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London Sunday Times
September 6, 2009

Missing Channel Pirate Ship Carried Russian Arms for Iran

By Mark Franchetti and Uzi Mahnaimi

A CARGO ship that vanished in the Channel was carrying arms to Iran and was being tracked by Mossad, the Israeli security service, according to sources in both Russia and Israel.

The Arctic Sea, officially carrying a cargo of timber worth £1.3m, disappeared en route from Finland to Algeria on July 24. It was recovered off west Africa on August 17 when eight alleged hijackers were arrested. The Kremlin has consistently denied that the vessel was carrying a secret cargo. It claims the ship was hijacked by criminals who demanded a £1m ransom.

The official version was challenged by sources in Tel Aviv and Moscow who claimed the ship had been loaded with S-300 missiles, Russia's most advanced anti-aircraft weapon, while undergoing repairs in the Russian port of Kaliningrad.

Mossad, which closely monitors arms supplies to Iran, is said to have tipped off the Russian government that the shipment had been sold by former military officers linked to the underworld.

The Kremlin then ordered a naval rescue mission which involved destroyers and submarines. Any evidence that the Kremlin had let advanced weaponry fall into the hands of criminals or be sold to Iran would be highly embarrassing, so military officials believe a "cover story" was concocted.

"The official version is ridiculous and was given to allow the Kremlin to save face," said a Russian military source. "I've spoken to people close to the investigation and they've pretty much confirmed Mossad's involvement. It's laughable to believe all this fuss was over a load of timber. I'm not alone in believing that it was carrying weapons to Iran."

The alleged hijackers, four Estonians, two Russians and two Latvians, will go on trial in Moscow. According to the Kremlin's account, they boarded the Arctic Sea in the Baltic by claiming their inflatable craft was in trouble and then took over the ship at gunpoint.

Sources in Moscow suggested Mossad may have played a part in the alleged hijacking by setting up a criminal gang, who were unlikely to have known anything about a secret cargo. "The best way for the Israelis to block the cargo from reaching Iran would have been to create a lot of noise around the ship," said a former army officer.

"Once the news of the hijack broke, the game was up for the arms dealers. The Russians had to act. That's why I don't rule out Mossad being behind the hijacking. It stopped the shipment and gave the Kremlin a way out so that it can now claim it mounted a brilliant rescue mission."

According to Israeli military sources, Israel received intelligence that weapons bound for Iran were being loaded in Kaliningrad, a port notorious for gun runners. "A decision was then taken to inform the Kremlin," said the source.

Had the S-300 missiles been delivered, Iran would have significantly strengthened its air defences. An Israeli air force source said that in the event of an attack on Iranian nuclear installations, such missiles could increase Israeli casualties by 50%.

Since the Arctic Sea was retaken, Russia has imposed a security blackout. The hijackers, the crew and two investigative teams were flown back to Moscow in three Il-76 air freight planes. For more than a week after being

freed the crew were not allowed to talk to their families. The captain and three crew are still on board the ship, which has resumed its voyage to Algeria, but they have not been able to call home.

Last week Mikhail Voitenko, an outspoken piracy expert who disputed the Kremlin's original version of events, fled Russia, claiming he had received threats from an official angered by his statements.

Admiral Tarmo Kouts, former commander of Estonia's armed forces and the European Union's rapporteur on piracy, has infuriated Moscow by saying the only plausible explanation of the mystery is that the ship was transporting weapons. A spokesman for the Finnish owners denied that missiles could have been secretly loaded onto the ship.

Sources who suspect Mossad's involvement point to a visit to Moscow by Shimon Peres, the Israeli president, the day after the Arctic Sea was rescued. Peres held four hours of private talks with Dmitry Medvedev, the Russian president. Although the Israeli foreign ministry would not be drawn on the Arctic Sea, it confirmed that the two leaders had discussed the sale of Russian weapons to countries hostile to Israel. According to Israeli officials, Peres received verbal guarantees from the Russians that they would not sell advanced weapons systems to Iran or Syria.

"Clearly the Israelis played a role in the whole Arctic Sea saga," said a Russian military source. "Peres used the incident as a bargaining chip over the issue of arms sales to Arab states, while Israel allowed the Kremlin a way out with its claims to have successfully foiled a piracy incident."

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article6823300.ece>

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RIA Novosti
07 September 2009

Russia's Strategic Missile Forces to Play War Games on Sept. 8-11

MOSCOW, September 7 (RIA Novosti) - Russia's Strategic Missile Forces (SMF) will conduct on September 8-11 large-scale command-and-staff exercises involving over 2,000 personnel, an SMF spokesman said on Monday.

"During the exercises, the SMF will practice operations control in scenarios involving conventional and nuclear warfare," the official said.

"A total of over 2,000 servicemen and 150 theater- and tactical-level command-and-control centers will take part in the drills," he said.

The exercise coincides with the start of the Russian-Belarusian large-scale Zapad 2009 exercises, which will be held on September 8-29 and involve around 13,000 service personnel on both sides.

Russia's SMF plans by 2016 to modernize its command-and-control systems in order to improve their ability to overcome missile defenses and increase the survivability of delivery vehicles.

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

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

Silo-based missiles constitute 45% of the total ballistic missile arsenal. They carry about 85% of nuclear warheads deployed by the SMF.

http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20090907/156052331.html

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RIA Novosti
8 September 2009

Russia set to hold 4-5 Rounds of Arms Talks with U.S. by December

MOSCOW, September 8 (RIA Novosti) - Russia hopes to hold before December at least five rounds of talks with the United States on a new arms reduction deal to replace the existing START-1 treaty, the Russian foreign minister said Tuesday.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and his U.S. counterpart Barack Obama agreed in July in Moscow on the outlines of a final deal to replace the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START-1), which expires on December 5.

"The latest round [of strategic arms reduction talks] was held at the beginning of September, and we are planning another 4 to 5 rounds by December when the START-1 treaty expires," Sergei Lavrov told a news conference after a meeting with Slovakian Foreign Minister Miroslav Lajcak in Moscow.

Lavrov reiterated that a new agreement to replace START-1 required a thorough and comprehensive approach and it would be premature to announce any details before the final deal is concluded.

"It will be a package deal. These talks are usually based on the principle that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed," the minister said.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Andrei Nesterenko said last Thursday that a new round of the talks would be held on September 21.

The START 1 treaty obliges Russia and the United States to reduce nuclear warheads to 6,000 and their delivery vehicles to 1,600 each. In 2002, a follow-up agreement on strategic offensive arms reduction was concluded in Moscow. The document, known as the Moscow Treaty, envisioned cuts to 1,700-2,200 warheads by December 2012.

Medvedev and Obama signed an agreement in July outlining the provisions of the new treaty, including cutting their countries' nuclear arsenals to 1,500-1,675 operational warheads and delivery vehicles to 500-1,000.

According to a report published by the U.S. State Department in April, as of January 1 Russia had 3,909 nuclear warheads and 814 delivery vehicles, including ground-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM), submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) and strategic bombers.

The same report said the United States had 5,576 warheads and 1,198 delivery vehicles.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090908/156060212.html>

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London Daily Telegraph
8 September 2009

Russia Denies Arctic Sea Ship was Carrying Missiles for Iran

By Andrew Osborn in Moscow

Sergei Lavrov said that claims the vessel was carrying advanced S-300 anti-aircraft missiles for Iran were "absolutely untrue".

Officially the Arctic Sea was only carrying timber worth just over £1m.

Russian state prosecutors allege hijackers seized the vessel on July 24 in what would be the first case of piracy in European waters in the modern era.

According to the Kremlin's version of events, the Russian Navy rescued the ship and its Russian crew on August 17 after dispatching a small armada reminiscent of Hollywood blockbuster *The Hunt for Red October*. They detained eight "pirates" who now languish in a Moscow jail. All protest their innocence.

But unnamed military and maritime sources inside Russia, a leading Russian shipping expert, and a European piracy official have said the ship was probably carrying weapons for the Middle East.

They have suggested that Mossad, the Israeli intelligence service, found out about the deadly cargo, intercepted it, and that the Kremlin then launched a massive cover-up to save face.

