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New York Times  
September 9, 2009

## **Pentagon Checks Arsenal in Race for Nuclear Treaty**

By Thom Shanker and Mark Landler

WASHINGTON — With the clock ticking on a year-end deadline, President Obama is pressing ahead with a top-to-bottom review of America's nuclear weapons to see how much the arsenal can shrink, as his negotiators are racing to wrap up a major new strategic arms control treaty with Russia.

The review, in tandem with reinvigorated talks between Washington and Moscow, will help determine how much further the two nuclear superpowers will cut their arsenals after the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or Start, expires Dec. 5.

The last time the Pentagon reviewed its nuclear posture, in 2001, it concluded that the American military could get by with 1,700 to 2,200 nuclear warheads at the ready, a level the Bush administration found comfortable even as it demurred over a binding treaty with Russia.

Now both sides want to go even lower. Russia is especially eager to lock in reductions, and Mr. Obama has made deep cuts a primary diplomatic goal. Their ambitions, and the impending deadline, make the Pentagon's review crucial, because it would help determine the bottom line, as well as which missiles, bombers and submarines to keep, how much to spend modernizing them and the implications of a changing world where small states, too, can acquire nuclear arms.

But not everybody is at ease with the prospect of such rapid change. Several officials involved in the effort said powerful constituencies — among arms specialists in the executive branch, Congress, the military and at the weapons laboratories — had conflicting views of how to proceed.

Although Mr. Obama has vowed that his long-term goal is eliminating nuclear weapons, there are significant disagreements about how fast and how deep reductions might be made while guaranteeing America's security in a world in which other nations maintain nuclear arsenals, others might be tempted to build them — and bomb-making knowledge can never be erased.

The shape of the arsenal also is a point of contention. Some military planners advocate building a new generation of safer and more reliable warheads, while some administration officials fear that reopening nuclear assembly lines would undermine their efforts at nonproliferation.

The arms talks must deal not only with the limit on warheads, a ceiling that might be as low as 1,500 on each side, but also with arcane counting rules, verification measures and ancillary issues like the deployment of missile defenses.

Tackling these extraordinarily complex issues at the same time on a tight schedule is an ambitious agenda, especially for an administration also trying to battle a deep economic crisis, overhaul the health care system and address global climate change.

“From a distance, it could look like, ‘How do you do all that?’ ” said Ellen O. Tauscher, the under secretary of state for arms control and international security. “It's like the operation of a very high-end restaurant kitchen. It may look chaotic, but beautiful things come out of it.”

Senior Defense Department officials said the nation's entire nuclear weapons architecture was under review, including such fundamental traditions as whether the nation still needs to maintain a triad of land-based missiles, submarine-launched missiles and bombers.

Mr. Obama laid out his vision in April, declaring in Prague that he would “reduce the role of nuclear weapons” and urge other countries to do the same, with the long-term goal of eliminating nuclear arms altogether.

Under a framework agreement signed in Moscow this summer by Mr. Obama and his Russian counterpart, Dmitri A. Medvedev, the new treaty is to reduce the ceiling on long-range nuclear warheads to 1,500 to 1,675 within seven years, down from the current limit of 2,200 by 2012, under the separate Moscow Treaty signed in 2002.

Total American warheads reached more than 32,000 in the 1960s but dropped to 10,500 just before Start was signed in 1991. This year, the Federation of American Scientists reported that the United States had already reduced its deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 2,200, more than three years ahead of the Moscow Treaty schedule.

Under the prospective new treaty, to be negotiated by December with follow-up talks to look at even deeper cuts, the total of all types of long-range delivery vehicles — land-based missiles, submarine-based missiles and bombers — would be limited to 500 to 1,100, down from the 1,600 now allowed.

“For some it is not enough of a cut, for others it is too much, too fast,” said one senior Defense Department official, who like other officials interviewed spoke on the condition of anonymity in order to describe the internal, classified discussion of the review.

Another senior Pentagon official said the calculations not only were about specific numbers but also finding the right balance: “So long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, how do we sustain a safe, secure and effective nuclear deterrent for us, and that can be extended to our allies? How do you define that?”

As Washington hammers out an arms deal with Moscow, negotiators may also glean insights from the Russians that would help answer these questions, according to another senior State Department official.

Senior officials involved in the review point out that the configuration of today’s arsenal offers Mr. Obama some flexibility, even in advance of the final negotiations. Several hundred bombers and missile silos have been removed from nuclear use or decommissioned, yet still are counted under current treaty rules.

The United States has just under 900 operational nuclear warhead platforms, meaning that Mr. Obama could easily give up significant numbers of missiles or planes in negotiations because they have already been taken out of nuclear service, officials said.

The review will look closely at the contentious question of whether the arsenal should be used to threaten retaliation in case of catastrophic attack by an adversary using nonnuclear weapons, whether chemical, biological or even overwhelming conventional forces, against the United States or an ally. Reshaping the list of targets for America’s nuclear warheads, officials said, also is under discussion.

“With the end of the cold war and the development of new conventional technologies, the traditional purposes for U.S. nuclear weapons have become increasingly less relevant,” said Daryl G. Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, an independent advocacy group.

“We can and should limit the role of our nuclear weapons to a core deterrence mission,” he added, noting that deterring attacks on the United States and its allies “requires far fewer nuclear warheads and delivery systems.”

Over the decades, however, the United States consciously maintained ambiguity in public statements about its nuclear policy — when it would strike, what it would strike and in response to which actions by an adversary.

“We don’t want to box our leaders in,” said a senior Pentagon official. “They like to hedge against uncertainty. They like to have options.”

