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Boston Globe  
May 26, 2009

## **Blast by N. Korea Tests US Policy**

By Bryan Bender, Globe Staff

WASHINGTON - North Korea's nuclear test yesterday morning, its most defiant move since President Obama took office, presents a direct challenge to the new US administration's more conciliatory approach to ending North Korea's nuclear program, according to current and former US officials and arms control specialists.

The underground explosion, which appeared to be more powerful than the test North Korea conducted in 2006, prompted a sharp condemnation by the United Nations Security Council, while Obama pledged to redouble efforts to pressure the Communist regime to give up its nuclear program.

"North Korea's actions endanger the people of Northeast Asia, they are a blatant violation of international law, and they contradict North Korea's own prior commitments," Obama told reporters at the White House before delivering Memorial Day remarks at Arlington National Cemetery. "Now, the United States and the international community must take action in response."

Obama did not specify what actions he is considering. A range of specialists suggested that moves could include banning even nonmilitary sales of goods to North Korea, and pushing China and Russia, which are North Korea's main trading partners, to increase pressure on reclusive North Korean leader Kim Jong Il.

The specialists also said the test indicated that Obama's entreaties for North Korea to return to international disarmament talks - including dangling the prospect of one-on-one talks with the United States - have failed to provide even a pause in the country's nuclear ambitions.

Indeed, yesterday's test came just weeks after Obama's special envoy, Stephen W. Bosworth, was dispatched to North Korea with a message that the United States may be willing to engage in direct talks, a sign of respect that North Korea has long sought.

The Obama administration "came into office hopeful that an outreached hand would yield better results," said Michael J. Green, former senior Asia adviser to President George W. Bush. "They are now in a much more sober and realist mood. [North Korea's leaders] mean it when they say they want to establish themselves as a nuclear weapons state."

Green and others also noted that the stability of North Korea is in doubt because Kim, who is believed to be in his late 60s and to have recently suffered a stroke, has not fully prepared for a transition of power.

"You have to wonder what comes next," Green said, expressing worry that the regime could collapse. "They may be getting more aggressive to the outside world precisely because of the situation at home. They are scrambling to set up a succession to Kim Jong Il."

Monday's atomic test - which coincided with the test-firing of three short-range missiles - was conducted shortly before 10 a.m. local time about 50 miles northwest of the northern city of Kilju, said Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Alexander Drobyshevsky.

Two hours later the official North Korean news agency announced that the government "has successfully conducted one more underground nuclear test on May 25 as part of measures to bolster its nuclear deterrent for self-defense."

The US Geological Survey reported the magnitude of the explosion was 4.7 on the Richter scale, leading specialists to make preliminary conclusions that North Korea, which is suspected of having enough plutonium to make up to nine bombs, has improved its technological capability.

"The North Korean nuclear test in October 2006 only had a seismic yield of 3.6 to 4.2 on the Richter scale, essentially a fizzle, and less than one kiloton," said Philip E. Coyle, a senior adviser to the Center for Defense Information, a Washington think tank. He said a yield of 4.7 this time "could suggest a yield of about five kilotons, or maybe even 10 kilotons."

Coyle, who previously ran the Nevada Test Site, where the United States conducted secret underground nuclear tests during the Cold War, said "better estimates of seismic yield will be forthcoming," adding that there are some indications the weapons did not fully detonate.

Russian specialists reported the magnitude of the test as high as 20 kilotons, comparable to the atomic bombs that United States dropped on Japan during World War II, but Coyle and others insisted those estimates were too high.

Meanwhile, South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported that the North's test of missiles with estimated ranges of 80 miles may have been an attempt to keep US and Japanese surveillance planes away from the nuclear test site.

The global condemnation of the actions was quick and resolute. France said it would push for tougher sanctions at the United Nations, while Russia called it a "serious blow" to arms control efforts.

Meanwhile, China, a traditional North Korea ally that has joined in trying to pressure North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons program, said it was "resolutely opposed" to its neighbor's actions.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman John F. Kerry was traveling in China and said in a statement that "North Korea's reckless, stubborn, and persistent steps to attract international attention will never buy it the security, legitimacy, and respect it seeks."

Some specialists called for quick punitive measures, including returning North Korea to the US State Department's list of countries that sponsor terrorism, which would bar it from certain aid. North Korea was removed from that list last year as an incentive to curtail its nuclear program.

"This is a multikiloton blast of reality," said Henry Sokolski, a member of the bipartisan US Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Terrorism. "We've been in denial and this should be a wakeup call. Trying to keep them from being a nuclear power is not going to happen."

But Sokolski and others acknowledge there are few alternatives to pressing ahead with diplomatic incentives in exchange for North Korea's agreement to dismantle its nuclear program - including a possible guarantee not to attack the country, which is believed to be obsessed with the prospect of an American invasion.

Using military force against North Korea would likely set off a major conflict drawing in South Korea and possibly other Asian countries, while prompting an enormous humanitarian crisis, officials said. North Korea has at least one million troops just miles from South Korea's capital of Seoul.

Harsh sanctions by themselves could backfire, forcing a regime controlled by hardliners to act out even more aggressively.

Kim "is gradually being succeeded by a coterie of hard-line loyalists and members of the Kim family," warned Victor D. Cha, former director of Asian affairs at the National Security Council under President George W. Bush.

For now, one senior Obama adviser said, the administration seems resigned to finding new ways to get North Korea - which also test-fired a long-range missile last month in defiance of UN resolutions - to negotiate.

"We need to reinforce our objective of achieving nuclear disarmament," said the senior administration official who is directly involved in crafting Obama's arms control policy and not authorized to speak publicly about plans. "Even if that can't be achieved immediately - even if that is going to take some time and proceed in stages - I think it is absolutely essential we not waver from that commitment."

[http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2009/05/26/blast\\_by\\_n\\_korea\\_tests\\_us\\_policy/?page=full](http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2009/05/26/blast_by_n_korea_tests_us_policy/?page=full)

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New York Times

May 26, 2009

## Test Delivers a Message for Domestic Audience

By MARTIN FACKLER

SEOUL, South Korea — When North Korea suddenly announced Monday that it had conducted a second nuclear test, the initial view across the region was that this had been yet another defiant gambit by the North to extract more concessions from Washington.

That has been the oft-repeated pattern in the past, and is likely to be one motivation now as well, say North Korea watchers. But this time around, North Korea's succession crisis is the primary impetus, many experts believe, suggesting that the audience for the test is its own population as much as the United States.

Monday's test is the culmination of a shift toward a more assertive foreign policy, which some analysts say seems to have begun not long after the North Korean leader, Kim Jong-il, is believed to have suffered a stroke in August. Speculation about a successor has focused on his youngest son, Kim Jong-un, which would continue the family dynasty to the third generation — one unique among Communist nations.

Some experts say the test was a display of might aimed at showing solidarity with North Korea's powerful military, whose support would be essential in securing Mr. Kim's choice of successor. Others believe the intended audience was North Korea's largely impoverished population, in hopes a display of technological prowess could serve as the elder Mr. Kim's legacy in a government that has failed to deliver even basic food and electricity.

Either way, the North Korean government most likely hopes the test will help ensure a smooth transition of power — and, perhaps, show that the elder Kim is still in charge, at least for now.

“Kim Jong-il wants to show that he has given his nation mighty nuclear power,” said Yoon Deok-min, a senior researcher at the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, a Seoul-based research organization. “This test was absolutely a domestic demonstration.”

Analysts called the test a sign that the ruling family may be preparing for a transition. Last month, Kim Jong-il's brother-in-law, Jang Seong-taek, joined the National Defense Commission, the most powerful group in the government, said Kim Sung-han, an international relations professor at Korea University in Seoul. He said Mr. Jang's promotion might be a move to secure support from the military in case Mr. Kim's health worsens.

In April, South Korean news media reported that Kim Jong-un, who is in his mid-20s, was appointed to a low-ranking job in the commission. Mr. Jang, Kim Sung-han said, may also be a caretaker until the younger Kim is old enough to assume power in a society that values seniority.

“The test is a signal of Kim Jong-il's desire to build good ties with the military,” he said. “The military is key to the succession.”

To be sure, as North Korea experts admit, trying to fathom this highly secretive government's motives is an exercise in tea leaf reading. And most North Korea watchers agree that the North is still keen to use nuclear brinkmanship to extract as much aid and food as possible out of Washington, in what has become a tried-and-true strategy.

It tried this in 1998, when it fired a multistage rocket over Japan, following up months later with an offer to halt long-range missile tests. Those concessions resulted in a thaw in ties with Washington that led to a groundbreaking visit two years later by then Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

The problem is that these improvements in relations have often proved short-lived. Just a year ago, North Korea blew up the cooling tower at its main nuclear weapons plant after agreeing to give up its weapons program. But it reneged on that promise in April, restarting its program out of anger at United Nations sanctions for a long-range rocket test.

There are also those who say the North's main objective in Monday's test was simply to advance its nuclear technology, in order to build an independent deterrent along the lines of Israel's or Pakistan's. Early seismic readings show the underground blast, in North Korea's northeast, was much more powerful than its first nuclear test three years ago, news reports in South Korea said.

Most experts agree that the North sees development of nuclear bombs and other weapons as the best way to ensure the current government's survival. They also say it hopes that this will force the United States to accept North Korea as a nuclear-armed state, just as it dropped its objections to India, and eventually normalize relations.

“It is like proposing to someone with a pistol,” said Masao Okonogi, a political scientist at Tokyo’s Keio University. “There is a big gap between North Korea’s goal and its means. But this is the only way that North Korea knows how to operate.”

Mr. Okonogi believes that the North conducted Monday’s test mainly to grab Washington’s attention. He said there was a perception among North Korean leaders that their nation has been a lower priority for the new administration of President Obama — a view that does reflect an administration strategy of trying to play down North Korea, given the succession crisis and the current focus on Iran.

