Xinhua) -- Preparations for the launch of Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant are proceeding as scheduled and the plant's first stage will be finished late August, a Russian energy company said Tuesday.

The construction of the Bushehr nuclear power plant does not fall under the UN sanctions against Iran, said Sergei Kiriienko, head of Russia's state-run atomic energy corporation Rosatom.

"The project is being built according to schedule. Questions regarding the exact dates should be referred to the Iranian side," Kiriienko was quoted as saying by the Interfax news agency.

"The preparations are continuing according to plan, plus or minus a few days, which will not make any serious difference," Kiriienko said.

The preparations for the launch of the plant would fall into three stages, Kiriienko said.

The preparatory work for the first stage must be finished in late August as planned, involving placing nuclear fuel in the reactor compartment, he said.

The second stage will involve loading fuel directly into the reactor, and the third stage will bring the capacity of the plant to the minimal controllable level, the official said.

Bushehr project has never come under sanctions, he said, noting that the project's peaceful nature does not arouse any doubts.

Russia would participate in all tenders to build nuclear power plants abroad, where the terms are acceptable for Russia, he said.

Iran handed over the Bushehr project, started by German firm Siemens in the 1970s, to Russia in 1995. The launch of Bushehr has been postponed repeatedly in recent years.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has announced that the construction of the Bushehr nuclear plant would be completed by August this year.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-07/27/c_13417871.htm

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

United Press International (UPI).com

July 27, 2010

Mattis: Iran Is 'Destabilizing Force'

WASHINGTON, July 27 (UPI) -- Marine Corps Gen. James N. Mattis, up for appointment as head of U.S. Central Command, said Tuesday Iran is the greatest destabilizing force in that region.

Mattis told the Senate Armed Services Committee Iran's nuclear ambitions make it a long-term threat in the region.

"[Iran] continues to threaten regional and global stability by pursuing a nuclear weapons program and by funding and arming militant proxies throughout the region," he said. "The task of Central Command will be to counter the Iranian regime's destabilizing activities, to deter the regime from aggression, and to work in concert with our partners in the region to advance our shared security interests."

Mattis would succeed Gen. David Petraeus, who left the post to head up the war effort in Afghanistan following the dismissal of Gen. Stanley McChrystal. Mattis serves as both the NATO supreme allied commander for transformation and commander of U.S. Joint Forces Command in Norfolk, Va.

"The wars we are fighting require highly integrated military efforts from the highest to the lowest levels," Mattis said in his opening remarks. "If confirmed, I will make every effort to work closely with civilian and military leaders charged with leading our operations, and to ensure they are fully resourced in a coherent and comprehensive manner."

Mattis told the senators consistency is needed in fighting al-Qaida and other extremist groups throughout the Central Command region, which includes all U.S. military operations in the Middle East and Central Asia, and beyond.

"The stakes there are high," he said. "The military component in our strategy in Afghanistan is sound, and requires firm execution. I support it fully.

"I believe that by steadfastly executing our strategy, we will win in Afghanistan. Nothing about the mission will be easy. We recognize that achieving our goals in Afghanistan requires also the enduring commitment of the international community."

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2010/07/27/Mattis-Iran-is-destabilizing-force/UPI-42571280286502/

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Xinhua News Agency - China

July 28, 2010

Iran's Nuclear Armament Option Not Acceptable: German FM

ISTANBUL, July 28 (Xinhua) -- German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle said here on Wednesday that Iran's nuclear armament option was unacceptable.

The German foreign minister made the statement at a joint press conference with his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu at Ciragan Palace in Istanbul.

Westerwelle stressed: "We want to encourage Iran to continue talks on their nuclear program." "Our aim is to bring the Iranian government to the negotiations table in cooperation and transparency. Iran surely has the right to possess nuclear power for civilian purposes but they have to fulfill their international obligations," he added.

As to a question on Hamas, Westerwelle said, they did not regard Hamas as a political group, adding: "Hamas does not place a distance between violence and itself."

In regard to a question on terrorist organization PKK, Westerwelle said, Germany would not accept any form of terrorist activities.

He said that hundreds of people died in terror acts in Turkey in recent years. "We share the sorrow of Turkey. We are determined to work together against terror. No one should expect us to accept or tolerate terror acts."

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said at the press conference that Turkey expected more active cooperation from Germany in countering terrorism.

"Many Turkish people live in Germany and many Germans live in Turkey. These two countries should have more strategic dialogue. We have decided to establish a strategic dialogue mechanism," Davutoglu said.

He said they also discussed fight against terrorism in the meeting. "We expect our friends to have cooperation with us against acts of terrorism that kill citizens, police officers and innocent people."

Unfortunately, he noted, "most important financial and logistic sources are in Europe. We expect our European friends and especially Germany to cooperate more actively in combating terrorism."