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/09/world/09arms.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/09/world/09arms.html?_r=1)

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Global Security Newswire  
Sept. 9, 2009

## **Tensions Persist in U.S. Over START Replacement**

While U.S. President Barack Obama remains committed to replacing the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, some administration officials as well as military officials, lawmakers and weapons scientists have differing opinions on making major cuts to the nation's nuclear arsenal, the *New York Times* reported yesterday (see *GSN*, Sept. 8).

Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev agreed in July to cut their nations' respective deployed strategic nuclear arsenals to between 1,500 and 1,675 warheads under the new pact. The two countries are now required under a 2002 deal to hold no more than 2,200 operationally fielded warheads by 2012.

High-level disagreements have persisted over how deeply and quickly the U.S. arsenal can be cut without compromising national security, given the existence of nuclear stockpiles in other nations, suspicions about the intent of certain atomic programs, and the impossibility of eliminating nuclear-weapon know-how.

Another issue is the proposed Reliable Replacement Warhead, which would receive no funding under the administration's fiscal 2010 budget request (see *GSN*, Aug. 18).

Such questions could be addressed in the congressionally mandated Nuclear Posture Review, a broad assessment of the nation's strategy, forces and readiness due near the end of the year. The report will reconsider policies as basic as the nation's reliance on nuclear weapons deployed on land-based ICBMs, submarine-launched missiles and bomber aircraft, according to high-level Defense Department officials.

The administration is faced with these issues even as it deals with the continuing recession, the battle to revamp the health care system and the threat of climate change.

"From a distance, it could look like, 'How do you do all that?'" said Undersecretary of State Ellen Tauscher. "It's like the operation of a very high-end restaurant kitchen. It may look chaotic, but beautiful things come out of it."

Along with the cutback in deployed strategic warheads, Moscow and Washington have pledged to draw down the number of deployed delivery vehicles from the currently authorized 1,600 to between 500 and 1,100.

"For some it is not enough of a cut, for others it is too much, too fast," said one high-level Pentagon official.

Another Defense Department official added: "So long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, how do we sustain a safe, secure and effective nuclear deterrent for us, and that can be extended to our allies? How do you define that?"

The Nuclear Posture Review is also expected to reassess Washington's refusal to rule out the use of nuclear weapons in response to non-nuclear attacks.

"With the end of the Cold War and the development of new conventional technologies, the traditional purposes for U.S. nuclear weapons have become increasingly less relevant," said Arms Control Association head Daryl Kimball.

"We can and should limit the role of our nuclear weapons to a core deterrence mission," Kimball said, adding that a reliable nuclear deterrent "requires far fewer nuclear warheads and delivery systems" (Shanker/Landler, *New York Times*, Sept. 8).

[http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw\\_20090909\\_8670.php](http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20090909_8670.php)

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Los Angeles Times  
September 10, 2009

## **U.S. Rejects Iran's Proposal for Talks**

By Paul Richter  
Reporting from Washington

The State Department rejected Iran's latest proposal for international talks Thursday in another sign of trouble for the Obama administration's top-priority effort to engage Tehran in nuclear negotiations.

A five-page Iranian proposal distributed to foreign diplomats Wednesday "was not really responsive to our greatest concern, which is obviously Iran's nuclear program," said P.J. Crowley, the senior State Department spokesman.

At the same time, Crowley said, "We remain willing to engage Iran."

The administration faces an approaching deadline on whether to pursue a diplomatic opening with Iran, which was one of President Obama's trademark foreign policy ideas during his presidential campaign.

U.S. officials say Obama will decide by the end of the year whether to continue his offer of negotiations or withdraw it, and step up sanctions to force the Islamic Republic to abandon its nuclear ambitions.

In the letter, Iranian leaders pledged to "embark on comprehensive, all-encompassing and constructive negotiations," but did not name the nuclear program as an issue for the talks. A copy of the letter was obtained by the nonprofit news organization ProPublica.

Tehran insists it has the right under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to process uranium as part of a peaceful nuclear energy program, but U.S. and European officials allege Iran seeks to develop atomic weapons.

Though U.S. officials insisted there was still reason for hope, warning signs are mounting. Glyn Davies, the American ambassador to the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency, said Wednesday that Iran was now capable of quickly enriching its low-grade uranium to bomb-grade material if it wished.

Pressure is increasing on the Obama administration from conservatives and pro-Israel groups to take a harder line on Iran. Lawmakers are moving ahead with legislation to penalize companies that help Iran refine or import gasoline. Rep. Howard Berman (D-Los Angeles), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said after meeting with visiting Jewish leaders Thursday that he planned to move ahead with the bill.

The administration is quietly resisting the bill, arguing that it wants to hold off on tougher sanctions until it is sure that Iran cannot be persuaded to join in talks.

Meanwhile, a number of Iran specialists say the hard-line Ahmadinejad government's preoccupation with political rivals at home has made it less inclined to negotiate.

Ray Takeyh, who served as a senior State Department advisor on Iran until recently, noted that Iran's leaders have accused the West of meddling and stoking the protests over the disputed June presidential election that has divided the country.

"They're viewing the West through a very suspicious, if not conspiratorial lens, which makes the possibility of compromise very difficult for them," said Takeyh, now with the Council on Foreign Relations.

George Perkovich, a nonproliferation specialist at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said the significance of the week's developments is what it shows about Iranian intentions.

"What's becoming increasingly clear is that Iran is not interested in negotiations," he said.

Still, a senior U.S. official insisted that the political turbulence in Iran might also make the government more open to a deal that would reduce international pressure.

"You can follow the logic of this two ways," said the official, who declined to be identified citing the diplomatic sensitivity of the subject.

U.S. officials intend to confer with the five other world powers who have been trying to deal with the Iran issue -- France, Germany, Britain, Russia and China. Officials spoke Wednesday and are scheduled to meet later this month.