“They want to be recognized as a nuclear-armed nation,” said Mr. Kim of Korea University. He added, with some hyperbole, “If Washington would do that, I’m sure the North would even be willing to send troops to help in Afghanistan.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/26/world/asia/26northk.html?em>

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New York Times  
May 26, 2009

## **Seismic Readings Point to a Small Nuclear Test**

By THOM SHANKER and WILLIAM J. BROAD

WASHINGTON — Initial seismic readings from the underground blast in North Korea were consistent with a relatively small nuclear test, but it will be days or weeks before the United States and international organizations can determine whether it was a nuclear detonation and how successful it might have been, experts said Monday.

Scientists can judge the size of an underground nuclear blast by how violently it shakes the earth, although this method is not foolproof because conventional explosives can mimic the rumble. Experts can confirm the atomic origin by detecting the signature of radioactive gases and particles that a nuclear blast emits.

The United States Geological Survey reported that Monday’s episode had a magnitude of 4.7, which would make it slightly larger than the one that the North Koreans generated in October 2006. Many experts considered that atomic blast a near flop, and they wondered the same about Monday’s test.

“Was it another fizzle?” asked Hans M. Kristensen, a nuclear expert at the Federation of American Scientists. “We’ll have to wait for more analysis of the seismic data, but so far the early news media reports about a ‘Hiroshima-size’ nuclear explosion seem to be overblown.”

Annika Thunborg, a spokeswoman in Vienna for the preparatory commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization, said in an interview that 39 of the organization’s tracking stations had detected the seismic event, and that the commission had judged its magnitude to be 4.5.

Martin B. Kalinowski, a nuclear expert at the University of Hamburg, said a magnitude of 4.7 corresponded to a nuclear explosive yield of about three to eight kilotons of high explosives, with the most likely yield being four kilotons. A blast that generated a tremor with a magnitude of 4.5 would be smaller.

In contrast, the primitive bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki had explosive yields of 15 kilotons and 22 kilotons, respectively.

A senior Obama administration official said Monday afternoon that based on seismic data alone, officials estimated the explosion at “several kilotons.” That would be a major advance beyond the 2006 test. However, senior American officials still had not seen any results of environmental sampling that might reveal details of the blast and confirm that it was nuclear.

While seismic readings are taken immediately by systems in the region and around the globe, the specialized devices that can measure spikes in radiation in the air and water must await any seepage from the underground North Korean test site to be carried by the wind and sea currents to fixed sensors.

Aircraft with high-technology “sniffer” devices read radiation increases carried by the wind, but American military officers cautioned that weather conditions dictate how quickly those aircraft can be launched into international airspace off North Korea.

Once all of the evidence is gathered it takes time to analyze it, at laboratories in Vienna, where many of the United Nations’ monitoring organizations are, and in the United States.

“We know there was a seismic event of about 4.7, which comports with a nuclear test as the North Koreans have claimed — and with what we had been anticipating them to do,” a senior military officer said. “So it fits with their rhetoric and our expectations. But for any detailed assessment beyond that, we’ll have to wait a few days for the tests and analysis.”

That officer, like other military and Pentagon civilian officials who agreed to discuss initial reports on the seismic event, did so on the condition of anonymity since much of the information remains classified.

In a statement on Monday, the test-ban commission said the radiological detection should be quicker this time around because more stations have been activated since 2006. “The meteorological situation,” the statement said, “will determine how long it will take” to identify the radioactive gases.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/26/world/asia/26threat.html?hp>

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Deutsche Welle  
26 May 2009

## **UN Security Council Condemns North Korean Atomic Test**

The United Nations Security Council has unanimously condemned a nuclear test by North Korea, describing it as "a clear violation" of a previous resolution. Meanwhile, Pyongyang fired more short-range missiles.

At an emergency meeting in New York, the UN Security Council responded strongly to the latest North Korean nuclear test, saying it violated international law, and indicating that it might impose sanctions.

Ignoring the international outrage, Pyongyang continued what many observers consider to be posturing when it fired two short-range missiles off its east coast Tuesday.

### **Saber rattling in the North?**

The joint chiefs of staff of the South Korean military did not confirm the launches, which were reported by South Korea's Yonhap news agency to be a surface-to-air missile and an anti-ship missile.

Yonhap quoted an official as saying, "the North is continuing its saber-rattling."

The move merely increased international condemnation. In response to the nuclear test on Monday, the UN Security Council met in a special session for just under an hour before issuing a joint response condemning the test and saying it would "start work immediately on a Security Council resolution on this matter."

Russia's ambassador to the UN, Vitaly Churkin, told reporters the test was "very serious and needs to have a strong response," an opinion shared by the US ambassador Susan Rice. China said it "resolutely opposed" the test, and demanded that North Korea stick to its disarmament commitments.

In Copenhagen, UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon said he was "deeply disturbed" by the development.

"If confirmed, this constitutes a clear violation of Security Council resolution 1718 of 2006, which demanded that North Korea does not conduct a nuclear test," Ban said.

Resolution 1718 was issued in October 2006 in response to Pyongyang's first nuclear test.

### **Size of blast**

Defense officials in Russia say the test involved an explosion of up to 20 kilotons, a similar size to the atomic bomb explosions in Nagasaki and Hiroshima at the close of World War II. That would make the blast 20 times larger than Pyongyang's 2006 test.

However, the US and Austria-based Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization say the blast was probably smaller, although their analysis is ongoing.

In the immediate wake of North Korea's latest test, EU foreign policy coordinator Javier Solana condemned the move.

"These irresponsible acts by North Korea warrant a firm response by the international community. The European Union will be in contact with its partners to discuss appropriate measures," Solana said in a statement on Monday.

The Czech Foreign Minister Jan Kohout, whose country currently holds the rotating EU presidency, had also said he was "very much disturbed" by North Korea's announcement.

### **Asian reaction**

Reactions to the test in Asia were also swift. In South Korea, President Lee Myung-bak has called an emergency meeting of the country's security council, and in Japan officials have set up a task force in the crisis management center of Prime Minister Taro Aso's office.

"As it is a violation of UN Security Council resolutions, Japan condemns and protests it strongly," said Japanese Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone. "We, as the only nation to have had a nuclear bomb used against us, feel the need to take stern action."

Despite the international outrage, the North said in an official statement that it would continue tests. Moreover, a senior official at Pyongyang's embassy in Moscow told the Itar-Tass news agency on Monday that the country would continue to carry out nuclear tests until western nations, led by the US, bring an end to policies of "intimidation."

<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,4279878,00.html>

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Mainichi Daily News – Japan  
26 May 2009

## **Japanese Experts Consider North Korea's Nuclear Test Successful**

Experts have taken the view that North Korea's recent nuclear test was successful, based on the fact that seismic waves from the blast were much larger than those recorded during a test the North conducted in October 2006.

University of Tsukuba associate professor Yuji Yagi estimates that the size of the explosion was four to five times greater than that of North Korea's previous test.

"We cannot rule out the possibility that North Korea's nuclear testing has become technologically advanced. Judging by the scale of the tremors alone, it was on practically the same scale as nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan," Yagi said.

Takeshi Matsushima, an associate professor at Kyushu University's Institute of Seismology and Volcanology who analyzed seismic data from 171 locations in the Kyushu, Shikoku and Chugoku regions of Japan, said the size of the latest explosion could be over 10 times higher than the 2006 detonation.

"Compared with the previous time, there's a possibility that the scale was 10 to 15 times bigger," he said.

Mitsuru Kurosawa, a professor at Osaka Jogakuin College familiar with the topic of nuclear nonproliferation, said that judging by the figure that North Korea provided in the six-party talks on the amount of plutonium it possessed (38.5 kilograms), it would "still have enough plutonium left after the latest test for seven or eight nuclear weapons." Additionally, it is estimated that North Korea has the reprocessing capacity to produce enough plutonium for one to 1.5 nuclear weapons a year.

<http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/news/20090526p2a00m0na013000c.html>

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Tehran Times  
May 26, 2009

## **N. Korea Confirms Second Nuclear Test**

SEOUL (Yonhap) -- North Korea said it has "successfully" conducted its second nuclear test on Monday, following a warning it issued last month after the UN's rebuke of its rocket launch and amid a diplomatic deadlock with Washington. South Korea and Japan swiftly agreed to take the test to the UN Security Council. Washington could not immediately confirm the North's claimed test. "The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) successfully conducted one more underground nuclear test on May 25," the official Korean Central News Agency said. North Korea warned of the second nuclear test -- following the first in October in 2006 -- last month after

the UN Security Council condemned its April 5 rocket launch. Monday's report did not say when and where the test was conducted. According to the Seoul-based Korea Meteorological Administration, artificial seismic waves were detected at 9:54 A.M. and their origin was 10-15 km away from the previous test site near the town of Kilju, in the country's northeast province of North Hamgyong. The waves had a magnitude of 4.5 on the Richter Scale, compared to the previous 3.6, the agency said. The North said the second test was "higher" in terms of its explosive power and technology. Analysts have said the previous test was a relatively small one with an explosive force of less than one kiloton. The test results "helped satisfactorily settle the scientific and technological problems ... further increasing the power of nuclear weapons and steadily developing nuclear technology," the report said. Washington was consulting with allies but could not yet confirm the report, said a U.S. State Department official on condition of anonymity. "Once we have established the facts, we will have more to say. At this point, I do not have a timeline as to when there will be more to say," the official said. South Korean President Lee Myung-bak called an emergency meeting of security ministers earlier in the morning to discuss countermeasures. The timing of the test was particularly embarrassing for South Korea, where the whole nation was mourning the death of former President Roh Moo-hyun who leaped to his death on Saturday amid a bribery probe. North Korea's Kim had sent a message of "profound condolences" to Roh's family just hours before the nuclear test. South Korean Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan and his Japanese counterpart Hirofumi Nakasone agreed to bring the issue to the UN Security Council on the sidelines of the Asia-Europe Meeting in Hanoi.

The Security Council bans North Korea's nuclear activity under its 1718 resolution adopted immediately after the country's previous test.

Yang Moo-jin, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, said North Korea intended to bear international condemnation in order to pressure Washington into opening direct talks with his country. The North also knows that the UN sanctions would have little impact on its already isolated economy, Yang said.

