



# **USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER**

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The Economic Times  
10 February 2009

## **Al-Qaeda Leader Yazid Warns India of More Mumbai-style Attacks**

LONDON: A top al-Qaeda commander, who was reported killed in a US drone strike last year, has appeared in a video warning India of more Mumbai-style

terror attacks if it tried to attack Pakistan.

"India should know that it will have to pay a heavy price if it attacks Pakistan," Mustafa Abu al-Yazid, believed to be al-Qaeda's military commander in Afghanistan and ranked behind No 2 Ayman al-Zawahiri, said in a 20-minute video in Arabic.

Yazid, who the Pakistani military said may have been killed in fighting last August in the Bajaur tribal region, said: "The Mujahideen will sunder your armies into the ground, like they did to the Russians in Afghanistan.

"They will target your economic centres and raze them to the ground."

Yazid denounced the ban on militant groups in Pakistan following the Mumbai attacks and asked the people of Pakistan to rise up and overthrow the government and President Asif Ali Zardari, the BBC reported.

The al-Qaeda leader is said to have been involved in a number of terror attacks, including last year's Danish Embassy bombings, in Pakistan and had claimed the responsibility of assassinating former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

[http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/Al-Qaeda\\_warns\\_India\\_of\\_more\\_Mumbai-style\\_attacks/rssarticleshow/4104006.cms](http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/Al-Qaeda_warns_India_of_more_Mumbai-style_attacks/rssarticleshow/4104006.cms)

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The Korea Herald  
7 February 2009

## **Is North Korea a Nuclear Weapon State?**

The U.S. CIA director-designate, Leon Panetta, confirmed on Thursday that North Korea conducted a test for a nuclear weapon three years ago.

"We know North Korea detonated a nuclear weapon in 2006," Panetta said in his opening statement at his Senate confirmation hearing.

The CIA director-designate's comments are somewhat different from the position that had been held by the former Bush administration that North Korea detonated a nuclear device, not a nuclear weapon.

The Bush administration had vowed not to regard North Korea as a nuclear weapon state, refusing to confirm whether the North possesses nuclear weapons.

But Panetta's comments are in line with recent remarks made by new Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

Gates said in his contribution article to Foreign Affairs journal that North Korea has built several nuclear bombs. Some U.S. intelligence and defense reports have also categorized the North as a nuclear weapon state.

Diplomatic observers in Seoul said the CIA director-nominee's remarks indicate that the Obama administration is accepting North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons as a fait accompli although it would not officially recognize the communist country's nuclear-state status.

"But we don't know whether Kim Jong-il is prepared to give up that nuclear capability once and for all," Panetta said.

Six countries - South and North Korea, the United States, China, Japan and Russia - have long held talks aimed at ending the North's nuclear ambitions. The latest round of the six-party talks stalled in December over North Korea's refusal to allow inspectors to take samples from its nuclear reactor.

U.S. President Obama has vowed to continue the talks and opened the possibility of meeting North Korean leader Kim Jong-il as part of bilateral engagement to resolve concerns over North Korea nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

New reports said North Korea is getting ready to test-launch another ballistic missile capable of reaching the western part of the mainland U.S., raising tension on the Korean Peninsula.

North Korea last test-fired a ballistic missile in 2006, but its success is disputed because of its short-lived flight time.

The CIA director-designate also pointed to North Korea as one of the security priorities facing the United States.

"I really do think that if we are going to come into the 21st century we have got to set a list of priorities that not only look at current crises - and clearly we've got Afghanistan, we've got Pakistan, we've got Iraq, we have North Korea," Panetta said.

He was stressing the importance of "clearly looking at Russia and China" and other "potential crises" that could develop in the future.

[http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html\\_dir/2009/02/07/200902070030.asp](http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/02/07/200902070030.asp)

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Christian Science Monitor  
February 10, 2009

## **North Korea Raises Tensions Ahead of Clinton Visit**

By Donald Kirk | Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

Seoul, South Korea - The United States appears willing to accept the reality of North Korea as a nuclear power – a measure of credit that Washington has refused to give since Pyongyang exploded a nuclear device in 2006.

The potential shift in US outlook comes as Pyongyang ratchets up tensions and the new US administration formulates its policy on North Korea. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton plans to visit the region next week.

"I'm not going into terminology," Gen. Walter Sharp, commander of US forces in Korea, said Monday, but acknowledged North Korea had "successfully" conducted a nuclear test while proclaiming its desire to be a nuclear power.

General Sharp's comment fueled concerns here that the US is conceding the nuclear-power status that North Korea craves. Leon Panetta, designated to direct the Central Intelligence Agency, signaled the shift in official thinking last week when he observed at a Senate confirmation hearing that it was not clear if North Korean leader Kim Jong Il was "prepared to give up that nuclear capability."

Those comments coincided with reports of North Korea moving a long-range Taepodong-2 missile to a launch pad on the east coast, after repudiating a North-South nonaggression pact that took effect 17 years ago and appearing to harden conditions on giving up the warheads it already has.

"This is typical North Korean tactics," says Kim Sung-han, professor of international studies at Korea University. "When North Korea is interested in negotiating a certain issue, they need to create tensions." Its central interest now, he says, is "sending a message to the US, and to South Korea too, before the Obama administration finishes its policy review."

The US hopes to restart six-party talks, which also include South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia, but just how far the Obama administration will go to halt the North's program remains unclear.

South Korea's conservative president, Lee Myung-bak, is trying to win assurances of the Obama administration's full support. He has pursued a hard-line stance since taking office a year ago, cutting off aid that South Korea had delivered for years to North Korea.

While aware of concerns about recent North Korean "threats," Mr. Lee said Monday in a radio address, "you do not need to worry too much."

US intelligence analysts estimate the North has fabricated six to a dozen warheads but doubt the North has the capacity to deliver them to targets.

Satellite imagery last week showed that North Korea had transported a Taepodong-2 missile, with a range of several thousand miles, to the site from which a Taepodong-2 was launched unsuccessfully in July 2006. That missile arced into the sea after a flight of 40 seconds.

"They are moving parts, assembling it," says Mr. Kim. "Then they will be putting fuel into the missile. It's a salami tactic. They are not going to launch it immediately."

Experts say North Korea is likely to return to six-party talks, at which it agreed two years ago to abandon its nuclear weapons program, while holding out for bilateral negotiations with the US.

An unofficial US team, back from Pyongyang, reported North Korea's eagerness for both types of talks. "We all learned that six-party process can be very useful," says Stephen Bosworth, former US ambassador to Korea, now dean of the Fletcher School at Tufts University, predicting "there will be both."

Korean analysts, though, see North Korea's likely acceptance of six-party talks as a ruse to exclude the South. "The Obama administration will start off with six-party talks," says Kim Sung-hak, North Korean analyst at Hanyang University in Seoul. "Then right away they will start bilateral talks in parallel before they talk of concessions."

Mrs. Clinton is expected to try to coordinate with South Korean leaders on a common response when she arrives here Feb. 19-20. She is stopping first in Japan and goes from here to China, which has been hosting six-party talks since 2005.

The fear here, meanwhile, is that North Korea will stage low-level attacks to test US and South Korean resolve. "The level of threat is higher than before," says Kim Tae-woo, vice president of the Korean Institute for Defense Analyses. "They are threatening another provocation" by possibly test-firing a short-range missile or attacking South Korean navy ships.