But there were new signs Thursday that the Russians, who have repeatedly balked at pressure to crack down on Iran, are unlikely to join a new sanctions effort.

Sergei Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, spoke favorably of the Iranian letter, saying in Moscow that "my impression is that there is something there to use," according to Reuters.

Lavrov added that Russia would not take part in any international effort to halt refined oil deliveries to Iran, as some have proposed.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-iran-talks11-2009sep11,0,1877697.story>

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Wall Street Journal  
SEPTEMBER 11, 2009

## **Russia Says No to Iran Nuclear Sanctions**

By MARC CHAMPION and JAY SOLOMON

MOSCOW -- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov made it clear Thursday that Moscow wouldn't back any new rounds of tough sanctions against Iran in the United Nations Security Council, and he dismissed a U.S. timetable for securing progress from Iran on ending its nuclear-fuel program.

Mr. Lavrov's comments in Moscow led U.S. officials to acknowledge that new U.N. sanctions against Iran were now unlikely in the near term -- endangering a major element of President Barack Obama's high-profile strategy for diplomacy in the Middle East. "We're pretty disappointed with the Russian position so far," a senior U.S. official said.

The development also appeared a blow to hopes that the Obama administration's "reset" of relations with Russia would lead to Moscow supporting a top U.S. foreign-policy priority.

Just a day after U.S. officials warned that Iran may already have enough enriched uranium to make a bomb if processed further, Mr. Lavrov said negotiations should begin without any imposed timetable. He also said that even if Iran tried to make weapons-grade fuel it would be detected and there would be time to respond. "I do not think those sanctions will be approved by the United Nations Security Council," Mr. Lavrov said.

President Barack Obama has set a deadline of this month for progress on talks with Iran, and the U.S. and its allies planned to develop an international consensus about sanctions by the time the U.N. General Assembly concludes its meeting in New York in two weeks. But Russia wields a veto on the Security Council.

Mr. Lavrov's comments also came amid a political storm in Israel over the disclosure that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had secretly traveled to Moscow earlier this week. Israeli media immediately speculated he was there to lobby against Russian sales of anti-aircraft arms to Iran that would hamper any Israeli strike. A more likely subject for the trip emerged among some analysts: A proposal that Moscow host an Israeli-Palestinian peace summit to increase the credibility of talks.

Mr. Lavrov's comments Thursday, to an annual meeting of Russia experts known as the Valdai Club, was the second hit in two days to U.S. hopes of coaxing Iran to compromise on development of its nuclear program while dangling the threat of international consequences -- such as banning exports of necessities such as refined petroleum -- if it declines.

Senior U.S. officials Thursday said that Iran's proposal the day before on the nuclear issue was "insulting" to Western countries that had hoped for a diplomatic resolution. A senior official said the document, which didn't address nuclear-fuel production or a timetable for talks, appeared to indicate that Tehran wasn't prepared to engage in real talks, perhaps because of turmoil over its recent election.

The official added that Tehran seemed to be trying for a framework in which the issue of enrichment of uranium wouldn't be addressed at all. "This is clearly not going to happen," said the U.S. official.

Mr. Lavrov disagreed with the U.S. assessment, contending there was "something there to use" in the proposal Tehran sent to the U.S., Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany. He noted that Iran said in the document that it was ready for comprehensive talks on security in the region.

"They need an equal place in this regional dialogue," he said. "Iran is a partner that has never harmed Russia in any way."

The rebuffs from Tehran and Moscow appear to leave the U.S. with few options in trying to block Iran from developing a uranium stockpile, which the U.S. and European governments believe could trigger a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. Israel has hinted it might conduct airstrikes against Iran's nuclear infrastructure to prevent that.

Mr. Lavrov appeared to dismiss U.S. and Israeli warnings of urgency. If Iran tried to enrich uranium to weapons grade, he said, it would have to reconfigure its cascades of centrifuges, a move that would immediately be picked up by cameras monitored by the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency. There would be time to respond, he said.

Western nuclear analysts say that if Iran can develop enough highly enriched uranium it could "break out" relatively quickly to manufacture a working weapon. Iran says it wants enriched uranium only for civilian purposes.

Mr. Lavrov said he welcomed the Obama administration's change in "style," and its willingness to listen to others -- a stark contrast, he said, to the administration of President George W. Bush. He noted that Russia since its "reset" of relations already has agreed to allow U.S. troops and military equipment to cross its territory to resupply the war effort in Afghanistan. He said Moscow had a common interest in seeing that effort succeed.

But Mr. Lavrov was skeptical about the depth of change in the U.S. approach under Mr. Obama, despite the Russian's view that a multipolar world -- in which the U.S. is just "the first among equals" -- increasingly restricts U.S. ability to impose its will globally. He added, "I don't think anyone in this room believes that any U.S. administration would forget its strategic goal: to stay No. 1."

Mr. Lavrov said even an expected U.S. move to drop plans to station a missile-defense system in Eastern Europe wouldn't be seen as a concession to Russia; such a move would merely correct a previous U.S. mistake, he said.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125260385206300253.html>

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RIA Novosti

11 September 2009

## **Russia Switching Vector of Interest to Asia - analyst**

MOSCOW, September 11 (RIA Novosti) - The vector of Russian interest is switching from Europe and the United States to Asia, a Canadian analyst said after a meeting with the Russian premier on Friday.

Piotr Dutkiewicz, director of the Institute of European and Russian Studies at the Carleton University (Ottawa, Canada) and a member of the Valdai Discussion Club, met with Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the Valdai forum, and drew three main conclusions from the meeting.

