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Emirates Business24|7/AFP  
Sunday, February 01, 2009

## **Obama, Pentagon Pull in Different Directions on No Nukes Goal**

President Barack Obama has set a goal of a "world without nuclear weapons" but the Pentagon is leaning in a seemingly contradictory direction: a modernized nuclear arsenal. The new administration has signaled its intent to swiftly engage Russia in negotiations on deeper cuts in their respective arsenals, with the ultimate aim of reducing them to zero. But US Defense Secretary Robert Gates has been leading another kind of charge, arguing in the final months of the previous administration that deeper cuts must be underpinned by production of a new warhead to replace an ageing nuclear stockpile.

"To be blunt, there is absolutely no way we can maintain a credible deterrent and reduce the number of weapons in our stockpile without either resorting to testing our stockpile or pursuing a modernization program," he said in an October 28 speech. Gates' speech at the Carnegie Endowment for Peace, says Jan Kristensen, an analyst at the Federation of American Scientists, was "an attempt to set a bottom line."

In Kristensen's view, the secretary's message was: "You can cut the numbers, but below that we need to have a strong capability, not only to maintain what we have, but also to build up if we need to." Kristensen added: "That is the big clash." Gates is not alone in his thinking. General Kevin Chilton, head of the US Strategic Command, warns that the United States is "living today off the largesse of an industrial base and a concept that was developed to support the Cold War which is many years in the rear view mirror right now."

A Pentagon advisory panel led by former defense secretary James Schlesinger warned this month of a weakening US deterrent. On the other hand, former secretaries of state Henry Kissinger and George Shultz, former defense secretary William Perry and former Senator Sam Nunn say that nuclear weapons are increasingly ineffective as a deterrent. They called for a "world free of nuclear weapons" in a Wall Street Journal op-ed piece two years ago.

The debate is likely to intensify over the next year as the new administration reviews the US nuclear posture. A bipartisan commission appointed by Congress is expected to weigh in April, and the Pentagon will undertake its own review later this year. The White House has already staked out its position, declaring on its website that "Obama and (Vice President Joe) Biden will set a goal of a world without nuclear weapons, and pursue it."

They will stop production of new nuclear weapons, seek agreement with Russia to take missiles off hair trigger alert, and seek "dramatic reductions" in their respective arsenals, it said. But, it also said, "Obama and Biden will always maintain a strong deterrent as long as nuclear weapons exist." Proponents of modernization argue that as weapons in the existing stockpile age, doubts about their safety and reliability will inevitably grow, thereby lessening their deterrent value.

They want Congress to fund the production of a new so-called "Reliable Replacement Warhead," which would incorporate safety features in its design to prevent accidental detonation or unauthorized use. The Congress, however, has been skeptical of the need for the RRW. Studies have shown no decline in the safety or reliability of the existing arsenal, and programs currently exist to extend their shelf life. Moreover, critics fear that the program will open the door to production of new types of nuclear weapons for military uses.

Those suspicions were fueled by a series of Bush administration proposals that suggested it was looking for ways to use nuclear weapons in a host of new scenarios. The proposals included mini nukes, precision low yield nuclear weapons, a "robust nuclear earth penetrator" for deeply buried targets, and concepts for using nuclear weapons to destroy chemical or biological weapons. So when the administration turned around and proposed the RRW to replace the weapons in the existing arsenal, Congress balked.

"There's lots of things that can be done to make real improvements to the existing stockpile, that should satisfy the concerns of those people who are genuinely concerned about safety and reliability," said Joseph Cirincione, president of the Ploughshares Fund, a non-profit that supports nuclear disarmament initiatives. "Only those who are

using this as an excuse to expand the nuclear arsenal won't be pleased," he said. Geoff Morrell, the Pentagon press secretary, said Gates has not had a chance yet to discuss his ideas on nuclear issues with Obama. "I think the secretary believes that, fundamentally, we have not done a good job of selling the importance of the Reliable Replacement Warhead," he said. "But these are discussions that he is going to have to have with his new boss."

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<http://www.business24-7.ae/articles/2009/2/pages/obama.pentagonpullindifferentdirectionsonnonukesgoal.aspx>

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AmericanDaily.com

Saturday, January 31, 2009

### **Obama Presidency: Terrorism, Organized Crime and International Affairs**

by Jim Kouri

America's new president—Barack Obama—will face more and more international problems and crises, according to law enforcement officials.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation forecasts that sub-national and non-governmental entities will play an increasing role in world affairs for years to come, presenting new "asymmetric" threats to the United States, according to a report submitted to the National Association of Chiefs of Police and other law enforcement and security organizations.

Although the United States will continue to occupy a position of economic and political leadership—and although other governments will also continue to be important actors on the world stage—terrorist groups, criminal enterprises, and other non-state actors will assume an increasing role in international affairs. Nation states and their governments will exercise decreasing control over the flow of information, resources, technology, services, and people.

Globalization and the trend of an increasingly networked world economy will become more pronounced within the next five years. The global economy will stabilize some regions, but widening economic divides are likely to make areas, groups, and nations that are left behind breeding grounds for unrest, violence, and terrorism. As corporate, financial, and nationality definitions and structures become more complex and global, the distinction between foreign and domestic entities will increasingly blur. This will lead to further globalization and networking of criminal elements, directly threatening the security of the United States.

Most experts believe that technological innovation will have the most profound impact on the collective ability of the federal, state, and local governments to protect the United States. Advances in information technology, as well as other scientific and technical areas, have created the most significant global transformation since the Industrial Revolution. These advances allow terrorists, disaffected states, weapons proliferators, criminal enterprises, drug traffickers, and other threat enterprises easier and cheaper access to weapons technology.

Technological advances will also provide terrorists and others with the potential to stay ahead of law enforcement countermeasures. For example, it will be easier and cheaper for small groups or individuals to acquire designer chemical or biological warfare agents, and correspondingly more difficult for forensic experts to trace an agent to a specific country, company, or group.

In the 21st Century, with the ready availability of international travel and telecommunications, neither crime nor terrorism confines itself territorially. Nor do criminals or terrorists restrict themselves, in conformance with the structure of our laws, wholly to one bad act or the other. Instead, they enter into alliances of opportunity as they arise; terrorists commit crimes and, for the right price or reason, criminals assist terrorists. Today's threats cross geographic and political boundaries with impunity; and do not fall solely into a single category of our law.

To meet these threats, we need an even more tightly integrated intelligence cycle. We must have extraordinary receptors for changes in threats and the ability to make immediate corrections in our priorities and focus to address those changes. And, we must recognize that alliances with others in law enforcement, at home and abroad, are absolutely essential.

Terrorism is the most significant threat to our national security. In the international terrorism arena, over the next five years, we believe the number of state-sponsored terrorist organizations will continue to decline, but privately sponsored terrorist groups will increase in number. However, the terrorist groups will increasingly cooperate with one another to achieve desired ends against common enemies. These alliances will be of limited duration, but such "loose associations" will challenge our ability to identify specific threats. Al-Qaeda and its affiliates will remain the most significant threat over the next five years.

