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## **Articles & Other Documents:**

[Atomic Agency Is Pressed On Iran Records](#)

[Nuclear Drive A Casualty of Iran's Turmoil](#)

[Russia, U.S. Undecided on Site of Rocket Observation Center](#)

[Flawed S. Korea Launch May Still Anger The North](#)

[Poland Without Missile Defence](#)

[Japan's Foreign Policy Likely to Change if DPJ Wins](#)

[Gen. Jing visit](#)

[Pokhran II Not Fully Successful: Scientist](#)

[Russia Says Seized Ship Might Have Carried Undeclared Cargo](#)

[Pokhran II Successful, Insists Kalam](#)

[U.S., Russia Unlikely to Cooperate on Missile Defense, Experts Say](#)

[No CTBT, India Needs More Nuclear Tests: Pokhran II Coordinator](#)

[Russia says will Keep Bulava Missile Despite Failures](#)

[Pakistan Nuclear Secrets Scientist To Go Free](#)

[Russia Moves Bulava Missile Production to Alternative Plant](#)

[UN Disarmament Conference Calls for Concrete Steps Toward "Nuclear Free World"](#)

[Russia Deploys Anti-missile Defence Unit Near North Korea](#)

[McConnell, Chandler Push to Destroy Chemical Weapons On Time](#)

[Experts Doubt Russian Military has moved Bulava Production](#)

[Lockerbie Bomber Megrahi 'May Live for Many More Months'](#)

[Iran 'Pragmatists' Proposed Nuclear Halt-Diplomats](#)

[Al Qaeda-Linked Group Claims Two Recent Baghdad Bombings that Killed 95](#)

[Iran Gets Support for Ban on Nuke Plant Attacks](#)

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New York Times  
August 26, 2009

## **Atomic Agency Is Pressed On Iran Records**

By David E. Sanger and William J. Broad

The Obama administration and its European allies are pressing the International Atomic Energy Agency to make public evidence that they believe points toward an Iranian drive to gain the ability to build a nuclear weapon, part of a broad effort to build a case for far more punishing sanctions against the country.

The request has touched off an internal debate in the agency over how directly to confront Iran over its continued refusal, over several years, to answer questions about documents and computer files suggesting military-led efforts to design a nuclear weapon. Iran has charged that the documents, many of which came from American, Israeli and European intelligence services, are fabrications. The agency, according to current and former officials there, has studied them with care and determined that they are probably genuine.

“What we and all the allies are pressing for is for the full case to be laid out, in public,” one senior Obama administration official said last week, speaking anonymously because he was discussing intelligence data.

The administration’s push for an open discussion of Iran’s suspected weapons program, and for tougher sanctions, reflects growing pessimism about efforts to engage with the country’s leaders. Administration officials said that while they had received some communications from the Iranian leadership before the presidential election in June, there had been no communications of substance since.

But agency officials say that Mohamed ElBaradei, the departing director general, resisted a public airing, fearing that such a presentation would make the agency appear biased toward the West in the effort to impose what Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton recently called “crippling” sanctions. Dr. ElBaradei, who has argued for allowing Iran to maintain a token capacity to produce uranium under strict inspection, has said that the evidence does not create an airtight case against Iran.

The Obama administration’s effort to make the case public contrasts with the approach of President George W. Bush. After the intelligence debacle surrounding Iraq, Bush administration officials said they lacked the credibility to make public the evidence about Iran’s nuclear efforts. Mr. Bush admitted as much in 2005, saying that the case would have to be made quietly.

Moreover, American intelligence agencies had balked at publishing some of their most sensitive discoveries, including data stripped from a laptop computer slipped out of the country by an Iranian nuclear engineer.

Some of that information was described to member countries of the I.A.E.A. by the agency’s chief inspector during a closed meeting in February 2008. The official, Olli Heinonen, laid out an array of documents, sketches and video that he said were “not consistent with any application other than the development of a nuclear weapon.” News of that presentation quickly leaked, and the details were denounced by Iranian officials as fabrications.

But before and since Mr. Heinonen’s briefing, Iran has refused to allow the agency to talk with Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, the scientist believed to lead two secret efforts inside the Iranian government called Project 110 and Project 111. The evidence collected by the agency suggests that each centers on elements of designing and delivering a nuclear weapon, though the United States said in a National Intelligence Estimate published nearly two years ago that it believed those projects were halted, at least temporarily, in late 2003.

A European diplomat familiar with the agency’s internal deliberations said that the United States, Britain, France and Germany were pressing the agency to reveal the strongest information it had gathered.

“There’s multilateral activity under way to ramp up pressure on Iran,” the official said. “It’s not just Israel.”

The agency’s next report on Iran is expected to be released as soon as Thursday or Friday. A senior European official said it contained “no bombshells,” but it was unclear how much analysis of previous information on bomb design and conversations among Iran’s nuclear engineers it might reveal. Much of that information came from the laptop, from a penetration of Iran’s computer networks and from the agency’s own findings, American and European officials said.

One nuclear official familiar with the preparation of the report said that a high-level dispute had broken out in the atomic agency over whether the report should include a toughly worded analysis of Iran's activities, in hopes of forcing a response from Iran. But Dr. ElBaradei has remained cautious, they said, and it was unlikely that much of the material would be included in the report.

Assessing the progress that Iran has made in the nuclear arena over the past year is difficult, and it has been made more complex by the upheaval that followed the election there.

Next Wednesday, American and European officials are scheduled to meet to discuss their next steps on Iran, and President Obama has said he will use the opening of the United Nations General Assembly later in the month, and perhaps an economic summit meeting in Pittsburgh, to press for far tougher sanctions. Among the penalties under consideration is a cutoff of refined gasoline to Iran, but a senior administration official said last week that such a step "will be a hard sell for China and Russia," which have extensive economic ties to Iran.

When the inspectors last reported on their periodic visits to Iran's main nuclear site, at Natanz, they said roughly 7,000 centrifuges had been installed to produce uranium. All of it was low-enriched uranium, which is not suitable for weapons. Iran insists that the fuel is for eventual use in nuclear power plants.

Iran has barred the inspectors from other sites, including some suspected of being part of a nuclear weapons program. It was during such an inspection five years ago that I.A.E.A. inspectors discovered enrichment activities that had been hidden for 18 years.

But last week the agency's inspectors were allowed to visit the nearly finished Arak heavy water reactor after being barred from the site for nearly a year. That facility has been of intense interest to the inspectors because its technology could aid nuclear weapons development.

Obama administration officials said they suspected that the visit was part of an effort to show cooperation just before the I.A.E.A.'s report. But they said that since Iran's election, they had not received an Iranian response to Mr. Obama's invitation to open discussions on nuclear issues.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/26/world/middleeast/26iran.html>

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

RIA Novosti  
26 August 2009

## **Russia, U.S. Undecided on Site of Rocket Observation Center**

ULAN BATOR, August 26 (RIA Novosti) - Russia and the U.S. have yet to decide on where to place a joint control point to observe rocket launches by foreign countries, Russia's chief of staff said on Wednesday.

During his visit to Moscow in July, U.S. President Barack Obama discussed with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev issues relating to the development of anti-rocket systems, and began talks on creating a joint "Center for Information Exchange," which would inform both countries of rocket launches throughout the world.

"The issue of creating a joint control point to observe rocket launches and to inform one another of unsanctioned launches is being discussed," Gen. Nikolai Makarov told a news conference in Mongolia's capital.

He said the center would allow both countries to inform each other of rocket launches, which country is launching them, and of the threat posed by them.

The two countries have been discussing the creation of such a center since 2000, but have not yet decided on where the center should be located, although Moscow has not been ruled out.

"We haven't set a date [to create the center]. We need to decide on the location, and then we will talk about a date," he said.

Markov said the two countries still need to work on building bilateral trust in military issues before such a center becomes fully functional, including in relation to submarine patrols and warship activities on the open seas.

"The questions we have placed before us should relax and eliminate suspicions that have built up between us over the past few years," he said.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090826/155930484.html>

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

Gazeta Wyborcza – Poland  
August 27, 2009

## **Poland Without Missile Defence**

By Marcin Bosacki, Waszyngton

The US plans for building elements of the missile defence system in Poland and the Czech Republic are virtually certain to be abandoned, say Gazeta's sources in Washington.