Mr Lavrov dismissed such theories as "rumours" on Tuesday, pledging a thorough investigation. "Everything will be transparent," he said. "Rumours on this subject are groundless."

A spokeswoman for President Dmitry Medvedev played down the claims too, calling them "speculation".

Meanwhile, Russian criminal investigators who are on-board the ship said they had spent several fruitless days searching it for signs of anything other than its official cargo of timber but had found nothing.

"Investigators have examined the cargo in detail," a spokesman for the investigators told Russian news agency Interfax. "Investigators have so far not found any other cargo." The strong official denials are unlikely to satisfy sceptics.

The Kremlin dispatched several heavy lift aircraft to Cape Verde last month after the ship was found, giving the Russian government ample time and opportunity to remove any embarrassing cargo.

An official at the port in Finland where the Arctic Sea begun its bizarre journey told the Finnish press yesterday that it was "entirely possible" that the ship was smuggling weapons since it underwent only cursory checks in Finland.

Mikhail Voitenko, an outspoken maritime journalist who fled Russia last week saying he had ruffled dangerous feathers with his theories about the Arctic Sea, has gone quiet about the strange case.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/6157053/Russia-denies-Arctic-Sea-ship-was-carrying-missiles-for-Iran.html>

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North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Press Release

31 August 2009

NATO Publishes New Policy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation

The North Atlantic Council decided on 31 August 2009 to make public a new strategic policy for preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and defending against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats. Official Texts: NATO's Comprehensive, Strategic-Level Policy for Preventing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and Defending against Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Threats - 01 Sep. 2009, at URL: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-9E440A15-345E4F03/natolive/official_texts_57218.htm

The document, which stems from the Bucharest Summit in 2008, was endorsed by Heads of State and Government at the Summit in Strasbourg/Kehl in April 2009 and constitutes a new basis for NATO's efforts in the field of WMD.

"The document is comprehensive in scope," said Ambassador Jacek Bylica, Head of NATO's WMD Centre. "It is guided by a clear vision: that the Alliance – its populations, territory and forces – will be secure from threats posed by weapons of mass destruction and related materials. It provides high-level political guidance for our future activities in support of international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and regimes, as well as for military planning and capacity-building for defending against the threats posed by these weapons."

The new document highlights "strategic enablers" that will allow the Alliance to prevent the proliferation of WMD, protect against a WMD attack, and recover should an attack take place. These enablers consist of intelligence and information sharing, international outreach and partner activities, as well as public diplomacy and strategic communication.

"In implementing this policy, NATO will foster cooperation with partners, and international and regional organizations in order to develop a common understanding of the WMD threat," Ambassador Bylica said. "It will encourage participation in and compliance with international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts."

At the 2006 NATO Summit in Riga, the spread of WMD and the possibility that terrorists will acquire them were identified as the main threats to the Alliance over the next 10-15 years.

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-284CB522-A6F68256/natolive/news_57234.htm?

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Xinhua News – China
5 September 2009

Chavez: No Proof of Iran Nuclear Bomb

TEHRAN, Sept. 5 (Xinhua) -- Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said Saturday here there is no proof that Iran is building a nuclear bomb, Iran's English-language Press TV reported.

"There is no single proof that Iran is building a nuclear bomb," Chavez was quoted as saying after arriving in Tehran early Saturday.

"We are certain that Iran, as it has shown, will not back down in its effort to obtain what is a sovereign right of the people -- to have all the equipment and structures to use atomic energy for peaceful purposes," Chavez said.

He also said Venezuela aims to build "a nuclear village" with Iran's assistance.

U.S. President Barack Obama has set a late September deadline for Tehran to initiate multilateral talks over its disputed nuclear issue, or face further sanctions.

Washington has been trying to beef up its sanctions on Tehran for Iran's involvement in anti-U.S. activities and allegedly secret development of nuclear weapons.

Iran denied these charges and insisted its nuclear program is for generating electricity only.

According to Iran's official IRNA news agency, Chavez, who is accompanied by a high-ranking delegation, was received at airport by Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki and Industry and Mines Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian.

Chavez is on his seventh official visit to Iran and will meet Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad later Saturday.

Chavez has visited Libya, Algeria and Syria and is also scheduled to go to Belarus, Russia, Turkmenistan and Spain, Press TV said.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-09/05/content_12001157.htm

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Reuters
September 5, 2009

Iran Dismisses Bomb Studies Intelligence as Forged

VIENNA (Reuters) - A senior Iranian official has accused the United States of feeding "forged" intelligence to the U.N. nuclear watchdog that says Iran had studied ways to make atomic bombs.

The International Atomic Energy Agency has lent some weight to Western intelligence reports which imply Tehran secretly combined uranium processing, airborne high-explosive tests and work to remodel a missile cone in a way that would fit a nuclear warhead.

While the IAEA has said it does not have concrete proof of a weapons agenda, it urged Tehran in an August 28 report to resolve the suspicions rather than dismiss information as a fabrication.

But Iranian envoy Ali Asghar Soltanieh told the IAEA in a letter seen by Reuters that the agency had not provided genuine documents on the alleged studies and the matter was "closed."

"The government of the United States has not handed over original documents to the agency since it does not in fact have any authenticated document and all it has are forged documents," Soltanieh wrote in a letter to IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei.

"The alleged studies are politically motivated and baseless allegations."

Western powers suspect Tehran of pursuing the means to produce atomic bombs under cover of a civilian nuclear fuel program, a charge which Iran denies.

The U.S. State Department declined to comment directly on Soltanieh's letter. Spokesman Ian Kelly said Iran had yet to give a meaningful response to offers for talks.

"We have provided a path whereby Iran can become a full and respected member of the international community. It is up to Iran to make a decision as to whether it chooses that path."

The IAEA report said Iran had refused to provide documentation, access to sites or to nuclear officials for interviews which the agency had requested to reach conclusions about the intelligence materials.

It said the intelligence appeared to have come from multiple sources over different periods of time.

"(It) is sufficiently comprehensive and detailed that it needs to be addressed by Iran," the report said.

The United States, Germany, France and Britain have threatened Iran with a fourth round of U.N. sanctions if it continues enriching uranium and refuses to clear up concerns.

"(Soltanieh's) accusations are baseless. The IAEA itself accepted the material as credible," said a U.S. official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Soltanieh also accused Britain, France and the United States of trying to derail the IAEA's technical mandate by piling political pressure on ElBaradei. He also complained Iranian cooperation with the IAEA had been overshadowed.

Tehran allowed IAEA inspectors to revisit a heavy-water reactor site last month after barring access for a year but U.N. officials cautioned this was a one-off and Tehran had not resumed providing design information to the agency.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/newsOne/idUSTRE5840M320090905>

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Reuters

September 6, 2009

Iran says Develops Stealth Missile Interceptor System

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Iran said on Sunday it had developed weapons systems to intercept stealth cruise missiles, state-run Press TV reported.

Israel and the United States have not ruled out possible military action if diplomatic efforts fail to curb an Iranian nuclear program the West suspects could yield atomic weapons. Iran insists it seeks only to generate electrical power.

"The Iranian air force has managed to build tens of anti-aircraft batteries and missile systems in addition to sophisticated radar systems," said General Ahmad Miqani, an air defense commander, quoted by Iran's English-language satellite news network.

"Today, the military is able to both detect stealth cruise missiles and destroy them," the television quoted Miqani as saying. He gave no further details.

Cruise missiles are designed to fly low to their targets, hugging the contours of the land to avoid radar.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSTRE5850QS20090906>

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The Australian

September 07, 2009

Iran 'Ready to Talk', but Not About Nukes

Article from: Agence France-Presse

IRAN is ready for "fair and logical" talks with the international community - but it won't debate its "undeniable" nuclear rights, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says.

"We have proposed a dialogue within a fair and logical framework with all the countries... which can be involved in changing matters," Mr Ahmadinejad said.

He ruled out talks over Iran's "undeniable" nuclear rights, insisting that any talks would be focused on "cooperation on peaceful use of atomic energy" and "non-proliferation."

He also said he was ready to "debate and talk" with US President Barack Obama in a public meeting before mass media when he heads to the UN general assembly this month.