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-07/28/c_13419604.htm

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Thaindian News – Thailand

Iran To Rethink Making 20 Percent Enriched Uranium

Thursday, July 29, 2010

By Indo-Asian News Service (IANS)

Tehran, July 29 (IANS) Iran Thursday said it is ready to rethink its uranium enrichment to 20 percent level if it will be supplied with fuel for Tehran research reactor.

"We have repeatedly stated that we continue 20 percent uranium enrichment on a needs-only basis," Head of Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran (AEOI) Ali Akbar Salehi was quoted as saying by Xinhua, citing a local TV interview.

"If our (nuclear fuel) needs are met through other means, we are prepared to review domestic fuel provision," he said.

"Enrichment is our right under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) articles, but this does not mean that we want to enrich all our reserves to 20 percent, since the Tehran reactor's fuel needs are limited," Salehi added.

Turkey, Iran and Brazil signed an agreement May 17, dubbed Tehran declaration, in which Iran committed itself to giving 1,200 kg of its 3.5 percent enriched uranium to Turkey in exchange for 20 percent enriched uranium it will receive from Western countries to be used as fuel in the nuclear research reactor in Tehran.

Western countries are pushing for multi-dimensional sanctions against Iran over its persistence on pursuing its sensitive nuclear programme. Tehran insists that its nuclear programme is "peaceful" and aims at energy production for civilian use.

http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/politics/iran-to-rethink-making-20-percent-enriched-uranium_100404095.html

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Global Security Newswire

Israel to Dispatch Nuclear-Armed Subs, Report Says

Thursday, July 29, 2010

A recent report said Israel intends to field nuclear-armed Dolphin-class submarines along the Iranian coastline, the Xinhua News Agency reported Monday (see *GSN*, July 8).

Experts widely suspect Israel of arming the German-made submarines with nuclear-capable cruise missiles. Israel is widely believed to possess nuclear weapons, but Jerusalem has neither confirmed nor denied its possession of an atomic arsenal.

"Submarines are very important to Israel. There are rumors overseas that they are equipped for nuclear second strikes but I don't think anyone intelligent can tell you any more than that," said Dan Schueftan, head of the National Security Studies Center at Haifa University in Israel.

Germany provided Israel with three Dolphin-class vessels between 1998 and 2000, and is set to deliver at least two more within the next two years. There are reports that Jerusalem is trying to knock down the price on a sixth submarine, according to Xinhua (see *GSN*, Jan. 19).

"Israel has never spoken about the role of its submarines, whether they are for patrol or attack missions, but internationally they are thought as being part of Israel's deterrence," said Yiftah Shapir, who heads the Military Balance Project at Tel Aviv University's Institute for National Security Studies.

"From my perspective it doesn't matter what their role is. As soon as it's believed to be one or the other then that's what counts," Shapir said (David Harris, Xinhua News Agency, July 26).

Israel yesterday denied it was in talks with Germany over buying a sixth submarine, United Press International reported.

"Following press reports, we wish to clarify that there are no negotiations with Germany for the purchase by Israel of an additional submarine," the Israeli Defense Ministry statement said in a prepared statement. "The question of a discount (by Germany) for such an acquisition is therefore not relevant."

German government spokesman Ulrich Wilhelm said "no concrete negotiations between Israel and Germany about a sixth submarine" were occurring. However, he declined to specify whether less official talks had taken place or whether Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and German Chancellor Angela Merkel had discussed the matter during a recent telephone conversation (United Press International, July 28).

http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20100728_4592.php

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Straits Times – Singapore
Jul 30, 2010

Iran Ready For Nuclear Talks

By Agence France-Presse (AFP)

TEHERAN - IRAN said on Friday it was ready for immediate talks with the United States, Russia and France over an exchange of nuclear fuel and added that it was also against stockpiling higher enriched uranium.

The comments by the Islamic republic's atomic chief Ali Akbar Salehi came as Washington decided to fan out across Asia, Middle East and the United Arab Emirates asking its partners to levy tighter sanctions against Teheran.

'We are ready even in the next few days to start negotiations with the other parties' over the fuel swap, Mr Salehi was quoted as saying by Mehr news agency.

He said talks on this issue with the so-called Vienna group comprising the United States, Russia and France will be held in Vienna, where the UN atomic watchdog the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is based.

The Vienna group has raised questions about a proposal forwarded by Iran, Brazil and Turkey concerning a fuel swap.

The May 17 proposal, known as the Teheran Declaration, stipulates that Teheran send 1,200 kilogrammes of its low-enriched uranium (LEU) to Turkey in return for 20 per cent high-enriched uranium to be supplied at a later date.

http://www.straitstimes.com/BreakingNews/World/Story/STIStory_559936.html

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Yonhap News – South Korea
30 July 2010

China Urged To Press N. Korea To Stop Provocations, Abide By Denuclearization Pledge: State Dept.