'The signals that the generals in the Pentagon are sending are absolutely clear: as far as missile defence is concerned, the current US administration is searching for other solutions than the previously bases in Poland and the Czech Republic,' Riki Ellison, chairman of the Missile Defence Advocacy Alliance, a Washington-based lobby group.

Mr Ellison took part last week in an industry conference on missile defence where the Pentagon talked about its plans to defence industry executives. Gazeta reported that Boeing had proposed there - instead of a base in Poland - mobile interceptor missile (anti-missile) launchers.

During the conference, Mr Ellison stresses, the 'generals never mentioned the original plan concerning Poland and the Czech Republic.' Instead of a plan, negotiated by the George W. Bush administration and the Polish and Czech governments, of locating anti-missile installations in those two countries, the Barack Obama administration prefers installing interceptor missiles on ships, as well as on bases in Israel, Turkey, and perhaps somewhere in the Balkans.

Shortly after Mr Obama took over, the White House started a strategic review of the missile defence project. In theory, the review hasn't yet been completed but Mr Ellison believes that in fact the decision has already been made. A credible source in the Congress says the same: 'The administration has been sounding out for a couple of weeks now how the Congress will react when the plans for building the missile defence in Poland and the Czech Republic are dumped.'

'The debate within the Obama administration is nearing an end,' adds a well-known Washington expert on defence matters and an adviser to the current administration.

The outcome of this debate, it has been increasingly clear, will see the Polish and Czech option abandoned. Riki Ellison at the MDAA believes that the main reason for this change of strategy is that the 'new administration pays more attention to Russia's arguments.' Other sources that Gazeta has talked to, although they agree this is an important factor, say that the key issue is that of the project's price tag and Mr Obama's key aides' doubts about whether the system would really work.

'Obama's people believe that many global problems will be more easily solved together with Moscow,' says Mr Ellison. 'It's about priorities. For many Democrats, disarmament is a priority and to reach a new strategic weapons reduction agreement with Russia, they are prepared to sacrifice a lot. Which doesn't mean that they are soft and naive,' explains the lobbyist.

'The Obama administration will negotiate firmly with the Russians, trying to bargain as much as possible in return for its concessions,' says Mr Ellison.

But a new approach to both Russia and missile defence is a fact.

Gen Kevin Chilton, head of the US Strategic Command, had a lengthy speech at the conference about how difficult to swallow for Moscow a missile defence base in Poland would be. It is clear that Russia's feelings are being taken into account in Washington.

According to Gazeta's sources, the US government will announce the conclusions of the strategic review only when it has prepared Warsaw and Prague for the change of plans and secured maximum possible concessions from Moscow.

Gazeta asked the State Department for permission to interview one of the high-ranking diplomats about Polish-US relations but was refused - until the strategic review of the missile defence project is completed.

Negotiations with the George W. Bush administration were started by the PiS administration and completed, after many perturbations, by the incumbent one. The missile defence was to protect Nato allies against missiles from countries like North Korea or Iran.

[http://wyborcza.pl/1,86871,6969565,Poland\\_Without\\_Missile\\_Defence.html](http://wyborcza.pl/1,86871,6969565,Poland_Without_Missile_Defence.html)

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

Washington Times  
Inside the Ring  
August 27, 2009

## **Gen. Jing visit**

By Bill Gertz

Chinese Embassy spokesman Wang Baodong said that U.S. and Chinese officials have held discussions on the long-standing U.S. invitation to China's top strategic forces general to visit the United States but that the commander, Gen. Jing Zhiyuan, still has not made the trip.

"Gen. Jing met with a couple of visiting U.S. military leaders and congressmen over the past years, though his proposed visit to the U.S. is yet to be realized due to domestic agenda," Mr. Wang said in an e-mail to Inside the Ring. He declined to elaborate on Gen. Jing's domestic agenda.

President George W. Bush asked Chinese President Hu Jintao during an April 2006 summit if the commander of China's nuclear forces could visit the United States for talks with his American counterparts. Mr. Hu agreed he would facilitate the visit of Gen. Jing, who met with Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld in Beijing in 2005.

The Pentagon has growing concerns over China's strategic nuclear forces buildup and worries that China has a two-track nuclear policy of saying one thing in public and doing another in secret.

The annual Pentagon report on China's military power, released in March, stated that China's plans to apply its stated policy of not being the first to use nuclear weapons is "unclear."

"The PRC government has provided public and private assurances that its 'no first use' policy has not and will not change," the report said.

"Nevertheless, periodic PRC military and civilian academic debates have occurred over whether a 'no first use' policy supports or detracts from China's deterrent, and whether or not 'no first use' should remain in place," it said.

Also, there are questions about whether or not a conventional strike on China's strategic forces would nullify the pledge not to be the first to use nuclear weapons.

"These debates add a further layer of ambiguity to China's strategic intentions for its nuclear forces," the report said.

A defense official, who asked not to be named because of the sensitivity of the topic, said the unanswered questions about China's nuclear forces are the main reason the Pentagon wants to develop dialogue on the subject.

Mr. Wang, the Chinese Embassy spokesman, insisted that China's nuclear doctrine is "consistent, clear and transparent."

"China has faithfully abided by its commitment that it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances and that it will unconditionally not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states or nuclear-weapon-free zones," he said.

"In fact, China is the only nuclear-weapon state that has undertaken such a commitment, and this policy will not change in the future."

Mr. Wang said China has not taken part in a nuclear arms race in the past and will not do so "ever."

"As a peace-loving and responsible country, China opposes the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery," he said.

<http://washingtontimes.com/news/2009/aug/27/inside-the-ring-39560534/?page=2>

<http://washingtontimes.com/news/2009/aug/27/inside-the-ring-39560534/?page=3>

<http://washingtontimes.com/news/2009/aug/27/inside-the-ring-39560534/?page=4>

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

Global Security Newswire  
August 26, 2009

## Russia Says Seized Ship Might Have Carried Undeclared Cargo

Senior Russian officials today refused to rule out the possibility that a cargo vessel was transporting undeclared material before it was seized by pirates off of Sweden in July, Agence France-Presse reported (see *GSN*, Aug. 19).

The ship, registered in Malta, was officially transferring a shipment of lumber to Algeria before it was hijacked on the Baltic Sea and held for several weeks. The Russian navy recently captured the vessel, which was rumored to have carried nuclear materials or some sort of weapons, and took eight suspects into custody.

"We do not rule out the possibility that the *Arctic Sea* transported something other than wood," said Alexander Bastrykin, chairman of the Russian Prosecutor General's Investigative Committee. "This is why we asked the crew to remain in Moscow, as we must figure out if any one of them was involved in those events."

Hours later, though, the official's press office issued a release asserting that the ship was not on a "secret mission" or smuggling illicit cargo at the time it was seized.

"The investigation currently does not have any information that the ship could have carried any sort of illegal cargo," according to the statement.

A senior Russian military official also indicated that more information was needed about the ship's cargo.

"We do not know what it is carrying, we only know there is wood and whatever else it is carrying must be clarified by the investigation," said Gen. Nikolai Makarov, head of Russia's General Staff.

The ship had sailed July 23 from Finland, where officials said the cargo was not radioactive in nature (Agence France-Presse/Google News, Aug. 26).

[http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw\\_20090826\\_2518.php](http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20090826_2518.php)

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

Global Security Newswire  
August 26, 2009

## U.S., Russia Unlikely to Cooperate on Missile Defense, Experts Say

By Martin Matishak

WASHINGTON -- A number of political and security concerns make cooperation between the United States and Russia on missile defense unlikely, experts said this week (see *GSN*, Aug. 21).

"Politically it's going to be very, very difficult" due to distrust by Russian military leaders of their U.S. counterparts and other "bad atmospherics," Mikhail Tsypkin, an associate professor at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, said Tuesday during a panel discussion at the Hudson Institute.

The Bush administration plan to permanently install 10 ground-based interceptor missiles in Poland and a radar station in the Czech Republic has become a major point of contention between Washington and Moscow. The plan - which U.S. officials argue is intended to defeat Iran's burgeoning long-range missile capabilities -- is under review. However, the Kremlin has argued that the system would pose a threat to its strategic security.