The global Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) threat to the United States and its interests is expected to increase significantly in the near term. We expect terrorists to exploit criminal organizations to develop and procure WMD capabilities. Globalization will make it easier to transfer both WMD materiel and expertise throughout the world. The basic science and technologies necessary to produce WMD will be more easily understood. Similarly, raw materials will be more available and easier to obtain.

Violence by domestic terrorists will continue to present a threat to the United States over the next five years. The number of traditional left wing terrorist groups, typically advocating the overthrow of the US Government because of the perceived growth of capitalism and imperialism, have diminished in recent years. However, new groups have emerged that may pose an increasing threat. Right wing extremists, espousing antigovernment or racist sentiment, will pose a threat because of their continuing collection of weapons and explosives coupled with their propensity for violence.

The most significant domestic terrorism threat over the next five years will be the lone actor, or "lone wolf" terrorist. They typically draw ideological inspiration from formal terrorist organizations, but operate on the fringes of those movements. Despite their ad hoc nature and generally limited resources, they can mount high-profile, extremely destructive attacks, and their operational planning is often difficult to detect.

The threat from countries which consider the United States their primary intelligence target, adversary or threat either will continue at present levels or likely increase. The most desirable US targets will be political and military plans and intentions; technology; and economic institutions, both governmental and non-governmental. Foreign intelligence services increasingly will target and recruit US travelers abroad and will use nonofficial collection platforms, including increasing numbers of students, visitors, delegations, and emigres within the United States. Foreign intelligence activities are likely to be increasingly characterized by the use of sophisticated and secure communication technology to handle recruited agents and to be more likely than in the past to occur almost anywhere in the United States.

(This article is based on a lengthy report received by the National Association of Chiefs of Police. Only parts pertaining exclusively to law enforcement personnel and strategies were omitted.)

<http://americandaily.com/index.php/article/400>

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Forbes/Associated Press

## **US Targets Chinese, Iranian, N Korean Firms**

By FOSTER KLUG

2 February 2009

The Obama administration said Monday it has imposed sanctions on companies in North Korea, China and Iran for violating U.S. law aimed at stopping the spread of missiles and other weapons technology. The penalties were the first of their kind from the new U.S. administration and signaled a willingness to continue the Bush administration's tough stance on weapons proliferation.

The sanctions, while largely symbolic, come at a sensitive time in two key U.S. diplomatic efforts. The United States relies on Chinese leverage in international negotiations to persuade North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons programs. The Obama administration also needs the help of China, a veto-wielding member of the U.N. Security Council, to deter Iran from pursuing a nuclear weapon.

The measures were in the works for some time, but Obama officials signed off on them after the new president took office and announced them in Monday's Federal Register. They bar the companies from trade with the United States that they were not likely involved in. The Obama administration is currently reviewing its North Korea policy, but Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton has called the six-nation nuclear disarmament talks "essential." The United States heavily relies on China, the host of the negotiations and a country seen as having the most outside leverage with the North.

Those talks are stalled, however, and tensions are rising on the Korean peninsula as the North has made increasingly bellicose threats since President Barack Obama's inauguration. Pyongyang pledged on Monday to maintain its atomic weapons and warned of a possible nuclear war. On Friday, the North said it would scrap all peace accords with Seoul.

The North Korean companies are Korea Mining and Development Corporation, Mokong Trading Corporation and Sino-Ki. The Iranian companies are Shahid Bakeri Industrial Group and Shahid Hemmat Industrial Group. The Chinese companies are Dalian Sunny Industries and Bellamax.

<http://www.forbes.com/feeds/ap/2009/02/02/ap5995555.html>

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London Times  
January 30, 2009

## **North Korea Renounces Agreements with South Korea in Challenge to US**

Richard Lloyd Parry

North Korea renounced diplomatic and military agreements with South Korea today, a move that could lead to a new round of skirmishes along the border between the two states, in a calculated shot across the bows of the new US Government.

The country's state news agency announced the nullification of political and military agreements between Pyongyang and Seoul, including a deal governing the disputed sea border where two deadly naval confrontations have taken place in the past ten years.

"The confrontation between the north and the south in the political and military fields has been put to such extremes that the inter-Korean relations have reached the brink of a war," said the statement on the Korean Central News Agency. "The group of traitors has already reduced all the agreements reached between the north and the south in the past to dead documents. Under such situation it is self-evident that there is no need to remain bound to those north-south agreements."

Such bellicose language is common in North Korean state media, and today's statement does not revoke the most important agreement of all – the 1953 Armistice Agreement that brought a halt to the Korean War. But it represents a further increase of tension on the peninsula after a year of deteriorating relations.

The South Korean Government reacted calmly, saying that it would respond to any violations of territorial agreements, but reported no unusual military activity in border areas. "We hope that instead of threats of this kind, North Korea would come out to talk to us on matters of mutual concern and interest," Prime Minister Han Seung Soo said, on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos.

"I don't know what is behind their thinking, but I am sure that the inauguration of the Obama administration must have had some impact on the thinking of North Korea on global issues, as well as the issue of the Korean peninsula."

His two predecessors sought to engage with the North, but South Korea's current President, Lee Myung Bak, has adopted a much more detached policy, promising long-term economic aid only after Pyongyang has completely abandoned its nuclear weapons programme. North Korean indignation at such a suggestion has taken the form of personal invective against Mr Lee that is virulent even by its own standards.

"The US imperialist aggressor forces in south Korea are the root cause of all disasters of south Koreans and sycophancy and treachery are the mode of existence for a traitor," KCNA opined this week. "The Lee group is the

worst group of spiritless traitors meeting the brigandish demands of its imperialist master without having even an iota of national conscience and self-esteem.”

Since Mr Lee’s inauguration a year ago, Pyongyang has closed the border crossings, and suspended operations at a mountain resort visited by South Korean tourists, after one of them was shot dead by a North Korean soldier.

The uncertainty worsened in August when the North Korean leader, Kim Jong Il, disappeared from public view for three months. It was rumoured that he had suffered a stroke, although he now appears to have at least partly resumed his duties.

Progress in negotiating the dismantlement of North Korea’s nuclear weapons programme has slowed almost to a halt. Although Pyongyang has suspended its plutonium reactor it has failed to agree with the US a means of verifying its complete abandonment of nuclear activities.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article5619896.ece>

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Washington Times

January 31, 2009

Pg. 1

## **Is A Power Struggle Under Way in North Korea?**

*Pacts severed with the South*

By Andrew Salmon, The Washington Times

SEOUL--North Korea's announcement Friday that it is scrapping all political and security arrangements with the South could be a cover for an ongoing policy struggle inside the secretive state's leadership, a Korea specialist here said.

"I think [North Korean leader] Kim Jong-il is trying to coordinate different views, but these views are definitely competing," said Choi Jin-wook of Seoul's Korea Institute of National Unification. "And I think one view is the military's."

Pyongyang's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea said Friday that agreements "putting an end to the political and military confrontation between the North and the South will be nullified." These include a 1992 agreement on recognition of the Northern Limit Line, the de facto sea border between the Koreas in the Yellow Sea.