"I have said it before in Obama's time and repeat it now that we are ready for debate and talk on global issues - which is the best way to resolve world issues - before mass media," Mr Ahmadinejad said.

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,26038879-12377,00.html>

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New York Times
September 8, 2009

Nuclear Agency Said to Be in 'Stalemate' With Iran

By ROBERT F. WORTH

BEIRUT, Lebanon — The head of the United Nations nuclear oversight agency said Monday that his organization was in a "stalemate" with Iran over its suspected nuclear program, just after the Iranian president affirmed once again that his country would not stop uranium enrichment or negotiate over its nuclear rights.

Mohamed ElBaradei, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, told the group's 35-nation board that Iran had not stopped enriching uranium or answered lingering questions about its nuclear program. He urged Iran to "substantively re-engage" with the nuclear agency, and to "respond positively to the recent U.S. initiative" on a dialogue about nuclear issues.

President Obama and his European allies have given Iran until the end of September to respond to an offer of nuclear talks with the "five plus one" group of permanent United Nations Security Council members and Germany. If Iran refuses, it could face harsher sanctions.

In a news conference in Tehran on Monday, the Iranian president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, said he was ready to hold "fair and logical" talks to "solve global challenges" with the six-nation group.

"We will continue our work in the framework of global regulations and in close cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency," said Mr. Ahmadinejad, who won a second term after a disputed election in June that set off widespread protests and the worst internal unrest Iran has seen in decades.

But Mr. Ahmadinejad also made clear that Iran expects a "change of approach" from the other side, and it was not even clear whether nuclear issues would be on the agenda. He said, as he has in the past, that "the nuclear issue is over" from Iran's point of view.

Iran has repeatedly denied accusations that it is developing nuclear weapons, and has refused to stop enriching uranium, citing its right to enrich uranium under the nonproliferation treaty.

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/08/world/middleeast/08iran.html?_r=1&hp

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Jerusalem Post –Israel
September 8, 2009

'Arab World Should Arm Against Iran'

JPost.com Staff , THE JERUSALEM POST

US allies in the Middle East should strengthen their respective militaries in order to deter Iran from continuing its contested nuclear weapons program, US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said in an interview published by Al-Jazeera on Tuesday.

"One of the pathways to get the Iranians to change their approach on the nuclear issue, is to persuade them that moving down that path will actually jeopardize their security, not enhance it," he told the station.

"The more that our Arab friends and allies can straighten their security capabilities, the more they can strengthen their co-operation, both with each other and with us, I think sends the signal to the Iranians that this path they're on is not going to advance Iranian security but in fact could weaken it," Gates said.

When asked about the perceived "double-standard" regarding US policy towards the Israeli nuclear program, versus the aggressive action currently being employed against Iranian nuclear proliferation, Gates defended the American behavior.

"First of all, it's the Iranian leadership that has said it wants to wipe Israel off the face of the earth," he said. "Those threats have not been made in the other direction."

"It is the Iranian government that is in violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions with respect to these programs, so focus needs to be on the country that is feuding the will of the international community and the United Nations," Gates added.

Despite the ever-increasing pressure on the Islamic regime, diplomacy continues to be the preferred course, Gates emphasized in response to a question of whether the US could ensure that Iran would not use Iraq to retaliate against any future military strike.

"I'm not going to address hypothetical situations," he said. "Our view is that there is still an opportunity for diplomacy and political and economic pressures to bring about a change of policy in Iran, so getting into hypotheticals about military reaction, I think doesn't take us very far."

Over the next few weeks, the topic of the Iranian nuclear program is expected to be raised during a series of high-level meetings on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly gathering, as well as the G-20 summit in Pittsburgh.

<http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1251804515777&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull>

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Chosun Ilbo – South Korea
5 September 2009

S.Korea, U.S. Concerned by N.Korean Uranium Announcement

North Korea has announced new progress in its nuclear weapons development, drawing expressions of regret and concern from the United States and its regional partners. A senior U.S. envoy is in the region discussing a response.

South Korea vowed a "stern and consistent" response to North Korea's declaration Friday that it is continuing to produce nuclear weapons material. The official North Korean news agency said Pyongyang is in the final stages of a program to enrich uranium. Until this year Pyongyang had denied U.S. allegations that it enriching uranium in violation of previous agreements.

Moon Tae-young is a spokesman for South Korea's Foreign Ministry. He says it is "regretful" that North Korea is moving "backward" in international efforts to end its nuclear weapons programs. He calls Pyongyang's activities a denial of the international community's will, which South Korea can not accept.

North Korea also said it is converting plutonium extracted from spent nuclear fuel into material useable in nuclear weapons.

A senior U.S. envoy on North Korea, Stephen Bosworth has been meeting with regional leaders on the North Korean nuclear issue. Before leaving Beijing en route to Seoul Friday, he said it was important for the U.S. and its partners to cooperate.

"Obviously anything that the North is doing in the area of nuclear development is of concern to us," he said. "It for all of us reconfirms the necessity to maintain a coordinated position on the need for the complete, verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula."

Bosworth says he has no immediate plans to visit North Korea. He says Washington wants dialogue, but that Pyongyang also must return to six-nation talks on ending its nuclear programs. "Any bilateral engagement with the North Koreans must be as a part of the six-party process," said Bosworth.

The United States, China, Russia, Japan, and South Korea have been trying for six years to convince North Korea to abandon nuclear weapons. The United Nations Security Council imposed new sanctions on the North after it conducted a second nuclear test in May.

Kim Yong-hyun is a North Korean studies professor at Seoul's Dongguk University. He says the U.S. should pay attention to a line in the North Korean statement that says Pyongyang is ready for both "dialogue and sanctions."

He says that line offers a cue for the U.S. and the international community to step forward diplomatically. While the statement seems threatening, says Kim, Pyongyang's tone need not always be so threatening going forward.

Dan Pinkston, northeast Asia analyst with the International Crisis Group, says the U.S. and its partners need to evaluate how far they want to take a punitive approach toward the North.

"Where do you set the bar for relaxation of those sanctions? How do you walk back from that? And if there is no criteria set, then North Korea has no incentive to cooperate whatsoever," said Pinkston. "You know, if all you are going to be is sanctioned no matter what, then why cooperate at all? I mean, who would?"

Pinkston says the U.S. should come up with some kind of positive incentive to draw North Korea back to the six-nation talks.

http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2009/09/05/2009090500260.html

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Wall Street Journal
September 5, 2009

North Korea Stirs Anger over Its Nuclear Claims

By EVAN RAMSTAD and JAY SOLOMON

North Korea's neighbors reacted angrily to its latest declaration of advances in its nuclear-weapons program, including that it had nearly finished development of highly enriched uranium as a second source of weapons fuel.

The political party that's soon to take power in Japan, facing its first provocative moment with North Korea since winning the Aug. 30 election, said Friday it would respond with more "stern sanctions" if Pyongyang proceeds with its pursuit of weapons of mass destruction.

Seoul also issued a strongly worded criticism and U.S. envoy to North Korea Stephen Bosworth, making a tour of the region over the weekend, reiterated Washington's stance that Pyongyang's weapons program remains a concern and that the U.S. is willing to hold two-way talks with the North as long as its four neighbors are at a nearby table, in the diplomatic process known as the six-party talks.

Mr. Bosworth met counterparts in China on Thursday and Friday, Seoul on Saturday and Tokyo on Sunday. Neither Mr. Bosworth nor other diplomats in the three countries offered details about their meetings.

They made broader statements in reaction to a letter North Korea sent last week to the United Nations Security Council that it was building more atomic bombs and was ready for both "dialogue and sanctions" as a result.

The letter, issued publicly early Friday Asia time by its state-run news agency, was written in response to the council's inquiry about a statement North Korea made in June after it was sanctioned for testing an atomic weapon on May 25.

North Korea also said in the new letter that it would never be bound by the sanctions passed on June 12, known as Resolution 1874. And it said that if member countries place sanctions ahead of dialogue, it would be forced to take "stronger self-defensive countermeasures." In the past, Pyongyang has used such a term to describe a weapons test.