Both sides have offered ideas for breaking the tension, with the United States focusing on cooperation and transparency in its European missile-shield operations and Russia proposing alternatives for the present plan.

The idea of a compromise partnership has been floated on Capitol Hill by some lawmakers, including Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin (D-Mich.). He has asked whether the two countries might be able to share radar data to track and intercept an enemy missile.

In June, Deputy Defense Secretary William Lynn told Levin's panel that the administration is examining ways to include two Russian radar installations in a European missile defense system (see *GSN*, June 17). Such a move would be viewed in Washington as an addition to the already proposed plan, a position not popular in Moscow.

At that same hearing U.S. Missile Defense Agency chief Lt. Gen. Patrick O'Reilly said he had visited a Russian radar facility at Gabala, Azerbaijan, and another in Armavir in Southern Russia and believes that both installations would be helpful in monitoring Iranian missile tests.

O'Reilly has also endorsed the idea of a Joint Data Exchange Center, which would enable the United States and Russia to share information on missile launches (see *GSN*, July 14).

A senior Russian military official today said the two nations are in talks about a joint missile launch monitoring facility, possibly in Moscow.

The center would allow instant communication in the event of a missile launch and would "protect our countries from a possible accident situation that could arise," said Gen. Nikolai Makarov, head of the Russian General Staff.

A schedule would be hammered out once the locale is chosen, Agence France-Presse reported.

Tsyarkin said the radar in Azerbaijan presents a technical problem for the U.S. plan because it is not configured to guide missiles. He quoted a Russian general who made a joke about the site: "The Americans need a shotgun and we're offering them binoculars."

Tsyarkin said there is also a "basic lack of trust" between the two nations, adding that Washington is fearful Moscow would have the power to "veto" any proposed action in the event of an Iranian missile launch.

In addition, the United States would be concerned about technical information on the deployed systems leaking to third parties "either for political reasons or for sale," he told the audience.

Meanwhile, Russia "would be worried that we would drag them down into some kind of adventure with Iran," Tsyarkin said.

Cooperation on missile defense also would be hampered because publicly Russia has said there is no threat from Iran, according to Stephen Blank, a research professor at the U.S. Army War College.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev made "flexible" statements regarding the situation when U.S. President Barack Obama visited Moscow in June, Blank said. However, he soon again took up the threat that if the United States places missile defense assets in Europe, Russia would field tactical Iskander missiles near Poland, according to Blank.

Those missiles could be fielded in ballistic or conventional formats, "which means that it comes in modes that cannot be defended against," he said, without elaborating.

Blank described the missiles as "countervalue" weapons, which target the population of an opponent, and not "counterforce" systems aimed at the opponent's military-industrial infrastructure. Iskander missiles are designed to "intimidate the Poles and the Baltic States," Blank told the audience.

He said that "in principle" a missile defense deal could be struck but "it would be a very arduous negotiation and it would take a long time." It would also "require an immense change of opinion not just among [Russian] generals but among Senator Levin's colleagues, too," Blank added.

[http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw\\_20090826\\_1930.php](http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20090826_1930.php)

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

Kyiv Post – Russia  
August 26, 2009

## **Russia says will Keep Bulava Missile Despite Failures**

ULAN BATOR, Aug 26 (Reuters) - Russia will continue to test its troubled Bulava nuclear missile despite several failures as it would otherwise be forced to refit a whole new class of costly submarines, a senior military official said on Wednesday.

After a failed test last month, the submarine-launched Bulava(Mace), which is capable of carrying 10 warheads 8,000 km (5,000 miles), now has a history of six unsuccessful launches and five successful ones, according to official reports.

"We are still inclined to believe the Bulava will fly in the end," chief of staff Nikolai Makarov told journalists during a visit to Mongolia with President Dmitry Medvedev.

"I believe our industry will finally cope with its technology, and the missile will fly."

The low success rate has undermined statements by senior officials that the Bulava should be commissioned this year and embarrassed the Kremlin, which has touted the intercontinental missile as capable of breaching any air defence.

Despite the uncertainty, Russia has already built and begun to test a new "Borei" (Arctic Wind) class submarine, specifically designed to carry this missile.

#### PRODUCTION PROBLEMS

Two more giant, nuclear-powered submarines of the same class are now being built.

Asked if it would be better to deploy the reliable, Soviet-era designed Sineva missile on the new boats, Makarov said: "The Bulava is a totally different system...To refit a submarine for the Bulava means to redesign it completely."

"This would be a very expensive project," Makarov said.

The head of the Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology which designed the Bulava, Yuri Solomonov, resigned last month after continued problems with the Bulava.

Makarov said it was the missile's faulty production cycle, not its design, that was to blame to its unsuccessful tests.

He said production of the Bulava would be transferred to another plant in Russia.

<http://www.kyivpost.com/world/47495>

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

RIA Novosti  
26 August 2009

## Russia Moves Bulava Missile Production to Alternative Plant

ULAN BATOR, August 26 (RIA Novosti) - Production of Russia's troubled Bulava ballistic missile has been moved to another manufacturer following reports of the faults in the production cycle, the chief of the Russian General Staff said Wednesday.

The Bulava submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM), which is being developed by the Moscow-based Institute of Thermal Technology (MITT), has suffered six failures in 11 tests. The general director of the institute has resigned over the failures, seen as a setback in the development of Russia's nuclear deterrent.

"The latest failed launch of the Bulava was caused by technical glitches in the production cycle rather than by faulty design," Gen. Nikolai Makarov told a news conference in the capital of Mongolia.

Makarov said a final report on the causes of the previous faulty test launches would be ready soon, but the date for the next Bulava trial had not yet been scheduled.

The general did not specify who the new manufacturer of the missile would be, but expressed hope that the Russian industry "will tackle the problems and cope with the [production] task."

The Bulava (SS-NX-30) SLBM carries up to 10 MIRV warheads and has an estimated range of over 8,000 kilometers (5,000 miles). The three-stage solid-propellant ballistic missile is designed for deployment on new Borey class nuclear-powered strategic submarines.

The Russian military expects the Bulava, along with Topol-M land-based ballistic missiles, to become the core of Russia's nuclear triad.

Makarov ruled out replacing the Bulava missile with the Sineva SLBM on new strategic submarines.

The RSM-54 Sineva (NATO designation SS-N-23 Skiff) is a third-generation liquid-propellant SLBM that entered service with the Russian Navy in July 2007 to equip Delta IV class strategic submarines.



"Sineva is an absolutely different system. [Borey class] submarines are designed to be armed with the Bulava system. If they are to be adjusted to Sineva, they will have to be rebuilt entirely, which would be a costly project," the general said.

[http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20090826/155931180.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20090826/155931180.html)

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

London Guardian  
27 August 2009

## **Russia Deploys Anti-missile Defence Unit Near North Korea**

Luke Harding in Moscow

Russia has placed an anti-missile defence system close to its border with North Korea, in an apparent sign of growing alarm in Moscow at Pyongyang's nuclear programme.

Russia's chief of army staff, General Nikolai Makarov, told reporters on a trip with President Dmitry Medvedev to Mongolia the military had deployed its S-400 anti-missile division, a state-of-the-art anti-aircraft system capable of shooting down short- and medium-range ballistic missiles.

The system, stationed in Russia's far east, would "guarantee" fragments from an errant North Korean missile would not fall on Russian territory, he said. "We are definitely concerned by the conditions under which tests are being carried out in North Korea, including nuclear devices," he added.

Russia shares a tiny border with North Korea in its Pacific far east, with the Russian naval port city of Vladivostok only 93 miles from North Korea. In 2006 an off-course North Korean missile reportedly plunged into Russian waters near the port of Nakhoda.

One analyst cast doubt on the general's comments, describing them as "baffling". Mikhail Barabanov, a Moscow-based defence analyst, said today there was no evidence that Russia had deployed its S-400 system in the far east. "Either the general was doing some sort of PR, or the journalists didn't understand what he was talking about," he said.

He conceded that the military may have transferred the radio-location system from the S-400 to the North Korean border to monitor the testing of missiles.

The Kremlin is vehemently opposed to the US's plans to site a ballistic missile defence system in central Europe – which Washington argues would protect the US and its allies from a rogue missile fired by Iran or North Korea. Moscow believes the system targets its nuclear arsenal.