"The main one is that this time he was very pragmatic in his approach to Europe, in his approach to the situation in the U.S.," Dutkiewicz said, describing Putin's approach as "non-ideological, very step-by-step."

His second impression was that "the vector of [Russia's] interest is switching from Europe and United States to Asia."

Russia made several attempts to collaborate with Europe on aerospace and high tech projects, but Europe was non-responsive. Instead, Russia is now successfully cooperating in these areas with India and Israel.

A Chinese political analyst welcomed Russia's Asian ambitions.

"It was very interesting to hear Putin's opinion on the development of the 'Eastern vector' in Russia's foreign policies. And Russia will develop the 'Western vector' as well," said Feng Shaolei, dean of the School of Advanced International and Area Studies at East China Normal University.

Shaolei, who also heads the Chinese Center for Russian Studies, praised this as "strategic thinking."

"Russia will be playing a very important role between the East and the West," the Chinese professor said.

The third conclusion drawn by Dutkiewicz was that Russia believes there is a need for a different kind of collective security arrangement.

"OSCE is not working properly," the Canadian professor quoted Putin as saying. "Unless we succeed in building a security framework that will satisfy everybody, we are going to create a dangerous environment," he said.

Overall, Dutkiewicz said, Putin "sounded like a manager."

"It was not political, it was a very administrative-like presentation," he said.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090911/156097001.html>

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RIA Novosti

11 September 2009

## **Putin says Russia Ready to Work with West on Arms Development**

MOSCOW, September 11 (RIA Novosti) - Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said on Friday Russia was ready to cooperate with the West in developing new weapon systems.

"We are ready to cooperate with the West in the joint production of weapons to NATO standards. If this cooperation materializes, Russia will be ready to buy these weapons," Putin told a meeting of the Valdai Discussion Club.

The discussion was off-limits to the press, and Putin's words were reported by Oksana Antonenko, senior fellow (Russia and Eurasia) at the Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), London.

Commenting on the meeting as a whole, Angela Stent, Professor of Government and Director, Center for Eurasian, Russian and East European Studies, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, said the conversation was "as usual, very rich."

"We covered a large number of issues. There was a quite positive assessment of where the economy was going, although obviously some problems still remain," she said.

She also said Putin "discussed with us the problems of European security that haven't been resolved since last year's war in the Caucasus."

"We had a pretty positive evaluation... of better US Russian relations, but we are still waiting to see some positive results."

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090911/156096370.html>

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RIA Novosti

11 September 2009

## **No Relocation of Bulava Missile Production - Russian Navy**

MOSCOW, September 11 (RIA Novosti) - Russia's Defense Ministry will not transfer production of Bulava ballistic missiles to a different plant, the Navy chief said on Friday.

Adm. Vladimir Vysotsky dismissed earlier reports that the submarine-launched ballistic missile, which has suffered six failures in 11 tests blamed on production faults, had been moved to another manufacturer.

"These reports are mere rumors," Vysotsky said, adding the tests would resume before the end of the year.

The general director of the institute developing the Bulava (Mace) has resigned over the failures, seen as a setback in the strengthening of Russia's nuclear deterrent.

Gen. Nikolai Makarov, chief of the Russian General Staff, was reported as saying in late August that Bulava production had been moved to another plant.

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.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090911/156094081.html>

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Arutz Sheva – Israel

9 September 2009

## **Report: Venezuelan Banks Helping Iran Nuclear Program**

(IsraelNN.com) Iran is using Venezuelan banks to evade international sanctions and acquire materials needed for its nuclear program, according to a new investigation by the Manhattan District Attorney's office. Ties between Venezuela and Iran are strengthening as both countries share nuclear aspirations, Robert Morgenthau said based on his office's investigation. Speaking at a speech Wednesday, he noted that Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez wants to build a "nuclear village" with Iran's help, said

He said the U.S. has placed no economic sanctions on Venezuela and is therefore not closely follow their banking system. "I have little faith that this is being effectively done, and the Iranians, aware of this vulnerability, appear to be taking advantage of it," Morgenthau said.

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/Flash.aspx/170840>

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Global Security Newswire  
Sept. 10, 2009

## **EU Presses Syria to Explain Uranium Traces**

The European Union yesterday joined the top U.N. nuclear official in demanding that Syria explain the origin of uranium traces found at a suspected nuclear reactor site bombed two years ago by Israel, United Press International reported (see *GSN*, Sept. 8).

Damascus has maintained that the facility was a non-nuclear military installation, and that the particles were left by depleted uranium munitions used in the September 2007 strike. The International Atomic Energy Agency, however, ruled out the possibility earlier this year (see *GSN*, Feb. 19). IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei on Monday urged Damascus "cooperate with the agency in its verification activities related to the nature of the Dair Alzour site."

Syria has refused to provide the U.N. nuclear watchdog with documentation related to the traces, and its adherence to nuclear oversight "would clearly remain in doubt" if it continued to do so, the European Union said yesterday in statements to the 35-nation IAEA governing board.

"The EU therefore calls upon Syria to cooperate with the agency to establish modalities which will allow IAEA access to relevant information and locations while protecting sensitive military information," the statement says (United Press International, Sept. 9).

[http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw\\_20090910\\_1435.php](http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20090910_1435.php)

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New York Times  
September 10, 2009

## **U.S. Says Iran Could Expedite Nuclear Bomb**

By DAVID E. SANGER

This article was reported by William J. Broad, Mark Mazzetti and David E. Sanger and written by Mr. Sanger.

WASHINGTON — American intelligence agencies have concluded in recent months that Iran has created enough nuclear fuel to make a rapid, if risky, sprint for a nuclear weapon. But new intelligence reports delivered to the White House say that the country has deliberately stopped short of the critical last steps to make a bomb.