"Chairman Kim Jong-il is following his roadmap under meticulous calculations," he said. "After the sanctions and temporary condemnations, he is looking at maximizing profits North Korea may get by holding nuclear disarmament talks with the U.S."

Yang also said North Korea appears to be expecting increased internal military unity as a result of the nuclear test.

[http://www.tehrantimes.com/index\\_View.asp?code=195470](http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=195470)

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Global Security Newswire

May 26, 2009

## **South Korea Joins Proliferation Security Initiative**

In the wake of North Korea's latest nuclear blast, South Korea said today it was joining the U.S.-led program to interdict illicit shipments of weapons of mass destruction and their component parts, Agence France-Presse reported (see *GSN*, April 23).

"Our participation in the [Proliferation Security Initiative] is necessary, in light of the very grave situation that North Korea has conducted a nuclear test," Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan told lawmakers (see related *GSN* story, today).

U.S. President Barack Obama expressed his appreciation for the decision in a telephone conversation with South Korean President Lee Myung-bak (Agence France-Presse I/NASDAQ.com, May 26).

Seoul has been solely an observer to the Proliferation Security Initiative, deferring full participation in order to avoid aggravating Pyongyang. The North, a known weapons exporter, has said it would consider its neighbor's involvement in the multilateral effort a declaration of war.

The South indicated last month it would reconsider its stance after North Korea's rocket launch, an event seen by several nations as a test of long-range missile technology (see *GSN*, April 6). Several weeks passed without a formal declaration, but Monday's nuclear test eliminated any reason for further delay, government sources in Seoul told the Yonhap News Agency.

The move was made "to cope with the serious threat that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles poses to world peace and security," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Moon Tae-young.

"But maritime agreements reached between South and North Korea will still remain valid," he added, addressing pacts that allow each nation's cargo vessels to pass through the territorial waters of the other country (Agence France-Presse II/ChannelNewsAsia, May 26).

[http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw\\_20090526\\_6455.php](http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20090526_6455.php)

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Pravda  
26 May 2009

## **North Korea Falls into Hysterics Building Nuclear Warheads**

North Korea continues to intimidate the world with a nuclear war. The country launched two missiles today, May 26, following yesterday's underground nuclear explosion and a missile launch.

Pravda.Ru interviewed Vladimir Khrustalev, an expert of nuclear technologies, about North Korea's nuclear potential.

"The range of North Korean ballistic missiles exceeds 1,000 kilometers. One may say that they can hit targets at a distance of 1,500 kilometers, which is enough to attack Japan and South Korea," the expert said.

"Some experts believe that North Korea can attack the United States in the event the war breaks out. Is it possible?"

"Three-stage missiles Paektusan-1, Paektusan-2 and Unha-2, which the country test-fired in 1998, 2006 and 2009, can hardly be viewed as a threat to America. The missiles were only launched once, and the launches can not be considered successful. There is no information about the infrastructure that the nation may have to fire its missiles from a different launchpad. In addition, it is not known whether the country can make launches during any time of the year, not just during the warm season as it happens now. Furthermore, the missiles are very large in size – pre-launch preparations take a lot of time. All these details make the missiles detectable and vulnerable."

"In other words, if the war breaks out, the missiles may not be even launched?"

"Most likely, yes. It is hard to hide them. The cumbersome infrastructure is defended very poorly. The Unha-2 missile, which was launched in April, has a number of disadvantages when it comes to its pre-launch preparations. It was installed on the launchpad on March 25. The tank fuelling began on April 2, whereas the launch was performed on April 4. It took them ten days to launch one missile. Therefore, it is absolutely impossible to use the missile in battle missions.

"For the time being, North Korea is unable to solve the problem of launching the serial production of long-range missile complexes, nor can it build the launching tubes that would be properly defended against high-precision weapons. Their small and medium-range missile systems have mobile launchers, but this is a completely different story."

"Which systems are you talking about?"

"Nodon missiles have the largest potential. They can be used for carrying nuclear warheads. Their modified versions have been passed into service in Iran and Pakistan. In addition, North Korea has Soviet R-17 missiles and local versions of Soviet Luna-M and Tochka small-range missiles."

"What about the reliability of the North Korean missiles?"

"The North Korean missile program is characterized with a relatively high level against the background of what many other countries have. However, this is the level that the Soviet Union had during the 1950s and the 1960s.

"It is not known how many missiles the nation has exactly. Most likely, it has hundreds. The missile potential will be enough to attack Japan and South Korea. A US defense publication wrote in 2005 that North Korea could launch from 54 to 72 ballistic missiles within one hour. This is just a theory, of course. At any rate, a ballistic missile is the only long-range weapon against which there is no guaranteed defense, especially if several ballistic missiles are launched at a time.

"Only ballistic missiles can guarantee a high probability of hitting a target, because the creation of the efficient missile defense system is highly problematic even for the United States. That is why, it is extremely important for North Korea to build nuclear warheads for Nodon missiles. Perhaps, this is exactly what North Korea is doing at the moment."

[http://newsfromrussia.com/world/asia/26-05-2009/107628-north\\_korea-0](http://newsfromrussia.com/world/asia/26-05-2009/107628-north_korea-0)

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London Daily Telegraph  
27 May 2009

## **North Korea: Russia Takes Extra Security Measures in case of Nuclear Conflict**

By Adrian Blomfield in Moscow

Revealing an unprecedented level of concern in Moscow over Pyongyang's increasing belligerence, officials said that a series of precautionary steps was being taken near Russia's border with North Korea, but insisted that no military measures were being considered.

"We are not talking about stepping up military efforts but rather about measures in case a military conflict, perhaps with the use of nuclear weapons, flares up on the Korean peninsula," an unidentified security source told the Interfax news agency.

Sensitive political decisions taken by Moscow are traditionally revealed by anonymous officials through Russian news agencies. Interfax provided no further details.

The measures being taken are likely primarily to involve emergency precautions in the event of radioactive contamination in the far-eastern regions of Russia close to the North Korean border.

The reclusive regime in Pyongyang carried out Monday's nuclear test just miles from the Russian border.

Although the Kremlin has been uncharacteristically virulent in its condemnation of its North Korean ally, Moscow has sent mixed signals over the extent of its support for an international response led by the United States.

Sergei Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, called for a "tough" United Nations Security Council resolution but hinted that Moscow would not back any new sanctions against Pyongyang.

The world "must not rush to punish North Korea just for punishment's sake," Mr Lavrov said, adding: "Problems can be resolved only through talks."

The minister's comments suggested that Russia would demand North Korea's return to six-nation talks on Pyongyang's nuclear programme but would not back any U.S. proposal calling for the country's financial isolation.

In an implicit criticism of the United States and Japan, Mr Lavrov suggested that North Korea did not bear the entire blame for the collapse of the negotiations.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/northkorea/5394262/North-Korea-Russia-takes-extra-security-measures-in-case-of-nuclear-conflict.html>

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China View  
27 May 2009

## **DPRK Seemingly Have Restarted Nuclear Facility: Yonhap**

SEOUL, May 27 (Xinhua) -- The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) seems to have restarted its nuclear reprocessing facility at Yongbyon, South Korea's Yonhap News Agency said Wednesday, citing its source.

"The Yongbyon nuclear facility was spotted to have opened several times the plutonium fuel rods in mid-April, in addition to smoke rising from the steam facility later in the month," the source was quoted as saying by Yonhap.

As Reprocessing spent fuel rods is a key process to producing weapons-grade plutonium, Pyongyang is believed to possess enough plutonium to make as many as half a dozen nuclear weapons, according to Yonhap.

As vehicles apparently conveying chemicals were also eyed near the Yongbyon facility, the DPRK seems to have followed pre-devised processes, one of which is the recent nuclear test, Yonhap said.

"As a result, it is the belief of our intelligence office that it is highly likely the North restarted its nuclear facility," the source was quoted as saying.

The DPRK has been going through a disablement process in the Yongbyon facility as it signed an aid-for-denuclearization deal in 2007.

Pyongyang said in April that it would restart the nuclear facility in protest of a U.N. Security Council statement that condemned its long-range rocket launch earlier that month.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-05/27/content\\_11442208.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-05/27/content_11442208.htm)

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Daily Yomiuri – Japan  
27 May 2009

## **N-Warheads May Come Next**

The Yomiuri Shimbun

Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada on Tuesday said North Korea might manage to develop nuclear warheads in the near future.

North Korea is believed to be making efforts to mount a nuclear weapon on a ballistic missile," Hamada said during a House of Councillors Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee meeting in the morning.

"We can't rule out the possibility of [North Korea] downsizing its nuclear weapons and developing nuclear warheads in a relatively short period of time," he said.

Hamada's remarks came in response to a question by main opposition Democratic Party of Japan member Naoki Kazama.

<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/20090527TDY02307.htm>

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Yonhap News  
27 May 2009

## **N. Korea Threatens Military Response after S. Korea Joins PSI**

By Kim Hyun and Tony Chang

SEOUL, May 27 (Yonhap) -- North Korea said Wednesday it will no longer abide by the Korean War armistice and may retaliate militarily in response to the South's participation in a U.S.-led drill, further raising tension following its nuclear test.

The statement, issued by the North's permanent military mission to the joint security area in the demilitarized zone separating the Koreas, also said the country can no longer guarantee the safety of South Korean and U.S. military ships and civilian vessels sailing along the western sea border.

"Our revolutionary armed forces, as they have already declared, will regard the Lee Myung-bak group of traitors' 'full participation' in the PSI as a declaration of war against the DPRK (North Korea)," the Panmunjom Mission of the North's Korean People's Army said.

South Korea joined the Proliferation Security Initiative on Tuesday, reacting to the nuclear test a day earlier. The North's second underground test, believed to be an improvement in nuclear yield and technology from its first test in 2006, prompted international condemnation and a U.N. Security Council move to sharpen sanctions on the North.

Wednesday's statement was the latest in a series of North Korean reactions to the outside world. North Korea quit nuclear disarmament talks last month to protest the Security Council's rebuke of its rocket launch. An informed source in Seoul said the country appears to have restarted in mid-April its nuclear reprocessing facility at Yongbyon, where it extracts plutonium used to make nuclear bombs.