Makarov's remarks indicate that Russia apparently shares the US's assessment of North Korea's nuclear threat, after the north's nuclear test in May and a series of launches of small- and medium-size missiles, which provoked international condemnation.

These concerns persist despite recent signs of a softer approach from the north and the release this month of two imprisoned US journalists who had inadvertently strayed across the North Korean border, after a visit to Pyongyang by the former US president Bill Clinton.

"North Korea's missile testing technique is pretty crude. You can't exclude the possibility that a missile could fall on Russia," Said Aminov, editor of the Anti-aircraft Defence Digest, a Russian website, said today. He added: "The far east is an extremely important region for the Russian Federation from both a political and military standpoint."

Russia is a member of the six-party disarmament group, which also includes China, Japan, North and South Korea and the US.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/sep/27/russia-north-korea-nuclear-missile-defence>

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

RIA Novosti  
27 August 2009

## **Experts Doubt Russian Military has moved Bulava Production**

MOSCOW, August 27 (RIA Novosti) - Russia cannot assign production of Bulava ballistic missiles to another manufacturer because there is only one plant in the country that makes solid-fuel ballistic missiles, Russian experts have said.

Chief of the Russian General Staff, Gen. Nikolai Makarov, said on Wednesday that production of the troubled Bulava missile had been moved to an alternative factory due to problems in the production cycle. He did not specify its name.

According to the Russian Nezavisimaya Gazeta newspaper, Makarov's announcement took the Russian military and defense industry experts by surprise because only one plant in Russia - the Votkinsky Zavod in the Urals - makes solid-fuel ballistic missiles for Russia's Armed Forces, including the Topol-M, the Iskander-M, and the Bulava-30.

"Apparently, the media misinterpreted what Gen. Makarov said because there is nowhere to transfer Bulava production to from the Votkinsky plant," former chief of staff of Russia's Strategic Missile Forces, Col. Gen. Viktor Yesin, said in an interview with the NG.

"On the other hand, it is possible to change manufacturers of faulty components supplied to the plant. Here we have some options, but the choice is still limited," Yesin added.

The Bulava submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM), which is being developed by the Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology (MITT), has suffered six failures in 11 tests. The general director of the institute has resigned over the failures, seen as a setback in the development of Russia's nuclear deterrent.

A final report on the causes of the previous faulty test launches is expected to be ready soon, but no date has been set for the next Bulava trial.

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[http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20090827/155939680.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20090827/155939680.html)

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

Reuters

Aug 26, 2009

## **Iran 'Pragmatists' Proposed Nuclear Halt-Diplomats**

By Louis Charbonneau

UNITED NATIONS, Aug 26 (Reuters) - Iranian leaders received and rejected in May a proposal from domestic "pragmatists" to halt Iran's nuclear enrichment program to resolve its feud with the West and avoid new U.N. sanctions, Western diplomats said.

Iran has repeatedly rejected international demands that it freeze its uranium enrichment program, which Western powers suspect is a facade for nuclear weapons development -- a charge Iran denies. Tehran has been hit with three rounds of U.N. sanctions for pressing ahead with enrichment.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, several diplomats said the proposal came from "pragmatists" inside Iran and called for a temporary suspension of "limited scope and duration." Tehran says its atomic program will produce electricity, not bombs.

They said the proposal, made before Iran's June 12 presidential election but after U.S. President Barack Obama's offer in March of direct talks with Tehran, was ultimately rejected by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The diplomats did not identify who came up with the idea. One diplomat said it came from people close to conservative Iranian politician Mohsen Rezai, a failed presidential candidate and secretary of the country's Expediency Council.

Hardline Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who won an election opposition politicians say was rigged, criticized his rival candidates in May for wanting what he described as a policy of "detente" with the West. Ahmadinejad says he won the election fairly.

Iran's Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, Ali Asghar Soltanieh, said he was not aware of any proposal to suspend enrichment.

"I have not heard such a thing," he told Reuters. "As far as I know, on this issue nobody is in favor of suspension. There is one solid voice on the nuclear issue."

#### DIPLOMATIC VICTORY

A senior Western diplomat said the proposal showed that within Iran's labyrinthine political system there are voices that are "pragmatic" and want to end their country's isolation and avoid further U.N. sanctions by suspending enrichment.

"Iran is not homogenous," he said. "Splits have become more apparent since the election. Many Iranians don't believe that the path they're taking is the right one."

Another diplomat said the proposal of a suspension appeared to be intended to take advantage of Obama's desire to reach out to Iran and "to achieve a diplomatic victory in the form of a (nuclear) deal with the West."

Britain's U.N. Ambassador and incoming chief of the MI6 spy agency, John Sawers, did not comment on the veracity of the reported proposal but said there were clearly divisions in Iran. He said Khamenei was more "interventionist and asserting himself more" with Ahmadinejad than with his predecessors.

The United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China have offered Iran a package of economic and political incentives, including the sale of civilian nuclear technology, if it freezes its enrichment program and clears up questions U.N. inspectors have about its past nuclear activities.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy warned Iran on Wednesday that it would have to face tougher sanctions if it did not change its position on enrichment.

Tehran has yet to respond to the offer and the four Western nations intend to use a Sept. 2 meeting of all six powers to try to persuade Russia and China to back a fourth round of sanctions against Iran -- this time targeting its energy sector and not only its nuclear and missile industries.

Diplomats say Moscow and Beijing, which have strong trade links to Iran, oppose sanctions on Iran's energy sector.

Earlier this week diplomatic sources told Reuters in Vienna that Iran has not expanded the number of centrifuges enriching uranium at its Natanz nuclear site since the end of May after increasing capacity steadily over the previous three years.

The reason for the slowdown was unclear. The IAEA is due to issue a report on Iran later this week that will influence the discussions on whether Tehran should face harsher sanctions. (Additional reporting by Sylvia Westall and Mark Heinrich in Vienna; editing by Mohammad Zargham)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSN26263492>

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

Associated Press (AP)  
News Hosted by Google  
26 August 2009

## **Iran Gets Support for Ban on Nuke Plant Attacks**

By GEORGE JAHN (AP)

VIENNA — Iran, whose nuclear facilities are under threat of possible Israeli military strikes, has enlisted the support of more than 100 nonaligned nations in its push for a ban on such attacks, according to documents shared with The Associated Press.

The 118-nation Nonaligned Movement backs Tehran in a letter submitted to the International Atomic Energy Agency endorsing Iran's plan to submit a resolution on the topic when IAEA nations meet next month.

While Iran says the language of any resolution will be kept general, the move is clearly directed against Israel and to a lesser extent the U.S. Both nations — Israel more overtly — have not ruled out an attack as a last resort if the international community fails to persuade Tehran to freeze its nuclear activities.

Iran has defied three sets of U.N. Security Council sanctions aimed at pressuring it to mothball its uranium enrichment. It also is resisting an IAEA probe into reports it had drafted plans and conducted experiments for a nuclear weapons program.

Tehran insists its enrichment program is geared only toward generating fuel to produce nuclear energy, not nuclear arms.

The IAEA's 150-nation general conference convenes Sept. 14. The annual conference regularly pits Israel backed by the U.S. and its other Western nations, against Islamic states and other nonaligned countries seeking to censure Israel and its nuclear secrecy.

Israel is believed to possess nuclear arms but refuses to confirm or deny its status. Again this year, its rivals are pushing for conference resolutions demanding that Israel open up its facilities to IAEA perusal.

The Iranian proposal was revealed to the AP last week. That and the nonaligned support, outlined in a letter shared with the AP on Wednesday, aims to give Islamic nations additional leverage at the conference.

The IAEA conference already passed a resolution in September 1990. But Iran argues a new resolution is called for because the use of nuclear power — and the corresponding international damage that any attacks would cause — have greatly increased since then.

Israeli warplanes have attacked nuclear sites before, and Iran appeared to be trying to ramp up diplomatic pressure on the Jewish state in hopes of reducing the chances of an attack.

The country's war planes crippled Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor in 1981 to prevent Saddam Hussein from the means of developing nuclear weapons. More recently, an Israeli air attack nearly two years ago destroyed what the U.S. says was a nearly finished nuclear reactor in Syria that would have been able to produce plutonium when completed.