By Hwang Doo-hyong

WASHINGTON, July 29 (Yonhap) -- The United States Thursday urged China to use its leverage on North Korea and faithfully implement international sanctions to persuade the reclusive communist state to stop provocations and abide by its denuclearization pledge.

"We would expect China to live up to its international obligations," State Department spokesman Philip Crowley said. "But at the same time, we want to see China use its leverage with North Korea to encourage North Korea to move in a fundamentally different direction."

Crowley spoke in response to China's signing of a new economic cooperation agreement with North Korea earlier in the day even as Seoul, Washington and their allies step up efforts to sanction Pyongyang after the North's torpedoing of a South Korean warship.

"I'm not familiar with the agreement or its terms," Crowley said. "Clearly, China, as a neighbor of North Korea, has become an increasing factor in North Korea's economy. That's a matter for China and North Korea. However, China has responsibilities with respect to specific aspects of U.N. Security Council resolutions as they pertain to the areas of concern: our proliferation concern, our nuclear concerns in particular."

China, North Korea's staunchest communist ally and its primary source of food, fuel and other necessities, has taken the sting out of U.N. sanctions issued after North Korea's nuclear and missile tests early last year.

China is believed to fear any instability across its border, which could lead to a massive inflow of refugees. It also enjoys a buffer zone, which would vanish with a unified Korea led by South Korea and its ally, the U.S.

As a veto-wielding member of the U.N. Security Council, China early this month greatly diluted the council presidential statement condemning the attack on the warship Cheonan. The statement failed to directly blame North Korea for the March 26 sinking, which claimed the lives of 46 sailors.

The North denies involvement in the incident.

Robert Einhorn, the State Department's special adviser for nonproliferation and arms control, meanwhile, said that he will visit Beijing in late August to discuss sanctions on North Korea and Iran.

Einhorn, who doubles as the intra-government coordinator for implementation of sanctions on North Korea and Iran, also told the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee that Daniel Glaser, deputy assistant secretary of treasury for terrorist financing and financial crimes, will accompany him to China, South Korea and Japan early next week.

He lauded the European Union and several other Western countries for measures announced earlier this week to restrict oil and natural gas transactions with Iran as well as trade related to arms. The steps are in line with the new U.N. sanctions imposed on Iran last month for Tehran's refusal to abandon its suspected nuclear weapons program based on highly enriched uranium.

"We are very grateful that the European Union took the decision it took this week," Einhorn said. "It set some very high standards for sanctions. We will use that high standard in our discussions. Danny Glaser and I will be in Seoul and in Tokyo next week to see if Japan and South Korea could come up to that mark. We'll also go to China later in the month. It's important that China step up and recognize its international responsibilities here."

Crowley said that Einhorn and Glaser will visit Seoul Monday and Tuesday and then fly to Tokyo Tuesday before coming back home Wednesday.

Einhorn is also expected to visit Singapore and Malaysia next month, informed sources said, adding that most North Korean financial transactions are done through banks in China and some Southeast Asian countries.

Washington reportedly has found more than 100 North Korean accounts in foreign banks involved in illicit activities.

"This is something that we watch carefully," Crowley said Monday of the reports. "We're looking to identify front companies which help North Korea evade existing sanctions."

Crowley said last week that the U.S. will not only use existing measures like the Patriot Act, but will also establish "new executive authorities" to blacklist more "entities and individuals supporting proliferation, subjecting them to an asset freeze; new efforts with key governments to stop DPRK trading companies engaged in illicit activities from operating in those countries and prevent their banks from facilitating these companies' illicit transactions."

DPRK stands for North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The U.S. currently lists 21 North Korean entities and several individuals.

"It is to interrupt programs and funding that enable them to conduct these illicit activities: conventional arms exports, counterfeiting, drug trafficking," the spokesman said.

The U.S., however, does not intend to sanction foreign companies involved in illegal transactions with North Korea, just like the case of Iran sanctions, as such sanctions need legislation, a source said.

Any foreign banks refusing to sever business ties with the Iranian entities and individuals blacklisted will have U.S. financial institutions suspend ties with them, resulting in international financial institutions cutting off ties with the Iranians.

The U.S. will instead try to persuade the international community to voluntarily cut off ties with listed North Korean entities and individuals, the source said, citing the complex procedural measures to reverse any legislative actions similar to the case of the Banco Delta Asia in Macau.

Washington froze more than US\$25 million in North Korean accounts in Macau bank in 2005, designating it as an entity suspected of helping North Korea launder money it earned by circulating counterfeit \$100 bills called supernotes.