"They want to manage the sense of insecurity" – and "encourage antigovernment forces in South Korea," Mr. Kim adds.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/0210/p04s01-woap.html>

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GlobalSecurityNewswire.org

Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2009

## **U.S. Officials Suggest Acceptance of North Korean Nuclear Status**

Recent statements by high-level U.S. officials suggest some level of acknowledgment of North Korea as a nuclear-weapon state, the Christian Science Monitor reported today (see GSN, Feb. 9).

Pyongyang has sought acceptance as a nuclear power since detonating a device in October 2006, experts have said. The test has been seen as something of a flub due to its low yield.

The official line from Washington has been to reject North Korea as a nuclear power.

"I'm not going into terminology," Gen. Walter Sharp, who leads U.S. military forces in South Korea, said Monday. He said, though, that North Korea "successfully" tested a nuclear weapon while pressing its assertion regarding its nuclear status.

CIA Director-designate Leon Panetta said during his confirmation hearing last week that it remained to be seen whether North Korean leader Kim Jong Il was "prepared to give up that nuclear capability."

North Korea is believed to possess several nuclear weapons. Efforts by five other nations to move the regime toward disarmament and dismantlement of its nuclear sector have made progress in recent years, but stalled in late 2008 over details of a plan for verifying the nation's atomic activities and holdings.

More recently, Pyongyang has increased its rhetoric against South Korea and the United States and appears to be preparing a test-launch of its long-range Taepodong 2 missile (see GSN, Feb. 6). The last test, in July 2006, ended when the missile failed shortly after launch.

"This is typical North Korean tactics," says Korea University international studies professor Kim Sung-han. "When North Korea is interested in negotiating a certain issue, they need to create tensions."

The regime's focus is on "sending a message to the U.S., and to South Korea too, before the Obama administration finishes its policy review" on North Korea, he said.

Pyongyang might be trying to cut South Korea's conservative government out of the diplomatic process by appearing ready to move ahead with the six-party nuclear talks, which also involve China, Japan, Russia and the United States, according to observers. The Lee administration in Seoul has taken a harder line than its predecessors on relations with North Korea, provoking a backlash from the regime.

"The Obama administration will start off with six-party talks," says Seoul-based analyst Kim Sung-hak. "Then right away they will start bilateral talks in parallel before they talk of concessions."

North Korea might seek to raise tensions in Seoul and Washington with a short-range missile launch or a limited military engagement with the South, observers said.

"They want to manage the sense of insecurity," Kim said (Donald Kirk, Christian Science Monitor, Feb. 10).

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is expected to address the nuclear standoff next week during trips to Japan, South Korea and China.

Clinton might meet with relatives of Japanese citizens abducted by North Korea, the Yonhap News Agency reported.

Tokyo has refused to provide its portion of energy assistance for North Korea, as designated in a 2007 denuclearization deal, until it is satisfied that the status of all abductees has been resolved. Japan has dismissed North Korean claims that the victims have either been returned or died in captivity while acting as tutors for North Korean spies.

The United States "remains very concerned about the abductees," said State Department spokesman Robert Wood.

"We've made that case, made the point very clearly to the North Koreans in the past," he said yesterday. "We'll continue to do so" (Yonhap News Agency, Feb. 10).

The foreign ministers of Japan and South Korea are expected to discuss the nuclear crisis during a meeting today in Seoul, Agence France-Presse reported.

"The meeting will take place just before Clinton's visit to Asia, so the exchange of opinions regarding the North Korean issue will be extremely important," according to a Japanese Foreign Ministry official.

Japanese Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone and his South Korean counterpart, Yu Myung-hwan, are "likely to have frank discussions on what to tell the Obama administration over North Korea as a united Japan-South Korea front," the official said (Agence France-Presse/Spacewar.com, Feb. 10).

[http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw\\_20090210\\_3964.php](http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20090210_3964.php)

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Stars and Stripes  
February 11, 2009

## **Sharp Tells N. Korea to Act Responsibly**

Teri Weaver, Stars and Stripes Pacific edition

SEOUL — The top U.S. military commander in South Korea called for North Korea to quiet talk about testing nuclear missiles and instead agree to an open dismantling of its nuclear weaponry.

"We call on North Korea to stop provocations and act like a responsible country," Gen. Walter Sharp, commander of U.S. Forces Korea, said at a luncheon with reporters in Seoul.

Sharp's statements were part of a continued response from the United States in recent days after North Korea scrapped military agreements with South Korea and threatened to test another nuclear missile, as it did in 2006.

Next week, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will visit Japan, China and South Korea, in part to address the rhetoric.

On Monday, Sharp — who under current agreements would command both U.S. and South Korean troops during a crisis — said that both President Barack Obama and South Korea's President Lee Myung-pak have military and diplomatic options in place to respond to North Korea. And, he added, despite the recent talk, North Korea's military seems to be following its usual winter training routines.

Yet a military attack, especially one aimed at South Korea's population center in Seoul, would cause casualties before U.S. and South Korean troops could take out North Korea's conventional artillery or ballistic missile systems, the general said.

"There still will be destruction in Seoul," Sharp said. "There's no doubt about it. We'll never be able to take all of them out" before North Korean forces cause damage. "It's that threat that we are prepared for."

While Sharp addressed the threats, he also talked about USFK's plans to add as many as 12,000 U.S. families to the military community throughout South Korea.

Currently, only about 2,000 of the 28,500 U.S. troops on the peninsula come with military orders that also include moving and living expenses for their families. These "command-sponsored" billets are expected to increase by 2,000 this year toward an ultimate goal of 14,000, Sharp said Monday.

The increase in families also will mean that servicemembers will stay in South Korea longer — in many cases three years — up from the current one-year tour. That increase will mean a more efficient force, "where I don't have to train a new soldier every year," Sharp said.

Many of the troops and families will be stationed south of Seoul, at an expanded Camp Humphreys in Pyeongtaek, Sharp said. With more troops centralized there, the military will increase efforts to protect the base, such as with air defense missiles, he said.

<http://www.stripes.com/article.asp?section=104&article=60606>

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The Korea Herald  
11 February 2009

## **North Korea Supplying Missile-related Gear to Launch Pad: Source**

Despite repeated warnings, North Korea is moving ahead with its preparation to test-fire a long-range ballistic missile by gathering necessary gear, a South Korean source said Wednesday, according to Yonhap News.

"Vehicles carrying equipment needed for missile launches are continuing to travel to the Musudan-ri base" on the east coast, the source said, declining to identify the gear.

South Korean and U.S. officials said last week North Korea has moved its most advanced missile, the Taepodong-2, to the launch pad in its northeastern region.

Even though it crashed soon after take-off in a 2006 test, the missile is believed to be capable of reaching the western U.S. because it has an estimated range of up to 6,700 km.

"At the current pace, they could inject fuel within a month," the source said, adding that the vehicles are taking turns in their delivery as they travel from a military factory south of Pyongyang.

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International Herald Tribune  
February 11, 2009

## North Korea Steps Up Missile Test Preparations

Jon Herskovitz

Chinese fishing vessels have moved out of waters near a disputed sea border between the two Koreas, a South Korean military official said on Wednesday, possibly signalling a North Korean short-range missile test is imminent.