Mr. Choi said the military "could try to exaggerate tension with the South" to justify its continued pre-eminence.

Friday's statement was the latest in a stream of vitriol.

On Jan 13., the North said it would maintain its nuclear arms until Washington reverses its "hostile policy." On Jan. 17, a North Korean military officer, appearing unusually on state television, announced an "all-out confrontation" against the conservative government of South Korean President Lee Myung-bak. North Korean officials also told visiting U.S. scholar Selig Harrison that they had enough material for six nuclear weapons.

Bellicose statements are hardly new for North Korea and the accords supposedly nullified Friday had been violated during naval clashes in 1999 and 2002.

Moreover, the agreements revoked do not include the Kaesong Special Industrial Zone. Although restrictions were placed on South Korean staff there last year, the zone, a flagship of North-South economic cooperation, was operating normally Friday, an official at South Korea's Unification Ministry said.

Friday's message also is at odds with statements Mr. Kim made to visiting Chinese envoys last week - his first meeting with foreigners since he is said to have suffered a stroke in August. He reportedly said he was seeking the denuclearization of the peninsula and did not desire increased tensions.

Drew Thompson, an expert on China and North Korea at the Nixon Center in Washington, said the Chinese, like the South Koreans, are "confused and frustrated" by the mixed signals emanating from Pyongyang. He noted that North Korea in late November closed border crossings with China, stationing border guards every 50 yards along the main crossing points in the north and northwest.

Mr. Choi said the North Korean actions suggest that policy or power struggles are under way in Pyongyang in the apparent absence of any successor to Mr. Kim.

He noted that Pyongyang's policy-setting Lunar New Year's Message, while reinforcing the "Songun," or military-first policy, also stated that "the military should help the people" - a reversal of previous messages, which stressed that the people are expected to assist the military.

The army has tremendous privilege in North Korea. Smuggled photographs show soldiers eating unconcernedly while ragged, starving children look on, and there are believed to be strains between the ruling party and the army.

Kim Tae-woo, another North Korean expert at the Korea Institute for Defense Analysis, said that Friday's statements were "unusual" and warned that South Korea should "prepare for provocations."

Seoul's Defense Ministry said Friday that it was ready to repel naval incursions. Unconfirmed reports stated that a South Korean destroyer had been dispatched to bolster units along the sea border. However, Mr. Kim of the Korea Institute for Defense Analystis said he believed that Pyongyang's differing messages are calibrated to distinguish between the North's South Korean and U.S. policy approaches.

"Towards the U.S., North Korea is expressing some degree of expectation for better treatment from [President] Obama," he said. "In contrast, it is becoming tougher on South Korea, so it is continuing a war of nerves."

Dan Pinkston, head of the International Crisis Group's Seoul office concurred.

"The messages they send to Beijing, Seoul or Washington are quite different," he said. "I think this one is aimed at South Korea."

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/jan/31/is-a-power-struggle-under-way-in-north-korea/>

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Strait Times, Singapore  
2 February 2009

## **N. Korea to Keep Atomic Bombs**

SEOUL - NORTH Korea's military vowed on Monday to keep atomic weapons until the United States removes its nuclear threat, reiterating a tough stance amid stalled disarmament talks.

'As long as there is no nuclear dismantlement in the South to remove the US nuclear threat, dismantlement to remove nuclear weapons in the DPRK (North Korea) won't be realised,' a spokesman for the North's General Chiefs of Staff was quoted as saying.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency, which monitors media in the communist state, said the spokesman's statement was carried on state television.

The spokesman said denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula does not only mean disarmament of the North but should also include verification of alleged nuclear facilities in South Korea, Yonhap reported.

The foreign ministry in Pyongyang, staking out a tough position for the incoming US administration, took a similar stance last month.

It said it may not give up its atomic weaponry even if ties with Washington are established, until the US completely removes its nuclear threat.

A six-nation deal signed in February 2007 offers the North energy aid, normalised ties with Washington and Tokyo and a permanent peace pact if it dismantles its atomic plants and hands over all nuclear weapons and material.

But the disarmament talks are stalled by disagreements over how the North's declared nuclear activities should be verified.

The North has said it should have the right to verify that US nuclear weapons have been withdrawn from South Korea - something which the US said happened in 1991.

The spokesman for the General Chiefs of Staff also called for disarmament talks to be held between nuclear powers, Yonhap said.

North Korea, which staged an atomic test in 2006, demands to be treated as a nuclear power but the US and South Korea refuse to give it this status.

The forum groups the two Koreas, China, Russia, the US and Japan. -- AFP

[http://www.straittimes.com/Breaking%2BNews/Asia/Story/STIStory\\_333357.html](http://www.straittimes.com/Breaking%2BNews/Asia/Story/STIStory_333357.html)

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Yonhap News

## **N. Korea Renews Claim to Nuclear Arms Amid Little Action from U.S.**

2 February 2009

By Kim Hyun

SEOUL, Feb. 2 (Yonhap) -- North Korea vowed Monday to hold onto its nuclear weapons until the United States removes "nuclear threats" against it, renewing its tough position after similar statements drew little action from the new U.S. administration. Pyongyang has continued unleashing acerbic statements to justify its nuclear drive since January, raising military tensions across the inter-Korean border. Seoul and Washington have reacted calmly.

"The Lee Myung-bak group of traitors should clearly understand that the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is by no means an issue of 'dismantling the north's nuclear weapons,'" a spokesman for the General Staff of the Korean People's Army said in an interview carried by the North's official Korean Central News Agency. "The DPRK will never 'dismantle its nuclear weapons' unless nukes in South Korea are dismantled to remove the nuclear threat from the U.S.," the spokesman said. DPRK is the acronym for the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. A similar nuclear warning was issued by the North's Foreign Ministry on Jan. 13. Pyongyang claims that it has been forced to develop nuclear weapons in the face of "nuclear threats" from the U.S. military stationed in South Korea. Seoul officials say South Korea has no atomic weapons.

The U.S. military withdrew its nuclear arsenal from the South in the early 1990s, following an inter-Korean denuclearization pact in 1992, but Washington has said it will provide a nuclear umbrella for South Korea if it is attacked by the North. The U.S. military has about 28,500 troops stationed in South Korea as a deterrent against possible aggression by the North. The 1950-53 war ended in a cease-fire, not a peace treaty. The North's military spokesman called for "nuclear disarmament" talks between nuclear powers, in an apparent demand for bilateral negotiations between Pyongyang and Washington. North Korea detonated its first atomic weapon in 2006.

"One should not forget that denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula can only be actualized through the strict verification of the entire Korean Peninsula" according to an agreement of the six-party talks, the military spokesman said. In a landmark deal in 2005, North Korea agreed to terminate its nuclear weapons program in return for economic and diplomatic incentives from South Korea, the U.S., China, Japan and Russia. But the disabling process is now on hold due to discord over how to verify the North's nuclear information.