Katsuya Okada, secretary general of the Democratic Party of Japan and DPJ President Yukio Hatoyama's choice to be Japan's next foreign minister, said "It's important to let the North Koreans know, by keeping sanctions against them, that there's nothing to be gained for them if they take such a difficult attitude."

In Seoul, South Korea's foreign ministry said in a statement, "The North's move to continue provocative steps ... can never be tolerated."

For intelligence and military analysts studying the North Korean program, the significance of Pyongyang's latest statement was its focus on highly enriched uranium.

U.S. intelligence officials have long believed that North Korea was developing a uranium-enrichment capability. But Washington has been uncertain how far it has progressed.

In 2002, President George W. Bush's administration scrapped an initial disarmament agreement with Pyongyang after intelligence surfaced showing that North Korea had been purchasing centrifuge equipment from Pakistani scientist A.Q. Khan.

North Korea in 2002 initially acknowledged the uranium development effort but then denied it for years.

President Barack Obama's administration had hoped recent conciliatory actions by North Korea indicated a new willingness to engage in disarmament negotiations with the U.S., China, Japan, Russia and South Korea. The release of two American journalists during a Pyongyang visit by former U.S. President Bill Clinton as well as meetings between officials of the two Koreas, fueled expectations of a shift in attitude in North Korea.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125206884621886313.html>

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Yonhap News
5 September 2009

N. Korea Cannot Make Weapons with Enriched Uranium: Experts

SEOUL, Sept. 4 (Yonhap) -- North Korea has made progress in uranium enrichment technology, but it probably does not have the capability to make nuclear weapons with it, local experts said Friday. Intelligence analysts and experts from the military and state-run think tanks speculated that Pyongyang may have completed research and acquired the necessary know-how to operate centrifuges imported from Pakistan in the 1990s.

"The North may be in a position to start full-fledged research that can lead to uranium enrichment," Lee Chun-geun, research fellow in charge of inter-Korean cooperation at the Science and Technology Policy Institute (STEPI), said.

He pointed out that if the announcement is true, it is an admission that the communist country has been engaged in a clandestine nuclear enrichment program for a very long time.

The remark comes after the North claimed earlier in the day it has nearly completed experimental uranium enrichment and has entered into a completion phase.

In the past, the North used plutonium as its base material to build the two nuclear devices it detonated. The United States dropped a plutonium bomb on Nagasaki, while a uranium weapon was dropped on Hiroshima, ending World War II.

Pyongyang allegedly admitted it tried to enrich uranium in late 2002, although it quickly denied the existence of such a program and objected to the matter being included in the six-way talks aimed at ending the country's nuclear ambitions. The North has since walked out of the talks, detonated two nuclear devices and fired a long-range missile in defiance of warnings by the United Nations.

Experts in South Korea and the United States have long suspected that the North acquired 20 P1 centrifuges from Pakistan from 1998-2001 and obtained blueprints for more advanced P2 machines.

Centrifuge machines spin natural uranium at 50,000-70,000 rotations per minute to separate U-235 from U-238. Higher concentrations of U-235 obtained through this process can be used for both light water reactors and nuclear bombs.

Those used for power production need to be 3-5 percent pure, while purity has to reach 90 percent levels for so-called weapons grade materials.

This means 20-30kg of highly enriched U-235 made from roughly 3.5t of natural uranium is needed to make one nuclear device.

Other local experts in the military said if the North has built an enrichment facility, it can produce enough highly enriched uranium to produce one or two nuclear devices per year.

This can pose a serious security threat because plutonium weapons are made in large facilities that are hard to hide, but uranium can be enriched in small labs. Such secrecy can make it hard for such facilities to be destroyed through military strikes.

Meanwhile, intelligence sources said Seoul and Washington have very little information on the North's uranium enrichment program and don't know where such a research facility could be located.

"There are several candidate locations like Yongbyon, where the North had a 5-megawatt graphite moderated reactor, yet nothing is certain," said an official who declined to be identified.

He added that because enrichment facilities can be very small, finding information may be hard.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2009/09/04/62/0401000000AEN20090904007400320F.HTML>

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Washington Times

September 5, 2009

U.S. Worried Over N. Korea's Nuclear-Breakthrough Claim

By Jae-soon Chang, Associated Press

SEOUL--The United States on Friday expressed concern over North Korea's latest claim that it is on the threshold of mastering a new way of building atomic bombs.

Pyongyang's claim to have succeeded in experimental uranium enrichment - an easier way to make nuclear weapons - raises concerns that North Korea may add uranium-based weapons to enlarge its stockpile of atomic bombs made from plutonium.

North Korea also said it is continuing to weaponize plutonium.

"We are prepared for both dialogue and sanctions," the North said in a letter to the U.N. Security Council carried Friday by its official Korean Central News Agency. If some veto-wielding permanent members of the council put "sanctions first before dialogue, we would respond with bolstering our nuclear deterrence first before we meet them in a dialogue," it said.

The letter from North Korea's U.N. Ambassador Sin Son Ho, obtained by the Associated Press, accused the Security Council of using a double standard and said it should apologize rather than impose sanctions.

If the Security Council had not made an issue of North Korea's "peaceful satellite launch in the same way as it kept silent over the satellite launch conducted by South Korea on Aug. 25, 2009, it would not have compelled [North Korea] to take strong counteraction such as its second nuclear test," the letter said.

The Security Council slapped tough sanctions on North Korea for conducting an underground nuclear test in May.

The letter was sent to U.S. Ambassador Susan E. Rice, this month's president of the Security Council. The U.S. mission said it was received Thursday and sent to the 14 other council members that night.

U.S. State Department spokesman Ian C. Kelly said the North's announcement was troubling.

"We are very concerned by these claims that they are moving closer to the weaponization of nuclear materials, but I can't really comment on the veracity, how true these claims are," Mr. Kelly said.

Security Council diplomats said they do not anticipate a council meeting on the letter or a new U.N. resolution.

The U.S. has been pressing for North Korea to return to six-party talks on its nuclear program. The North pulled out of the negotiations with the U.S., South Korea, China, Russia and Japan after the council criticized its April rocket launch.

Pyongyang said later it won't return to the negotiations and will only talk one-on-one with the Obama administration.

Analysts said the North appears to be trying to add urgency to the standoff to get Washington into one-on-one talks.

Meanwhile, experts poring over a satellite image of North Korea's Yongbyon nuclear reactor said there is no evidence the Stalinist state is trying to rebuild the facility as threatened, according to Agence France-Presse.

The Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security said the black-and-white photo they have published shows key parts of the reactor still in disrepair.

North Korea mothballed the reactor as part of a 2007 deal with the U.S., China, Russia, South Korea and Japan, but recently said it would recover plutonium from fuel rods at the site.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/sep/05/us-worried-over-n-koreas-nuclear-breakthrough-clai/>

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Press Trust of India
6 September 2009

No Radioactive Material on Korean Ship: Final Report

Sumir Kaul

New Delhi, Sep 6 (PTI) The North Korean ship, which was detained by the Coast Guard after a chase in Andaman and Nicobar Island, had no traces of chemical, biological, radioactive or nuclear material, two nuclear scientists said today in their final report.

After critically examining the ship "M V Mu San" at Kakinada port a team of scientists from Kalapakkam nuclear centre concluded there found no "CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radioactive and Nuclear) traces" from the ship, which was detained by the Coast Guard off the Andaman waters in the first week of last month, official sources said here.

The report was handed over to authorities today.

http://www.ptinews.com/news/267726_No-Radioactive-material-on-Korean-Ship--final-report

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Yonhap News
6 September 2009

Envoy says U.S. to Talk with N. Korea only in 6-party Framework

By Kim Hyun

SEOUL, Sept. 6 (Yonhap) -- The U.S. special envoy on North Korea said Sunday that Washington will talk with North Korea only within the six-party framework, reiterating the U.S.'s firm stance over Pyongyang's call for bilateral dialogue.

Stephen Bosworth also said North Korea's claim to be furthering its uranium enrichment program is "a subject of concern" but added such a statement is nothing new.