In another move that could stoke tensions, U.S. and South Korean news reports said the North has made further preparations to test its longest-range Taepodong-2 missile, with a launch possible in about a month.

North Korea usually orders its vessels to stay out of Yellow Sea waters off its west coast when it conducts short-range missile tests. China is the closest thing the North can claim as a major ally and is the impoverished state's biggest benefactor.

"The (Chinese) fishing boats have disappeared, but no other unusual moves have yet been detected," said an official with South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff who asked not to be named.

During its last test launch of short-range missiles in that area in October 2008, the North issued a no-sail order to its ships a few days before firing off missiles, South Korean government officials have said.

North Korean short-range missiles have a range of about 100-150 km (60-95 miles), which means they can hit all of the Seoul area and many U.S. military bases in South Korea.

Experts say the North may have hundreds of short-range missiles, and that the missiles have a proven capability due to recent successful tests.

CNN reported on its website (<http://edition.cnn.com/>) that North Korea also appeared to have positioned telemetry equipment at an east coast missile base it used when it last launched its Taepodong-2 missile in 2006.

The missile, which has never successfully flown but is designed to hit U.S. territory, fizzled seconds after it was fired in that test.

There was no evidence of a Taepodong-2 being moved to a launch pad, the U.S. official was quoted as saying.

"Vehicles carrying equipment needed for missile launch were moving towards the (east coast) Musudan-ri base," Yonhap news agency quoted a South Korean government source as saying.

The source said that if the North continued at its current pace, it could launch a Taepodong-2 in a month. South Korean officials were not immediately available for comment.

Impoverished North Korea, angry at the hardline policies of the South's government, in recent weeks has stepped up tension by threatening to reduce its wealthy southern neighbour to ashes.

### PRESSURE BUILDS

Analysts said the steps were aimed at putting pressure on the South and at attracting the notice of new U.S. President Barack Obama, who is sending Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to the region next week to discuss regional security concerns.

"We are hopeful that some of the behaviour that we have seen coming from North Korea in the last few weeks is not a precursor of any action that would up the ante or threaten the stability and peace and security of the neighbours in the region," Clinton told reporters in Washington on Tuesday.

The U.S. military stepped up its monitoring of North Korea this week amid concerns of possible missile launches, a U.S. military official said.

The foreign ministers of South Korea and Japan said after meeting in Seoul that North Korea should stop its provocations.



Leader Kim Jong-il has named senior military official Kim Yong-chun as the new defence chief, the North's state media said, replacing a close confidant with another to set him up as one of the unquestioned leader's more powerful aides.

Kim Jong-il, 66, who is suspected of suffering a stroke in August, has no challengers to his leadership, analysts said, but the North has rearranged ministerial posts in the past few months -- changing the alignment of the distant trailing pack of officials who might eventually succeed him.

(Additional reporting by Jack Kim and Kim Junghyun in Seoul, Arshad Mohammed and David Morgan in Washington)

<http://www.iht.com/articles/reuters/2009/02/11/asia/OUKWD-UK-KOREA-NORTH.php>

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London Times

February 11, 2009

## **US Launches Spy Operation over North Korea**

Richard Lloyd Parry in Tokyo

The United States military has launched an intensive spying operation over North Korea, amid reports that the isolated totalitarian state may be about to test fire short range missiles close to its disputed sea border with South Korea.

A US military spokesman confirmed that unspecified monitoring "assets" – probably including spy satellites and high altitude spy planes – have been moved into position amid reports of imminent missile launches, after unusual movements by shipping in the area.

South Korean officials confirmed the sudden disappearance of Chinese fishing boats from an area off the north-west coast of the Korean peninsula, possibly because of a shipping warning in advance of missile firing exercises.

North Korea regularly test fires such short range ship-to-ship missiles which do not, in themselves, pose an immediate threat to its neighbours. But the timing of such a test this week would be provocative, coming as it does after Pyongyang renounced military agreements with the South, and just before Hillary Clinton's first visit to Asia as US secretary of state.

"We're watching those things closely with all the assets we have," Marine Major Bradley Gordon, a spokesman for the US Pacific Command, said. "We've got all sorts of sensors all around the area. But I won't say what or where they are."

Mrs Clinton told the government of North Korea that its recent threats and military posturing are "unacceptable", and promised to discuss the problem with the leaders of Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and China when she visits them next week on her inaugural overseas trip.

"I know of the continuing concern on the part of the other members of the six-party talks [on North Korean nuclear disarmament] with respect to North Korea's attitude in the last weeks," she said in Washington. "North Korea has to understand that all of the countries in East Asia have made it clear that its behaviour is viewed as unacceptable".

Last week South Korean officials revealed signs of North Korean preparation for a far more significant missile test – of a North Korean Taepodong 2 missile, a long range weapon with the potential to cross the Pacific and strike the western reaches of the US. A large cylindrical object was photographed by satellites on a train travelling in the direction of North Korean test firing sites.

The North Koreans fired an earlier version of the Taepodong in 1998. In 2002, a Taepodong 2 broke up soon after being launched, and even a successful launch now would not represent an immediate threat to the US and its allies.

"Since the first time that they launched the missile – it flew for a few minutes before crashing – the range of the Taepodong 2 remains to be seen," the US defence secretary, Robert Gates, said yesterday in Washington. "So far, it's very short."



The firing of such a large missile would require several more weeks of preparation. The North Korean government may therefore decide to put pressure on Mrs Clinton by firing its smaller missiles close to its sea border with the South, a disputed line which has seen deadly naval skirmishes in 199 and 2002.

[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/us\\_and\\_americas/article5706636.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/us_and_americas/article5706636.ece)

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GlobalSecurityNewswire.org

Feb. 12, 2009

## **North Korea Warned Against Missile Test**

South Korea and the United States over the last two days warned North Korea against conducting another test-launch of its long-range Taepodong 2 missile, according to news reports (see *GSN*, Feb. 11).

Satellite imagery has shown a large item that appears to be a missile being transported to the Musudan-ri launch site, along with apparent preparations for the test at the facility. Pyongyang last launched a Taepodong 2 in July 2006, only to see the missile fail in less than one minute.

"We've said, over and again, we remain concerned about some of North Korea's behavior in the international community," State Department spokesman Robert Wood said yesterday. "And we've encouraged the North not to take any steps that will ... create any kind of tensions in the region."

Defense Department spokesman Bryan Whitman said another missile test might undermine the six-party talks aimed at shuttering North Korea's nuclear operations and eliminating its atomic arsenal, the Yonhap News Agency reported (see related *GSN* story, today).

His boss, Defense Secretary Robert Gates, suggested that the Pentagon was prepared to use its missile defense capabilities to bring down a North Korean missile if necessary. "My colleagues, the secretary of state, national security adviser, president and vice president, understand what our capabilities are," he said (Yonhap News Agency, Feb. 12).

South Korean Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan today said Pyongyang could face additional sanctions for carrying out a missile test, Agence France-Presse reported. It was hit with a set of U.N. Security Council penalties following the 2006 launch.