In the first public acknowledgment of the intelligence findings, the American ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency declared on Wednesday that Iran now had what he called a "possible breakout capacity" if it decided to enrich its stockpile of uranium, converting it to bomb-grade material.

The statement by the ambassador, Glyn Davies, was intended to put pressure on American allies to move toward far more severe sanctions against Iran this month, perhaps including a cutoff of gasoline to the country, if it failed to take up President Obama's invitation for serious negotiations. But it could also complicate the administration's efforts to persuade an increasingly impatient Israeli government to give diplomacy more time to work, and hold off from a military strike against Iran's facilities.

In interviews over the past two months, intelligence and military officials, and members of the Obama administration, have said they are convinced that Iran has made significant progress on uranium enrichment, especially over the past year.

Iran has maintained that its continuing enrichment program is for peaceful purposes, that the uranium is solely for electric power and that its scientists have never researched weapons design. But in a 2007 announcement, the United States said that it had found evidence that Iran had worked on designs for making a warhead, though it determined that the project was halted in late 2003. The new intelligence information collected by the Obama administration finds no convincing evidence that the design work has resumed.

It is unclear how many months — or even years — it would take Iran to complete that final design work, and then build a warhead that could fit atop its long-range missiles. That question has been the subject of a series of sharp, behind-the-scenes exchanges between the Israelis and top American intelligence and military officials, dating back nearly two years and increasing in intensity in recent months.

The American position is that the United States and its allies would probably have considerable warning time if Iran moved to convert its growing stockpile of low-enriched nuclear fuel to make it usable for weapons.

While there is little doubt inside the United States government that Iran's ultimate goal is to create a weapons capability, there is some skepticism about whether an Iranian government that is distracted by the fallout from a disputed presidential election would take that risky step, and how quickly it could overcome the remaining technological hurdles.

But Israel draws more dire pictures from the same set of facts. In classified exchanges with the United States, it has cited evidence that the design effort secretly resumed in 2005, at the order of Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. American officials say that the evidence is circumstantial, and point out that the Israelis have not produced a copy of the order they say Ayatollah Khamenei gave.

"We're all looking at the same set of facts," said one senior Israeli intelligence official, who, like others interviewed for this article, asked for anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the intelligence-gathering. "We are interpreting them quite differently than the White House does."

At the core of the dispute is the "breakout capacity" that Mr. Davies referred to on Wednesday in his first presentation as ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations' nuclear watchdog. The phrase refers to a non-nuclear nation's ability to acquire enough fuel and expertise to be able to complete building an actual weapon relatively quickly.

The Israelis have argued that there could be little or no warning time — especially if Iran has hidden facilities — and they contended that in the aftermath of Iraq, American intelligence agencies were being far too cautious in assessing Iran's capability.

As American and Israeli officials expected, Iran turned over to European nations on Wednesday what it called a new set of "proposals" for negotiations over its nuclear program. American officials said they had not read them, but Susan E. Rice, the American ambassador to the United Nations, said the Iranian response must be "serious, substantive and constructive" to meet Mr. Obama's test.

The White House has given Iran a late-September deadline to begin substantive negotiations, or face additional sanctions.

Administration officials are debating whether the Iranian leadership, struggling with violent protests, is effectively paralyzed when it comes to negotiating with the West — or for that matter in determining how aggressively to push ahead with its nuclear program. The White House is hoping its offer to negotiate has thrown Iran's leadership off track, and built up credibility around the world if the president begins to press for tougher sanctions.

The intelligence updates for Mr. Obama follow the broad outlines of the conclusions delivered to President George W. Bush in 2007, as part of a 140-page National Intelligence Estimate. It was based on information gathered by American spy agencies that had pierced Iran's military computer networks, coming up with surprising evidence that the country had halted its weapons-design effort four years earlier.

Critics said the public portion of the report understated the importance of Iran's progress in enriching uranium, the hardest part of the bomb-making process.

Accurate intelligence about the progress of Iran's weapons programs has been notoriously poor. Much of the country's early activity was missed for nearly 18 years, until a dissident group revealed the existence of enrichment efforts.

Both the 2007 National Intelligence Estimate and the recent updates for Mr. Obama, according to officials familiar with their contents, are filled with caveats that Iran could be conducting uranium enrichment or weapons design work at remote locations that have eluded detection.

The 2007 estimate outraged Israel, so much so that the next year the Israeli government secretly went to Mr. Bush to seek bunker-busting bombs, refueling capability and overflight rights over Iraq, in case it moved to strike Iran's facilities. He turned Israel down.

Last month, former Vice President Dick Cheney told Fox News that he "was probably a bigger advocate of military action than any of my colleagues." In recent interviews, former Bush administration officials confirmed that they had asked the Pentagon to draw up possible attack scenarios. But the issue was never seriously debated because Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice were firmly opposed, the officials said, partly because they felt that an attack would not deal a significant setback to Iran's program. "The vice president

believed, and the Israelis believed, that it would be better if the Bush administration took care of it,” one former official said.

By the international inspectors’ last count, Iran has installed more than 8,000 centrifuges — the machines that enrich uranium — at its main underground facility at Natanz, the primary target the Israelis had in their sights. At last inspection, Iran was using only a little more than half of them to enrich uranium.

If Tehran has no hidden fuel-production facilities, to create a bomb it would have to convert its existing stockpile of low-enriched uranium into bomb-grade material. International inspectors, who visit Natanz regularly, would presumably raise alarms. Iran would also have to produce or buy a working weapons design, complete with triggering devices, and make it small enough to fit in one of its missiles.