"We are prepared to engage bilaterally as well with the North Koreans but only within the context of six-party talks," Bosworth said in Seoul after three-day consultations with South Korean officials.

Just hours before Bosworth's arrival in Seoul on Friday, North Korea renewed its nuclear warning, saying its uranium enrichment program, a second route to building nuclear weapons alongside a plutonium-based one, has entered into "completion phase." The North also said it was weaponizing plutonium obtained from reprocessing spent fuel rods.

"Any indication of the nuclear program on the part of North Korea whether it's HEU (highly enriched uranium) or anything else is a subject of concern, and one which we have to address," Bosworth said.

But Friday's North Korean statement "is not the first we've heard of HEU and may not be the last," he added.

Despite North Korea's recent conciliatory gestures toward the international community, the U.S. sees no fundamental change in the prolonged stalemate over the North's nuclear drive, Bosworth said. Over a month's period in August, North Korea freed detained American and South Korean citizens, lifted inter-Korean traffic restrictions and restored sagging joint business ventures.

"No, I don't think there's been any fundamental change," Bosworth said.

"We are very gratified that young American journalists have been released," he said, "But our primary interest remains the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and we continue to (support) opportunities to reinitiate this process."

Bosworth said he was "very pleased with the level of coordination" with South Korean partners, including Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan and chief nuclear envoy Wi Sung-lac, with whom he held talks during his three-day visit.

"We are also agreed that because of the nature of this issue, and the regional implications and its global implications, this is a problem that requires multilateral solutions," he said.

Bosworth came here on the second leg of his three-nation Asian tour that began in Beijing and will take him to Tokyo later in the day. His primary task is discussing ways to resume the six-party talks and the implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1874 imposed after North Korea's nuclear test in May.

The six-party talks, which were last held in December, involve the two Koreas, the U.S., China, Japan and Russia.

Diplomatic sources said Bosworth would also discuss preconditions for his visit to the North, anticipating that such a visit would come later this year. In Japan, he is likely to get acquainted with incoming Japanese government officials who will deal with North Korea.

Before leaving Beijing for Seoul on Friday, Bosworth said he has "no plans at the moment" to visit North Korea during this trip, but he confirmed that Pyongyang had extended an invitation to him.

North Korea said, "We are prepared for both dialogue and sanctions."

Sung Kim, the U.S. chief envoy to the six-party talks who is currently accompanying Bosworth, will return to Seoul next week to hold talks with Grigory Logvinov, Russia's deputy envoy to the multilateral forum, Bosworth said.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2009/09/06/56/0401000000AEN20090906001200315F.HTML>

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Reuters

September 6, 2009

U.S. Seeks Clarity from North Korea on Uranium

By Jon Herskovitz

SEOUL (Reuters) - North Korea's pursuit of a second path to nuclear weapons by enriching uranium is a problem likely to persist and Pyongyang needs to come clean about its intentions, a U.S. envoy for the reclusive state said on Sunday.

North Korea, which has produced enough plutonium for an estimated six to eight bombs, said on Friday it had made advances in uranium enrichment, a move analysts saw as a tactic to put pressure on regional powers after a month of conciliatory gestures.

"This is not the first we have heard of HEU (highly enriched uranium) and it may not be the last," Stephen Bosworth told reporters in Seoul, a day after having talks with South Korean officials.

"If we are going to deal as we wish with the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, this is an issue that will have to be clarified," said Bosworth, who has just visited Beijing and will next visit Tokyo to discuss stalled six-country diplomatic efforts on ending the North's nuclear arms program.

The U.S. has long suspected North Korea of trying to enrich uranium for weapons but proliferation experts said the North is nowhere near a full scale program, and it would take several years at least before it could reach that stage.

Bosworth said the enrichment was a concern and: "We have just begun to consider the question of what we might do in response."

Yonhap News reported later on Sunday, citing an unnamed Korean government official, that the United States and South Korea agreed that a two-way approach of sanctions and dialogue for North Korea would continue.

SPY SATELLITES

A switch to uranium would alarm Western powers because it could be done away from the prying eyes of U.S. spy satellites, it may lead to enhanced cooperation with Iran and it could lure customer states keen to start their own nuclear arms programs.

North Korea's broken economy was dealt a heavy blow by U.N. sanctions for its nuclear test in May that were aimed at cutting into its arms trade, which is a vital source of cash that brings it an estimated hundreds of millions of dollars a year.

North Korea last week sent a diplomatic mission China, which is the reclusive state's biggest benefactor and has the greatest influence on the enforcement of U.N. sanctions.

The North's KCNA news agency reported on Sunday that Chinese officials said diplomatic exchanges between the two countries would be maintained and cooperation would grow, following meetings with the North's delegation led by Deputy Foreign Minister Kim Yong-il.

Analysts said the North's moves to warm ties by freeing U.S. and South Korean citizens it held captive and trying to restore frozen business connections with the South were aimed at helping it bring cash to its depleted coffers.

But in a move that could raise tension with Seoul, fire officials said on six South Koreans were missing near the border with North Korea after a sudden rise in a river possibly due to water released from a dam in the North.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/politicsNews/idUSTRE58507S20090906>

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Chosun Ilbo - South Korea

7 September 2009

'No Evidence' of Reconstruction at Yongbyon Reactor

A United States-based think tank, the Institute for Science and International Security, on Friday said there was no evidence of North Korea trying to rebuild the Yongbyon nuclear facilities that had been disabled as part of a deal with the U.S. and four other countries in 2007.

Based on satellite images of the site taken on Aug. 10, experts say the nuclear reactor and the cooling tower remain destroyed with no signs of reconstruction.

However, experts say the reclusive state can theoretically produce weapons-grade plutonium by bringing out the fuel rods from a water tank where they were kept after the deal, even if they do not rebuild the facilities.

This comes against the backdrop of Pyongyang's claim early Friday that it has reached the "final stage" of enriching uranium, a process that would give the country a second way of producing a nuclear bomb. It added that extracted plutonium is also being made into atomic weapons.

A Washington-based source said if these claims are to be taken at face value, it appears that Pyongyang has reactivated its reprocessing facilities.

In Seoul, U.S. special envoy to North Korea Stephen Bosworth and South Korean envoy Wi Sung-lac met on Saturday to discuss strategies to bring the North back to the six-party nuclear talks. The two exchanged views on how to cooperate on issues concerning North Korea's call to remove UN sanctions and for bilateral talks with the U.S.

Meanwhile, Russia's Interfax news agency reported Friday that Russia views Pyongyang's recent claim as "very alarming" and will pressure the North to come back to the six-party negotiations.

http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2009/09/07/2009090700869.html

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RIA Novosti

4 September 2009

Indian Navy Crew to Join Russian Sub Sea Trials in Far East

VLADIVOSTOK, September 4 (RIA Novosti) - A crew of Indian submariners will take part in sea trials of a Russian nuclear submarine in mid-September, a source involved in the trials said on Friday.

Russia's Nerpa nuclear attack submarine, damaged in a fatal accident during tests last November, resumed sea trials on July 10 in the Sea of Japan after extensive repairs that cost an estimated 1.9 billion rubles (\$60 million).

The submarine is to be leased to the Indian Navy by the end of 2009 under the name INS Chakra.

The source said the Indian submariners would need to undergo a course of training together with Russian specialists and servicemen.

They will subsequently operate on their own under the supervision of Russian instructors.

On November 8, 2008, while the Nerpa was undergoing sea trials in the Sea of Japan, its on-board fire suppression system activated, releasing a deadly gas into the sleeping quarters. Three crewmembers and 17 shipyard workers were killed. There were 208 people, 81 of them submariners, on board the vessel at the time.

India reportedly paid \$650 million for a 10-year lease of the 12,000-ton K-152 Nerpa, an Akula II class nuclear-powered attack submarine.

Akula II class vessels are considered the quietest and deadliest of all Russian nuclear-powered attack submarines.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090904/156023023.html>

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Morung Express – India
5 September 2009

‘Pak Enhancing N-arsenal to Target India’

Washington, September 5 (Agencies): Pakistan is making qualitative and quantitative improvements to its nuclear arsenal, which is primarily targeted towards India, and could increase the number of circumstances under which it would be willing to use atomic weapons, according to a US Congressional report.