"Such an act would isolate it ... given various restrictions and sanctions which North Korea would incur with the missile launch, it would never be in the North's interest," he said (Agence France-Presse/[Yahoo!News](#), Feb. 12).

[http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw\\_20090212\\_3334.php](http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20090212_3334.php)

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Xinhua, China

China View

February 11, 2009

## **Clinton: U.S. Anti-missile Shield in East Europe might be Unnecessary if Iran Changes Policies**

WASHINGTON, Feb. 10 (Xinhua) -- U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Tuesday said that the planned U.S. anti-missile shield in East Europe might not be necessary if Iran changes its nuclear policies.

"If we are able to see a change in behavior on the part of the Iranians with respect to what we believe to be their pursuit of nuclear weapons ... then ... we will reconsider where we stand," Clinton said at a news conference with visiting Czech Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg.

"But we are a long, long way from seeing such evidence of any behavior change," Clinton said, stressing the deterrent effect from a missile shield.

"We expect any system that we deploy to be able to operate effectively," she said, referring to former U.S. President George W. Bush's plans to deploy missile interceptors in Poland and a radar station in the Czech Republic to guard against alleged Iran's missile threat.

Clinton said that deployment of missile shield system might not be necessary if Iran changes its policies. "This is one of those issues that really will rest with the decisions made by the Iranian government," she said.

The Bush administration signed agreements with Poland and the Czech Republic to deploy parts of the U.S. global missile shield in the two East European countries.

Russia strongly objects to American anti-missile shield plan, warning it will deploy a short-range missile system in its Baltic enclave of Kaliningrad bordering Poland.

Before Obama's inauguration, several rounds of talks between senior officials from Washington and Moscow on the missile shield have failed to reach a deal.

The United States has long accused Iran of trying to develop nuclear weapons under the cover of a civilian nuclear program. Iran rejects the U.S. charges, saying its nuclear program is a peaceful drive to generate electricity so it can export more oil and gas.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-02/11/content\\_10797560.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-02/11/content_10797560.htm)

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Czech Happening  
11 February 2009

## **U.S. Radar in Brdy is not Aimed against Russia-Czech Minister**

Moscow - The U.S. missile defence radar the USA intends to station in the Brdy military district, west Bohemia, "is not aimed against Russia," but against Iran that is successfully developing its missile programme, Czech Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg said at a press conference in Moscow today.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov who met representatives of the European Union under the leadership of the Czech EU presidency today stressed that Russia intended to deploy its Iskander missiles to Russia's western outpost of Kaliningrad only if the United States went ahead with its plan for a missile shield.

"Russia will take no practical steps to retaliate against the planned U.S. missile defence shield unless it is physically deployed," Lavrov said.

"A retaliatory step will be made in the event, and only in the event, if the ... (missile defence installations in eastern Europe) are physically created. If they are not created then there will be no retaliatory measures from the Russian Federation," Lavrov said at the same press conference.

Schwarzenberg as the Czech EU presidency minister led the talks of the EU Troika with Russia. He later told Czech journalists that the meeting was marked by a "small progress," rather than any fundamental breakthrough, which also concerns the dispute over the missile defence system.

Schwarzenberg said that he saw the possibility of Russia being involved in the project.

"We are really in favour of a thorough and honest dialogue with Russia because Russia, too, can be in danger," Schwarzenberg told CTK, Czech Radio, Czech Television and dpa agency.

Although Moscow cannot have the right of veto regarding the missile shield it is possible to imagine, in conditions of the improved Russian-U.S. relations, the appearance of the missile defence system that would also embrace Russian territory, the exchange of data or other cooperation, Schwarzenberg said.

He told Czech journalists and dpa in Moscow today that the American administration had not abandoned the missile defence shield though it is analysing its effectivity.

It also sees the "growing danger" of the Iranian nuclear and missile programme, Schwarzenberg said.

[http://www.ceskenoviny.cz/news/zpravy/u-s-radar-in-brdy-is-not-aimed-against-russia-czech-minister/359846&id\\_seznam=](http://www.ceskenoviny.cz/news/zpravy/u-s-radar-in-brdy-is-not-aimed-against-russia-czech-minister/359846&id_seznam=)

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Czech Happening  
10 February 2009

## **U.S. Anti-missile System may be Revised -Clinton to Czech for Min**

Washington - The United States does not rule out reconsideration of its anti-missile defence plans, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told journalists after meeting her Czech counterpart Karel Schwarzenberg today.

If the USA sees some changes in the conduct of Iran in the sphere of its nuclear programme, it may reconsider its position on anti-missile defence, Clinton said.

She said that were still a big, very big distance from any evidence on a change in the Iranian position.

The United States plans to build a radar base in the Czech Republic, near the Brdy military grounds, 90 km southwest of Prague, and a base for ten interceptor missiles in Poland within the missile defence shield.

The Czech-U.S. treaties on the radar base have already been approved by the upper house of Czech parliament, the Senate. The Chamber of Deputies, in which support for the project is not sure, has not yet made a decision.

It is vital for the USA and its allies to be prepared for a possible Iranian threat, Clinton added.

The timing and possible stationing of anti-missile elements are primarily technical questions, Clinton said, adding that she admitted the influence of economic factors.

Clinton said the USA should hope for the best, but be prepared for the worst.

She repeated the U.S. stand that all systems the USA might deploy within its anti-missile defence had to be efficient.

<http://www.ceskenoviny.cz/news/zpravy/u-s-anti-missile-system-may-be-revised-clinton-to-czech-for-min/359658>

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RIA Novosti  
11 February 2009

## **Russia can Launch ICBMs at Minute's Notice - Missile Forces Chief**

MOSCOW, February 11 (RIA Novosti) - Intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) in service with the Russian Strategic Missile Forces (SMF) could be launched within a minute if Russia's security is threatened, the SMF commander has said.

"Over 6,000 servicemen are on 24/7 combat duty, and at least 96% of all missile systems are ready for deployment within several dozen seconds. It is the highest readiness level among the components of the Russian nuclear triad," Col. Gen. Nikolai Solovtsov said in an interview published on Wednesday by the Krasnaya Zvezda newspaper.

At present, six types of silo-based and mobile ICBM systems of the fourth and the fifth generation, including the heavy Voyevoda (SS-18 Satan), capable of carrying 10 warheads, and the Topol-M (Stalin) systems, are on combat duty with the SMF.

According to open sources, the total arsenal of Russia's SMF comprises 538 ICBMs, including 306 SS-25 Topol (Sickle) missiles and 56 SS-27 Topol-M missiles.

"The fifth regiment at the Tatishchevo Missile Division, which is armed with silo-based Topol-M complexes, was fully staffed in 2008, and there are now 50 silo-based Topol-M systems on combat duty," the general said.

The first two Topol-M mobile missile battalions, equipped with six road-mobile systems, have already been put on combat duty with the 54th Strategic Missile Division near the town of Teikovo, about 150 miles (240 km) northeast of Moscow.

The deployment will continue in 2009 and the division will be up to full strength by 2010, Solovtsov said.

The Topol-M missile, with a range of about 7,000 miles (11,000 km), is said to be immune to any current and future U.S. missile defenses. It is capable of making evasive maneuvers to avoid a kill using terminal phase interceptors, and carries targeting countermeasures and decoys.