Pyongyang hopes to start anew with the Obama administration after eight combative years with George W. Bush. Cha Do-hyeogn, a North Korea specialist with the Institute for National Security Strategy, a state-run think tank in Seoul, said Pyongyang is sending another message for dialogue to Obama. "With this, North Korea is displaying its consistent position that it wants to reduce South Korea's standing and directly talk with the U.S.," he said. Cha also said North Korea appears to be increasingly irritated as its continuing nuclear claims have drawn little action from the Obama administration.

Washington and Seoul officials have downplayed North Korea's recent warnings as "rhetoric." Concerning Friday's threat to scrap all peace accords with Seoul, State Department spokesman Robert Wood said, "Let me just say this type of, you know, rhetoric is distinctly not helpful." Wood said the six-party talks will continue. "North Korea had wishful thinking about Obama in his first weeks in office. But judging from Obama's remarks, North Korea has been in the outer area of his policy attention, with the Middle East and Iran in the center," Cha said.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2009/02/02/96/0401000000AEN20090202009200315F.HTML>

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Strait Times/AFP (Singapore)

Feb 2, 2009



## China to Build up Arsenal

BEIJING - CHINA will accelerate the build-up of its nuclear and conventional arsenal to form a credible deterrent, the general in charge of the country's strategic missile force said. 'We will accelerate the building of our nuclear and conventional combat strength,' said Jing Zhiyuan, the commander of the Second Artillery Corp, in an article he co-wrote for the authoritative journal Qiushi published on Sunday. 'We will strengthen the build-up of combat systems and improve the training of high-quality personnel,' said the article. China will also develop 'a nuclear and conventional missile force corresponding to the needs of winning a war' in conditions changed by modern information technology, it said.

The Second Artillery Corps is an independent branch of the armed forces directly under the control of the powerful Central Military Commission. It is armed with hundreds of strategic and tactical missiles. 'The Second Artillery is the core of our nation's strategic deterrence. It is the main support pillar and backup force of our national security and development,' the article said. The corps' jobs include 'detering other countries from using nuclear weapons against China, and for conducting nuclear counter-attacks and precision strikes with conventional missiles,' China said in a recent policy paper. Qiushi is a journal for the ruling Communist Party to publish policies and theories.

The United States has long expressed concern over China's military build-up, and accused the Chinese government of not being transparent about its defence spending. China has said its military budget for 2008 was 417.8 billion yuan (\$92.4 billion), a rise of 17.6 per cent from the previous year. -- AFP

[http://www.straittimes.com/Breaking%2BNews/Asia/Story/STIStory\\_333323.html](http://www.straittimes.com/Breaking%2BNews/Asia/Story/STIStory_333323.html)

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Strait Times, Singapore

Feb 2, 2009

## India Signs Inspections Deal

VIENNA - INDIA signed an inspections agreement with the UN atomic watchdog on Monday as part of a deal lifting a 34-year-old embargo on nuclear trade with New Delhi, the International Atomic Energy Agency said. 'An agreement between the government of India and the IAEA for the 'Application of Safeguards to Civilian Nuclear Facilities' was signed on Monday in Vienna by IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei and Ambassador Saurabh Kumar of India,' the agency said in a statement.

'The safeguards agreement, which is the result of several rounds of consultations conducted between India and the IAEA since November 2007, was approved by the IAEA board of governors in August 2008,' the statement said. The agreement would enter into force once it had been ratified by New Delhi, the watchdog continued. Up until now, India had allowed IAEA inspectors regular access to six nuclear reactors under safeguards agreements concluded between 1971 and 1994. But under the new agreement, 'additional reactors are expected to be under IAEA safeguards in the future.' In all, New Delhi has agreed to open up 14 of its 22 declared civilian reactors to regular IAEA inspections by 2014.

The so-called safeguards agreement is a pre-condition for a US-led deal to allow nuclear nations to supply energy-hungry India with nuclear material and technology for civilian uses even though it refuses to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). It was approved by consensus by the IAEA's board of governors in August.

And in September, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, which controls the export and sale of nuclear technology, agreed to make a special exemption for India, even though it refuses to sign the NPT, having developed atomic bombs in secret and conducted its first nuclear test in 1974.

The United States wanted a special waiver so it can share civilian nuclear technology with New Delhi. Critics say the deal undermines international non-proliferation efforts and accuse the nuclear powers of pursuing commercial and political gains. Dependent on oil imports, India is seeking to broaden its fuel sources to sustain its fast-growing economy. Nuclear power supplies around three per cent of India's fuel needs but it aims to raise this to 25 per cent by mid-century.

Indian Premier Manmohan Singh signed a landmark nuclear deal with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in December covering the building of four new nuclear energy reactors in India. The United States and France are the

other powers to have signed bilateral agreements with New Delhi but former Cold War ally Russia is as yet the only state actively involved in building reactors in India. -- AFP

[http://www.straitstimes.com/Breaking%2BNews/Asia/Story/STIStory\\_333431.html](http://www.straitstimes.com/Breaking%2BNews/Asia/Story/STIStory_333431.html)

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RIA Novosti  
30 January 2009

## **Germany Calls on U.S., Russia to Initiate Nuclear Disarmament**

BERLIN, January 30 (RIA Novosti) - German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier called on the U.S. and Russian presidents to take the initiative on nuclear disarmament during a meeting in Germany's parliament on Friday.

"The last period of reforms ended without any results," he said. "It is obvious that Russia and the U.S., which have more than 90% of the world's nuclear weapons, need to set an example here. I call on both of the young presidents from the U.S. and Russia...to push this forward."

The minister said that he had already seen some of the "signs" that the U.S. was ready to move forward and renew the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) once it expires in December this year.

He also said that Obama had signaled his intention to send an agreement banning nuclear weapons tests to the U.S. Senate as well as halting the production of fissile materials capable of making nuclear weapons.

"These are three important signals that could be a great leap forward in the denuclearization of military technology," he said, adding he was hopeful "that the course will be set this year for disarmament policies over the next 10 years."

Relations between the U.S. and Russia have deteriorated over U.S. plans to deploy missiles and a radar in Central Europe as a defense against possible strikes from "rogue states" and Russia's recent conflict with Georgia over South Ossetia.

Last November, President Dmitry Medvedev said Moscow would deploy Iskander missile systems in its Baltic exclave of Kaliningrad, sandwiched between NATO members Lithuania and Poland, in response to any deployment by Washington of elements of a missile defense shield in Europe.

However, Moscow recently expressed hope that U.S. President Barack Obama's administration would "take a break on the issue of missile defense ... and evaluate its effectiveness and cost efficiency." And some media sources cited a Russian high-ranking military source as saying that the Defense Ministry had so far taken no practical measures to deploy Iskander missiles in its Kaliningrad exclave, in a sign that Moscow was ready to compromise with the United States.

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20090130/119898188.html>

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International Herald Tribune

## **From Russia, a Seemingly Softer Tone on Missile Deployment**

By Judy Dempsey  
Friday, January 30, 2009

BERLIN: Russia seems to be testing the ground for a shift in policy, which could emerge at the annual gathering in Munich on security policy that two years ago was the forum used by then-President Vladimir Putin to take a much harsher tone with the West and announce Moscow's hard-nosed return as a force in international affairs.