Maintaining that Islamabad’s nuclear arsenal consists of approximately 60 atomic weapons, the Congressional Research Service’s (CRS) latest report, nevertheless, said that this number could be even larger. Another report released last week had said Pakistan’s nuclear arsenal was inching towards 100. The CRS, an independent bipartisan research wing of the US Congress, said that such an indication has come officially directly from the Pakistan government. It noted that a Foreign Ministry spokesperson indicated during a May 21 press briefing that despite the government’s continued opposition to a “nuclear or conventional arms race in South Asia,” Pakistan may need to increase its nuclear arsenal in response to Indian conventional and nuclear arms expansion.

Illustrating this point, the CRS report, entitled ‘Pakistan’s Nuclear Weapons: Proliferation and Security Issues’ which has been updated till July 30, said a Pakistani Foreign Office spokesperson reacted to India’s July 26 launch of its first indigenously built nuclear-powered submarine by asserting that “continued induction of new lethal weapon systems by India is detrimental to regional peace and stability.” The Pakistani spokesperson had said that “without entering into an arms race with India, Pakistan will take all appropriate steps to safeguard its security and maintain strategic balance in South Asia,” the CRS report noted.

However, whether and to what extent Pakistan’s current expansion of its atomic weapons-related facilities is a response to the Indo-US nuclear deal is unclear, partly because the government’s decisions regarding those facilities are not publicly available, said the report. The report said in addition to making qualitative and quantitative improvements to its nuclear arsenal, Pakistan could increase the number of circumstances under which it would be willing to use nuclear weapons.

For example, senior security analyst Peter Lavoy has argued that India’s efforts to improve its conventional military capabilities could enable New Delhi to achieve “technical superiority” in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, as well as precision targeting, proving India with “the capability to effectively locate and efficiently destroy strategically important targets in Pakistan.” Islamabad could respond by lowering the threshold for using nuclear weapons, according to Lavoy. Indeed, a Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesperson warned in May that Islamabad could take this step, the report said.

The CRS report said Pakistan has pledged no-first-use against non-nuclear weapon states, but has not ruled out first use against a nuclear-armed “aggressor”, an indirect reference to India. Some analysts say this ambiguity serves to maintain deterrence against India’s conventional superiority. The Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesperson stated on May 21 that “there are acquisitions of sophisticated weaponry by our neighbour which will disturb the conventional balance between our two countries and hence, lower the nuclear threshold.”

<http://www.morungexpress.com/national/32523.html>

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MyNews.in – India
September 8, 2009

Pak's Nuclear Security Arrangements 'Sufficient and Adequate': US

Washington: As fresh fears are being voiced about the safety of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, the United States has said it feels that the security arrangement are "sufficient and adequate."

The American Defence Secretary Robert Gates also said that Islamabad had given "insurances" about the safety net for its nuclear arsenal.

Washington is "quite comfortable that the security arrangements for the Pakistani nuclear capabilities are sufficient and adequate," Gates said in an interview to the Qatar-based Al Jazeera news agency.

Asked if the Americans have guarantees to cover the safety of Pakistani nuclear weapons, the US Defence Secretary said "it's based both on our own understanding of the security arrangements that the Pakistanis have for their weapons and their capabilities, their laboratories and so on."

"We have also been given insurances by the Pakistanis on this," he said.

Asked about whether he was 100 per cent satisfied that the Pakistani intelligence had stopped lending a hand of support to Taliban, Gates sought to side-step the issue by merely saying that Washington and Islamabad were working for the same goals.

In the interview, Gates admitted that there had been sharp rise in Taliban attacks in Afghanistan, but attributed this to what he called as 'new alliances of convenience' between the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Haqqani network, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and his group and al-Qaeda.

But he made it clear that the United States would not turn its back on Afghanistan saying "our interest is in giving the Afghan people a capacity to protect its own people and to prevent the country from being a centre for violent extremists again. And then we'll leave."

He said Americans had no interest in permanent presence in Afghanistan or having bases there.

Referring to concern over rising civilian casualties, the American Defence Secretary conceded "civilian casualties are a problem for us and we are doing everything conceivable to try and avoid that.

[http://www.mynews.in/News/Pak's nuclear security arrangements 'sufficient and adequate' US N25421.html#](http://www.mynews.in/News/Pak's_nuclear_security_arrangements_'sufficient_and_adequate'_US_N25421.html#)

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Global Security Newswire
Sept. 8, 2009

Pakistan Seeks Additional Nuclear-Weapon Capabilities, Analysts Assert

Pakistan is seeking to build better nuclear weapons and developing new missiles suitable for carrying nuclear warheads, Robert Norris of the Natural Resources Defense Council and Hans Kristensen of the Federation of American Scientists wrote in the latest edition of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (see *GSN*, May 29).

Islamabad continues to build new nuclear devices, expanding its stockpile to between 70 and 90 warheads, the analysts wrote in the *Bulletin's* "Nuclear Notebook." As of early last year, the nation had generated 2,000 kilograms of highly enriched uranium and 90 kilograms of weapon-grade plutonium; the supply could power between 80 and 130 warheads, but the South Asian state is unlikely to have weaponized all of its fissile material, says the report.

"Following the example of other nations that have developed nuclear weapons, Pakistan is improving its weapon designs, moving beyond its first-generation nuclear weapons that relied on HEU," the assessment states.

A new chemical separation site and two new plutonium production reactors, still unfinished, would "provide the Pakistani military with several options: fabricating weapons that use plutonium cores; mixing plutonium with HEU to make composite cores; and/or using tritium to 'boost' warheads' yield," the report states.

"The types of facilities under construction suggest that Pakistan has decided to supplement and perhaps replace its heavy uranium-based weapons with smaller, lighter plutonium-based designs that could be delivered further by ballistic missiles than its current warheads and that could be used in cruise missiles," according to the analysis.

Pakistan is developing a new ballistic missile and two cruise missiles that could carry nuclear weapons, the report says (Norris/Kristensen, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, September/October 2009).

Islamabad denied expanding its nuclear stockpile from 60 warheads to as many as 90, United Press International reported last week.

"We are against [an] arms race in South Asia and accordingly we have proposed a restraint regime in the region and we do not have any aggressive design against any country," said Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi (United Press International, Sept. 4).

Meanwhile, the United States expressed concern last week about a Pakistani court's decision to eliminate all restraints on the movement of former top nuclear scientist and proliferator Abdul Qadeer Khan, *Dawn* reported (see *GSN*, Aug. 28).

"Our concerns over the potential for... proliferation activities by Mr. Khan are well known to the Pakistani government. We believe that he remains a proliferation risk," said State Department spokesman Ian Kelly (*Dawn*, Sept. 2).

http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20090908_9361.php

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Brazzil Magazine – Brazil
07 September 2009

Brazil Knows Everything There Is to Build an A-Bomb

Written by Newsroom

According to an article in Sunday's edition of Rio's daily *Jornal do Brasil*, Brazil has the necessary knowledge to build an atomic bomb. The statement is based on a doctoral thesis presented recently at the Military Institute of Engineering IME.

There has been no official comment on the news but the United Nations International Atomic Energy, IAEA, has expressed an interest in the publication, according to the Brazilian press.

In the thesis "Numerical simulation of thermonuclear detonations in fusion-fission hybrid environments operated with radiation", physicist Dalton Ellery Girão Barroso interprets physics and mathematical models of the W-87 warhead developed by the United States.

"You don't need to make the bomb," says Barroso. "You just have to show that you know how to do it."

Part of the thesis was recently published in Brazil in a book with several contributions, "Physics of nuclear explosions", although the hard core of the academic work remains in the dark well protected by IME, according to *Jornal do Brasil*.

A Brazilian Foreign Ministry spokesman quoted by Agence France Presse said that there was "no secret" around this thesis, as it has "apparently already been published in a book". But Brazil is a signatory to the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty and it respects the agreement," he said

According to *Jornal do Brasil*, the publication of the book last April triggered the interest of the IAEA, which allegedly requested additional information about the book to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense

Apparently IAEA concluded that the models described in the academic thesis and the book could have been practiced in a lab and this would support suspicions that Brazil has been advancing investigations on how to build a nuclear bomb.