It is also shielded against radiation, electromagnetic pulses and nuclear blasts, and is designed to survive a hit from any known form of laser technology.

Solovtsov also said that in 2009 the SMF would start bringing into service systems equipped with new-generation (RS-24) intercontinental ballistic missiles, bearing multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle (MIRV) warheads.

"Making this missile system operational will help bolster the SMF's combat capabilities to overpower missile defense systems, thus strengthening the nuclear deterrence potential of the Russian nuclear triad," Solovtsov said.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090211/120089670.html>

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International Herald Tribune  
February 10, 2009

## **Cyprus: Detained Ship Broke Iran Arms Export Ban**

The Associated Press

**NICOSIA, Cyprus:** A ship detained off Cyprus has breached a U.N. ban on Iranian arms exports, Cyprus' foreign minister said Tuesday.

But Markos Kyprianou refused to specify what had been found on the Cypriot-flagged Monchegorsk, which U.S. officials suspect was delivering arms to Hamas militants in Gaza.

Kyprianou said Cyprus will decide what to do with the cargo once the search of all containers aboard the ship is completed.

Cyprus inspected the Monchegorsk twice after it arrived Jan. 29 under suspicion of ferrying weapons from Iran to Hamas fighters in Gaza. It remains anchored off the port of Limassol under tight security.

Returning the shipment to Iran has been ruled out, but Kyprianou said possible options include confiscating and storing it in Cyprus or another country.

Last week, Cyprus applied for and received guidance from the U.N. Security Council Sanctions Committee on whether the cargo breached sanctions barring Iran from sending arms abroad.

The committee was established in December 2006 to oversee a Security Council-imposed embargo on Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, an export ban on arms and related material, and individual targeted sanctions including travel bans and an assets freeze.

Iran has denied accusations it is trying to build nuclear weapons, saying its nuclear program is geared toward generating electricity.

Kyprianou said Cyprus would "turn to friends" for help if authorities decide against storing the Monchegorsk's cargo on the island.

Britain's Minister for Europe Caroline Flint, who is visiting Cyprus, said her country is ready to help.

"My understanding is that Cypriot authorities are looking into what the situation is, what are the specifications on these weapons that are there," Flint said after talks with Kyprianou.

"And I think when we have a better report of that, the U.K. and I'm sure other countries will want to help in whatever way we can to make sure that they are disposed of effectively."

The U.S. military stopped the ship last month in the Red Sea, and said it found artillery shells and other arms on board. But it could not legally detain the ship, which continued to Port Said, Egypt, and then to Cyprus.

U.S. officials had said the ship was headed for Syria.

Israel launched a 22-day offensive late last month on Hamas-controlled Gaza to try to end militant rocket fire on Israelis and to halt the smuggling of arms into the Palestinian territory.

<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2009/02/10/europe/EU-Cyprus-Iran-Ship.php>

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New York Times  
February 11, 2009

## **Iran Offers ‘Dialogue with Respect’ with U.S.**

By Nazila Fathi and David E. Sanger

TEHRAN — President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran took up President Obama’s oft-repeated invitation for direct talks between the United States and Iran on Tuesday. The move signaled the start of a long-delayed war-or-peace drama that may help define the Obama administration’s plans to remake America’s approach to diplomacy.

But it also opens up the possibility of new tensions with Israel, which less than a year ago sought American help in preparing an attack on Iran’s main nuclear complex and is expected to drift further to the right after Tuesday’s parliamentary elections.

And Mr. Obama will have to decide whether to continue a major covert program against Iran’s nuclear ambitions, even while beginning to engage in diplomacy.

Mr. Ahmadinejad promised that if the United States was truly serious about changing the countries’ relations, then Iran was ready to respond in kind. “It is clear that change should be fundamental, not tactical, and our people welcome real changes,” he said. “Our nation is ready to hold talks based on mutual respect and in a fair atmosphere.”

Mr. Ahmadinejad’s remarks were made in a televised address to a rally celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, which deposed Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. That ended the close relationship between Washington and Tehran and ushered in decades of confrontation that culminated in President Bush’s description of Iran in 2002 as part of an “axis of evil.”

Three weeks ago, however, Mr. Obama promised in his inaugural address a new relationship with nations willing to “unclench” their fists, an offer he repeated at his news conference on Monday evening.

It is too early to know quite how to read Mr. Ahmadinejad’s response. He coupled his offer of talks with an attack on former President Bush, calling for him to be “tried and punished” for his policies and actions in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf region.

It is also never exactly clear who is running foreign policy in Iran, and there is good reason to question whether its fiery president will overcome his mismanagement of the economy to survive the elections there on June 12.

Yet analysts note that, for all his harsh words, Mr. Ahmadinejad has sent a surprising number of positive signals to the United States in recent years. He sent a letter to President Bush in 2006 and a letter to Mr. Obama congratulating him on his election victory, and he has traveled four times to New York since he took office to take part in United Nations meetings.

“Generally speaking, Iran favors ties with the United States because falling oil prices have hurt its economy dramatically,” said Saeed Leylaz, an economist and political analyst in Tehran. “The United States needs to take the first major step. Otherwise Iran cannot go any farther.” But he cautioned that the United States hold direct talks only with Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran’s supreme religious leader.

There is no question that a new dynamic is afoot, one that seems likely to become even more complicated after Tuesday’s election in Israel is settled. If the government that emerges is even more determined to end the Iranian nuclear program by any means necessary, Mr. Obama may find himself trying to negotiate with one of America’s most determined adversaries while restraining one of its closest allies.

“I could draw you a scenario in which this new combination of players leads to the first real talks with Iran in three decades,” one of the key players on the issue for President Obama said last week, speaking on condition of anonymity because the new administration had not even named its team, much less its strategy. “And I could draw

you one in which the first big foreign crisis of the Obama presidency is a really nasty confrontation, either because the Israelis strike or because we won't let them."

In public, Mr. Obama is talking only about the first possibility. On Monday evening, he talked about "looking at areas where we can have constructive dialogue, where we can engage directly with them," and said he was looking for "diplomatic overtures." But he cautioned that "there's been a lot of mistrust built up over the years," and that after 30 years of a deep freeze, openings are "not going to happen overnight."

To protect his right flank, Mr. Obama quickly added the caveat that Iran should know that "we find the funding of terrorist organizations unacceptable" and that "a nuclear Iran could set off a nuclear arms race in the region that would be profoundly destabilizing."

But curiously, he did not repeat the warning he made repeatedly during the campaign that he would never allow Iran to obtain a nuclear weapon, or even the nuclear fuel and ability to build one.

Whether this comes to anything, or founders on the question of Iran's race to enrich more uranium even while the two presidents circle each other, is anyone's guess. But it is bound to make the new government in Israel nervous, and the clock in Jerusalem is ticking a lot faster on the Iranian nuclear problem than it is in Washington.

As The New York Times reported last month, a little less than a year ago the Israeli government went to President Bush seeking bunker-busting bombs, refueling ability and overflight rights over Iraq to strike Iran's main nuclear enrichment plant, at Natanz. President Bush — who elevated pre-emption to a doctrine and declared he would never allow Iran to develop the ability to build a nuclear weapon — turned the Israelis down.