The official American estimate is that Iran could produce a nuclear weapon between 2010 and 2015, probably later rather than sooner. Meir Dagan, the director of the Mossad, Israel’s main spy agency, told the Israeli Parliament in June that unless action was taken, Iran would have its first bomb by 2014, according to an account in the Israeli newspaper Haaretz that Israeli officials have confirmed.

“Israel expects that the international community will prevent Iran from gaining nuclear military capabilities,” said Michael Oren, Israel’s new ambassador to Washington.

Despite Mr. Dagan’s public comments, most Israeli officials believe that Iran could create a bomb much more quickly. They cite the murky evidence surrounding two secret programs in Iran, Project 110 and Project 111. Those are the code names for what are believed to be warhead-design programs run by an academic, Mohsen Fakrizadeh.

Iran has never allowed Mr. Fakrizadeh to be interviewed. But international inspectors have shown videos and documents suggesting that his group has worked on nuclear triggers, trajectories for missiles and the detonation of a warhead at almost 2,000 feet above ground — which would suggest a nuclear detonation. On Wednesday, Iran again said this evidence consisted of “forgeries” and “fabrications.”

Israeli officials say privately that the Obama administration is deluding itself in thinking that diplomacy will persuade Iran to give up its nuclear program. The Obama administration says it believes that Iran is on the defensive — fearful of more crippling sanctions and beset by internal turmoil. But even inside the White House, some officials think Mr. Obama’s diplomatic effort will prove fruitless.

Some administration officials insist Israel is throwing out worst-case possibilities to “shorten the timeline” to an Iranian bomb as a way to put pressure on the Obama administration. But some administration officials acknowledge that Israel’s impatience and hints of military action are useful because they might push Iran into negotiations, with real deadlines.

At a meeting with a senior Obama administration official several months ago, Israeli officials pressed for intelligence and other help necessary for a strike, according to one official with knowledge of the exchange.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/10/world/middleeast/10intel.html?pagewanted=all>

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Wall Street Journal  
September 10, 2009

## **Iran Dims Hopes For Diplomacy**

By Farnaz Fassihi and Jay Solomon

Iran rejected any compromise with the West over its nuclear program Wednesday, as blunt comments from the Obama administration over Tehran's bomb-making capability suggested that the two sides were headed toward a renewed diplomatic crisis.

Iran offered Western officials a long-awaited package of proposals to restart negotiations over its nuclear program. But diplomats who viewed the offer Wednesday said the document of fewer than 10 pages essentially ignored questions over Iran's production of nuclear fuel and instead focused broadly on other international issues.

It made no mention of Tehran's willingness to suspend its uranium-enrichment activities or to enter into substantive talks about the future of its nuclear program, they said.

Meanwhile, the U.S. envoy to the International Atomic Energy Agency made the Obama administration's strongest comments yet on Iran's nuclear threat. Speaking at the board meeting of the IAEA in Vienna, Glyn Davies warned

on Wednesday that Iran has enough fissile material to produce a nuclear bomb, if Tehran enriches the uranium to weapons-grade level. "Ongoing enrichment activity...moves Iran closer to a dangerous and destabilizing possible breakout capacity," he said. Iran denied the U.S. allegations.

U.S. officials have made generally similar warnings before, but Mr. Davies's remarks were the most public and specific. U.S. officials said the comments were made to stress to the international community the need for a united response to Iran's growing nuclear capabilities.

President Barack Obama has given Iran a deadline of September to show good faith in negotiations over its nuclear program; otherwise the U.S. hopes to get broad international agreement for new sanctions. Western countries had hoped Iran might agree to freeze its production of nuclear fuel in exchange for the West holding off on new economic sanctions as formal negotiations commenced.

Instead, Tehran's letter to the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, plus Germany, simply summarized vague Iranian calls for better cooperation with the international community, many of which have been made before.

At the same time, Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, Saeed Jalili, publicly ruled out a compromise, saying the nation would never give up its right to its nuclear program or wait around for permission from other countries.

Iran's moves Wednesday mean the U.S. and its diplomatic partners will focus on intensifying their efforts to prepare new economic sanctions against Tehran, said officials involved in the process. The Iranian proposals didn't specify any timetable for when Iran might meet the U.S. and other Security Council members in the coming weeks, said a European diplomat who viewed the document.

A senior U.S. official briefed on Iran's proposals said Wednesday that Washington would still continue trying to engage Tehran, though the official acknowledged its proposals contained nothing new. "At least now we have a response from Tehran, and we can test what Iran is willing to do going forward," said the official.

Iran claims that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes of gaining nuclear energy, but many Western and Arab countries suspect Iran of pursuing a nuclear bomb.

The Security Council members and Germany held conference calls Wednesday concerning Iran, according to U.S. and European officials, and may convene a formal meeting ahead of the U.N. General Assembly later this month in New York.

"We have no choice now but to go down the path we've set and see what the market will bear," said the European diplomat. He added, though, that there remains deep skepticism over whether Russia or China, either of whom can veto sanctions, will agree to them in the coming weeks.

There remain divisions among the U.S. and its allies on just how quickly Iran could assemble a bomb. Tehran would need to convert its low-enriched uranium into weapons-grade material. This would require Tehran to significantly reconfigure its centrifuges, or conduct clandestine work outside the view of IAEA cameras and monitors. Israeli officials believe Iran could be just months from producing a bomb, while U.S. intelligence agencies believe it could still take years.

Iran's diplomatic standoff with the West comes as Tehran is roiled by political crisis at home. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is still struggling to recover from a turbulent presidential election in June and allegations that his re-election was secured with fraud. The election has polarized the country between ruling hardliners and a moderate opposition.

In the past week, the government has taken unprecedented measures to stop public gatherings, including religious ones. Waves of university students are being called into interrogation sessions ahead of the fall semester, according to Iranian news Web sites. Education authorities are calling for a revision of the syllabus in humanities and liberal arts because they produce secular graduates.