But with the Russian economy reeling from the collapse in oil prices, Putin, now prime minister, was at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, this past week, sounding conciliatory.

According to a Russian defense official cited by the Interfax news agency, Russia may even be reconsidering its threat to deploy new missiles near Kaliningrad in response to a U.S. antimissile system that would be based in Eastern Europe. That may be a trial balloon to see how the new U.S. administration and the Europeans will respond,

particularly when governments on both sides of the Atlantic are preoccupied with the global financial crisis rather than pouring billions into new defense systems.

Trial balloon or not, Russia's stance - and Putin's explicit offer at Davos of cooperation - will be welcomed by some West European governments, mulled over by President Barack Obama's administration and viewed with considerable suspicion by some East European countries.

"We would be very concerned if the Americans wanted to go it alone in conciliatory gestures with Russia," said Jiri Schneider, program director of the Prague Security Studies Institute. "There would be a lot of bad feeling here if that took place over our heads."

Poles are taking a more practical view. "You could argue that if the U.S. and Russia did really improve relations, then there might be less of a need for the missile defense system," said Alexander Smolar, director of the Stefan Batory Foundation in Warsaw.

Poland's center-right government, led by Prime Minister Donald Tusk, has already pushed missile defense quietly to the side, say security specialists.

"Warsaw knows that the Obama administration is less enthusiastic about missile defense than the Bush team," said Zdzislaw Lachowski, a defense specialist at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. If the Polish government "does not get missile defense, it will not be so concerned. It can live without it. What matters is that it obtains an air-defense system."

Tusk met with Putin on Thursday in Davos, where the main issue was not, unusually, missile defense but, after the recent Russian-Ukraine energy dispute and cutoff of gas supplies to Europe, energy security. "Missile defense is not Poland's No. 1 priority now," said Lachowski. "It is the economy and energy."

It is a measure of how much the financial crisis has changed things. Less than three months ago, President Dmitri Medvedev of Russia, delivering his first state-of-the-nation address hours after Obama had been elected, threw down the gauntlet to the incoming administration.

Medvedev threatened to deploy short-range, high-precision tactical missiles in Kaliningrad, a Russian enclave sandwiched between Lithuania and Poland, two NATO members, if the United States went ahead in deploying the antiballistic missile system in Poland and the Czech Republic.

It did not matter at the time that Russia had insufficient missiles to base in Kaliningrad.

"It was pure bluff, which Putin would use as a bargaining chip," said Schneider. "Now the Kremlin is using that bluff as if to show it is making concessions. The West should not fall for this and allow Russia to have a veto on what can or cannot be based on our territory."

Some West European countries with close ties to the Kremlin have opposed a U.S. military presence in Poland and the Czech Republic and would most likely welcome any Russian gesture to defuse tensions, even if they were largely started by the Kremlin in the first place.

Germany has claimed that the missile defense system would trigger a new arms race. That was a theme Putin took up in a speech to the 2007 Munich Security Conference, where, as the Russian president, he spoke of a new Cold War and the emergence of a stronger, more assertive Russia that the West would have to stop ignoring and start taking seriously.

Others, notably the former Communist nations, have seen a resurgent Russia as a country unafraid to use the wealth and clout generated by high energy prices. This partly explains why Warsaw and Prague sought a U.S. military presence - a security umbrella beyond the guarantees of either NATO or the EU.

Now, it is far from certain that Washington will pursue missile defense. The Obama administration is reassessing policy toward Iran, whose presumed pursuit of nuclear capability was one of the main reasons cited by the Bush administration for missile defense.

The Democrats have been less enthusiastic about missile defense because of its expense and because the system has not yet been fully tested. Much depends on what the Russians say in Munich next week, where several high-ranking Americans will be listening, among them Vice President Joseph Biden Jr.; the national security adviser, General James Jones; and the special representative to Pakistan and Afghanistan, Richard Holbrooke.

If the result is rapprochement between Washington and Moscow, it might give Obama's administration an elegant way out of the commitment to deploy interceptors in Poland and radar in the Czech Republic.

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Washington Post  
January 31, 2009  
Pg. 9

## **In Book, Insider Recounts Hunt for Hussein's Weapons**

By Colum Lynch, Washington Post Staff Writer

UNITED NATIONS -- During his final days in U.S. captivity, Saddam Hussein wrote poetry, flirted with American nurses, expressed his desire to restart a nuclear weapons program and asked to be put to death by firing squad like a soldier, not hanged like a common criminal, according to a new book by Charles A. Duelfer, who was the CIA's top weapons investigator in Iraq.

"Hide and Seek: The Search for Truth in Iraq" chronicles Duelfer's decade-long hunt for Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, first as a top U.N. weapons inspector in the 1990s and later as head of the CIA-led Iraq Survey Group, which concluded in fall 2004 that Iraq had essentially dismantled its deadliest weapons program years before the U.S. invasion.

The book -- which was held up for more than nine months by CIA reviewers -- includes fresh allegations about the Vladimir Putin government's corrupt oil dealings with Iraq and Putin's effort to persuade Hussein to step down to avert a U.S. invasion. It also describes a rudimentary program by Iraqi insurgents after the invasion to develop chemical agents, including ricin, a highly toxic poison derived from castor beans. The operation was shut down by coalition forces, Duelfer says.

Duelfer portrays the United States as a lumbering superpower whose top policymakers, particularly in the White House and the Defense Department, lacked any basic understanding of Iraq's history, motives and leaders. But he says Iraq also routinely misread American intentions and overestimated the capability of U.S. intelligence. He says that according to an Iraqi government account, Hussein once asked his top commanders if Iraq had any hidden weapons he didn't know about.

The book tracks Duelfer's political journey from his days as an obscure State Department official in the Reagan administration who organized arms shipments to Chad during its struggle against Libya.

His 1993 appointment as deputy chairman of the U.N. Special Commission on Iraq placed him at the center of a major international crisis. As a U.N. official, Duelfer gained access to Iraq's top officials and helped arrange a U.S.-backed spying operation that penetrated Hussein's inner circle. The revelations of U.S. spying led to the U.N. commission's ejection from Iraq in 1999.

Duelfer said that on the eve of the 2003 U.S. invasion, he had more direct knowledge of Iraq's weapons programs and leaders than virtually any other top American official. But he had also presided over a U.N. inspection operation that had wrongly assumed that Iraq still possessed weapons of mass destruction.

Duelfer describes numerous requests from senior Iraqi officials to start a dialogue with the United States to improve relations. "Each time I passed on such entreaties to Washington, there was never an answer," he said. "If nothing else, they were missed opportunities for Washington to gain more knowledge."

After he left the United Nations in 2000, Duelfer went to a Washington think tank, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, where he began working informally with a unit in the CIA's Near East division, the Iraq Operations Group, which was tasked with regime change.

Duelfer assembled a list of more than 40 high-level officials who could help run Iraq following an invasion. He cultivated old contacts in the oil industry and the Iraqi government, meeting secretly with a top Iraqi official at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. He traveled to Vienna for OPEC meetings that included key Iraqi oil officials. But the plan to put together a team that would form the basis of a future government was shelved.