Mr. Bush told the Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, now in his last days in office, to wait and to give a new American covert effort to disable the Natanz plant time to work. Reluctantly, the Israelis agreed, and when the Bush administration disbanded last month, it was still unclear whether Mr. Olmert had really intended to go ahead with the attack or was just bluffing in an effort to force the United States to deal with the problem.

Now comes the replay, this time with some new players.

Over the weekend, Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. offered up the warning that Mr. Obama sidestepped on Monday night: If Iran stays on its current course, sanctions will intensify. The subtext of the Israeli election has been even clearer. To various degrees, all the candidates have made clear they plan to take on not only Hamas, but its Iranian sponsors.

And in Iran itself, the race for the presidency has been energized by the announcement over the weekend by former President Mohammad Khatami, the reformist who never mustered the power or the will to carry out much reform, that he wants his old job back. Presumably, that is a relief to Washington, which desperately wants to see President Ahmadinejad sent to an early and permanent retirement, and with him Iran's proclamations about Israel's eventual destruction and America's inevitable decline.

But it was under Mr. Khatami that Iran's nuclear ambitions first expanded. If the latest National Intelligence Estimate on Iran's nuclear ambitions is correct, the push to develop a weapons design, and the suspension of that effort in 2003, all happened on his watch.

Iran contends that its nuclear program is solely for energy production, but Israel and many Western countries, including the United States, say it is just a cover for attempts to build a bomb.

Mr. Obama's task over the next few months will be to demonstrate that he can simultaneously make progress with the Iranians and buy a little time from the Israelis. That will require some hard decisions, first among them whether the United States will stick to its insistence that the entire nuclear infrastructure in Iran, down to the last centrifuge, be dismantled.

It is almost inconceivable, some of Mr. Obama's aides acknowledge, that the Iranians will be willing to give up everything needed to produce a weapon. And it is hard to imagine that the Israelis will settle for anything less.

*Nazila Fathi reported from Tehran, and David E. Sanger from Washington.*

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/11/world/middleeast/11iran.html>

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11 February 2009

## Iran may be Running out of Yellowcake: Study

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Iran may be close to exhausting its supply of uranium oxide, or yellowcake, raising questions about the commercial viability of its nuclear program, a new study said Wednesday.

The study by the Institute for Science and International Security said there was scant evidence that Iran had supplemented its dwindling supply of yellowcake with domestic uranium mining.

"The current uranium ore shortfall illustrates a fundamental inconsistency between Iran's stated intentions -- a commercially viable, indigenously fueled, civil nuclear power industry and its capabilities," the report said.

"If Iran's objective is a latent nuclear weapons capability, it need not invest resources in the further development of its mining industry," it said.

"But if it wants to meet the requirements of even a single Bushehr-type reactor, it will need to do much more to develop its own indigenous mining capabilities, or settle its differences with the international community so that it can import sufficient quantities of yellowcake," it said.

The study was authored by David Albright, Jacqueline Shire and Paul Brannan for the institute, a non-profit founded in 1993 that focuses on nuclear weapons policy.

Based on a November 2008 report by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the analysts estimate that Iran has consumed nearly three quarters of the 600 tons of yellowcake it acquired from South Africa in the 1970s during the rule of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi.

Neither of Iran's two uranium mines -- one near the Gulf at Gchine and the other in central Iran at Saghand -- appear to have the capacity to support the fuel needs of even a single reactor, according to the study.

The IAEA reported in 2002 that the infrastructure Saghand -- which contains low grade ore -- was essentially complete and would begin production in 2006 with a goal of producing 50 tons a year.

But no evidence of mining activity appears in satellite images taken in August 2004 and again in October 2008, the report said.

Satellite images of a facility built to process ore from the mine "shows further construction of buildings on site but no evidence of ore processing activity," the report said.

The Gchine mine was reported to have begun production in 2004, and the IAEA said it would eventually produce 21 tons of "low but variable grade ore" a year.

But the ISIS report said "the output of the Gchine mine is inadequate to meet the refueling requirements of a single 1000 MW electric power reactor."

It is thought that Gchine produces only a fraction of the uranium needed to keep Iran's uranium conversion facility at Esfahan operating at both current and projected levels.

If Iran manages to maintain operations at Esfahan well into 2010, it could mean that it has succeeded in acquire ore from other sources despite UN Security Council sanctions, the report said.

[http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j-TYN\\_rAR\\_Wr8xXDVyxWb2s77iw](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j-TYN_rAR_Wr8xXDVyxWb2s77iw)

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International Herald Tribune

February 11, 2009

## Official: Iran Not Running out of Raw Uranium

The Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran: Iran said Wednesday that it was not running out of raw uranium or seeking to buy uranium concentrate from abroad to sustain its ambitious nuclear program.



Foreign Ministry spokesman Hassan Qashqavi said reports that Iran's raw uranium stockpile was running out was only "media speculation without any scientific basis."

An Atomic Energy Organization of Iran official also said Iran has its own uranium mines to extract ore, which are sufficient and there is no shortage. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

The Times of London has reported that Western powers believe Iran is running short of raw uranium and its stockpile could be exhausted within months. The paper reported last month that Western countries were trying to dissuade major uranium producers from selling the ore to Iran.

Iran's own principal source of uranium is the Saghand mine in the center of the country, which has the capacity to produce 132,000 tons (120,000 metric tons) of ore per year. Located about 300 miles (480 kilometers) south of Tehran, the mine consists of an open pit with minimal reserves and a deep mine. It has a total estimated uranium ore reserve of 1.73 million tons (1.58 million metric tons).

Iran also has had a considerable stock of yellow cake, acquired from South Africa in the 1970s under the former U.S.-backed shah's original civil nuclear power program.

Uranium ore extracted from a mine such as Saghand is first reprocessed into uranium ore concentrate, known as yellowcake. In the next stage, yellowcake is turned into UF-4, a preliminary stage before being reprocessed into uranium hexafluoride gas, known as UF-6. Iran does this reprocessing at its Uranium Conversion Facility in Isfahan.

In the next stage, the gas is injected into centrifuges — machines that spun at supersonic speeds to purify uranium. Iran says it has 5,000 centrifuges operating in its Natanz uranium enrichment plant in central Iran.

Uranium enriched to a low degree is used to make fuel for a nuclear power reactor — but highly enriched uranium can be used to make bombs.

The U.S. and some of its allies accuse Iran of seeking to build nuclear weapons, but Tehran denies the charges saying its nuclear program is geared toward generating electricity — not weapons.

The U.N. Security Council has slapped three rounds of economic sanctions on Iran over its refusal to halt uranium enrichment.

<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2009/02/11/news/ML-Iran-Raw-Uranium.php>

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Los Angeles Times  
February 12, 2009

## **U.S. Now Sees Iran as Pursuing Nuclear Bomb**

By Greg Miller

Reporting from Washington — Little more than a year after U.S. spy agencies concluded that Iran had halted work on a nuclear weapon, the Obama administration has made it clear that it believes there is no question that Tehran is seeking the bomb.

In his news conference this week, President Obama went so far as to describe Iran's "development of a nuclear weapon" before correcting himself to refer to its "pursuit" of weapons capability.

Obama's nominee to serve as CIA director, Leon E. Panetta, left little doubt about his view last week when he testified on Capitol Hill. "From all the information I've seen," Panetta said, "I think there is no question that they are seeking that capability."