In July 2007, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva announced the revival of the nuclear program in Brazil, with the completion of its first submarine nuclear propulsion and recovery, after 20 years of interruption, the construction of its third plant.

However, last week in a long interview with France Press, President Lula da Silva recalled that Brazil "is the only country in the world which specifically bans nuclear weapons in its Constitution, so it's not the will of the president, it's in the Constitution."

This Monday, September 7, Brazil's Independence Day, Lula hosted his French counterpart, Nicholas Sarkozy and signed a US\$ 9 billion military cooperation agreement with Paris that includes among other things, Brazil's first nuclear submersible and four conventional ones.

<http://www.brazzilmag.com/content/view/11176/1/>

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London Guardian
7 September 2009

Three Terrorists Convicted of Plotting to Blow up Jets over Atlantic

By Vikram Dodd

British terrorists planned to blow up at least seven transatlantic flights from London, murdering more than 1,500 people in a plot on a scale to rival the September 11 attacks, a jury found today.

As three men now face life sentences after being found guilty of conspiring to explode liquid bombs on airliners flying from Britain to North America, the former head of US homeland security at the time of their arrests has revealed that the threat was taken so seriously that President George Bush was repeatedly briefed on the status of a UK surveillance operation on the London council flat being used as a terrorist bomb factory.

The plan involved inserting liquid explosives into empty bottles of Lucozade and Oasis, colouring the liquid so it appeared to be the same as the original.

The cell, based in east London and High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire, was supposed to carry out what counter-terrorism officials say was an al-Qaida-inspired suicide mission, motivated by rage at British and US foreign policy.

The US former homeland security chief, Michael Chertoff, told the Guardian the US administration was on such a state of heightened alert about the plot that it turned back a plane in midair two days before the arrests, believing a terror suspect was on board.

The men were arrested in August 2006, just two days before it was feared they would stage a dry run of the plot – but the US had wanted the plotters arrested days earlier, fearing that British police would miss the start of the attack.

Chertoff said of the plot: "This stood out as being of a very substantial dimension, advanced, specific and sophisticated and of a scale comparable to 9/11."

Yesterday at Woolwich crown court, Abdulla Ahmed Ali, Assad Sarwar and Tanvir Hussain were found guilty of conspiracy to murder by detonating the bombs on airliners. The liquid bombs, disguised in drinks bottles, were so ingenious, relying on batteries and detonators carried separately, that they would have bypassed airport security. UK scientists, who constructed versions of the devices, concluded that if exploded, they would have punched a hole in the aircraft skin.

The plot was disrupted on 10 August 2006, leading to chaos at airports and restrictions which remain in force today on the amount of liquids travellers can carry aboard.

The men were previously put on trial last year, but while the first jury convicted the three chief defendants of conspiracy to murder, they stopped short of concluding that they had targeted planes. After a lengthy retrial, a new jury convicted them after 54 hours of deliberations.

None of five other defendants was convicted of the airline charge, but one, Umar Islam, was convicted of conspiracy to murder. Of the other four, one was cleared on all counts, and the jury was unable to agree verdicts on the other three men. Next week the CPS will decide whether to seek retrials of the men for whom the jury failed to reach a verdict, and the judge will sentence those found guilty.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner John McDowall, head of Scotland Yard's counter terrorism command, said the convicted men intended to commit "mass murder on an unimaginable scale. They intended to cause carnage through a series of co-ordinated explosions and bring terror into the lives of people around the globe. Apart from massive loss of life, these attacks would have had enormous worldwide economic and political consequences."

One man, Donald Stewart-Whyte, was acquitted on all charges, three years after he was first arrested. In a statement read outside court, his solicitor demanded a public apology from the Crown Prosecution Service for putting him on trial on the basis of "spurious" evidence.

The lawyer, Bernie Duke, said: "We also invite the CPS to issue a public apology to Mr Stewart-Whyte and his family for the terrible wrong done to them. Mr Stewart-Whyte will continue to speak out against terrorism and fight against the slur that there is any connection between true Islam and terrorism."

The investigation and trials are estimated to have cost £35m. It was the biggest counter-terrorism operation in UK history, involving hundreds of police officers and MI5 agents.

During the surveillance, a bug caught one man recording a suicide video. Other videos were recovered after the arrest and in one, Ali warned of "body parts ... decorating the streets" if Muslims were not left alone, and said he had yearned to take part in violent jihad since he was a teenager.

Before the arrests Washington pressed Britain to arrest the men earlier than police had planned, but Scotland Yard wanted to let the cell – which was under the tightest surveillance – continue so more evidence could be gathered to put before a jury.

The arrest in Pakistan, at the urging of the US, of the plot's alleged mastermind, Birmingham-born Rashid Rauf, led UK police to bring their own arrests forward. Scotland Yard and MI5 feared if the UK cell learned of Rauf's arrest they would either try to escape or rush forward their attack, fearing imminent capture.

Chertoff told the Guardian: "Rauf was the link between the plotters and the al-Qaida end. We know there was a connection to al-Qaida central."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/sep/07/terrorists-plot-atlantic-liquid-bombs>

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Washington Post
September 8, 2009

Britain Convicts Three in Plot to Rival 9/11

By Anthony Faiola and Karla Adam
Washington Post Foreign Service

LONDON, Sept. 7 -- A British court on Monday convicted three men of plotting to kill more than 1,500 people by smuggling bombs made with flammable liquid aboard at least seven transatlantic airliners, including one bound for Washington, in a case that changed the way millions of air passengers travel worldwide.

The men were arrested in August 2006 after officials uncovered the plot targeting jets departing London's Heathrow Airport and destined for cities in the United States and Canada. The failed plan involved bringing on board homemade bombs filled with hydrogen peroxide and disguised in soft drink bottles, and using parts of light bulbs and chemicals hidden in batteries to detonate them almost simultaneously.

Discovery of the plan snarled air travel for weeks and prompted sweeping new rules for taking liquids onto commercial flights -- regulations that continue to cause security backups at airports worldwide.

If successful, the plot would have caused the biggest loss of life in a terrorist attack since Sept. 11, 2001. It amounted to a complex, often frustrating case for prosecutors, law enforcement and counterintelligence agencies in Britain and the United States. Last year, a jury convicted the same three men of conspiracy to murder but failed to reach a decision on broader terrorism charges.

British prosecutors, using evidence supplied by the CIA and other U.S. agencies, mounted another legal case against the men to try to secure tougher sentences. After a six-month trial that the BBC estimated to have cost \$65 million, their reward came in the form of convictions for Abdulla Ahmed Ali, 28, Assad Sarwar, 29, and Tanvir Hussain, 28, on higher charges of conspiracy to murder by bombing aircraft in flight.

The jury found another defendant guilty of the lesser charge of conspiracy to commit murder and deadlocked on that charge for three other men. Prosecutors will decide whether to pursue another trial against them. An eighth alleged conspirator was acquitted of all charges.

Though U.S. intelligence officials were involved from the early stages of the counterterrorism operation, sources familiar with the trial said the case had divided the British and Americans from the beginning. U.S. intelligence had pressed for quick arrests of the terrorist cell involved in the plot, while the British sought to wait to gather more evidence in the hopes of winning more convictions.

Nevertheless, the convictions of three of eight men after what had become the biggest counterterrorism operation in British history were hailed by the government here as a triumph of justice.

"I am pleased that the jury has recognized that there was a plot to bomb transatlantic flights and that three people have been convicted of that plot," British Home Secretary Alan Johnson said. "This case reaffirms that we face a real and serious threat from terrorism."

In contrast to other homegrown terrorism plots in the United States and Britain, the three men found guilty Monday were British nationals who were shown to have direct links to leading al-Qaeda operatives. Ali was said to have finalized the plot during a trip to Pakistan, and a martyrdom video showed him threatening the British with "floods of martyr operations."

All eight men had pleaded innocent to most of the charges, saying they were planning nothing more than a publicity stunt to raise awareness of Western policies in the Islamic world. The three men are due to be sentenced Sept. 14.