After its nuclear test Monday, Pyongyang test-fired several short-range missiles into the East Sea. Watchers say inter-continental missile tests may follow, as the North threatened last month.

The latest warning came during the crab-catching season in the Yellow Sea. Sparking concerns of military clashes, the North said it will no longer be bound by the 1953 armistice agreement and a western sea border drawn at that time.

The statement said it is "illogical" to keep the armistice while South Korea and the U.S. have reneged on it by joining the anti-proliferation drill. The exercise, aimed at seizing ships and planes suspected of carrying weapons of mass destruction, violates the armistice agreement that bans any form of naval blockade on the peninsula, the North claimed.

"Accordingly, they (the North Korean army) will regard any hostile actions against the DPRK, including checkup and inspection of its peaceful vessels, as an unpardonable encroachment on the DPRK's sovereignty and counter them with prompt and strong military strikes," the statement said.

Seoul officials refuted the North's claim. The drill is not blocking North Korean entry into South Korean waters, they say, and commercial ships will continue to pass across the border as allowed in a 2005 inter-Korean maritime accord, they said.

Pyongyang had repeatedly warned of a military response should Seoul join the PSI. On March 30, it said that South Korea "should never forget that Seoul is just 50 km away from the Military Demarcation Line."

The North's statement said the two Koreas are now "bound to immediately return to a state of war."

Two bloody skirmishes occurred along the western sea border in 1999 and 2002. The Koreas currently divide their territories with the Northern Limit Line, which was unilaterally drawn by the U.S.-led U.N. Command at the end of the war. The North has rejected it as illegitimate and demanded it be redrawn further south.

"For the present, we will not guarantee the legal status of the five islands under the south side's control" or the "safe sailing of warships of the U.S. imperialist aggression forces and the South Korean puppet navy and civilian ships operating in the waters around there," the statement said.

Yang Moo-jin, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies, said military clashes could occur in the western sea border at any time. North Korea wants to draw U.S. attention to the peninsula, he said, particularly noting that the warning was issued by the North Korean mission to the joint security area within the purview of the U.N. Command.

Yang also said North Korea may follow up by test-firing inter-continental ballistic missiles.

Koh Yu-hwan, a professor at Dongguk University, said North Korea is aware of South Korea's superior military force and will not easily attempt a provocation that will likely lead to its own defeat. Instead, South Korea will suffer emotional and economic losses, as fishermen on those islands will withdraw and investors' sentiment in the country may slide, he said.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2009/05/27/30/0401000000AEN20090527011000315F.HTML>

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China View  
27 May 2009

## **DPRK Officials Gather for Celebration on Nuclear Test**

PYONGYANG, May 27 (Xinhua) -- Senior government officials of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) Tuesday gathered for a mass celebration of its second nuclear test, the official Rodong Sinmun daily reported on Wednesday.

"The nuclear test was a grand undertaking to protect the supreme interests of the DPRK and defend the dignity and sovereignty of the country and nation," Choe Thae Bok, secretary of the central committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, said in a speech delivered at the event.

The country was faced with "the U.S. imperialists' unabated threat to mount a preemptive nuclear attack and sanctions," he said.

DPRK top legislator Kim Yong Nam and Kim Yong Chun, vice chairman of the National Defense Commission, were present at the meeting.

The DPRK said on Monday it successfully conducted "one more underground nuclear test" in clear violation of a UN resolution banning it from any nuclear test and missile launch.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-05/27/content\\_11442732.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-05/27/content_11442732.htm)

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Scottish Daily Record

May 27, 2009

## **North Korea Ready to Sell Nuclear Weapons to al-Qaeda, Expert Warns**

By Bob Roberts

NORTH Korea is ready to sell nuclear bombs to al-Qaeda, experts warned yesterday.

As the crisis over the rogue regime's nuclear bomb explosion deepened, former diplomats said there was a clear and present danger from the Pyongyang government.

Graham Allison, former US defence minister under Bill Clinton, said the international community regularly underestimated North Korean leader Kim Jong Il's willingness to do the unexpected.

Sanctions Allinson, now an expert on international affairs at Harvard University, said: "Could this guy believe he could sell a nuclear bomb to Osama bin Laden? Why not?"

The warning came as North Korea said it was ready for war over the threat of sanctions from the United Nations.

In a statement on the official news agency KCNA, the rogue regime said America was pursuing a "hostile policy", adding: "Our army and people are fully ready for battle against any reckless US attempt for a pre-emptive attack."

South Korea said it would join US attempts to intercept North Korean ships which could be carrying nuclear weapons.

North Korea said it would regard the move as an act of war. And it also fired two more test missiles to prove its readiness for conflict.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon - a South Korean - said he was "most deeply disturbed" by the move.

Yesterday, UN diplomats began work on a resolution to punish North Korea for its underground nuclear test.

Diplomats said they were seeking "tough measures", including further sanctions.

In an emergency session of the UN Security Council, countries condemned the latest test.

The US ambassador to the UN Susan Rice said: "The US thinks that this is a grave violation of international law and a threat to regional and international peace and security."

Blockade The UN will now have to decide how tough the sanctions will be.

A blockade could spark military clashes in south east Asia and lead to a fullscale war. But failure to take action could encourage other states like Iran and Syria to develop nuclear weapons.

Monday's nuclear bomb test came after North Korea walked away from long-runnindisarmament talks.

The country agreed in 2007 to abandon its nuclear ambitions in return for aid and diplomatic concessions.

But it accused the US, South Korea, Japan, China and Russia of failing to meet agreed obligations.

<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/2009/05/27/north-korea-ready-to-sell-nuclear-weapons-to-al-qaeda-expert-warns-86908-21392451/>

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Yonhap News

28 May 2009

## **N. Korean Nuclear Blast Probably Less Powerful Than Hoped for: Yale scholar**

By Sam Kim

SEOUL, May 28 (Yonhap) -- North Korea apparently failed to achieve desired explosiveness in its second nuclear test, a Yale University professor says, citing seismic readings that have been generated by it.

North Korea set off an underground nuclear explosion on Monday, creating a shock that registered 4.52 in magnitude on the Richter scale, according to a Vienna-based anti-nuclear weapons organization.

North Korea produced a magnitude of 4.1 in its first test in October 2006, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty says.

Jefferey Park, director of the Yale Institute for Biospheric Studies, said the seismic data from Monday's test indicate that North Korea failed to create a "Hiroshima-class crude explosive device."

"It was too small," he wrote on the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, referring to the explosion.

Using what he called standard conversions, Park, a geologist, said North Korea appears to have produced a force of 4 kilotons or less through the test that took place in the northeastern region.

"That's a lot of energy, much larger than the 2006 North Korean test, but it still falls far short of an expected 12-20 kiloton yield of a crude Hiroshima-style device," he said. North Korea is believed to have produced less than 1 kiloton in its previous test.

Park said if North Korea had built a detonator precise enough, it would have obtained a yield of 10-20 kilotons. One kiloton is equal to 1,000 tons of TNT.

"My guess is that North Korea tried and failed to get a simple plutonium bomb to detonate correctly," he said.

But he said the latest explosion should not be taken as a failure, warning, "Make no mistake -- an inefficient nuclear weapon is nothing to dismiss."

"Even at the low end of its estimated yield (2 kilotons), the May 25 test released as much or more explosive energy than the largest conventional-explosive air raids during World War II," he said.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2009/05/28/62/0401000000AEN20090528007400315F.HTML>

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Yonhap News  
28 May 2009

## **Seoul Urges Pyongyang Not To Use PSI To Justify War Threats**

By Tony Chang

SEOUL, May 28 (Yonhap) -- North Korea is "severely distorting" the intention behind South Korea's recent decision to join a U.S.-led anti-proliferation campaign, Seoul's foreign ministry said Thursday, while urging Pyongyang to scrap its nuclear and missile programs.

South Korea initially made the decision to join the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) on Tuesday following the North's April 5 rocket launch, but it had delayed a formal announcement in consideration of its efforts to resume dialogue with the communist neighbor. Government officials said there was no reason to wait any longer as North Korea carried out another nuclear experiment on Monday.

"North Korea is severely distorting our government's decision to participate in the international effort, in which 94 countries are already pitching in to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction," Moon Tae-young, spokesman for the Foreign Ministry, said in a press briefing.

North Korea on Wednesday said it was nullifying the Korean War armistice and warned of an immediate military strike should South Korea attempt to interdict any of its ships as part of the PSI. Pyongyang has repeatedly warned that the South's participation in the PSI would be tantamount to a declaration of war.

"The statements issued on Wednesday from the North's permanent military mission to the joint security area and the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland are absolutely groundless," Moon noted.

The spokesman illustrated that the PSI does not target North Korea but applies to all vessels and aircrafts from all countries and also underscored that a 2005 inter-Korean maritime accord will continue to remain in effect.

Pyongyang should not use Seoul's PSI affiliation as an excuse to launch threats against the South, Moon warned, calling upon the North to halt its nuclear and missile programs.

Regarding the ongoing issue of whether Seoul should delay taking over wartime control of its troops from the U.S. in 2012, Moon underscored that the government "will respect the previous agreement reached by South Korea and the U.S."

South Korea is set to retake wartime operational control of its 655,000 troops from the U.S. in April 2012. Control was relinquished to the U.S.-led U.N. command at the onset of the Korean War. Peacetime control was returned in 1994.

"South Korea and the U.S. are carrying out the transition process based on a strategic transition plan," said Moon.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2009/05/28/76/0401000000AEN20090528005200315F.HTML>

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RIA Novosti  
28 May 2009

## **Russia Pledges to Back UN Resolution on N. Korea**

MOSCOW, May 28 (RIA Novosti) - Russia will not object to a new UN resolution on North Korea over the communist state's recent nuclear test, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Thursday.

"We have no reason to object to a new UN Security Council resolution on North Korea," Andrei Nestrenko said.