The language reflects the extent to which senior U.S. officials now discount a National Intelligence Estimate issued in November 2007 that was instrumental in derailing U.S. and European efforts to pressure Iran to shut down its nuclear program.

As the administration moves toward talks with Iran, Obama appears to be sending a signal that the United States will

not be drawn into a debate over Iran's intent.

"When you're talking about negotiations in Iran, it is dangerous to appear weak or naive," said Joseph Cirincione, a nuclear weapons expert and president of the Ploughshares Fund, an anti-proliferation organization based in Washington.

Cirincione said the unequivocal language also worked to Obama's political advantage. "It guards against criticism from the right that the administration is underestimating Iran," he said.

Iran has long maintained that it aims to generate electricity, not build bombs, with nuclear power. But Western intelligence officials and nuclear experts increasingly view those claims as implausible.

U.S. officials said that although no new evidence had surfaced to undercut the findings of the 2007 estimate, there was growing consensus that it provided a misleading picture and that the country was poised to reach crucial bomb-making milestones this year.

Obama's top intelligence official, Dennis C. Blair, the director of national intelligence, is expected to address mounting concerns over Iran's nuclear program in testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee today.

When it was issued, the NIE stunned the international community. It declared that U.S. spy agencies judged "with high confidence that in fall 2003, Tehran halted its nuclear weapons program."

U.S. intelligence officials later said the conclusion was based on evidence that Iran had stopped secret efforts to design a nuclear warhead around the time of the U.S. invasion of Iraq.

Often overlooked in the NIE, officials said, was that Iran had not stopped its work on other crucial fronts, including missile design and uranium enrichment. Many experts contend that these are more difficult than building a bomb.

Iran's advances on enrichment have become a growing source of alarm. Since 2004, the country has gone from operating a few dozen centrifuges -- cylindrical machines used to enrich uranium -- to nearly 6,000, weapons experts agree.

By November, Iran had produced an estimated 1,400 pounds of low-enriched uranium, not nearly enough to fuel a nuclear energy reactor, but perilously close to the quantity needed to make a bomb.

A report issued last month by the Institute for Science and International Security concluded that "Iran is moving steadily toward a breakout capability and is expected to reach that milestone during the first half of 2009." That means it would have enough low-enriched uranium to be able to quickly convert it to weapons-grade material.

Tehran's progress has come despite CIA efforts to sabotage shipments of centrifuge components on their way into Iran and entice the country's nuclear scientists to leave.

Iran still faces considerable hurdles. The country touted its launch of a 60-pound satellite into orbit this month. Experts said Iran's rockets would need to be able to carry more than 2,000 pounds to deliver a first-generation nuclear bomb.

And there are indications that the U.S. and Iran are interested in holding serious diplomatic discussions for the first time in three decades. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said this week that his nation was "ready to hold talks based on mutual respect," and Obama indicated that his administration would look for opportunities "in the coming months."

Hassan Qashqavi, spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, on Wednesday warned the U.S. not to wait for Iranian presidential elections this year, because ultimate authority rests with supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

He also said Iran would be patient.

"Since a new administration came to power in the U.S., we do not want to burn the opportunity of President Obama

and give him time to change the reality on the ground," Qashqavi said.

But experts said Iran was now close enough to nuclear weapons capability that it may be less susceptible to international pressure.

"They've made more progress in the last five years than in the previous 10," Cirincione said.

Special correspondent Ramin Mostaghim in Tehran contributed to this report.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/washingtondc/la-fg-usiran12-2009feb12,0,3478184.story>

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GlobalSecurityNewswire.org

Thursday, Feb. 12, 2009

## **Obama Administration Expresses Certainty of Iranian Nuclear Bomb Intent**

High-level members of the Obama administration have voiced conviction that Iran is determined to acquire a nuclear weapon, largely discounting a 2007 intelligence finding that the Middle Eastern state halted its formal bomb development efforts more than five years ago, the *Los Angeles Times* reported today (see *GSN*, Feb. 11).

The National Intelligence Estimate asserted that while Iran continued to pursue ballistic missile capabilities and a uranium enrichment program that could produce a key nuclear-bomb ingredient, the nation in 2003 halted efforts geared toward "weaponizing" bomb material in a warhead. Tehran had denied that its nuclear program ever had a military component.

President Barack Obama criticized Iranian leaders this week for "their development of a nuclear weapon or their pursuit of a nuclear weapon" (see *GSN*, Feb. 10).

Answering a question on Iran last week, CIA Director-designate Leon Panetta said, "From all the information that I've seen, I think there is no question that they are seeking that capability" (see *GSN*, Feb. 6). National Intelligence Director Dennis Blair is set to discuss Iran's atomic activities in Senate testimony today.

The administration's strong statements might be aimed at precluding debate over Iran's nuclear ambitions as Washington prepares some sort of diplomatic engagement with Tehran, experts said.

"When you're talking about negotiations in Iran, it is dangerous to appear weak or naive. It guards against criticism from the right that the administration is underestimating Iran," said Ploughshares Fund head Joseph Cirincione.

Iran's nuclear program has "made more progress in the last five years than in the previous 10," he added (Greg Miller, *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 12).

Meanwhile, analysts yesterday reaffirmed earlier reports that Iran might be running out of unrefined yellowcake uranium for its nuclear program, Agence France-Presse reported (see *GSN*, Jan. 30).

Iran has used roughly three-fourths of a 600-metric-ton uranium supply it received from South Africa in the 1970s, according to a report published yesterday by the Institute for Science and International Security.

The country's two uranium mines do not produce enough uranium to fuel one nuclear power reactor, the study concludes.

"The current uranium ore shortfall illustrates a fundamental inconsistency between Iran's stated intentions -- a commercially viable, indigenously fueled, civil nuclear power industry and its capabilities," the report states.

"If Iran's objective is a latent nuclear weapons capability, it need not invest resources in the further development of its mining industry. But if it wants to meet the requirements of even a single Bushehr-type reactor, it will need to do much more to develop its own indigenous mining capabilities, or settle its differences with the international community so that it can import sufficient quantities of yellowcake," it says (Agence France-Presse/Google News, Feb. 11).

Iran yesterday dismissed reports that its yellowcake supply is dwindling, the Associated Press reported.

The claims are "media speculation without any scientific basis," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Hassan Qashqavi said (Ali Akbar Dareini, Associated Press I/*International Herald Tribune*, Feb. 11).

Elsewhere, Israeli hard-liner Benjamin Netanyahu's strong performance at the polls Tuesday could complicate Obama's drive to reach out to Iran, according to AP. Netanyahu today appeared to have the edge over centrist rival Tzipi Livni to put together a coalition government that he would lead as prime minister (Barry Schweid, Associated Press II/[Yahoo!News](#), Feb. 12).

The political realignment could make Israeli military action against Iranian nuclear facilities more likely, one expert said.

"It ratchets up the pressure on the Obama administration to keep Israel in line over Iran," said Mike Williams, a University of London expert who advised Obama's campaign team on foreign policy. "The major concern for the U.S. is that Israel will start a military operation it can't finish and Washington would have to mop up afterward. The Israelis don't have the technology to effectively retard the Iranian nuclear program" (see [GSN](#), Oct. 27, 2008; Gregory Katz, Associated Press III/*International Herald Tribune*, Feb. 11).