"Once U.S. forces were in Iraq, they used the lists as targets," he writes. "Those named would find their homes raided, and they would be thrown in jail. . . . We continued to make more enemies."

Duelfer was later selected by then-CIA Director George J. Tenet to head the Iraq Survey Group. Duelfer's hunt for weapons of mass destruction led him to Camp Cropper, a detention facility at Baghdad International Airport that held "high value" detainees, including Hussein and his top lieutenants.

Hussein spent his final months at the facility -- nicknamed the "petting zoo" -- in a solitary cell. His only visitor was a young Lebanese American FBI interrogator named George Piro, whom the former Iraqi leader came to regard as a son.

During sessions with Piro, Hussein said he would seek to reconstitute his nuclear weapons program as long as his regional enemies, Iran and Israel, possessed such arsenals. Hussein also acknowledged that he had sought to persuade the world that he still possessed such weapons in order to show his powerful neighbors that he had not been fatally weakened by a decade of U.N. sanctions.

Duelfer writes that he interrogated Hussein's personal secretary, Abid Hamid Mahmud Tikriti, who described Hussein's meeting in early 2003 with Yevgeny Primakov, the former Russian foreign minister.

Primakov hand-delivered a letter from Putin "asking Saddam Hussein to step out of power and remain as the secretary general of the Baath Party. By this move, he would be able to convince the United States not to attack Iraq. Saddam Hussein walked out of the room."

Duelfer says then-Secretary of State Colin L. Powell sought to pressure him not to publicly divulge Russia's activities in his 2004 report, while other State Department officials warned it could harm diplomatic relations with Moscow.

Powell said yesterday that it was only appropriate for him, as secretary of state, to "measure the potential diplomatic fallout with foreign countries" from the report. "It is incorrect to say we tried in any way to stifle his reporting," he said. "To the best of my knowledge, the Duelfer report contained everything related to the behavior of the French, Russians and others."

A spokesman for the Russian mission to the United Nations, Ruslan Bakhtin, declined to comment.

John E. McLaughlin, then the CIA's acting director, said he did not believe that Powell applied "undue pressure" to suppress evidence of foreign corruption. He said Powell rightly wanted to spare the United States embarrassment if the information turned out to be wrong.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/01/30/AR2009013003430.html>

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The Wall Street Journal  
FEBRUARY 2, 2009

## **Senior Democrat Snubbed by Iran in Outreach Bid**

By JAY SOLOMON

WASHINGTON -- The chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs tried to meet a top aide to Iran's supreme leader in mid-December but was rebuffed at the last minute, a snub that illustrates the challenges to dialogue with Tehran pushed by President Barack Obama.

Rep. Howard Berman, a California Democrat, notified Mr. Obama's transition team and the Bush White House of the planned meeting in Bahrain, according to senior Obama administration officials.

The engagement with Ali Larijani, speaker of the Iranian parliament, would have marked one of the highest-level meetings between American and Iranian officials since the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran. It's unclear why Mr. Larijani pulled out.

Iran's competing power centers have often differed on the merits of engaging the U.S. and the West, sometimes producing whiplash on the part of Americans who seek to improve ties.

Rep. Berman's office didn't respond to requests for comment. A spokesman at Iran's mission to the United Nations in New York declined to comment.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, left, delivering a bill to Iran's parliament speaker Ali Larijani in Tehran Tuesday. Mr. Larijani is expected to challenge Mr. Ahmadinejad in presidential elections in June.

Until late 2007, Mr. Larijani served as a national security adviser to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and as Tehran's chief nuclear negotiator. He is a potential contender in June presidential elections against the incumbent, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Rep. Berman has been a leading proponent in Congress of sanctions on Iran aimed at stalling its nuclear program, but has also said Tehran should be tested to assess whether dialogue could achieve the same aim. That resembles the view of Mr. Obama, who has said he wants a high-level dialogue with Iran to address the nuclear issue and regional concerns such as Iraq and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The proposed meeting was brokered by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, organizer of the Manama Dialogue, an annual regional security conference. Rep. Berman canceled his trip to Bahrain after being notified by the institute that Mr. Larijani wouldn't attend, according to officials familiar with the episode.

In recent days, Mr. Ahmadinejad and Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said the Obama administration would need to apologize for Washington's past actions, such as support for a 1953 military coup in Iran, before Tehran agreed to high-level talks.

"We do believe that if the new administration of the United States, as Mr. Obama says, is going to change its policies not in saying but practice, they will find in the region a cooperative approach and reaction," Mr. Mottaki said last week at the World Economic Forum.

Contacts between the U.S. and Iran have accelerated in recent months. In November, the presidents of six American universities visited Tehran to promote scientific exchanges. "When we left, we had a promise to do more academic exchanges," said participant David Skorton, president of Cornell University.

Weeks later, however, one of the organizers, Glenn Schweitzer of the National Academies, an umbrella body that includes the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, was detained and questioned in Tehran by Iranian intelligence operatives. Mr. Schweitzer said his inquisitors impressed on him their belief that scientific exchanges were bad for Iran.

[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123352824260337327.html?mod=googlenews\\_wsj](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123352824260337327.html?mod=googlenews_wsj)

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London Times  
February 3, 2009

## **Iran Launches own Space Satellite to Mark 30 Years since Revolution**

MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE EDITOR

Iran has claimed success in launching its first home-built satellite into orbit, using a rocket which the West believes is part of its long-term ballistic missile programme.

Until official satellite spotters confirm Tehran's claim, made by President Ahmadinejad, the Iranian leader, on state television, the announcement will be treated with a degree of scepticism. The first two attempts at launching an Iranian-built satellite, in February and August last year, failed.

If the Iranian President's claim turns out to be true, however, it will provide further proof of Tehran's growing ability to master the technology for developing a long-range ballistic missile.

Despite Mr Ahmadinejad's insistence that the satellite mission was purely for peaceful purposes, experts said there was an undeniable link between the rocket launch and Iran's military programme.

Duncan Lennox, editor of Jane's Strategic Weapons Systems, said: "Iran is just following what the United States, Russia and China did in the early stages of their missile programmes, transferring the technology from satellite launches to ballistic missiles."

Iranian news agencies reported that a Safir 2 space rocket launched the Omid (Hope) satellite into orbit, coinciding with the 30th anniversary of the Islamic revolution. "With this launch, the Islamic Republic of Iran has officially achieved a presence in space," President Ahmadinejad claimed on state television.

He dismissed as "old talk" the accusation by the West that Iran's space programme had military goals. The satellite, he said, carried a message of "peace and brotherhood" to the world.

Manouchehr Mottaki, the Iranian Foreign Minister, speaking in Addis Ababa, said the satellite would enable Tehran to receive environmental data. The state news agency, IRNA, said the satellite would take orbital measurements and would circle the Earth 15 times every day.

The announcement comes just a day before senior diplomats from the United Nations Permanent Security Council - Britain, the US, Russia, China and France - as well as Germany, are due to meet near Frankfurt to review Iran's continuing uranium-enrichment programme.