The U.S. lifted the freeze in early 2007 to entice the North to come back to the six-party talks on ending its nuclear weapons programs. Washington officials have said the freeze effectively cut off Pyongyang's access to the international financial system and dealt the nation a devastating blow.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2010/07/30/43/0301000000AEN20100730001100315F.HTML>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Bangkok Post - Thailand

N.Korean FM In Burma Amid Nuclear Worries

By Agence France-Presse (AFP)

July 29, 2010

North Korea's foreign minister arrived in Burma on Thursday for talks with the junta, an official said, amid Western concerns about possible nuclear cooperation between the two autocratic nations.

Pak Ui Chun landed in Rangoon, where he was expected to visit the Shwedagon Pagoda before travelling to the capital Naypyidaw on Friday to meet his counterpart Nyan Win, the Burma official said, asking not to be named.

Full details of Pak's schedule were not immediately available, but he was expected to stay in the military-run state until Sunday.

Burma severed ties with Pyongyang in 1983 following a failed assassination bid by North Korean agents on South Korea's then-president Chun Doo-Hwan during a visit to the Southeast Asian nation. The attempt left 21 people dead.

But the two countries branded "outposts of tyranny" by the United States have been rebuilding relations in recent years, resuming diplomatic ties in 2007.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton last week expressed worries about military ties between the two nations.

"We know that a ship from North Korea recently delivered military equipment to Burma and we continue to be concerned by the reports that Burma may be seeking assistance from North Korea with regard to a nuclear programme," she said during a visit to Hanoi.

In June the ruling junta denied allegations -- in a documentary produced by the Norwegian-based news group Democratic Voice of Burma -- that Burma had begun an atomic weapons programme with Pyongyang's help.

The documentary cited a senior army defector and years of "top secret material". It showed thousands of photos and testimony from defectors that it said revealed the junta's nuclear ambitions and a secret network of underground tunnels, allegedly built with North Korean assistance.

Burma is preparing for rare elections sometime later this year that critics have dismissed as a sham due to laws that have barred opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi from participating.

<http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/188480/n-korean-fm-in-burma-amid-nuclear-worries>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

London Guardian – U.K.

George Osborne: Trident Costs Will Be Met By Defence Budget

Defence secretary Liam Fox rebuked by chancellor, who says there are no exemptions for his budget

By Nicholas Watt in Delhi

Thursday, 29 July 2010

George Osborne delivered a rebuke to the defence secretary, Liam Fox, when he declared that the costs of Britain's new Trident nuclear deterrent will come from the main defence budget.

In a sign of the Tory's leadership's growing impatience with Fox, who has embarked on what Downing Street sources have dubbed as "freelance" missions, the chancellor said there could be no special accountancy exemptions for the defence budget.

Speaking to Bloomberg in New Delhi, Osborne said: "The Trident costs, I have made it absolutely clear, are part of the defence budget. All budgets have pressure. I don't think there's anything particularly unique about the Ministry of Defence. I have made it very clear that Trident renewal costs must be taken as part of the defence budget."

The chancellor's blunt remarks will be seen as something of a reprimand for Fox, who complained recently that his department was being asked to pay the £20bn costs of replacing Trident. Fox believes that the costs of replacing Trident should come directly from the Treasury because Britain's continuous-at-sea defence is a matter of national security.

The defence secretary went public with his concerns on 18 July when he told BBC 1's Andrew Marr Show: "There has always been an understanding that the [capital] budget for the nuclear deterrent came from outside the core defence budget. Running costs for the deterrent have always come from inside.

"That is something we are discussing in the run-up to the spending review.

To take the capital cost would make it very difficult to maintain what we are currently doing in terms of capabilities."

There have been tensions for some time between Fox and Osborne over Trident. The defence secretary, a committed Atlanticist with links to the Republican right, is a strong believer in delivering a like-for-like replacement of the four submarines that ensure Britain can launch a nuclear strike from beyond its shores at any time.

Osborne, with links to more moderate US figures than Fox, supports a replacement for Trident. But he is understood to be more open minded about finding a like-for-like replacement.

David Cameron said last month that there was "a case" for "bearing down" on the cost of the Trident programme.

The Treasury regards Fox's remarks as a classic example of ministerial lobbying ahead of a spending round. Osborne is due to outline the tightest spending squeeze in a generation in October.

One source said: "The costs of Trident have always come out of the MoD budget. We know what Liam is up to. But does he expect that the department of culture will pay for Trident?"

The MoD has been promised it will be treated more lightly than other departments in October. But these reassurances are aimed at troops in Afghanistan.

The strong remarks by the chancellor are designed to stop Fox's public negotiations. But they also reflect growing impatience with the defence secretary in Nos 10 and 11 Downing Street.