The Israeli political transition would not affect U.S.-Iranian talks, former U.S. Ambassador to Israel Samuel Lewis said.

"Both the Israelis and we have a mutual interest in trying a diplomatic effort to stop their programs," he said, adding that "Obama will have to decide what to do" if economic penalties and diplomatic outreach fail to curb Iran's disputed nuclear activities (Schweid, AP II).

[http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw\\_20090212\\_6525.php](http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20090212_6525.php)

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Times of India  
12 February 2009

## 'India's Secret N-submarine Project Nearing Completion'

Rajat Pandit, TNN

BANGALORE: In a boost to India's long-standing aim to have "a nuclear weapon triad", defence minister A K Antony on Wednesday said the secretive programme to construct indigenous nuclear submarines was on the verge of completion now.

"Things are in the final stage now in the ATV (advanced technology vessel) project. There were bottlenecks earlier...they are over now," said Antony, during the ongoing Aero India-2009 here.

The hush-hush ATV project, a euphemism for the three nuclear-powered submarines being constructed at the Visakhapatnam naval dockyard, has been dogged by a series of technical hiccups since it was formally launched as far back as 1983.

The main problem has revolved around the design of miniature PWRs (pressurised water reactors) and their containment plans for the submarine's propulsion system but sources said such technical problems are a thing of the past now, with a little help from countries like Russia and France.

Sources said there had been some delay in "launching" the first prototype of the nuclear-powered guided-missile attack submarine for sea trials but it would happen soon. Antony, on his part, said, "We will announce it when it is ready."

The Navy hopes to get the first such operational submarine by 2012 or so. Concurrently, DRDO is also working on the K-15 submarine-launched ballistic missile, which will later be integrated with the submarine. In all, five ATVs are planned under the programme, whose cost is touching around Rs 14,000 crore now, by around 2025.

The entire aim behind the ATV programme is to have nuclear-powered submarines, armed with nuclear-tipped cruise or ballistic missiles, to ensure "credible" second-strike capabilities in consonance with India's "no-first use" nuclear doctrine.

Nuclear-powered submarines have higher speeds and can stay submerged much longer than conventional diesel-electric submarines -- which have to surface or snorkel frequently to get oxygen to recharge batteries -- and thereby provide a much more invulnerable launch pad for nuclear weapons.

Though India already has nuclear-capable aircraft and mobile land-based missiles like the 700-km Agni-I and 2,500-km Agni-II being inducted into the armed forces now, it's hoped the ATV project will finally provide it with the third leg of the nuclear triad.

India, of course, is also trying to sort out the remaining few hitches in leasing the K-152 Nerpa Akula-II class nuclear submarine from Russia for a 10-year period, as reported by TOI earlier.

India and Russia had secretly signed the deal for the Akula lease in January 2004, along with the \$1.5 billion package deal for the refit of aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov and 16 MiG-29K fighters to operate from it.

With the two nations now negotiating the around \$2 billion jump in the Gorshkov contract, there is a feeling that Russia is trying to extract more money for the Akula lease also. "We will get the Akula since we have paid money for it. We will use it to train our sailors for the eventual ATVs," said a senior Navy officer.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/Indias-N-sub-in-final-stages-Antony/articleshow/4114292.cms>

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World Nuclear News

EXPLORATION AND NUCLEAR FUEL

11 February 2009

## **Russia Signs Fuel Supply Contract with India**

Russian nuclear fuel producer TVEL and India's Department of Atomic Energy have signed long-term contracts worth more than \$700 million for the supply of nuclear fuel to India's nuclear power plants.

Under the contract, TVEL will supply uranium dioxide pellets to Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL). The contract lasts for several years and will ensure fuel supply to the Tarapur plant in Maharashtra state. The plant's two small boiling water reactors have had to operate at only 50% power for many months due to India's previous inability to source uranium in world markets. The change of this situation will give a quick 150 MWe boost to Indian power supplies.

The agreement, TVEL said, marks the first such long-term nuclear fuel supply contract with India after the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) lifted restrictions for supply of uranium, reactors and technologies to India in September 2008. TVEL said that the contract resulted from a series of discussions and negotiations the two sides had in this connection.

Vasily Konstantinov, vice president of TVEL, commented: "All technical details of cooperation had been studied together with the Indian partners very quickly - coordination took not more than three months." He noted India's strategic approach to development of atomic energy including "preparedness to build long-term relations and to sign 'package' contracts, which provide the opportunity to make certain preferences."

In early December 2008, Russia and India signed a civil nuclear cooperation agreement during a visit to India by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. The signing of the agreement meant that commercial contracts could be prepared by Russian and Indian firms. At that time, the \$700 million deal for TVEL to supply fuel had already been agreed.

Besides nuclear fuel supply, a high priority for India is to import a range of large-scale foreign power reactors. Russian firms are already building two large reactors at Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu under a specific cooperation agreement that covers just those two. TVEL is already fabricating and delivering fuel for the first two reactors at the Kudankulam nuclear power plant. The first consignment of fuel from Russia for first unit at Kudankulam was delivered in May 2008. Another two Russian reactors are expected to be agreed for Kudankulam very soon.

S K Jain, chairman and managing director of NPCIL, said that the news contract with TVEL signifies yet another land mark in the relationship between NPCIL and Russian companies in furthering the role of nuclear power as a clean generating technology.

In addition to Russia, other leading nuclear nations such as France, Canada, Kazakhstan, the UK and USA have sent trade missions to India and further nuclear-related contracts, including those for fuel supply, are expected to be signed soon.

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## **Khan Still Poses Proliferation Threat, Expert Says**

The release of a Pakistan nuclear smuggler from house arrest could raise new proliferation dangers despite government assurances that he would be closely monitored, a nuclear security expert said this week (see *GSN*, Feb. 10).

A Pakistani court ruled last week that former scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan -- who once confessed to running an illicit international network that supplied nuclear technology to Iran, Libya and North Korea -- must be released after five years of house arrest. Officials in Islamabad promised that his communications would be monitored and his contacts and travel would be limited, but U.S. officials and others have expressed continuing concern.

"If Khan is feeling vindictive or feeling there is more money to be made, then he could actually try to activate some of the old relationships," said David Albright, head of the Institute for Science and International Security. It is unlikely that Khan could restore the full extent of his former operations, Albright said, but he might still have access to limited stocks of equipment, not to mention his extensive expertise (Jackie Northam, National Public Radio, Feb. 12).

U.S. State Department spokesman Robert Wood expressed similar concern about Pakistani monitoring efforts. "We have to take them at their word. But, of course, we'll have to see what comes out ... see how things play out with regard to these assurances" (Lalit Jha, Press Trust of India, Feb. 10).

Another nuclear expert, however, said Khan's release represented more of a bad message than a proliferation threat. "To me, the more damaging outcome was the symbolism," said Leonard Spector of the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, "the fact that Pakistan did not stand by a tough nonproliferation commitment" (Northam, National Public Radio).

"I don't think it's a positive signal," agreed EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana. "In the moments we are living, with the problems of proliferation, it's not a good signal" (Reuters, Feb. 11).

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