The five permanent members of the Security Council plus South Korea and Japan are expected to draft a resolution next week.

Russia, a veto-wielding Security Council member, which in the past has refused to back Western calls for tougher sanctions against the North, earlier said a "strong resolution" was needed against Pyongyang this time.

Since the start of the week Pyongyang has conducted an underground nuclear test explosion and test launched at least six short-range surface-to-air and anti-ship missiles in defiance of previous UN resolutions.

Pyongyang is already under a number of UN sanctions over its first nuclear test, carried out in 2006.

Possible new sanctions may include a ban on importing and exporting all arms and not just heavy weapons, additional asset freezes and travel bans for North Korean officials, and placing more firms on a UN blacklist, according to UN sources.

However, Russia believes that North Korea's isolation would be ineffective and sees no alternative to six-nation talks for ensuring stability in the Korean Peninsula.

"We still don't see a real alternative for ensuring stability and security other than through political-diplomatic tracks, responsible dialogue with the participation of all interested sides, and above all by resuming six-nation talks," Nesterenko said.

The six-nation talks, involving North and South Korea, Russia, Japan, China and the United States, were launched in 2003 after Pyongyang withdrew from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT).

Under deals reached in 2007, the North began disabling a nuclear reactor and other facilities at Yongbyon under international supervision, in exchange for economic aid and political incentives.

However, in December last year, a round of six-nation talks ended in deadlock over a U.S. demand that nuclear inspectors be allowed to take samples out of the country from North Korean facilities for further analysis.

The reclusive communist regime had been threatening for several weeks to resume work at its Yongbyon nuclear facility, which produces weapons-grade plutonium, after withdrawing from six-nation talks. The move came in response to international condemnation of an April 5 rocket launch, which Pyongyang said was carrying a communications satellite.

North Korea had also said it would conduct further nuclear tests and rocket launches to ensure its security and defense capability.

Russia's Foreign Ministry expressed hope that the latest actions by North Korea would not lead to a new arms race in the region.

"We hope that the latest actions taken by North Korea will not be used by other countries as a pretext to create or increase their own nuclear potential and will not lead to a new round of an arms race in the region," Nesterenko said.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090528/155112399.html>

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Washington Post

May 28, 2009

## **After Initial Mild Reaction, Kremlin May Consider Tougher Stance on Tests**

By Philip P. Pan

Washington Post Foreign Service

MOSCOW, May 27 -- For years, Russia has appeared to take a back seat in international efforts to persuade North Korea to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons. It urged diplomacy and resisted tougher sanctions, but usually let China take the lead in relations with Pyongyang.

There are signs, however, that the Kremlin may be considering a more active, tougher stance following Monday's surprise test of a nuclear device by North Korea less than 60 miles from the Russian border.

After an initial, mild expression of "concern" by the Russian foreign minister, the government issued a high-level statement denouncing the underground blast as a "direct violation" of U.N. resolutions.

"Initiators of decisions on nuclear tests bear personal responsibility for them to the world community," said Natalya Timakova, chief spokeswoman for President Dmitry Medvedev, adding that the test "deals a blow to international efforts to strengthen the global regime of nuclear nonproliferation."

Timakova also said North Korea's nuclear program was "linked to the development of rocket technologies" and described the connection as "a source of particular anxiety," according to the Interfax news agency. Russian officials previously played down the threat posed by the North's missile program.

Meanwhile, Russia's ambassador to the United Nations convened an emergency meeting of the Security Council to condemn the test and pledged to support a strong new resolution against North Korea. Russia holds the rotating presidency of the council this month.

"The reaction has been quite serious and quite unusual," said Alexander Pikayev, a top arms control expert at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations here. "Moscow is really concerned. North Korea most likely has an operational deterrent now with this successful test. So this changes the whole situation."

Pikayev said the Kremlin generally defers to China on how to manage North Korea because it recognizes that Beijing has greater leverage over Pyongyang. But the government now appears to favor tougher sanctions, he said, and "might try to convince the Chinese to take more serious actions."

Vasily Mikheev, a senior Asia scholar at the Russian Academy of Sciences, said Medvedev seemed to be driving the more forceful response, perhaps to assert his authority over foreign policy a year after succeeding Vladimir Putin, now the prime minister.

Medvedev may see the issue in the context of his efforts to improve relations with the United States, Mikheev added. "Nonproliferation is one of the most important areas where Russia and America can work together," he said.

The nuclear test came just weeks after Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov traveled to Pyongyang to try to persuade North Korea to return to the six-nation disarmament talks it quit in April.

During the trip, Lavrov presented a proposal to help North Korea launch satellites into space from Russian territory, which analysts said was an early hint of the Kremlin's desire to play a more active role in resolving the nuclear dispute.

But Lavrov was not granted a meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Il. Russian analysts have interpreted that as a snub and a sign of North Korea's displeasure with Moscow's decision to support a U.N. statement condemning its April 5 launch of a three-stage rocket. North Korea announced it was withdrawing from the six-nation talks in retaliation for the council statement.

Alexander Khramchikhin, a researcher with the Institute of Political and Military Analysis, said that even if the Kremlin wants to assume a leading role in resolving the dispute, it cannot. The Soviet Union once served as North Korea's patron, but Moscow withdrew support after the Soviet Union's collapse, and Beijing took its place.

"You can see some shift in policy perhaps, but I think Russia is simply following China," he said. "Russia just doesn't have the tools to influence North Korea."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/27/AR2009052703231.html?hpid=sec-world>

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Wall Street Journal  
May 28, 2009

## Tests Point to Spread of Weapons Trade

By JAY SOLOMON

WASHINGTON -- Signs of growth in North Korea's nuclear program and the country's increasing isolation are renewing fears about Pyongyang's ability and need to smuggle weapons of mass destruction around the world, said U.S. and United Nations officials.

North Korea's arms trade has focused on Iran and Syria, countries Washington views as state sponsors of terrorism, as well as Libya. Officials say North Korean arms have also been sold to nations allied with the U.S., such as Egypt and Pakistan, and to the military regime in Myanmar.

The concerns about North Korean weapons proliferation were heightened this week with Pyongyang's underground test of a nuclear weapon and several short-range missile launches. Sales of short- and medium-range missile systems remain among North Korea's largest export earners, part of an arms trade that generates \$1.5 billion annually for Pyongyang, say North Korea analysts.

With the international community looking to punish the regime for the nuclear test, U.S. and U.N. officials say Pyongyang could try to increase exports of its nuclear and missile technologies as it gradually loses its ability to obtain hard currency from foreign aid and exports to markets such as Japan and South Korea.

Even if Pyongyang doesn't seek to sell weapons-grade materials such as reprocessed plutonium, Pentagon officials say just the possibility it might sell nuclear-weapons designs poses a security challenge to the U.S.

"The concern is not just that they have a nuclear weapon; it's what they're going to do with the technology and where it's going to go," said a senior U.S. defense official. "It's very difficult to have perfect knowledge about who they're talking to or where they're sending stuff," the official said.

Since the nuclear test, President Barack Obama, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and National Security Adviser James Jones have publicly voiced concerns about the threat posed by Pyongyang's proliferation activities.

North Korea's mission to the U.N. in New York declined to respond to questions about its weapons program.

The country's weapons industry has played a crucial role in the spread of ballistic-missile capabilities across the Middle East in recent decades, said U.S. and Middle East officials.

U.S. officials say North Korea doesn't yet have the technology to use its missiles to deliver nuclear weapons, but say intelligence about the secretive nation's weapons program is incomplete.

Pyongyang used missile technologies passed on by the former Soviet Union during the Cold War to build a single-stage rocket, the Nodong, as well as the longer-range Taepodong missile system. In April, North Korea tested a multistage Taepodong-2 missile that crashed into the Pacific Ocean, in what Pyongyang said was a satellite launch.

Iran and Pakistan have already used North Korean materials to develop domestic ballistic missiles. Syria, Yemen, Libya and Egypt have also purchased North Korean missile components in recent years, U.S. officials say.

An Iranian diplomat in New York denied North Korea has helped Tehran develop long-range missiles, declining to comment further. A spokesman at Syria's Washington embassy declined to comment on military cooperation with Pyongyang. A diplomat at the Yemeni Embassy in Washington said Yemen's former government purchased Scud missiles from North Korea in the 1990s, but said there is no more military cooperation with Pyongyang. A Libyan diplomat declined to comment. Egyptian diplomats didn't respond to requests to comment.

"The North Koreans are involved in developing virtually every missile system in the region," said a senior Israeli counterproliferation official. "All of them."

U.S. and Asian counterproliferation officials say Pyongyang has developed sophisticated smuggling networks in the Middle East and Asia in recent years. North Korea has worked with Asian criminal gangs to move narcotics and counterfeit currency globally, it ships contraband using Cypriot and Cambodian flagged carriers, and falsifies export documents, the officials say.

In August, the U.S. worked with India to block a North Korean Air Koryo jet from flying to Iran from Myanmar on the belief it was carrying missile components; the intercepted jet flew back to Pyongyang. A diplomat at Myanmar's U.N. mission declined to comment Wednesday. Iran has in the past declined to discuss any allegations of arms deals with North Korea. The U.S. also blocked a Syrian cargo plane from landing in Pyongyang in 2007, due to similar concerns.

"How do you consistently detect North Korea's proliferation activities and stop it? It's very hard," said David Albright, a former U.N. weapons inspector who heads the Institute for Science and International Security, a Washington think tank.

In 2007, Israeli jets bombed a Syrian industrial facility on the Euphrates River that U.S. intelligence officials subsequently described as a nascent nuclear reactor being built by North Koreans. The U.N.'s atomic watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, has reported that soil samples taken at the site showed large traces of processed uranium. Syria denied it is developing a nuclear program.

A North Korean state-owned company, Nomchongang Trading Co., was the principal facilitator for the Syrian project, according to former U.S. officials. The company's chief, Yun Ho Jin, worked during the 1990s as a senior diplomat at North Korea's mission at the IAEA, where he developed an understanding of the global procurement system, according to U.S. and U.N. officials. Mr. Yun and Nomchongang couldn't be reached to comment.