Still, Iran's chief delegate to the IAEA said Israel was not the main concern

"We ignore the Israelis," Ali Asghar Soltanieh told the AP. "Nobody dares to threaten or attack Iran."

Most recently, an Israeli submarine believed to have the capability of carrying nuclear-tipped missiles last month returned to the Mediterranean after crossing to the Red Sea in the direction of Iran, a mission seen as a warning. Also, Israel has held air force maneuvers that were described unofficially in Israel as mock attacks on Iranian targets.

U.S. Vice President Joe Biden last month suggested on a talk show that Washington would not stand in Israel's way if it chose to attack Iran to scuttle its nuclear ambitions. And the Obama administration has not taken the Bush era option of a such a strike by U.S. forces off the table.

Still, Israeli strategists face more formidable odds than they did against Iraq or Syria if contemplating any attack on Iran.

Its main known nuclear site at Natanz, a city about 300 miles (500 kilometers) south of Tehran, is far underground in a cavernous fortified hall where thousands of centrifuges churn out enriched uranium, a potential core for nuclear warheads.

Its above ground facilities — the Bushehr light-water reactor and the Arak heavy water reactor under construction — are ringed by anti-aircraft defenses.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hRZ6b0byNMZbWNq5zY4p-AtCHdiAD9AAGDQO0>

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

Los Angeles Times  
August 28, 2009

# Nuclear Drive A Casualty of Iran's Turmoil

By Borzou Daragahi

Reporting from Beirut--Iran's political crisis could prevent the nation from making any swift move to ratchet up its nuclear program, said analysts and officials, giving President Obama and Western allies more time to grapple with the issue.

The chaos over the disputed reelection of hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad brings into question who calls the shots in Tehran, and what any deal with the Islamic Republic involving its nuclear program would look like.

The Obama administration, concerned that Tehran is seeking to amass the materials needed to manufacture nuclear weapons, set an informal deadline of September for Iran to respond positively to an offer to discuss the matter rather than risk new economic sanctions.

"The infighting in Tehran has sent up a smoke screen that further confuses the picture from the outside, and the picture was plenty opaque to begin with," said a U.S. official in Washington who is involved in formulating nuclear policy and spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue.

Tehran has long insisted that its nuclear research program is meant solely to provide electricity for its growing population. Its production of reactor-grade uranium has become a source of national pride, the atomic symbol emblazoned on the back of Iran's 50,000-rial bills.

But most Western arms-control experts believe Iran is trying to achieve the ability to quickly manufacture a nuclear bomb. And Iran continues to defy United Nations Security Council resolutions demanding that it stop producing the enriched uranium, material that, if further refined, could be turned into the fissile material for a bomb.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, or IAEA, is set to take up its latest quarterly status report on Iran's nuclear program in early September.

In recent weeks, Iran granted IAEA inspectors access to a heavy-water reactor and parts of the country's enrichment facility after previously barring them. The move suggests an effort by Tehran to ease pressure on itself and on its most likely supporters at the Security Council -- Russia and China -- before any new talks on sanctions.

Although Iranian scientists have continued to enrich low-grade uranium during the nation's political crisis, news agencies have reported that Tehran has not taken steps to increase its processing capacity during the last quarter. Experts say that may have more to do with technical quirks than political decisions.

For now, most Iran watchers agree that Tehran will not only be unable to respond positively to the Obama administration's offer of talks, but also is in too much political disarray to make the major decisions necessary to build a nuclear weapon. Such steps would include further enriching its uranium supply to weapons grade, or constructing controversial new facilities for speeding up the process.

"The nuclear dossier has been stalled and is in a stagnant position, with no back or forth moves," said Ahmad Shirzad, an Iranian nuclear scientist and political analyst. "The recent events in Iran put all important decision-making in limbo. The postelection events have not completely unfolded, and Mr. Ahmadinejad has not come to a conclusion what to do."

Iran's 20-year foray into nuclear technology has long benefited from a broad consensus among the nation's political elites, or at least acquiescence by foes of the program. Important institutions such as the Expediency Council, led by Ayatollah Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani; the presidency; the Supreme National Security Council and parliament, along with supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, have played a role in the program's creation and sustenance.

Conservative Ahmadinejad likes to take credit for Iran's recent nuclear progress. But Tehran actually relaunched its dormant program under the 1980s premiership of his primary rival, Mir-Hossein Mousavi, and the first breakthroughs on enrichment came during the presidency of Ahmadinejad's reformist predecessor, Mohammad Khatami.

"Nuclear policy has not changed regardless of the domestic problems, as the nuclear policy, like any other strategic policy, was predetermined more than two decades ago," said Ali Khorram, a former Iranian diplomat based in Tehran.

Since the disputed June election, Iran's feuding factions have been preoccupied with political infighting. Rafsanjani skipped Ahmadinejad's inauguration and the president skipped a session of the Expediency Council. At a ceremony honoring the new judiciary chief, who is a conservative rival to Ahmadinejad, the president arrived an hour late and

left in haste after delivering a blistering speech calling on the jurist to go after those he termed elitists, alluding to Rafsanjani.

Within Iran's treacherous domestic political arena, any sign of weakness, or of bowing to the West, either by slowing Tehran's missile program or suspending the production of reactor-grade uranium, could be used by rivals to pounce, political analysts say. Therefore, it is likely that the current program, in which reactor-grade nuclear material is processed by at least 5,000 spinning centrifuges, will keep moving forward at its current pace.

"The nuclear program is a touchstone issue for the entire government," said the U.S. official. "No one on either side of the current controversy is going to risk his credibility by even suggesting a change in posture or a substantive pause."

Iran's political hard-liners have made dramatic moves during previous periods of domestic discord. Such measures as stoning women or questioning the Holocaust provoked an international reaction that unified squabbling domestic factions and silenced critics.

But because of the extent of the current political feuding and the stakes involved, experts say, it is unlikely that Tehran will make a dramatic move toward constructing a nuclear weapon.

"It will be hard to get an approval by all concerned," said Jalil Roshandel, an Iran expert at East Carolina University. Moreover, he said, continued public support of Ahmadinejad's nuclear policies is no longer a given.

"Public opinion is divided, dispersed or, at best, indifferent," he said.

A "breakout" move on the nuclear issue risks not only public scorn, but also tighter sanctions, an embargo on sales of refined petroleum to Tehran or even armed conflict.

Iran's rulers may not want to risk testing the loyalty of an already volatile and angry populace..

"We must remember that the nuclear program is a means to an end," said Meir Javedanfar, an Iran expert based in Tel Aviv. "Khamenei would not sacrifice his regime over it."

Anger over Ahmadinejad's domestic policies has already emboldened figures close to the opposition to speak out more forcefully against his approach on the nuclear issue.

"The Iranian authorities should know what they should expect if they do not enter the negotiations seriously and do not adhere to the repeated resolutions of the Security Council on the suspension of the uranium enrichment program," warned a commentary in the reformist newspaper Mardom Salari.

Internal paralysis, international isolation and stagnant oil prices, analysts say, could work dramatically in the West's favor, giving Tehran the incentive to make a quick deal with the West in order to concentrate on shoring up domestic stability and its faltering economy.

"So far, since the election, Iran seems to be a bit more flexible than before," said Anoush Ehteshami, a professor of international relations at Durham University in Britain.

"Given the current political climate at home, it makes sense to try to contain the nuclear crisis for as long as possible."

But some warn that any deal with Iran's current government would strengthen its legitimacy, betraying an election protest movement that has captured the world's imagination and challenged decades-old ideas about Iran's political realities.

"The Iranian people will never forget if Western liberalism and the international community abandons the Iranian nation's struggle for freedom," said Reza Kaviani, a Tehran-based analyst and opposition supporter.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-iran-nukes28-2009aug28,0,2403215,full.story>

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

Philadelphia Inquirer  
August 26, 2009

## **Flawed S. Korea Launch May Still Anger The North**

By Kwang-Tae Kim, Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea -- South Korea's first rocket launch yesterday failed to push a satellite into its orbit, but the flawed mission may still anger rival North Korea, coming just months after the communist nation's own launch drew international condemnation.

The failure dealt a blow to Seoul's quest to become a regional space power. It comes against the complex backdrop of relations on the Korean peninsula - and recent signs that heightened tension over the North's nuclear program may be easing.