On Tuesday, Tehran's new prosecutor general shut down the offices of opposition candidates that had been investigating postelection claims of human-rights violations. Two prominent political figures, Alireza Beheshti and Morteza Alviri, were also arrested in raids at their home, according to Iranian Web sites.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125249646237795391.html>

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London Daily Telegraph  
September 10, 2009

## **US Risks Being Sucked into Yemen Civil War**

By Richard Spencer, in Dubai

The Yemeni government is to try to subdue a rebel Shia army in the north of the country. But its assault is meeting fierce resistance, with the Yemeni air force staging desperate forays to pound the rebels into submission.

International observers fear that even if the US, a long-term ally, can stay aloof, the conflict might be subsumed in a regional war by proxy.

Saudi Arabia helps to finance the government, partly out of fear of its own Shia minority and terrorist elements. The government accuses Iran, which is ruled by a Shia theocracy, of backing the rebels with money and arms, though it has produced no hard evidence.

The government launched a full-scale assault on the rebel stronghold in Saada province last month. Since then, 25,000 refugees have registered with the United Nations refugee agency, but diplomats say as many as 100,000 people may have been displaced by the fighting.

Whole villages are on the move, according to the World Food Programme (WFP), with thousands of people caught in a pocket between the fighting and the Saudi border.

About 35,000 have fled to Saada city, only to find themselves taking refuge in houses under constant shell fire.

"The situation is getting worse and worse and worse," said Gian Carlo Cirri, country director for the WFP. "We're not confronted with a humanitarian crisis, it's becoming a humanitarian tragedy."

One analyst warned that the United States might be forced to intervene as the security situation worsened to prevent Yemen becoming a "failed state".

The country has been used as an al-Qaeda base before, and its strategic location between the oil supply routes of the Gulf and the piracy haven of Somalia means its stability is regarded as a key western interest.

"It's very difficult," said Joost Hiltermann, of the International Crisis Group. "You might well see American advisers, maybe even some special troops, go in for special operations."

President Barack Obama sent a letter this week to President Ali Abdullah Saleh pledging to "stand beside Yemen, its unity, security and stability".

"The security of Yemen is vital for the security of the United States," he said.

Previously, the US had urged a return to the negotiating table.

Any American intervention would risk opening a new front in its hostile relationship with Iran, whose rise to power is increasingly feared by Gulf Arab countries, several of which also have Shia minorities.

The rebellion started as a minor conflict with a local tribe, the al-Houthis. But after its leader was killed in 2004, the insurrection, rather than disappearing, began to spread.

The al-Houthis are followers of a moderate Shia sect known as Zaidi, and their followers are now calling for the return of the so-called Zaidi caliphate which ran Yemen until 1962.

A ceasefire broke down earlier this year, leaving the government facing a double conflict against the Houthis in the north and al-Qaeda groupings throughout the country.

The Houthis were also accused of a string of kidnaps, including of a British engineer who is still being held.

Yemen is the poorest country in the Arab world, and since reunification of its northern and southern halves in the nineties it has been mired in both tribal and sectarian strife.

The civil war in the north is also seen as distracting the government from political and economic reforms needed to lift it out of poverty.

Diplomats say there is little evidence of active Saudi and Iranian involvement in the fighting itself. One described a claim that Saudi aircraft had joined in the bombardment of Saada as "far-fetched".

But the diplomat added: "There's a long-term sense that Saudi Arabia and Iran play out their longer term rivalry in Yemen.

"Speculation about international intervention also takes away from the humanitarian issue, which is the most worrying aspect of the war."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/yemen/6162617/US-risks-being-sucked-into-Yemen-civil-war.html>

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Los Angeles Times  
September 10, 2009

## **Iran Submits Proposals for Possible Nuclear Talks with World Powers**

By Borzou Daragahi and Julia Damianova  
Reporting from Vienna and Beirut

Iran on Wednesday handed over a package of proposals for possible talks with world powers about its nuclear program, but it gave no indication that the offer would include discussions on halting its enrichment of uranium as demanded by the United Nations Security Council.

In Vienna, the United States and its European allies again condemned Iran's nuclear activities, noting that Iran has crossed or is close to the threshold for assembling enough fissile material to make one atomic bomb.

"This ongoing enrichment activity . . . moves Iran closer to a dangerous and destabilizing possible breakout capacity," Glyn Davies, U.S. ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency, said at a meeting of the U.N. watchdog agency's governing board.

"We have serious concerns that Iran is deliberately attempting, at a minimum, to preserve a nuclear weapons option."

Western nations, along with Israel, suspect that Iran is preparing to build nuclear weapons under the guise of a civilian energy program, a charge that the Islamic Republic vehemently denies.

The U.S. intelligence community and outside experts believe Israel has 100 to 200 nuclear weapons, making it the sole nuclear power in the Middle East.

World powers fear that a nuclear Iran could further unsettle an already-volatile region and trigger an arms race.

The U.N. Security Council has repeatedly called on Iran to halt sensitive nuclear activity until it clears up questions about the nature of its nuclear enrichment program.

The United States, France, Britain and Germany have pushed for an increase in U.N. economic sanctions on Iran but have been thwarted by veto-bearing Russia and China, which remain economically and politically engaged with Tehran.

If the West is unable to gather momentum for sanctions at the U.N. General Assembly meeting next week, diplomats say, it might try to punish Iran by pursuing restrictions at the Group of 20 summit of world economic powerhouses this month in Pittsburgh.

Details of the Iranian package, handed to diplomats in Tehran late Wednesday, were not made public.

Saeed Jalili, Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, said last week that it would be an updated version of a proposal submitted last year. That proposal was dismissed by the U.S. and its allies as irrelevant.