Nomchongang had offices in Syria, according to the former U.S. officials. "Nomchongang was the operating interest in the Syrian sale," said Dennis Wilder, who served as President George W. Bush's top Asia adviser until January. "It was the arm of the North Korean government dealing with nuclear issues."

U.S. and Asian officials said Nomchongang was also detected selling equipment to Myanmar that could be used for a nuclear program. Exchanges between senior North Korean and Myanmar military officers have increased, these officials say. Myanmar may be seeking to replicate North Korea's weapons development as a deterrent to Western pressure, the officials say.

[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124347081988160711.html?mod=googlenews\\_wsj](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124347081988160711.html?mod=googlenews_wsj)

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Reuters India  
May 28, 2009

## **N.Korea's Kim too Selfish to Start War - Defectors**

By Jack Kim

ANSEONG, South Korea (Reuters) - North Korean leader Kim Jong-il is likely basking in the patriotic fervour whipped up by his nuclear test but is too worried about his own well-being to start a war, North Korean defectors said on Thursday.

Poverty, famine and political oppression have driven tens of thousands of North Koreans over the border to seek a better life.

"Why did they have to do it again? If they already have all that military power, perhaps it would be a wiser plan to make the lives of the people better," a defector named Choi told reporters at a centre established by the South to help recent arrivals adjust to life in their new capitalist home.

The defectors asked to be identified only by their family names because the North is known to punish relatives of escapees.

The communist North, facing international censure for this week's nuclear test, has threatened to attack the South after it joined a U.S.-led plan to check vessels suspected of carrying equipment for weapons of mass destruction.

"All Kim Jong-il thinks about is himself and because of that, he won't start a war," said Cho, another defector, echoing the comments of several others.

The defectors are among about 14,000 who have passed through the Unification Ministry's Hanawon centre in the town of Anseong, south of Seoul, since it was set up about 10 years ago.

The North's only prior nuclear test in 2006 "felt like a grand celebration," said Kim, another defector who was in the state at that time.

Despite Kim Jong-il's guiding principle of putting the military first, many of the North's 1.2 million troops are ill-equipped and underfed, the defectors said.

"The soldiers were meant to fight a war but the ones I have seen will probably run away," said defector Kim.

Analysts said the North's sabre rattling might be partly aimed at firming the leader's grip on power and helping him draw up succession plans in Asia's only communist dynasty after a suspected stroke in August raised questions over his rule.

Several defectors said their former leader, called "a peerless military genius" by state propaganda, has lost a great deal of weight, with one saying: "The general has aged a lot."

Several said they had no idea Kim had three sons because the state does not allow discussions of his family life.

This could complicate succession because Kim was well known for decades at home before taking over after his father Kim Il-sung died in 1994, and even then, it took the well-groomed younger Kim several years before he was firmly in control.

<http://in.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idINIndia-39932520090528?sp=true>

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New York Times

May 27, 2009

WORLD BRIEFING | THE AMERICAS

## **Bolivia and Venezuela Deny Report**

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bolivia and Venezuela on Tuesday ridiculed an Israeli report that they were supplying uranium to Iran's nuclear program. Bolivia said it did not produce uranium; Presidential Minister Juan Ramón Quintana called the report nonsense. President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela said it was one more in a list of accusations meant to tarnish his government. The Israeli Foreign Ministry document cited Israeli intelligence estimates.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/27/world/americas/27briefs-WebBolivia.html?pagewanted=print>

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Associated Press/Google News

28 May 2009

## **Iran Says It Boosts Uranium Enrichment Capability**

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said Iran has boosted its capacity to enrich uranium, another sign of anti-Western defiance by the leader seeking re-election in a vote next month.

Ahmadinejad said last month that Iran had 7,000 centrifuges at its uranium enrichment facility in Natanz in central Iran. The figure marked a significant boost from the 6,000 centrifuges announced in February. In his latest comments, reported by the state-run Islamic Republic News Agency on Thursday, he did not give a specific new figure.

"Now we have more than 7,000 centrifuges and the West dare not threaten us," IRNA quoted Ahmadinejad as saying on a small radio station late Wednesday.

Ahmadinejad has made Iran's expanding nuclear program one of the centerpieces of his campaign for the June 12 elections and has struck an increasingly harsh tone against the United States and other countries calling for Iran to halt its uranium enrichment.

Iran's leaders say they will never give up nuclear technology and insist they seek only energy-producing reactors. The United States, Israel and other nations worry that Iran's enrichment facilities could eventually produce material for nuclear warheads.

There is broad consensus among Iranian voters on the nation's rights for a nuclear program. But Ahmadinejad's three challengers — a fellow hard-liner and two moderates — have questioned his uncompromising stances against the West and their offers of economic incentives in exchange for suspending uranium enrichment.

The centrifuges spin at supersonic speeds to remove impurities from uranium gas, which then goes through other steps to become nuclear fuel or, at higher enrichment levels, nuclear weapons material.

Earlier this year, Iran said it was using an upgraded centrifuge that produces enriched uranium at about double the rate of its original systems.

Currently, Iran is only capable of slowly producing enriched uranium for reactors. But Iranian officials have said their long-term goal is for more than 50,000 centrifuges, which would give it the ability to produce high-grade nuclear material in a start-to-finish cycle of just weeks.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jG7bnyWWJfgaYD-JwcqmImlpRujwD98F91J04>

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Washington Post  
May 28, 2009

## **Nuclear Aims by Pakistan, India Prompt U.S. Concern**

By R. Jeffrey Smith and Joby Warrick  
Washington Post Staff Writers

Sometime next year, at a tightly guarded site south of its capital, Pakistan will be ready to start churning out a new stream of plutonium for its nuclear arsenal, which will eventually include warheads for ballistic missiles and cruise missiles capable of being launched from ships, submarines or aircraft.

About 1,000 miles to the southwest, engineers in India are designing cruise missiles to carry nuclear warheads, relying partly on Russian missile-design assistance. India is also trying to equip its Agni ballistic missiles with such warheads and to deploy them on submarines. Its rudimentary missile-defense capability is slated for a major upgrade next year.

The apparent detonation of a North Korean nuclear device on Monday has renewed concerns over that country's efforts to build up its atomic arsenal. At the same time, U.S. and allied officials and experts who have tracked developments in South Asia have grown increasingly worried over the rapid growth of the region's more mature nuclear programs, in part because of the risk that weapons could fall into the hands of terrorists.

India and Pakistan see their nuclear programs as vital points of leverage in an arms race that has begun to take on the pace and diversity, although not the size, of U.S.-Soviet nuclear competition during the Cold War, according to U.S. intelligence and proliferation experts. Pakistani authorities said they are modernizing their facilities, not expanding their program; Indian officials in New Delhi and Washington declined to comment.

"They are both going great guns [on] new systems, new materials; they are doing everything you would imagine," said a former intelligence official who has long studied the region and who spoke on the condition of anonymity. While both India and Pakistan say their actions are defensive, the consequence of their efforts has been to boost the

quantity of materials being produced and the number of times they must be moved around, as well as the training of experts in highly sensitive skills, this source and others say.

"More vulnerabilities. More stuff in production. More stuff in transit," when it is more vulnerable to theft, said Rolf Mowatt-Larssen, formerly the CIA's top official on weapons of mass destruction and the Energy Department's director of intelligence during the George W. Bush administration. U.S. experts also worry that as the size of the programs grows, chances increase that a rogue scientist or military officer will attempt to sell nuclear parts or know-how, as now-disgraced Pakistani scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan did in the 1980s and 1990s.

Former Indian government officials say efforts are underway to improve and test a powerful thermonuclear warhead, even as the country adds to a growing array of aircraft, missiles and submarines that launch them. "Delivery system-wise, India is doing fine," said Bharat Karnad, a former member of India's National Security Advisory Board and a professor of national security studies at New Delhi's Center for Policy Research. India and Pakistan tested nuclear devices in 1998; India first detonated an atomic bomb in 1974.

A senior Pakistani official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said his government has refrained from testing missiles that could carry nuclear weapons because officials do not want to antagonize the Indian and U.S. governments.

### **'A More Global Approach'**

U.S. officials say narrow appeals to the two countries to slow their weapons work will probably fail. "We have to think of dealing with the South Asian problem not on a purely regional basis, but in the context of a more global approach," Gary Samore, the senior White House nonproliferation adviser, said after a speech to the Arms Control Association last week.

Samore said the "Pakistani government has always said they will do that in conjunction with India. The Indians have always said, 'We can't take steps unless similar steps are taken by China and the other nuclear states,' and very quickly you end up with a situation where it's hard to make progress."

Some experts worry, however, that the United States may not have the luxury of waiting to negotiate a treaty that would curtail the global production of fissile materials -- a pact that President Obama says he hopes to complete during his first term.

A recent U.S. intelligence report, commissioned by outgoing Bush administration officials, warned of the dangers associated with potential attacks on nuclear weapons-related shipments inside Pakistan, for example.

Lt. Gen. Michael D. Maples, director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, told senators days before his retirement in March that "Pakistan continues to develop its nuclear infrastructure, expand nuclear weapons stockpiles, and seek more advanced warheads and delivery systems." He added that although Pakistan has "taken important steps to safeguard its nuclear weapons . . . vulnerabilities still exist."

Although Maples did not offer details of the expansion, other experts said he was referring to the expected completion next year of Pakistan's second heavy-water reactor at its Khushab nuclear complex 100 miles southwest of Islamabad, which will produce new spent nuclear fuel containing plutonium for use in nuclear arms.

"When Khushab is done, they'll be able to make a significant number of new bombs," Mowatt-Larssen said. In contrast, "it took them roughly 10 years to double the number of nuclear weapons from roughly 50 to 100." A third heavy-water reactor is also under construction at Khushab, according to David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security.

Before it can be used in weaponry, the plutonium must first be separated from the fuel rods at a highly guarded nuclear facility near Rawalpindi, about 100 miles northeast of Khushab. Satellite images published by Albright's institute show a substantial expansion occurred at the complex between 2002 and 2006, reflecting a long-standing Pakistani desire to replace weapons fueled by enriched uranium with plutonium-based weapons.