Also yesterday, a South Korean newspaper reported that North Korea had invited top envoys of President Obama for the first nuclear negotiations between the two countries under his presidency. But Washington quickly said it had no plans to send the envoys to Pyongyang.

The North gave no immediate reaction to the rocket launch but has said it would watch to see whether the United States and regional powers refer the matter to the U.N. Security Council - which in June approved sanctions on the North over its recent nuclear and missile tests.

The two-stage Naro rocket, whose first stage was designed by Russia, was South Korea's first launch of a rocket from its territory. It lifted off from Oenaro Island, about 290 miles south of Seoul.

The rocket was carrying a domestically built satellite aimed at observing the atmosphere and oceans. A South Korean official said they could not trace the satellite in orbit after it separated from the rocket.

"It seems that communications with the satellite scheduled on Wednesday are unlikely to happen," Science Ministry official Yum Ki Soo said late yesterday.

He said more details could be available today, as South Korean and Russian scientists were analyzing data.

Russia's Interfax-AVN news agency, citing an unidentified Russian space-industry source, said that the satellite never reached orbit and that problems occurred in the South Korean-built second stage of the rocket.

In joint statements, Russia's space agency, Roscosmos, and the state-controlled Khrunichev company, which made the rocket's first stage, said the first stage operated as planned.

The North, unlike the South, is banned from ballistic-missile activity by Security Council resolutions as part of international efforts to eliminate its nuclear and long-range missile programs.

South Korean officials said it was inappropriate to compare their launch with the North's because Seoul's was for peaceful purposes and carried out with transparency.

[http://www.philly.com/inquirer/world\\_us/20090826\\_Flawed\\_S\\_Korea\\_launch\\_may\\_still\\_anger\\_the\\_North.html](http://www.philly.com/inquirer/world_us/20090826_Flawed_S_Korea_launch_may_still_anger_the_North.html)

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

Xinhua News – China  
28 August 2009

## **Japan's Foreign Policy Likely to Change if DPJ Wins**

By Richard Smart

TOKYO, Aug. 28 (Xinhua) -- As Japan prepares for an election on Aug. 30, it seems that nothing but a miracle will be able to keep the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in power as a tide of change looks likely to sweep the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) into governance.

If the DPJ does win the election, it is likely, argued Jeff Kingston, a professor of Asian studies at Temple University, that there will be changes in Japan's foreign policy and international relations, particularly the nation's relationship with the United States.

"I don't think that the DPJ will do anything to inflict irreparable harm on the bilateral alliance with the United States," said Kingston in an interview with Xinhua.

"I think the Obama administration is ready to update the relationship and make it somewhat more equal. However, in this new multipolar world the United States expects more of its allies, so in the case of Japan, Washington will expect not soldiers, but engineers, educators and doctors, things like that, to contribute to the rebuilding process in the Middle East," Kingston said.

The DPJ, however, seems more likely than the LDP to generate tension with the United States. In particular, the DPJ "will expose the secret agreement that allows the U.S. to routinely violate the three non-nuclear principles."

Japan's three non-nuclear principles are not possessing, producing or permitting the bringing-in of nuclear weapons on its soil. However, over recent years, documents from the United States and statements by former government ministers have pointed to the existence of a pact that allowed the United States military to carry nuclear weapons in Japanese waters. Revealing the documents is unlikely to have disastrous consequences, but it will mark a change in the way Japan deals with its ally.

How the DPJ deals with U.S. hopes for support in its Afghan mission is also a potential stumbling block, as the DPJ has stated that it will not extend Japan's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean to support U.S. troops once the deal expires next year.

Kingston, however, said that this will not be the end of the world.

"If Japan makes some gesture in the direction (of the Afghan war) then that will be taken as sufficient," he said.

In the DPJ's manifesto, the party said that it hopes to "take the lead in eliminating nuclear weapons," but Kingston said that this is unlikely to lead to an end to the U.S. nuclear umbrella, and will have little effect on ties with the U.S.

"The Japanese government has long wanted the NPT (Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty) to be a reality, but in that sense, they are on the same page as Obama, so that shouldn't be a problem," Kingston said.

Eliminating nuclear weapons has taken on a new sense of urgency in Japan since the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) developed a nuclear program last year. Kingston argued that the DPJ may be better equipped than the LDP to make progress in the six-party talks, which include the DPRK, South Korea, China, the United States, Japan and Russia.

The professor said that while the LDP has focused on resolving the abduction issue -- to the annoyance of other members of the negotiations -- "there is hope the DPJ can get out from behind the abductee problem."

Another area that has caused Japan a large number of problems is the nation's legacy from World War II. Many LDP politicians have visited Yasukuni Shrine -- where 14 class A war criminals are enshrined -- and there are still a lot of prisoners of war and forced laborers demanding compensation and an apology from the Japanese government.

While Kingston saw the DPJ suggestion of creating a new secular war memorial where ministers could pay their respects to the war dead as being a positive development, he is less sure on the suggestion that the DPJ may try to provide compensation to former POWs (prisoners of wars) and forced laborers.

The DPJ "will almost certainly be unable to meet the expectations of the victims, and anything they do will be too much for Japan's right-wingers, who think that what Japan did was fine. History remains very divisive and now the LDP is set to lose power, they can really pull their gloves off and show their true views on history, which we get a taste of every once in a while," Kingston said.

On these issues, as with many others, it seems that winning the election will be the start of a challenging period for the DPJ, and not the end of a difficult time.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-08/28/content\\_11957444.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-08/28/content_11957444.htm)

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

Times of India  
27 AUGUST 2009

## **Pokhran II Not Fully Successful: Scientist**

SACHIN PARASHAR , TNN

NEW DELHI: The 1998 Pokhran II nuclear tests might have been far from the success they have been claimed to be. The yield of the thermonuclear explosions was actually much below expectations and the tests were perhaps more a fizzle rather than a big bang.

The controversy over the yield of the tests, previously questioned by foreign agencies, has been given a fresh lease of life with K Santhanam, senior scientist and DRDO representative at Pokhran II, admitting for the first time that



the only thermonuclear device tested was a "fizzle". In nuclear parlance, a test is described as a fizzle when it fails to meet the desired yield.

Santhanam, who was director for 1998 test site preparations, told TOI on Monday that the yield for the thermonuclear test, or hydrogen bomb in popular usage, was much lower than what was claimed. Santhanam, who was DRDO's chief advisor, could well have opened up the debate on whether or not India should sign CTBT as claims that India has all the data required and can manage with simulations is bound to be called into question.

``Based upon the seismic measurements and expert opinion from world over, it is clear that the yield in the thermonuclear device test was much lower than what was claimed. I think it is well documented and that is why I assert that India should not rush into signing the CTBT," Santhanam told TOI on Wednesday.

He emphasised the need for India to conduct more tests to improve its nuclear weapon programme.

The test was said to have yielded 45 kilotons (KT) but was challenged by western experts who said it was not more than 20 KT.

The exact yield of the thermonuclear explosion is important as during the heated debate on the India- US nuclear deal, it was strenuously argued by the government's top scientists that no more tests were required for the weapons programme. It was said the disincentives the nuclear deal imposed on testing would not really matter as further tests were not required.

According to security expert Bharat Karnad, Santhanam's admission is remarkable because this is the first time a nuclear scientist and one closely associated with the 1998 tests has disavowed the government line. ``He is not just saying that India should not sign the CTBT, which I believe is completely against India's interests, but also that the 1998 thermonuclear device test was inadequate.

His saying this means that the government has to do something. Either you don't have a thermonuclear deterrent or prove that you have it, if you claim to have it," said Karnad.

Sources said that Santhanam had admitted that the test was a fizzle during a discussion on CTBT organised by IDSA. Karnad also participated in the seminar. He told TOI that no country has succeeded in achieving targets with only its first test of a thermonuclear device.

``Two things are clear; that India should not sign CTBT and that it needs more thermonuclear device tests," said Santhanam.

The yield of the thermonuclear device test in 1998 has led to much debate and while western experts have stated that it was not as claimed, BARC has maintained that it stands by its assessment. Indian scientists had claimed after the test that the thermonuclear device gave a total yield of 45 KT, 15 KT from the fission trigger and 30 KT from the fusion process and that the theoretical yield of the device (200 KT) was reduced to 45 KT in order to minimise seismic damage to villages near the test range.