Though the plotters were foiled days before their planned attack, they "did achieve their goal of disruption, which is still going on three years later," said Sajjan Gohel, director of international security at the Asia-Pacific Foundation, a counterterrorism research organization. Today, a "whole gamut of increased security is a result of this plot," he said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/07/AR2009090700560.html>

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Chicago Tribune
EDITORIAL
September 5, 2009

A Legacy of Shame

The outgoing chief of the UN's atomic agency, Mohamed ElBaradei, looks to be preoccupied in his last few months with polishing his legacy. How will his 12-year term as head of the International Atomic Energy Agency be remembered?

Here's how we will remember it:

For years, ElBaradei coddled Tehran as it stonewalled his inspectors and refused to answer a raft of critical questions about its nuclear program.

He set deadlines for "cooperation," and then backed off, again and again.

He warned America and its allies against using force against Tehran. In other words, he dawdled and blustered as Iran developed its nuclear prowess.

And now we learn from the Associated Press that for almost a year ElBaradei has refused to publicly release a secret and potentially incendiary report on Iran's nuclear programs. It's reported to be a complete summary of everything the IAEA knows about Iran, based on its investigations and U.S. and other intelligence. That may include fresh and damaging details on Tehran's efforts to develop nuclear warheads and missiles to deliver them.

But ElBaradei, ever concerned with ruffling the iron-fisted mullahs in Iran, reportedly fears that such a public airing would make the agency appear biased toward the West. That the agency has no irrefutable proof of Iran's nuclear weapons agenda, and that the report could stiffen Iranian intransigence and push the U.S. or Israel closer to a military strike.

But we wonder if maybe there's another reason, too. How would you feel, as the world's nuclear watchdog, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, if your legacy was: You could have helped to stop an Iranian nuclear bomb but instead looked the other way until it was too late? There aren't any prizes for that.

The IAEA's board is set to convene in Vienna on Monday and again later in the month. ElBaradei will face intense questioning about that document. And the pressure to release it will only grow.

The Obama administration and its European allies are rightly pushing to make the report public. That could help build the case for more sanctions against Iran, including a gasoline embargo.

President Barack Obama has said that Iran must respond to his offer of direct talks by the end of September. Don't hold your breath. "We offered unconditional talks to the Iranians and they're still not at the table," a U.S. official told

The Wall Street Journal. There's not much time for diplomacy to work. Iran's nuclear program is advancing. Tehran has enough low-enriched uranium for at least one bomb, although it must first be further enriched. Iran now has enough centrifuges spinning to create enough fuel for as many as two nuclear weapons a year, if its leaders decided to do so.

ElBaradei now concedes that his "gut feeling" is that "Iran definitely would like to have the technology . . . that would enable it to have nuclear weapons if they decided to do so."

Even so, in his final months on the job, ElBaradei is *still* impeding the West's efforts to squeeze the mullahs.

That is a legacy of shame.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/opinion/editorials/chi-0905edit1sep05.0.6774635.story>

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New York Times
EDITORIAL
September 7, 2009

No Freedom for Mr. Khan

Abdul Qadeer Khan has a special place in the pantheon of international outlaws. In 2004, he confessed that over a 15-year period he provided some of the world's most nefarious and dangerous governments — Iran, North Korea and Libya — with the designs and technology to produce the fuel for nuclear weapons.

The Pakistani metallurgist deserved to be imprisoned for life. But he caught a scandalous break. As the father of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program, he is a national hero. And despite the tearful, televised confession in which Mr. Khan insisted that he alone was guilty, it is widely believed that Pakistan's powerful military, including Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who was then president and is a former army chief of staff, was complicit in this exceedingly vile trade.

So Mr. Khan was pardoned and put under house arrest. But Pakistan was unable to hold to even that mild punishment.

Last February, a court ordered his release and allowed him to move around the country, although he still was required to inform officials of his travel plans and obtain permission to have visits from intelligence agents and other guests. Then, last month, a court directed the government to lift remaining restrictions.

The United States has pressured the fragile government of President Asif Ali Zardari to maintain restraints and should continue to do so; last Wednesday, a two-member panel of the Lahore High Court reimposed the travel limits. But the rein on Mr. Khan is steadily eroding.

If Pakistan and Mr. Khan had cooperated fully with American and other international investigators over the years, then granting him his freedom might have been a worthwhile trade-off. But as far as is known, the Central Intelligence Agency and international nuclear inspectors were never allowed to interrogate him directly. And he never revealed the full extent of his network, which may well have involved providing the electronic design for a bomb itself.

It was bad enough that Mr. Khan enabled Pakistan to amass a nuclear arsenal now estimated by The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists at about 70 to 90 weapons. A Pakistani official said that with his bank accounts frozen and international contacts suspended, "there is no imminent threat of proliferation from A. Q. Khan." But officials and experts in Washington and elsewhere are concerned that he could still revive a network that was not fully dismantled.

In a recent court petition, Mr. Khan protested the restrictions, saying they made him feel like a "prisoner." That is exactly what he should be for his heinous role as maestro of the world's largest nuclear black market.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/07/opinion/07mon2.html?ref=opinion>

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Times of London
EDITORIAL

September 8, 2009

The Airline Plot

Had the jury yesterday not found the key figures guilty in the plot to blow up airliners over the Atlantic, Britain's efforts to contain terrorism inspired by al-Qaeda would have suffered a catastrophic blow. The enormity of the atrocity planned, the scale and cost of the investigation and the failure of the earlier case against the British-born Islamist extremists made this a test case of the police and intelligence operations to keep Britain safe from attack.

At issue was not only the ability of a jury to handle a case so complex; riding on the outcome was also the credibility of the Government and the security services in their warnings about the scale and dangers of the terrorist threat to Britain. The plot, intercepted in the final stages, would have detonated liquid bombs aboard seven airliners in flight from Britain to North America. The death toll could have exceeded the 3,000 killed on 9/11. If, for a second time, a jury had failed to convict the accused, despite overwhelming scientific evidence, the public would have found it hard ever again to take security warnings seriously. Public anger at the subsequent ban on taking liquids aboard would have been rekindled. Muslims would have accused the Government of scaremongering and targeting their community. And Americans, already angry over the Lockerbie release, would have been furious at this failure to deal firmly with terrorism.

The failure last year of the bomb plot case against Abdulla Ali, the 28-year-old ringleader from Walthamstow, and his two associates caused consternation in the Government and intelligence circles. Strenuous precautions were taken to ensure that the second trial went better. The evidence, including martyrdom videos, bombmaking equipment and lists of flights to be targeted, was better presented. And the new judge did not give the jury a two-week break in the middle of the case, as happened, absurdly, before.

The critical difference, however, was that this time the prosecution was able to present all the e-mails between Ali and the defendant accused of acquiring materials for the suicide bombs. None of this damning evidence was introduced last time because of the ban on the use of intercept material in British courts. So the prosecution obtained a court order in California to require Yahoo! to disclose the archived messages. Identical to the intercepts, they raise the question why an intercept ban remains valid in British courts.

The verdicts yesterday underline the cost, difficulty and global scope of the fight against al-Qaeda terrorism. The massive surveillance operation and the lengthy search of woods around High Wycombe for bombmaking equipment cost about £40 million — so much that Scotland Yard came under pressure to call off the search. The plot cost the aviation industry huge sums to hire more security staff and handle the resultant delays and cancellations. The difficulty in obtaining evidence was also thwarted by growing public concern, not only among Muslims, at the intrusive surveillance, informants, CCTV, DNA, telephone call data and trappings of a surveillance society. But without these it would be impossible to gather evidence so that complex terrorist cases could still be tried by jury.

The plot has yet again shown the close links between young British Muslim extremists and the training camps, madrassas, al-Qaeda operatives and terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan. Gordon Brown has argued that the war in Afghanistan is being waged to keep the streets of Britain safe. Al-Qaeda is not yet defeated. It was thanks only to co-ordinated action by the intelligence agencies that atrocities were averted. The trial should dispel any complacency or cynicism over terrorism. The threat is far from over.

http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/leading_article/article6825274.ece

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