There was irritation when he likened Afghanistan to a "broken 13th century country". But Fox provoked real fury in No 10 when he told the Sunday Times that Air Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup, the chief of defence staff, would retire when the strategic defence review has been completed by the end of this year.

Downing Street had agreed with Stirrup, who promised Gordon Brown he would serve an extra few years in his post, to retire at the end of the year. But Cameron felt Fox had been insensitive to Stirrup.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/jul/29/george-osborne-trident-defence-budget>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

London Evening Standard – U.K.

Defense Secretary Liam Fox Warns Over 'New Nuclear Arms Race'

30 July 2010

Defence Secretary Liam Fox today warned of the risk of a "new nuclear arms race" as he defended the renewal of Trident as the most cost-effective way of maintaining Britain's deterrent.

The Defence Secretary was speaking just hours after Chancellor George Osborne made clear in public for the first time that the Ministry of Defence will have to bear the full cost of replacing the UK's ageing nuclear submarines from within its core budget.

His decision represented a bitter defeat for Dr Fox, who was engaged in a behind-the-scenes battle with the Treasury over the costs of renewing the deterrent, which was traditionally funded from outside the MoD budget.

The Defence Secretary warned earlier this month that it would be "very difficult" to maintain the MoD's other capabilities if it was required to fund the estimated £20 billion capital cost of four new subs.

Although the cost would be spread over several years, experts estimate that it could consume up to £1.5 billion of the MoD's £36 billion annual budget at a time when savings are being demanded.

But Mr Osborne left no doubt he rejected Dr Fox's pleas, telling Bloomberg: "All budgets have pressure. I don't think there's anything particularly unique about the Ministry of Defence. I have made it very clear that Trident renewal costs must be taken as part of the defence budget."

The development sparked speculation that the MoD may be forced to scale back Trident, perhaps by cutting back to three subs.

Speaking to Metro newspaper, Dr Fox warned against complacency over the need for Britain to maintain its deterrent.

"Should Iran become a new nuclear weapon state, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Turkey would be likely to follow suit and we could see ourselves in a new nuclear arms race," the Defence Secretary warned.

"There are a lot of real dangers out there and I'm not sure people have really focused on them."

He played down suggestions that the like-for-like replacement of the ageing Trident subs planned by the previous Labour administration represented an extravagant use of public money.

"Gordon Brown and Tony Blair didn't choose this particular programme because it is the most expensive," he said. "They chose it because they thought it was the most cost-effective way of maintaining Britain's nuclear deterrent in the first half of this century."

Reducing the Trident fleet to three subs would put extreme pressure on the UK's policy of keeping one nuclear missile-armed craft at sea at all times, said Dr Fox.

"At current levels of technology, it is very hard to manage a continuous deterrent with three submarines rather than four," he explained.

The MoD received some protection in the autumn spending review - being ordered to draw up plans for cuts of between 10% and 20%, compared with the reductions of 25% to 40% facing most other departments.

But the concern within the armed forces will be that other projects will now have to be axed if the MoD does have to pay for Trident renewal at a time when it is already facing swingeing cuts.

Professor Malcolm Chalmers, of the Royal United Services Institute, said the MoD was already looking at whether it could afford two new aircraft carriers for the Royal Navy and new fast jets for the RAF, as well as considering Army manning levels.

"This increases the pressure to look at the timetable for Trident renewal," he said. "Delaying that timetable for five years would substantially lighten the pressure on the defence budget up to 2020."

The Scottish National Party called for Trident to be scrapped to preserve funding for the rest of the armed forces.

"Absorbing Trident into the core defence budget is unsustainable and would have a devastating impact for spending on conventional forces, which are already overstretched," said defence spokesman Angus Robertson. "The implications of this decision could not be more serious."

And Mr Osborne's decision was condemned by Commons Defence Committee member John Woodcock, Labour MP for Barrow and Furness where the submarines would be built.

"This decision will add to concern over the wider defence and security review that the Government is hell-bent on cutting budgets with a speed and brutality that is simply not in the country's long-term interests," he said.

But Dr Fox today said the blame for any pain should be laid at Labour's door.

"They left orders to which there was no money set aside," the Defence Secretary told Metro. "Now the sky is black over Whitehall with the sight of chickens coming home to roost. Here at the MoD we are having to make cuts to Labour's unfunded projects.

"There will be some increased investment in some areas but the economic train crash we inherited will inevitably mean reductions in other areas."

<http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/standard/article-23861626-defence-secretary-liam-fox-warns-over-new-nuclear-arms-race.do>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russia's Defense Spending To Rise By 60% By 2013 – Paper

30 July 2010

Russian defense spending will increase by 60 percent, to more than 2 trillion rubles (\$66.3 million) by 2013 from 1.264 trillion (\$42 million) in 2010, a leading Russian business daily said on Friday.