British experts, however, later challenged the claims saying that the actual combined yield for the fission device and thermonuclear bomb was not more than 20 KT.

Key Pokharan scientist R Chidambaram had described these reports as incorrect. He has also argued that computer simulations would be enough in future design.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/news/india/Pokhran-II-not-fully-successful-Scientist/articleshow/4938610.cms>

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

Times of India  
27 AUGUST 2009

## **Pokhran II Successful, Insists Kalam**

NEW DELHI: Seeking to put a lid on the controversy over Pokhran II nuclear explosions, former President A P J Abdul Kalam on Thursday said the tests were successful and had generated the desired yield.

"After the test, there was a detailed review, based on the two experimental results: (i) seismic measurement close to the site and around and (ii) radioactive measurement of the material after post shot drill in the test site," Kalam said.

"From these data, it has been established by the project team that the design yield of the thermo-nuclear test has been obtained," said Kalam, who as director general of the Defence Research and Development Organisation, spearheaded the nuclear tests in 1998.

India conducted five nuclear tests on May 11 and 13, 1998 at the Pokhran range in Rajasthan which included a 45 kiloton (kt) thermonuclear device, called as hydrogen bomb in common parlance.

The other tests on May 11 included a 15 kt fission device and a 0.2 kt sub-kiloton device. The two simultaneous nuclear tests on May 13 were also in the sub-kiloton range -- 0.5 and 0.3 kt.

Kalam, also scientific adviser to the defence minister, R Chidambaram who was chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and Anil Kakodkar, then director of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, were key players in the Pokhran II nuclear tests.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/NEWS/India/Pokhran-II-successful-insists-Kalam-/articleshow/4941553.cms>

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

Hindustan Times - India  
27 August 2009

## **No CTBT, India Needs More Nuclear Tests: Pokhran II Coordinator**

A former top official who coordinated India's nuclear weapons programme has cautioned that India should not be "railroaded" into signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) as the 1998 Pokhran tests were not sufficient from the security point of view.

"We can't get into a stampede to sign CTBT. We should conduct more nuclear tests which are necessary from the point of view of security," K Santhanam told IANS in New Delhi.

"We should not get railroaded into signing the CTBT," Santhanam said when asked about reports of the US pressuring India to sign the CTBT and fresh efforts by the Obama administration to revive non-proliferation activism.

Santhanam, a former official with the Defence Research and Development Organisation, said that the thermonuclear or hydrogen bomb tests, the first and most powerful of the three tests conducted on May 11, 1998 - did not produce the desired yield.

Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) chief R Chidambaram is on record as saying that the bombs yield was 45 kilotons (45,000 tonnes of conventional explosive).

Santhanam's remarks are set to create a flutter in the non-proliferation establishment in the US and may raise doubts about the future of the India-US nuclear deal which will unravel if New Delhi were to test again.

Santhanam's assessment is set to bolster India's opposition to signing the CTBT - an issue that may figure in the discussions when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh goes to the US in November. India has opposed CTBT on grounds that it is discriminatory and tends to divide the world into the nuclear haves and have-nots.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/homepage/newdelhi/No-CTBT-India-needs-more-nuclear-tests-Santhanam/447667/H1-Article1-447523.aspx>

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

Reuters  
August 28, 2009

## **Pakistan Nuclear Secrets Scientist To Go Free**

ISLAMABAD (Reuters) - A Pakistani judge ruled on Friday that nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan should be allowed freedom of movement more than five years after being put under house arrest for his role in a nuclear proliferation scandal.

Khan had lodged an appeal with the Lahore High Court as the authorities had confined him to his home despite a court order lifting his house arrest last February.

"Justice Ijaz Chaudhry, after hearing the argument, directed the government that it will not restrain Dr. A Q. Khan in any manner," Khan's lawyer, Ali Zafar, said in a statement.

Khan was pardoned but placed under house arrest in 2004 by then president Pervez Musharraf after the scientist confessed on television to selling nuclear secrets to Iran, North Korea and Libya.

Musharraf had been forced to act against Khan after being confronted by the United States with evidence of the scientist's role in a nuclear black market.

After a new government came to power last year, Khan gave a series of media interviews in which he recanted his 2004 confession, saying he only took the blame in return for assurances from Musharraf.

The court fixed another hearing for September 4 to address the question of whether government officials were in contempt of court for ignoring the February ruling.

Khan is still lionized as the father of Pakistan's atomic bomb and there is widespread belief that he was the fall guy for a larger conspiracy to smuggle nuclear technology.

Pakistani authorities denied any connection to Khan's smuggling ring but never let foreign investigators question him.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSTRE57R24D20090828>

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

Xinhua News – China  
28 August 2009

## **UN Disarmament Conference Calls for Concrete Steps Toward "Nuclear Free World"**

NIIGATA, Japan, Aug. 28 (Xinhua) -- Participants to the 21st UN Conference on Disarmament Issues called for concrete steps toward a "nuclear free world" in the Japanese city of Niigata on Friday.

"The dangers posed by existing nuclear weapons and the risks of the proliferation of such weapons or their acquisition by non-state actors collectively pose the gravest challenges to international peace and security," said Hannelore Hoppe, director and deputy to the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

"The conference explored ways and means to translate the vision of a nuclear weapon-free world into concrete actions," Hoppe said.

She elaborated that these include some preliminary steps aimed at significantly reducing nuclear arsenals, enhancing efforts to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into force, and negotiating a fissile materials treaty.

During the three-day meeting, delegates from 90 countries, including the United States, China, France and Japan, addressed topics ranging from the Korean Peninsula denuclearization, outlook to next year's NPT Review Conference, as well as media and civil organization's role in disarmament.

Regarding the ongoing diplomatic effort to achieve a denuclearized Korean peninsula, which received particular attention at the conference, Chinese deputy said there should be a joint effort rather than focusing on China's role.

"China has played and will continue to play its role in achieving the goal," said Jiang Yingfeng, an official from Arms Control and Disarmament Division of China's Foreign Ministry. "But we must acknowledge the importance of the other participating countries, as well as Democratic People's Republic Korea (DPRK)'s desire to talk directly with the United States."

The annual conference in Japan is organized by the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs through its Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-08/28/content\\_11958260.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-08/28/content_11958260.htm)

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

Courier-Journal - Louisville, KY  
August 25, 2009

## **McConnell, Chandler Push to Destroy Chemical Weapons On Time**

By James Bruggers

RICHMOND, Ky. — U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell and U.S. Rep. Ben Chandler said Tuesday that they expect the Department of Defense to destroy the thousands of deadly chemical weapons stored at the Blue Grass Army Depot by 2017 as Congress mandated, not four years later as the military plans.

“There are people who say that (date) can't be met,” McConnell said after touring the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant site on Tuesday. “But that's the law. That's about eight years from now. Let's get to work. We'll get the money.”

Jeff Brubaker, the government's site manager for the project, said about \$873 million of the \$3.8 billion project has been allocated, and the military will do its best to try to meet the earlier date.

But the Army anticipates the delicate process of separating nerve agents from warheads on most of the 100,000 munitions will force the project to run to 2021, he said.

The event Tuesday at the sprawling depot east of Richmond allowed members of the Kentucky media their first access to the site since construction of facilities to conduct the disarming began in 2006.

John Schlatter, a spokesman for construction contractor Bechtel Parsons Bluegrass, said if more money were provided, his company could finish sooner than the current construction target of 2016, though he could not be precise about a potential end date.

The tour included a photo opportunity for McConnell, a Republican, and Chandler, a Democrat representing Central Kentucky, at a vantage point on a corner of the 18-acre construction site. designed to keep the media away from the construction zone and prevent photographs of sensitive areas.

Officials briefed the two just out of earshot of photographers and reporters, who were confined to an area about 20 feet by 20 feet, and restricted from taking photos of the munitions-containing bunkers on the other side of nearby barbed wire and razor wire fencing.

McConnell, the Senate's top Republican, said the weapons — warheads containing the lethal nerve agents sarin and VX, and the blister agent called mustard — should never have been made. “This is one of history's great mistakes. We are in the process of cleaning up the mistake.”