The timing of the satellite launch will not be lost on the diplomats of the six countries who have to decide what extra measures might be necessary to try and persuade Iran to stop enriching uranium which the West, and Israel, believes is part of a clandestine ambition to build a nuclear weapon. The ballistic missile programme is seen as being inextricably linked to Tehran's nuclear goal.

The Safir 2 appears to be a version of Iran's Shahab 3 ballistic missile which forms the basis of the weapons programme, although Tehran uses a number of different names for its missiles, including Ghadr 1, Ashoura and Sejjil.

The Iranians say they have developed a ballistic missile with a range of 2,000-kilometres, but Mr Lennox said there was no evidence to back this claim. Russia has said that Iran has built a missile with a range of 1,500 kilometres, capable of reaching Israel.

The Safir 2 is a two-stage, possibly three-stage, rocket which uses liquid propulsion. It's 72ft long and weighs more than 26 tonnes. The Shahab 3 is a one-stage liquid-propulsion missile.

Last year, Iran caused concern in the West when it sent a probe called Kavoshgar (Explorer) into space on the back of a rocket which Tehran said was in preparation for a satellite launch. In October 2005, a Russian-made Iranian satellite named Sina 1 was put into orbit by a Russian rocket.

Reza Taghipour, head of the Iranian space agency, said Iran would launch another satellite rocket on March 20.

[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle\\_east/article5649206.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle_east/article5649206.ece)

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guardian.co.uk

## **How World Leaders View Iran's Space Ambitions**

*Tehran claims to be joining the space race but the west has its suspicions*

Julian Borger, diplomatic editor

Tuesday 3 February 2009

The apparently successful launch of an Iranian satellite looks very different from Washington than it does from Tehran.

For the Iranian government, it is an important milestone along the road to reclaiming Persia's ancient claim to major power status, which it feels the jealous west is trying to deny it.

It is also enormously significant in Iranian internal politics. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad got elected promising economic benefits for the common man and modernisation. He has made a complete mess of the first part of that mission. Delivering the second is important for his prospects of re-election in June, in the eyes of both the average voter and – even more importantly, given the controlled nature of Iranian democracy – the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

From Washington and some other western capitals, the launch is seen primarily through the prism of Iran's nuclear project. The capacity to put an object into space together with the feared capability to build a nuclear device, spells – for some at least – the eventual threat of an intercontinental ballistic missile that could reach the US.

For that reason, the satellite launch has a direct and immediate bearing on the debate over the US missile defence scheme. Barack Obama has announced a review period during which the whole project will be weighed up, in light of criticisms that it is unnecessary, or does not work, or both. That decision brought immediate benefits in the relationship with Moscow, which felt threatened by the deployment of missile interceptors in Poland and a radar system in the Czech Republic. The Bush administration insisted the system was a shield against Iran; the Russians saw it pointing at them.

The Russian government said that in return for Obama's rethink, it would review its own plans to put tactical missiles in its western enclave of Kaliningrad. The diplomatic thaw, which is only a week old, generated hopes of a more productive bilateral relationship. All that is now under greater threat.

Christopher Pang, a strategic analyst at the Royal United Services Institute, said a lot of these potentially dangerous consequences are driven by perceptions rather than facts.

"The Iranians have shown a very rudimentary capability in a technology that requires far greater sophistication," Pang said.

It is one thing to put a rocket into space with a payload, another thing entirely to bring it down on a target. By this summer, Iran will probably have produced enough low-enriched uranium to produce a bomb, if it was turned into highly enriched uranium, but that process itself would be hard to carry out without the UN's nuclear watchdog, the IAEA, noticing. Then the uranium would have to be crafted into a warhead small enough to put on top of a missile. That too is very difficult. According to the most recent estimate by the US intelligence community, the Iranians gave up trying to do that in 2003.

The Israelis have rubbished that estimate, and will be telling the new US administration: "We told you so". However, the launch does not directly affect Israel, as Iran has already shown it can reach Tel Aviv with the Shahab-3 missiles it tested last year. But the launch will inject more anxiety and urgency into the international debate on Iran, at a time when the new US government is trying to create some breathing space with friendly overtures to Tehran.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/feb/03/iran-satellite-julian-borger-analysis>

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The Times of India

## **Russia, Cuba Pledge 'Strategic Partnership'**

30 January 2009

MOSCOW: Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Cuban leader Raul Castro pledged on Friday to build "strategic" relations as Moscow moves to revive ties with its Cold War Caribbean ally. At talks in the Kremlin on a week-long visit by the Cuban leader, Medvedev told Castro: "We have good conditions to take our relations to a strategic level.... I think your visit will start a new page in the history of friendly Russian-Cuban relations." The Cuban leader, who has led the Communist island since his brother Fidel fell ill in 2006, said the two planned to cement a "strategic partnership."

"We are old friends and today is a historic moment, a very important landmark," Castro said. "We've known each other through good times and bad and have great experience." Russia has engaged in a drive to revive what it calls "privileged relations" with states in Latin America dating from the Soviet era. In 2006, then-president Vladimir Putin decided to put on hold talks on 20 billion dollars in Soviet-era debt that Russia says it is owed by Cuba. Officials on Friday also signed a raft of agreements on cooperation in education and car manufacturing and other areas.

The formal talks followed a Soviet-style welcome picnic on Thursday at a presidential hunting lodge outside Moscow where the Castro brothers had been hosted by Soviet leaders in the past, with icy vodka and venison on the menu. Few details were made public on the agreements signed Friday, amid sniping in some Russian media outlets that the financial crisis means Moscow has little ability to realise its commercial projects in Latin America. But Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin sounded upbeat on the prospects for cooperation in the car-making sector, shipbuilding and Russian plans to build a power station in Cuba.

Sechin, a close aide of Putin, who is now Russia's powerful prime minister, has spearheaded the drive to revive ties with Latin America after Moscow scaled back its goals in the 1990s. "A serious basis has been laid for development of Russian-Cuban relations in the economic sphere that should encourage others to get involved," Sechin said, quoted by Interfax. In addition to agreements on car-making and education, other accords covered sports, aviation, agriculture and fishing. Russia also agreed to extend a loan to Cuba which Putin said last week was worth around 20 million dollars. But Medvedev lamented that trade turnover with Cuba was "modest" at around 239 million dollars (186 million euros).



Castro is on the first visit by a Cuban leader since the Soviet collapse, designed to mend a rift that appeared when Moscow's Soviet-era subsidies dried up and it shut down a military base on the island. Medvedev made a four-country tour of Latin America in November culminating in a meeting with the ailing Fidel Castro in Havana. The Cuban leader is to meet Putin on Monday.

[http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/Russia\\_Cuba\\_pledge\\_strategic\\_partnership/articleshow/4054357.cms](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/World/Russia_Cuba_pledge_strategic_partnership/articleshow/4054357.cms)

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The Times (UK)

February 2, 2009

## **Could Ecoterrorists Let Slip the Bugs of War?**

Jeffrey A. Lockwood

The terrorists' letter arrived at the Mayor of Los Angeles's office on November 30, 1989. A group calling itself "the Breeders" claimed to have released the Mediterranean fruit fly in Los Angeles and Orange counties, and threatened to expand their attack to the San Joaquin Valley, an important centre of Californian agriculture.