The Russian government made the relevant decision during a meeting on Thursday. The largest growth is planned for 2013, when the figure will rise by 0.5 trillion rubles (\$16.6 million), Vedomosti reported.

Konstantin Makiyenko from the Russian Center for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies (CAST) told the paper that the government is likely to spend more on the Navy, as well as the aviation and space industries.

The construction of advanced submarines, including Yasen and Borei class subs, and Bulava ballistic missiles, as well as the construction of three new Talwar class frigates, three Improved Kilo class subs and other vessels for the Russian Black Sea Fleet are likely to require the largest part of the planned spending, Makiyenko said.

The budgeted allocation should also consider spending on the construction of the first two Mistral class amphibious assault ships under a Russian-French deal, a Russian military plant manager told Vedomosti. This may account to about \$0.5 billion, he estimated.

Russia is currently in talks with France on the purchase of two Mistral class helicopter carriers and the construction of two others under a French license.

Besides this, Russia is planning to spend 80 billion rubles (\$2.65 billion) on 60 Su-family fighter jets starting 2010, and buy 26 MiG-29K Fulcrum-D carrier-based fighter jets, with the expected contract estimated at about 25 billion rubles (more than \$828 million), a military aircraft plant manager told the paper. The plans also include the purchase of 32 Su-34 Flanker fighter bombers under the 2008 contract (a single plane then cost more than 1.1 billion rubles (\$36.4 million), he said.

MOSCOW, July 30 (RIA Novosti)

http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100730/160003543.html

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Global Security Newswire

U.S. Faces Drop In Nuclear Forensics Capabilities, Report Says

Thursday, July 29, 2010

A report issued today by the National Research Council says the United States is facing continued reductions in its ability to determine the point of origin of material used in an act of nuclear terrorism, the *New York Times* reported (see *GSN*, Feb. 17).

“Although U.S. nuclear forensics capabilities are substantial and can be improved, right now they are fragile, underresourced and, in some respects, deteriorating,” according to the [report](#). “Without strong leadership, careful planning and additional funds, these capabilities will decline.”

The document is a summary of a classified report finished early this year on behalf of the Defense and Homeland Security departments and the National Nuclear Security Administration, which manages the national laboratories that help lead forensics activities.

Nuclear forensics specialists would study fallout and radioactive material deposited by an atomic or radiological "dirty bomb" blast to determine who made the weapon and who had set it off, according to the *Times*. That know-how has become increasingly important in the face of potential acts of nuclear terrorism against the United States, officials say.

The research council's panel of nuclear experts, though, took issue with federal agencies' handling of the program. While a number of departments have a role in forensics activities, the effort has been operated “without central authority and with no consensus on strategic requirements to guide the program,” the report says.

The complicated nature of the multiagency initiative, according to the experts, “hampers the program and could prove to be a major hindrance operationally.”

Other issues include the limited number of forensics specialists, the increasing age of the equipment and infrastructure used in the program and availability of sufficient funding, the report says. Its authors urged the government to provide the forensics effort with more money, improved planning, distinct leadership roles and drills that hew more closely to real-life scenarios.

Improvements at the federal level seem to have been made since a secret version of the report was submitted in January, said nuclear engineer Albert Carnesale, who led the panel.

However, “much work,” he stated, “remains to be done” (William Broad, *New York Times*, July 29).

http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20100729_7689.php

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Wall Street Journal

OPINION

July 29, 2010

How The CIA Got It Wrong On Iran's Nukes

In 2007, U.S. intelligence said Iran had stopped its nuclear weapons program. Analyst policy bias and disinformation from Iranian double agents may explain the mistake.

By EDWARD JAY EPSTEIN

In a stunning departure from a decade of assessments, the 2007 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iran declared: “We judge with high confidence that in fall 2003, Tehran halted its nuclear weapons program,” including “nuclear weapon design and weaponization work” and covert uranium enrichment. Even more astonishingly, it attributed this change to “increasing international scrutiny and pressure resulting from exposure of Iran’s previously undeclared nuclear work.” In other words, the threat of sanctions had ended that country’s surreptitious effort to obtain nuclear weapons.

This assessment suggested that further action against Iran was unnecessary. Unfortunately, as the Obama administration has now acknowledged, the NIE’s conclusion was dead wrong, costing us precious time in dealing with a serious threat.

The question remains, what caused such a disastrous mistake?

In 2007, there was still much the same mountain of evidence that led U.S. intelligence to conclude in the 2006 NIE with equally “high confidence” that Iran was secretly engaged in a nuclear weapons program. This evidence included verified reports that Iran had experimented with Polonium 210, a key ingredient in the trigger of early-generation nuclear bombs. And documents recovered from a stolen Iranian laptop described its efforts to fit a warhead in the nose cone of its Shahab 3 missile that would detonate at an altitude of 600 meters, which is too high for anything but a nuclear warhead to be effective.