Craig Williams, who runs the Chemical Weapons Working Group in nearby Berea, and has pressed federal officials for safe destruction of the munitions, praised both McConnell and Chandler for getting funding “on track.”

He specifically credited McConnell for getting a commitment from Defense Secretary Robert Gates to “fully fund an accelerated effort until these weapons are destroyed.”

And Chandler, he said, had recently fended off efforts in Congress to cut the project budget by \$50 million.

“I think we do see the light at the end of the tunnel, and that's very exciting,” Chandler said.

But Chandler added that he and his constituents still have concerns about the aging stockpile, with weapons that date to the 1940s and occasionally leak vapors into the bunkers.

Military officials have acknowledged three leaks this year — two on May 26 and one on Aug. 17. In addition, an Army Inspector General's report that recently became public noted faulty air monitoring equipment in some of the so-called “igloos” where the weapons are stored.

“You always have concerns,” Chandler said when asked about the revelations. “There is a real danger as long as these weapons exist.”

Williams said the monitoring problems have been corrected, and he downplayed the leaks, saying they were small, contained and didn't put the public at risk.

About 120 construction workers are there now, Schlatter said, mostly working on the foundation of several buildings, including one that will be made of highly re-enforced concrete so that it can contain any blasts. Eventually, he said, as many as 450 construction workers will be employed there, with hiring done through local union halls.

The military's schedule calls for processing of the munitions to begin in 2018. Chemical agents first will be drained and separated from any explosives or propellants, and then the poisons will be neutralized in a mixture of hot water and sodium hydroxide.

Waste water then will be recycled, and other byproducts will be sent to a yet-to-be chosen hazardous waste landfill, Schlatter said.

The weapons are being destroyed under a treaty ratified by the Senate in 1997 that calls for them to be gone by 2012, and Army officials acknowledged the U.S. won't meet that deadline.

But Williams said, "The fact is we all have to remain vigilant and engaged in this process until all these weapons are destroyed."

<http://www.courier-journal.com/article/2009908250344>

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

Daily Telegraph

25 August 2009

## **Lockerbie Bomber Megrahi 'May Live for Many More Months'**

By Simon Johnson and Andrew Porter

Dr Richard Simpson said that medical reports show there is "significant doubt" that Abdelbaset Ali Mohamed al Megrahi will die within the next three months.

The Labour MSP accused Kenny MacAskill, the Scottish justice minister, of failing to conduct sufficient checks before deciding to release the terminally-ill bomber last week.

This attack was echoed by the Tories, who said that the most recent medical consensus was Megrahi would live eight months, too long to be eligible for compassionate release.

The row broke out as Gordon Brown finally ended his silence on the controversy, but refused to say whether he agreed with Mr MacAskill's decision.

The Prime Minister stressed he had "no role" in the release and he was "angry and repulsed" at the hero's welcome that greeted Megrahi on his return to Libya.

A storm of international condemnation has met Mr MacAskill's ruling last week to release Megrahi, who is suffering from prostate cancer, on compassionate grounds.

Scottish Prison Service (SPS) guidelines suggest that inmates are only freed if they have less than three months to live.

However, Dr Simpson, who specialised in prostate disease research, said: "It is clear to me from the medical reports and the opinion of the specialists that Megrahi could live for many more months.

"Kenny MacAskill released him apparently on the advice of just one doctor whose status is not clear and who is not named."

Dr Simpson, a former member of the British Association of Urological Surgeons' prostate cancer working group, said the minister should have sought a second opinion from a specialist in palliative care.

A health assessment compiled by a SPS medical officer for Mr MacAskill, states that last autumn Megrahi was given between 18 months and two years to live.

However, a range of specialists concluded in June and July this year that his condition had deteriorated over the intervening 10 months and the lower end of this scale was more likely.

Megrahi's life expectancy was no longer deemed to be "many months" but the report concluded: "Whether or not prognosis is more or less than three months, no specialist would be 'willing to say'."

However, his personal physician said his condition “declined significantly” between July 26 and August 3 and a life expectancy of three months was deemed a “reasonable estimate”.

Bill Aitken, Scottish Tory justice spokesman, said: “In June and July, there was a consensus on prognosis of eight months. Where is that consensus now?”

”We only have the opinion of one anonymous individual - not the range of medical experts promised.”

The Scottish Executive admitted that Megrahi could live longer than three months, but insisted this prognosis was supported by a wide range of medical experts.

A spokesman said Mr MacAskill had based his decision on a report by the SPS director of health and care, who had access to all Megrahi's medical records.

He said this contained a “clear” clinical assessment that the bomber's life expectancy was three months or less.

Gordon Brown argued that, because Scottish judicial issues are devolved, his Government “could not interfere and had no control over the final outcome”.

But he added: “I was both angry and I was repulsed by the reception that a convicted bomber guilty of a huge terrorist crime received on his return to Libya.”

The Prime Minister had pleaded in a personal letter to Colonel Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, for restraint.

Speaking at a Downing Street press conference with Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, he said he did not think the affair would harm relations with other countries in the fight against terrorism.

But William Hague, the shadow foreign secretary, said: “He still hasn't said whether or not he was happy with the decision, a decision of huge public concern in this country, of immense international importance, which President Obama and so many other people in other countries have commented on.

”I think it is part of a continuing failure of leadership that he is unable to say that he will defend the decision or that he was not happy with it. And that is not what we expect from the Prime Minister of Britain.”

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/politics/scotland/6089131/Lockerbie-bomber-Megrahi-may-live-for-many-more-months.html>

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

Los Angeles Times

August 26, 2009

## **Al Qaeda-Linked Group Claims Two Recent Baghdad Bombings that Killed 95**

By Liz Sly

Reporting from Baghdad

An Al Qaeda-affiliated group claimed responsibility Tuesday for the devastating suicide bombings last week at two government ministries in Baghdad, and Iraq and Syria recalled their ambassadors in an escalating dispute over whether Damascus may have aided in attacks.

The claim of responsibility came in a statement posted on the Internet by the Islamic State of Iraq, the name now used by the Sunni Muslim Al Qaeda in Iraq organization. The group acknowledges few bombings, and those tend to be among the most spectacular.

However, Iraq's government appears to be convinced that Syrian-based members of Saddam Hussein's dismantled Baath Party were primarily responsible for the devastating explosions Aug. 19 at the foreign and finance ministries, which killed 95 people and wounded more than 500 in the heart of Baghdad.

At a meeting Tuesday, the Iraqi Cabinet demanded that Syria hand over two Baathist leaders believed to be living there and summoned the Iraqi envoy back from Damascus, the Syrian capital.

"A decision was made to direct a demand to the country where the attack was launched," Prime Minister Nouri Maliki told reporters, directly implicating Syria, during a visit with Baghdad's governor.

Maliki also called for the establishment of an international war crimes tribunal to try the suspects. He said he believed that Al Qaeda also played a role in the attacks, but his remarks mainly focused on the allegations that Baathists and Syria were involved.

Iraqi state television on Sunday broadcast a videotaped confession by a man claiming to be a Baathist, who said he had helped carry out the bombing at the Finance Ministry. He said he had acted on the orders of a Damascus-based Iraqi called Sattam Farhan, who was working for the Baathist group led by Mohammed Yunes Ahmed.

Iraq's Cabinet demanded that Syria hand over Farhan and Ahmed, as well as others who may have been linked to the attacks in Iraq, said a statement by government spokesman Ali Dabbagh.

Syria promptly recalled its envoy from Baghdad, marking a sharp deterioration in relations between two neighbors who have long had frosty ties because of suspicion that Syria harbored senior leaders of Hussein's regime and facilitated the flow of foreign fighters across its border to join Al Qaeda.

Damascus denied the allegations, saying they were based on "fabricated evidences intended to serve internal political goals," Syria's state news agency reported.

U.S. officials say they are still troubled that Syria may have helped foreign fighters cross the porous border but are more inclined to suspect that Al Qaeda was involved in the bombings, which military spokesmen have said bore all the "hallmarks" of the international terrorist network.

Al Qaeda has been suspected of being linked to several other recent attacks on Shiite Muslims and ethnic minorities. But last week's bombings were an assault against the institutions of the state.

In its statement posted on the Internet, the Islamic State of Iraq said it had carried out the bombings to expose the government's weaknesses.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-iraq-bombings26-2009aug26.0,1660412.story>

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