Pakistani officials dismiss suggestions that the building represents an acceleration in South Asia's arms race. "If two are sufficient, why build 10?" asked Brig. Gen. Nazir Ahmed Butt, defense attache in Pakistan's embassy in Washington. "We cannot match warhead for warhead. We're not in a numbers game. People should not take a technological upgrade for an expansion."

Details of precautions surrounding Pakistani nuclear shipments are closely held. Abdul Mannan, director of transport and waste safety for Pakistan's nuclear regulatory authority, said in a 2007 presentation to the Henry L. Stimson Center in Washington that Pakistani safeguards are "enough to deter and delay a terrorist attack, and any

malicious diversion would be protected in early stages." But Mannan also said the government needed to upgrade its security measures, and warned that "a country like Pakistan is not well equipped" to contain radioactive fallout from an attack on a nuclear shipment.

U.S. officials have said they accept Pakistan's assurances that its nuclear stockpile is adequately safeguarded, but intelligence officials have acknowledged contingency plans to dispatch American troops to protect or remove any weapons at imminent risk.

### **Proximity to Taliban**

While Pakistan's nuclear program has lately attracted the most worry, because of the close proximity to the capital of Taliban insurgents, many U.S. experts say that it should not be considered in isolation from India's own nuclear expansion.

Some experts say that a civil nuclear cooperation agreement that Bush signed with India in October benefits the country's weapons programs, because it sanctions India's import of uranium and allows the military to draw on enriched uranium produced by eight reactors that might otherwise be needed for civil power. In a letter to the International Atomic Energy Agency last July, Pakistan's ambassador in Vienna warned that the deal would increase "the chances of a nuclear arms race on the sub-continent."

Ken Luongo, a former senior adviser on nonproliferation at the Energy Department who recently returned from meetings with Pakistani officials, said the deal exacerbated Pakistan's fears of losing a technological race; others say that, at the least, it provided a rationalization to keep going.

Feroz Hassan Khan, a retired Pakistani general in charge of arms control, said Pakistan perceives a real risk of a preemptive strike by India. Because of Indian superiority in conventional forces, "Pakistan is compelled to rely more heavily on nuclear weapons to counter the threat," Khan said. "It would be highly foolish not to produce more and better weapons."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/27/AR2009052703706.html>

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New York Times  
May 27, 2009

## **In Siberia, The Death Knell Of A Complex Holding A Deadly Stockpile**

By Clifford J. Levy

MOSCOW — Soon after the Soviet Union's collapse, an American inspection team arrived at a decrepit storage complex in Siberia. The front gate was guarded by a scrawny teenage soldier who had not been paid in months. Giant sheds seemed to hold little of value. Why else would their doors be secured only with rusty bicycle locks?

The reality was far more disturbing: the sheds contained two million artillery shells and warheads filled with nerve agents, extremely deadly substances, row after row, stacked like cordwood. Many were portable, and a single one detonated in a stadium or other crowded area could kill tens of thousands of people.

Today, the site has been transformed. The inspection in 1994 was a catalyst for a far-reaching American plan to destroy those chemical weapons, culminating in the formal opening scheduled for Friday of a facility nearby to carry out the work.

The new facility, built with \$1 billion in American aid, represents a milestone in a longstanding partnership between the United States and Russia to safeguard and in many cases liquidate enormous quantities of chemical, nuclear and biological weapons manufactured by the Soviet Union.

This overall arrangement between the nations has often been troubled, and the project to eradicate the chemical weapons site in the Siberian city of Shchuchye, first proposed in 1996, has been repeatedly delayed. Some members of Congress sought to end financing, asserting that Russia should pay for the program itself, and the United States Defense Department's oversight of the project was questioned by Congressional auditors.

For its part, Russia imposed unwieldy regulations on the project, and it was reluctant to use its own money. In general, the Kremlin under Vladimir V. Putin has grown much more secretive about these weapons sites, making it more difficult for American officials to verify how money is being spent.

Still, American and Russian officials are hailing the opening of the new facility at Shchuchye (pronounced SHOO-che), 1,000 miles east of Moscow and just east of the Ural Mountains. They said these chemical weapons were in some respects a far more potent terrorist threat than nuclear ones because they are much easier to steal and deploy.

The opening of the facility underscores how the United States and Russia have been able to hew to certain arms agreements even as overall relations soured during the Bush administration.

“This is one of the most historic steps forward ever in nonproliferation,” said Paul F. Walker, who took part in the 1994 inspection as a Congressional aide and is now a senior official at Global Green USA, an affiliate of an environmental organization begun by Mikhail S. Gorbachev, the former Soviet leader.

“One of the most dangerous chemical weapons arsenals in the world is finally getting demilitarized,” Mr. Walker said. “And it’s been a long, long time.”

As the early inspection of Shchuchye demonstrated, Russia’s economic and political disarray in the early 1990s had severe consequences for its military infrastructure. American officials became alarmed that unconventional weapons could fall into the hands of terrorists.

In 1991, two senators, Sam Nunn, Democrat of Georgia, and Richard G. Lugar, Republican of Indiana, proposed a program to help the countries of the former Soviet Union secure and destroy those weapons.

However rocky, the relative success of the Nunn-Lugar program has been cited by some Obama administration officials as offering hope for negotiations on future treaties. Russian and American officials are now engaged in talks on a new version of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or Start, which expires in December.

The shells and warheads at Shchuchye contain about 5,950 tons of nerve agents, including sarin and VX. To dispose of them, a hole will be drilled into each, and the agents will be drained and mixed with other chemicals to neutralize them. The residue will be solidified in asphalt or a similar material.

While the facility’s formal opening is on Friday, it began preliminary operations in March. Russia ended up allocating roughly \$600 million for the project, and other countries contributed as well.

It has taken years to develop the process to eliminate the nerve agents, with the Russians choosing not to incinerate them because of local opposition. It might be five years or more before all the weapons are neutralized.

“It turns out that it is a lot easier to produce chemical weapons than to destroy them,” said Igor V. Rybalchenko, a scientist who is a senior adviser to the Russian government.

Mr. Rybalchenko said the methods being used were safe. However, environmental groups expressed concern about the potential for accidents at the new facility. They contend that the Russian government has long violated environmental laws at such sites.

Lev A. Fyodorov, president of the Russian Union for Chemical Safety, said people in Shchuchye had seen fires and other accidents at the storage complex in recent years, yet the government had never publicized them or explained what safety measures it had undertaken.

“At American storage bases, many kinds of accidents have occurred, and we know about them,” Mr. Fyodorov said. “In Russia, do we know about such things at Russian bases? Of course not. I am a Russian citizen, and the Russian government does not tell me anything. Do we need to destroy chemical weapons? Of course. But do we need to violate the environmental rules of Russia to do this?”

Russia and the United States have the vast majority of the world’s chemical weapons, and they have pledged to dispose of them under the Chemical Weapons Convention. Both countries have encountered problems in financing and logistics, and they are not expected to meet the 2012 deadline.

Shchuchye, in fact, has only 14 percent of Russia’s chemical weapons, which are kept at seven sites.

But Shchuchye is considered perhaps the most critical location because many of the nerve agents are in shells. The city is close to Kazakhstan, which itself is near Afghanistan.

Senator Lugar recalled that he often had to fend off Congressional opposition to the Shchuchye project, especially from Republicans who said that American aid was allowing Russia to spend its own money on bolstering its military.

But Senator Lugar, who plans to attend the opening ceremony on Friday, said that on an earlier visit, a single gesture showed that the storage site endangered the whole world.

“I took one of those shells,” he said, “and put it in a briefcase.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/27/world/europe/27russia.html>

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New York Times  
May 26, 2009

## **Russian Uranium Sale to U.S. is Planned**

By ANDREW E. KRAMER and MATTHEW L. WALD

MOSCOW — Russia, already a large supplier of nuclear-reactor fuel to Europe and Asia, is expected on Tuesday to sign its first purely commercial contract to supply low-enriched uranium to United States utilities.

With the signing, Russia’s nuclear-fuel trade with the United States will shift to a commercial footing, similar to Russia’s dealings with other consumers of fuel, like France and the Netherlands, both longtime buyers of Russian uranium.

For the United States, the change is a sign that Washington is acquiescing to the idea of a major Russian role not only in the international nuclear power market, but also in the domestic market. Russia’s outsize role in supplying uranium to American utilities had previously been justified because the fuel was a byproduct of a program to eliminate nuclear weapons. Now the Russians will be selling nuclear fuel from virgin uranium.

Yet the contract signing, after North Korea’s nuclear test on Monday, also underscores a counterintuitive element of American nonproliferation policies.

The policy of buying diluted, or blended-down, Russian weapons-grade uranium yielded a clear nonproliferation benefit. The new mode — of having the Russians enrich new uranium for United States markets — is not directly beneficial for nuclear security because it does not remove weapons-grade uranium from stockpiles.

Yet by encouraging the commercial availability of Russian enrichment services, the United States deprives other countries of the rationale to have enrichment programs of their own.

The United States continues to want to see Russian weapons material blended down where possible, and is encouraging a largely open market to allow Russian enrichment facilities built for military purposes to become part of the international market for enrichment.

As a legacy of the cold war, Russia possesses about 40 percent of the world’s uranium enrichment capacity, much more than it needs to service its domestic reactors, and it has sought direct access to the American utilities market for years.

“We are finally working in the principle of mutual profit,” Sergei G. Novikov, a spokesman for the Russian state nuclear energy company, Rosatom, said in an interview about the expected first contract signing.

Techsnabexport, the Russian state company that exports low-enriched uranium, is expected to sign the contract in Moscow with a consortium of American nuclear companies. Techsnabexport declined to identify its American partners or the size of the contract on Monday.

The new contract is separate from a program to dilute surplus weapons uranium into civilian fuel for use in American reactors. Under that so-called megatons to megawatts program, begun in 1993, Russia is already the largest supplier of enriched uranium to American utilities and provides about half of all uranium consumed in civilian reactors in the United States.