The CIA had learned that Iran had most likely acquired a digital copy of a Chinese nuclear warhead design from the A.Q. Khan network. It also had monitored Iran’s crash program at Natanz to build a nuclear enrichment plant that could house up to 50,000 centrifuges.

Taken individually, these secret activities might have a nonnuclear explanation. For example, Iran claimed the purpose of its Polonium 210 experiments was merely to find a power source for an Iranian spacecraft (though Iran had no known space program at the time). Taken together, however, these efforts added up an inescapable conclusion: Iran was going nuclear.

What helped change this conclusion, in addition to the reorganization of U.S. intelligence following the report of the 9/11 Commission, was the receipt of new secret intelligence from Iran. This intelligence included convincing evidence that the facilities of the weapons-design program (code named “Project 111”) revealed on the stolen laptop had been closed down in 2003. Satellite photographs showed that buildings involved in the program had been bulldozed, communications intercepts indicated that scientists were no longer at the location, and a high-level defector from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, Ali-Reza Asgari, reported that Project 111 had stopped functioning.

Since the Iranians knew that we knew about Project 111 in 2004—the CIA had released technical drawings from it to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)—it was not surprising that the Revolutionary Guard, which runs Iran’s nuclear activities, shut it down. The issue was how to interpret the closure. Had the weapons-design work been quietly moved to avoid further scrutiny? Had it been closed because the warhead design had been solved with

the acquisition of the digital blueprints of the Chinese nuclear weapon? Or had Iran abandoned its quest for a nuclear weapon?

Deciphering a government's intentions is no easy task. It is especially difficult in a closed and terrorized society in which the U.S. has no diplomatic relations and little direct access. So it came down to espionage to illuminate the intentions behind the shut-down of Project 111.

Over the years, the CIA had recruited a network of Iranian agents who had, or claimed to have, access to the thinking of Iran's governing elite. These agents were in a position to cast light on Iranian nuclear intentions, and presumably they provided reports that supported the thesis that Tehran decided to end its nuclear weapons program. In any event, the authors of the 2007 NIE cited secret evidence to support the conclusion in its publicly released summary document that "Tehran's decision to halt its nuclear weapons program suggests it is less determined to develop nuclear weapons than we have been [previously] judging."

As we now know, the Revolutionary Guard was secretly completing the construction of new facilities in 2007. For example, at Fordo, 20 miles north of the holy city of Qom, it was reinforcing tunnels leading inside a mountain cavern designed to house a new uranium enrichment plant. This underground facility was only disclosed by Iran to the IAEA in late 2009. Clearly, Tehran was not abandoning its nuclear-weapons program.

What may have misled the CIA was a flaw in its espionage system. James Risen, the New York Times's national security reporter, explains in his book "State of War" that since the CIA had no embassy base in Iran, it communicated with its agents through state-of-the-art satellite transmissions, which it assumed were invisible to the Iranian security services.

Then, in 2004, a CIA communications officer accidentally included data in a satellite transmission to an agent that could be used to identify "virtually every spy the CIA had in Iran." This disastrous error was compounded, according to Mr. Risen, because the recipient of the transmission turned out to be a double-agent controlled by the Iranian security service.

So the Iranians knew the identity of all the agents that the CIA had arduously maneuvered into positions of access, and the technical methods by which the CIA communicated with them. The agents (or their replacements) in Iran would have little choice but to allow the Iranian Security service to control the information they provided the CIA. If so, the CIA may have been vulnerable to receiving misleading secret intelligence that Tehran had abandoned its nuclear ambitions in 2004

One Iranian agent who supplied information to the CIA is Shahram Amiri, who defected to the U.S. last year and re-defected back to Iran this month. He reportedly provided details about the termination of Project 111 that presumably dovetailed with other information we got from the CIA's compromised network. Iran now claims Mr. Amiri was a double agent all along.

Whether Iran controlled his secret reports to the CIA will be hotly debated for years to come. But willful blindness on our part should not be ignored. There were high-level people in the newly reorganized U.S. intelligence community who wanted to believe Iran was ending its quest for the bomb, and messages to the CIA from agents inside the country that diplomatic pressure was accomplishing this task fell on receptive ears.

Whether the erroneous conclusions in the 2007 NIE proceeded from Iranian deception or American self-deception, they undercut the case for taking more drastic action against Tehran. To the degree that other countries believed Iran had ended its nuclear program, they had little incentive to join us in imposing further sanctions.

To be sure, Iran could not conceal forever the evidence of its massive increase in uranium enrichment capabilities at Natanz, its missile testing, and its preparation of other underground facilities. In the interim, however, Iran managed to upgrade a large portion of its centrifuges and stockpile enough low-enriched uranium gas to manufacture, if it chose to further process it, the fuel for a nuclear bomb.