With perverse logic, they said that unless the Government stopped using pesticides they would assure a cataclysmic infestation that would lead to the quarantining of California produce, costing 132,000 jobs and \$13.4 billion in lost trade. The infestation was real enough. It was ended by heavy spraying. It is still not known if ecoterrorists were behind it, but the panic it engendered shows that "the Breeders" were flirting with a powerful weapon.

The history and future of insects as weapons are explored in my new book, *Six-Legged Soldiers*. As an entomologist, I was initially interested in how human beings have conscripted insects and twisted science for use in war, terrorism and torture. It soon became apparent that the weaponisation of insects was not some quirky military footnote but a recurring theme in human strife, and quite possibly the next chapter in modern conflicts.

Insects are one of the cheapest and most destructive weapons available to terrorists today, and one of the most widely ignored: they are easy to sneak across borders, reproduce quickly and can spread disease and destroy crops with devastating speed.

A great strategic lesson of 9/11 has been overlooked. Terrorists need only a little ingenuity, not sophisticated weapons, to cause enormous damage. Armed only with box-cutters, terrorists hijacked aircraft and brought down the World Trade Centre. Insects are the box-cutters of biological warfare - cheap, simple and wickedly effective.

Am I being an alarmist? I wish I knew. But I do know that few people have an inkling of how insects can - and have - been used to inflict human suffering and economic destruction. And I know that government officials admit that entomological attacks are, "not something that is yet on our radar". So my goal in *Six-Legged Soldiers* is to find a measured concern that lies between complacency and panic.

Yet insects have shaped human history. In the 14th century, 75million people succumbed to flea-borne bubonic plague. But few people realise that the Black Death arrived in Europe after the Mongols catapulted flea-ridden corpses into the port of Kaffa. People fled, carrying bacteria, rats and fleas throughout the Mediterranean. And it was lice, not enemy armies that nearly broke the back of the Soviet Union when typhus made 30 million people ill and killed 5 million after the First World War.

Military strategists have seen the potential for warfare in all this. In the Second World War, the French and Germans pursued the mass production and dispersal of Colorado beetles to destroy enemy food supplies, and the Japanese military killed more than 400,000 Chinese by dropping plague-infected fleas and cholera-coated flies.

During the Cold War, the US military planned to produce 100million yellow fever-infected mosquitoes a month, and produced an "entomological warfare target analysis" of vulnerable sites in the Soviet Union and its allies' territories. The dispersal and biting capacity of (uninfected) mosquitoes was tested by secretly dropping them over US cities.

America believed that insect-borne diseases were the bane only of underdeveloped nations until the summer of 1999, when West Nile virus arrived. A natural experiment in entomological warfare unfolded. Over the next seven years, the technological might of the US could not stop mosquitoes carrying the disease across the nation, infecting nearly 7,000 people and killing 654.

Many insect-borne pathogens could afflict Western nations. But given the losing battle against West Nile virus, the greatest concern is its African cousin, Rift Valley fever. Originally discovered in 1931, this viral disease caused miscarriages in livestock while young animals suffered 10 to 70 per cent mortality rates. Mosquitoes spread the virus from Kenya. In 1997 a virulent strain appeared, able to infect the human nervous system. About 200,000 Egyptians fell ill, of whom 2,000 lost their sight and 598 died of encephalitis. Every region of the US has a mosquito species that is capable of carrying the disease.

Nor would it be difficult to introduce. According to biodefence experts, a terrorist with \$100 worth of supplies, simple instructions and a plane ticket could introduce Rift Valley fever to the US or another target country with almost no chance of being caught. Western societies are understandably worried about disease, and terrorists would relish the opportunity to introduce deadly pathogens. But they are aware that we take our wealth as seriously as our health. The World Trade Centre was an icon of US economic prosperity. And agriculture accounts for a trillion dollars in economic activity as well as one in every six jobs in the US.

An entomological attack would not empty America's larders completely but it could go a long way to emptying its wallets.

In economic terms, the 9/11 attacks resulted in direct losses of \$27.2 billion. The Asian longhorned beetle, which arrived in 1996, with the emerald ash borer, found in 2002, together have the potential to destroy more than \$700 billion worth of forests, according to the US Department of Agriculture.

What would be the cost of an insect-borne disease? If it destroyed enough orchards to cut the sale of orange juice by 50 per cent for five years, the US economy would lose \$9.5 billion - approximately the cost of building the World Trade Centre from scratch.

Stacking a nation's defences along its borders is a strategic error. The better model is that of public health. Rather than hoping to stop every sick traveller entering a country, a wise government would stockpile vaccines, train health professionals and educate the public.

The best "homeland defence" is flourishing human and agricultural health systems that can detect and deal with whatever comes in. Such an infrastructure would pay for itself. Even without terrorists, new diseases and insect pests will continue to arrive.

Western societies tend to think in terms of the short-term spectacle and heroic saviours of Hollywood action movies. Our disconnection from the natural world makes us believe that risk and benefit unfold at a blistering pace. For a terrorist group with patience, a slow-motion disaster in ecological time would be a perfect tactic against an enemy that thinks in terms of days or months, but would suffer across the generations.

Jeffrey A. Lockwood is the author of *Six-Legged Soldiers: Using Insects as Weapons of War* (OUP). Educated as an entomologist, he is a professor of philosophy and creative writing at the University of Wyoming

[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/guest\\_contributors/article5634450.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/guest_contributors/article5634450.ece)

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Shinhalaya.com (Sri Lanka)  
2 February 2009

## **Troops Breach Chalai Earth Bund**

Asha Nanayakkara, SINHALAYA News Agency, Colombo, Sri Lanka :

Troops of Wanni humanitarian mission have breached the Earth Bund in the North of Chalai, Mullaittivu and captured the front defense line of the LTTE terrorists, latest information from Wanni battlefield confirmed. Fierce

fighting broke out between LTTE terrorists and security forces in the Chalai general area since yesterday and LTTE ended up loosing their front defense line. Meanwhile another formation of security forces continues their counter terrorist attacks in Udayarkattukulam and Visuamadu areas. Troops of 58 division led by Brig. Shavendra Silva recorded series of victories against LTTE terrorist during last week in the Visuamadu area. Despite of the stiff resistance of LTTE terrorists, army troops of 11th Light Infantry under 582 brigade, captured a well fortified LTTE camp in Primanthakulam located northwards the 12th signal post along the A35 Paranthan-Mullaittivu road. During the clearing operations troops have seized a large haul of arms including two T56 riffles, an American made LMG gun and nine chemical weapons along with nine bodies of slain LTTE cadres. Troops have also recovered a fully air-conditioned bunker built underground in the camp site.

(An Adoption of the Sinhalese Article done by Su.Hewawasam, SINHALAYA News Agency – 02.02.2009 )

<http://www.sinhalaya.com/news/eng/2news2lanka2.php?go=fullnews&newsid=104>

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