Yet Russia has been prohibited from selling directly to the utilities by provisions of American law to prevent dumping at below-market prices, and it was compelled to deal only through a monopoly importer, the United States Enrichment Corporation.

That company was originally part of the United States Department of Energy, and the megaton-to-megawatts deal was a government-to-government agreement. When the United States sold off the enrichment corporation to a private company, the new entity was given a continuing monopoly on the sale of blended-down warhead materials from Russia. The company, USEC, said it paid competitive prices for the material. The Russians, meanwhile, complained that they were being underpaid.

In a negotiated settlement in February 2008, the United States agreed to allow Russia to sell low-enriched uranium directly to domestic utilities without the involvement of the enrichment corporation. But all sales of diluted weapons uranium will still go through the corporation. A spokeswoman for the company said the initial direct Russian sales will be small and will not harm its business.

Nuclear reactors run on uranium that is composed of 3 to 5 percent uranium 235. In nature, uranium is only 0.7 percent uranium 235.

Uranium used in weapons and in the reactors that power nuclear submarines use more than 90 percent uranium 235. "Enrichment" means raising the proportion of 235 compared with the dominant type, 238, and the Russian industry was set up to provide large volumes of high-enriched uranium for weapons and marine reactors.

Russia is a major supplier to the developing world by tapping this cold war-era military industrial base. It has provided 80 tons of low-enriched uranium manufactured into fuel assemblies to Iran for use in that country's Bushehr reactor, for a price of \$46 million, according to Atomstroyexport, the Russian contractor building the reactor.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/26/world/europe/26russia.html?hp>

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RIA Novosti  
OPINION & ANALYSIS  
26 May 2009

## **In An Extreme Situation N. Korea Could Sell Its Nuclear Capability to al-Qaeda**

The latest North Korean nuclear test was not just a political act. Pyongyang is actively developing its nuclear capabilities. This is the opinion of Dr. Charles M. Perry, which he expressed in an interview with RIA Novosti. Dr. Charles M. Perry is vice president and director of studies at the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, Inc., and vice president of National Security Planning Associates, Inc.

North Korea wants to be accepted as a nuclear power before they seriously do anything to remove those weapons, if they have a word. I'm kind of skeptical. I did support and I still support the six-party process. Now that we don't have the six-party, the five, including Russia, the United States, Japan, South Korea, and, of course, most importantly China, need to redouble their efforts to bring some pressure. It is becoming very serious in terms of the North developing nuclear capabilities. We are not sure exactly what happened in the test, whether it was full success or not. The nature of the test was more operationally oriented than just a diplomatic bomb to create an effect. The implications are a little bit more serious.

There was some news coming from Moscow that the explosion would be much larger like 20 kilotons, which I think would be more along the demonstration model, a diplomatic kind of effort. But the fact is it looks like it was not, it was below 10 kilotons, which means it is more of an operational work in progress to create a capability that would in time possibly be a marriage to their missile and in time be of interest to a country or a group that they might choose to transfer things to. So, it comes to the real consequence of it, the real concern. We have to respond, we have to bring some sanctions, some pressure.

Maybe along this, Bank of Macau type model, the financial pressure that can hurt the leadership a bit more than the people, hopefully. And they did seem to pay attention to that kind of thing in the past. We have to tighten the screws. But, of course, when you tighten the screws, you should worry about what it means in terms of collapse or true isolation to the extent that the North has so little access to economic, financial support from the outside that they have nothing to sell but their nuclear capabilities. And if they really are refining them to the level that al-Qaeda or some other operative might want them.

In an extreme situation, where they see themselves even more isolated than they are now with traditional, if not allies, supporters like China really coming down hard, they might really then take that next step of exporting, selling their nuclear capability. And that's the biggest danger from the U.S. prospective, certainly, and I think, broadly in the region, Japan, and the UN community.

<http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20090526/155097148.html>

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RIA Novosti  
OPINION & ANALYSIS  
27 May 2009

## **Tehran's Missiles a Way to Raise Its Stakes in a Big Political Game**

MOSCOW. (RIA Novosti military commentator Ilya Kramnik) - The announcement of the successful launch of the Sejil-2 missile, made by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad last week, revived global disputes about the Iranian missile and nuclear threat and the closely related U.S. ballistic missile defense system.

Sejil-2 is a two-stage surface-to-surface ballistic missile of a new generation, with a range of some 1,240 miles. It can presumably hit targets in Israel, Asia Minor and the Balkans.

However, analysts doubt that it is a completely new missile and believe Iranian television showed the launch of the Shahab-3 missile created in the early 2000s on the basis of North Korea's Nodong missile.

But this does not change the essence of the debate. The main issue is the possibility of Iran using its missiles and the number of troops and equipment necessary to respond to a potential Iranian strike.

The political importance of Iran's missile program is greater than its military implications. The creation of new missiles increases Tehran's political bargaining power with the West. The broader capabilities Iranian missile designers show, the more Iran may receive in response for its potential concessions.

This tactic does not entail any real threat of the use of these missiles. A potential Iranian missile strike will almost certainly result in the total destruction of Iran's missile capability and in heavy losses for the country and its economy. This cannot justify the relatively minor damage Iran would likely exact from its adversaries.

Therefore, the announcement of new missile tests and missile characteristics should be viewed as PR spin aimed at raising Iran's stakes in the global political game.

However, the situation may become sinister if Iran creates nuclear warheads for its missiles. This upping of the stakes will almost definitely tighten military tensions around Iran and rule out the possibility of talks on different problems.

This is what is now happening on the Korean Peninsular after North Korea held its second nuclear test. In fact, it has pushed Pyongyang into nearly complete isolation.

The situation around Iran is also being influenced by the other key regional country, Israel, which can and will deliver a strike at Iran's nuclear facilities under certain conditions. It is unclear if and when Israel will cross the thin line into a military operation, disregarding world public opinion.

At the same time, the United States is deploying ballistic missile defense (ABM) systems to ward off Iran's missile threat. The ABM system has provoked heated debates between the U.S. and Russia, which claims that the systems, if deployed as planned, are designed to intercept Russian rather than Iranian missiles.

Russia has several times proposed an alternative plan of deploying interceptor missiles on Iran's borders - in Turkey, Kuwait and possibly Iraq. This would simplify the task of intercepting Iranian missiles without endangering Russia's nuclear missile capability.

The plan provides for using not the expensive silo-launched GBI missiles but the theater high-altitude area defense (THAAD) U.S. PAC-3 and Israeli Arrow (Hetz) missiles, and other mobile (and possibly naval) systems.

Does the United States consider the Iranian missile threat to be serious, or is it using it as a pretext for deploying its ABM systems spearheaded against Russia? We will know the answer when Washington responds to Russia's proposal.

The opinions expressed in this article are the author's and do not necessarily represent those of RIA Novosti.

<http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20090527/155102832.html>

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New York Times  
OPINION  
May 29, 2009  
OP-ED CONTRIBUTOR

## **North Korea Will Never Disarm**

By B.R. MYERS

BUSAN, SOUTH KOREA — Let's look on the bright side: North Korea's latest underground nuclear test should put to rest several misperceptions about the country's motivations.

It is no longer possible for anyone to go on claiming that everything Kim Jong-il does is an effort to get America's attention, or that he just wants to go into the next round of disarmament talks with a stronger hand. Nor can anyone seriously argue that all these hugely expensive exercises are aimed at securing more economic aid.

In short, it has become obvious that North Korea's nuclear and military provocations and the escalating belligerence of its rhetoric are motivated by domestic political considerations instead.

This does not mean that we must now waste time speculating about which of Kim's sons will someday take over, or whether the army and the party are struggling for power. It hardly matters who succeeds Kim. All players in the elite are wedded to the same paranoid, race-based nationalism, without which the country has no reason to exist at all.

Over the past 15 years the regime in Pyongyang has painted itself into an ideological corner — or, to put it better, it has pushed itself up to the edge of an abyss. Kim Jong-il shook off responsibility for economic matters in the mid-1990s in order to avoid public blame for the famine. The propaganda machine claimed that his new “military first” regime would henceforth be too busy defending the country from the Yankees (who in fact were sending aid at that time) to bother with economic issues. This line not only maintained support for Kim, but also enabled officials at the provincial level to begin dismantling the command economy.

The West, of course, was overjoyed to note that the North Koreans no longer took all that Communist nonsense seriously. But the spread of capitalist values is what made the current string of nuclear provocations inevitable. Simply put, the more North Korea resembles a third-rate South Korea on the economic front, the more the Kim Jong-il regime must justify its existence through a combination of radical nationalist rhetoric and victories on the military and nuclear front. This is why North Korea will never disarm, for to do so would be to declare itself irrelevant.

Some in the West are now suggesting that North Korea's nuclear capability must be accepted as a *fait accompli*, but that is no solution either. Needing constant tension with the outside world for his own political survival, Kim Jong-il is no more interested in winning international acceptance of his nuclear ambitions than in normalizing relations with Washington. The West must assume that he will always find a way to make his nukes unacceptable, while at the same time engaging sporadically in arms talks to keep the tension from tipping into all-out war.

It is time for America to shift its focus from negotiating with North Korea to negotiating with the Chinese about North Korea. Beijing understands how vital these nuclear provocations are to Pyongyang's survival, which is why it continues to bankroll them. Washington must therefore do more to assuage Beijing's fears of a collapse of the Kim Jong-il regime.

Let us remember how opposed the Soviet Union was to a unified Germany, until NATO came up with a promise not to station troops in the former East Germany. It would be a step in the right direction for the United States to assure the Chinese that they will never have to face American troops along the Yalu River.

One thing is certain: We cannot simply wait for Kim's death and hope for the best, because whoever succeeds him is going to need an especially dramatic military crisis to legitimize his rule. What we have seen in the past few weeks may well end up looking tame in comparison.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/29/opinion/29iht-edmyers.html?\\_r=1&hpw](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/29/opinion/29iht-edmyers.html?_r=1&hpw)

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