The moral of this sad spy story is that espionage is by its very nature a two-way game. Spies that are viewed as "assets" in a closed country can turn out to be very risky liabilities.

Mr. Epstein, an investigative reporter, is currently completing a book on the 9/11 Commission.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704913304575371942413920522.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Post
OPINION

New START: Too Modest To Merit Partisan Bickering

It's hard to believe that ratification of the New START treaty is turning into a pitched battle between some Republicans and the White House. It's even harder to believe that advocates for and against the treaty are trying to turn it into a stand-in for some imagined ideological contest over arms control and nonproliferation. It's not. This treaty is simply too unexceptional to carry such heavy freight.

The proposed cuts in nuclear arsenals are modest. The START I agreement cut deployed strategic nuclear weapons on both sides roughly 50 percent, from between 10,000 and 12,000 down to 6,000. The never-ratified (but generally abided-by) START II Treaty cut forces by another 50 percent, down to between 3,000 and 3,500. The 2002 Moscow Treaty made further deep cuts, bringing each side down to between 1,700 and 2,200. And New START? It would bring the number on both sides down to 1,550.

This is hardly the revolution that either side claims. Take the favorite argument of many New START proponents. They insist the treaty represents a critical commitment by the nuclear superpowers to abide by the grand bargain of the Non-Proliferation Treaty: The nuclear states move toward zero in exchange for the non-nuclear states forgoing the weapons altogether. Ratification is essential, they claim, to gaining greater worldwide support for nuclear nonproliferation efforts.

Really? If this causal logic existed, why wasn't this the happy result of the massive cuts in superpower arsenals from 1989 to 2002? Instead, throughout those years, Iran and North Korea, as well as Iraq, worked determinedly to build nuclear weapons, and neither India nor Pakistan felt constrained from testing their nuclear devices. It's hard to see why the smaller cuts proposed in New START should suddenly produce a global commitment to nonproliferation.

But it's equally hard for the treaty's critics to argue that these cuts represent a great leap toward zero and the end of the American nuclear deterrent. The three previous arms control treaties, all negotiated by Republican presidents, and two of which were ratified with full Republican Party support, cut deployed nuclear weapons from near 12,000 down to around 2,000 -- about 80 percent. If anyone deserves credit, or blame, for moving the United States in the direction of zero, the two Bushes deserve a lot more than President Obama.

The biggest issue consuming administration and Senate negotiators at the moment has nothing to do with the treaty per se. Sen. Jon Kyl and others are quite reasonably demanding that the administration put more money into modernizing the U.S. nuclear arsenal, since old warheads will become unreliable without major investments in the scientists and infrastructure behind them. As far as anyone can tell, the administration is trying to meet this request. And if it isn't, it should be. But the issue has nothing to do with New START's intrinsic strengths or weaknesses.

Some critics express concern that the treaty will limit American missile defense capabilities. The administration insists it will not, and senior officials are on record to that effect. But the real problem is not the treaty. It is the administration's ambivalent attitude toward missile defense in general. Yet the critics don't seem to be pressing for any new spending on missile defense -- as Kyl is doing on the issue of force modernization. If critics are truly worried about missile defense, that is where they should be focusing their efforts.

Finally, there is the question of U.S.-Russian relations. Some who oppose the treaty see it as the marquee item in the administration's "reset" policy. They rightly worry that this policy has given Russia too much at the expense of Eastern and Central European allies as well as Georgia and Ukraine. But here again, none of the critics has suggested making any linkage between the treaty and Russian policy toward its neighbors.

As to the treaty's virtues, there is little doubt that its negotiations improved the mood of relations between Moscow and Washington. This has had some payoff, both in Moscow's behavior and in the administration's. One suspects the administration has moved in a tougher direction on these other issues partly because it has the treaty in hand. Successful cooperation with Russia on one front has allowed it to press Russia harder on others. The administration already seems to be trying to reset the "reset," paying greater attention to worried Europeans and protesting Russia's continued occupation of Georgia. Would defeat of the treaty help Russia's neighbors? I doubt it. Those who want to fix problems with the reset should focus more intently on those problems. New START is not one of them.

Senators have an obligation to block a treaty that they believe may damage the national interest. And Democrats certainly have no right to lecture Republicans about supporting the president, since many of them just voted against his funding request for Afghanistan.

But on this issue, Republicans can and should take the high ground and set a better standard. The treaty has its problems -- in verification, where the Russians seem never to be entirely trustworthy, as well as in counting mechanisms -- and so did the treaties negotiated by the two Bush administrations. But New START is not so badly flawed as to warrant rejection.

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