Ali Asghar Soltanieh, Iran's envoy to the IAEA, said the new proposal includes possible talks on nuclear matters.

"It covers all issues of concern and interests *inter alia* security, economic cooperation, nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament, energy supply and demands, energy security as well as peaceful applications of nuclear energy," Soltanieh said in a statement distributed to reporters in Vienna.

"The basis of negotiations would be this package," the Iranian envoy told reporters on the sidelines of the board of governors meeting.

"And during the process of negotiations, all parties in an open-minded, pragmatic manner have to deal with the issues and any parties in any negotiations have the right to reflect their viewpoints and comments on it."

The Obama administration has offered to engage in comprehensive talks with Iran without preconditions.

But after years of what international atomic agency chief Mohamed ElBaradei described Wednesday as a "logjam," France, Germany and Britain have grown increasingly skeptical about negotiations.

The Islamic Republic has brushed aside as forgeries a set of documents that purportedly show it engaged in nuclear experiments consistent with a clandestine weapons program until 2003.

"If this information is real, there is a high probability that Iran nuclear weaponization activities have taken place," ElBaradei told the board, according to a transcript of his remarks. "But I should underline 'if' three times."

Germany's ambassador to the atomic agency, Ruediger Luedeking, decried Iran's "disrespect" for its international obligations.

"This Iranian attitude further reinforces doubts relating to the nature of Iran's nuclear program," the ambassador said, reading a statement on behalf of his country, France and Britain.

"Iran must address the lack of confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear program. It should build, not reduce, confidence."

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-iran-nukes10-2009sep10.0.890061.story>

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Times of London  
September 10, 2009

## **Israel Admits Binyamin Netanyahu's Secret Trip to Moscow**

Sheera Frenkel, Jerusalem

Israeli officials have been forced to admit that Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, made a secret trip to Moscow this week.

The revelation, which comes after denials of Israeli and Russian press reports, reinforces speculation that the Israelis played a role in stopping an alleged shipment of Russian arms to Iran.

The fact that Mr Netanyahu had used a false cover story for his absence on Monday — his military attaché told reporters that he was busy touring "security facilities" — prompted anger among Israeli commentators, who accused the Prime Minister of bad faith.

The visit appears to be linked to the story of the Arctic Sea, a cargo ship meant to be carrying wood whose reported seizure by pirates on July 24 as it passed through Swedish waters.

It was the first recorded act of piracy in northern European waters for centuries and set off a modern-day maritime mystery that was not entirely solved even after Russian forces seized the ship near Cape Verde, off the West African coast, on August 17. It was some 2,500 miles off course.

The Russian Government this week denied reports that the ship had been transporting an illegal shipment of S-300 surface-to-air missiles destined for Iran or Syria.

Reports suggested that the shipment had been aborted after it came to the attention of Mossad, the Israeli secret service.

Israeli security officials have been reluctant to speak about the incident, although several admitted to *The Times* that the full story had yet to be told.

"What exactly happened on that ship is still unknown, and everyone, from Moscow to Jerusalem is working hard to keep it a secret," said one diplomatic official in Israel.

"Unfortunately, they are tripping over themselves and being caught in the very web they are spinning. At this point, we have more denials over this story than actually facts."

Mr Netanyahu's trip to Moscow appears to have been kept a secret even from some members of his own staff. "He made great efforts to conceal the trip from the public, as both he and the Russians agreed that it should be kept quiet," one official said.

Nor is it clear whom he met. Russian authorities said that the Israeli premier had met neither his counterpart, Vladimir Putin, nor President Medvedev, although they did not explicitly deny the trip itself.

Officials in the Prime Minister's office admitted that they had misled the public over Mr Netanyahu's whereabouts "There were many considerations, many reasons that the Prime Minister's schedule on Monday was not made public. It was in the interest of national security, which has now been damaged by these leaks", one official told *The Times*.

He added that Mr Netanyahu took great care to keep the Moscow trip a secret, including spending \$20,000 to hire a private jet from a company owned by the Israeli mogul Yossi Maiman.

Israel has long kept a close eye on dealings between Russia and Iran. On August 18, the day after the seizure of the Arctic Sea, President Shimon Peres visited Moscow and said that he had secured a promise from Mr Medvedev that Russia would review its decision to sell the S-300 anti-aircraft missiles to Iran.

Those missiles would clearly help Iran protect its nuclear sites from an air strike if Israel were to decide that Tehran's nuclear programme needed to be stopped. The Islamic regime insists that it is simply trying to build up a nuclear power industry and is not trying to manufacture atomic weapons.

[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle\\_east/article6829278.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle_east/article6829278.ece)

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Washington Post  
September 11, 2009

## **Iran Urges Disposal of All Nuclear Arms**

By Thomas Erdbrink, Washington Post Foreign Service

TEHRAN, Sept. 10 -- Iran is not prepared to discuss halting its uranium enrichment program in response to Western demands but is proposing instead a worldwide control system aimed at eliminating nuclear weapons, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's top political aide said in an interview Thursday.

In a set of proposals handed to the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council and Germany on Wednesday, Iran also offered to cooperate on solving problems in Afghanistan and fighting terrorism and to collaborate on oil and gas projects, Mojtaba Samareh Hashemi said. A longtime confidant of the president's, Samareh Hashemi is reportedly being considered for the key post of first vice president in Ahmadinejad's new government.

As described by Samareh Hashemi, Iran's offer is similar to a call by President Obama in April to eliminate the world's nuclear weapons. Later this month, Obama is scheduled to chair a special session of the U.N. General Assembly's annual meeting aimed at seeking consensus on preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, rather than targeting individual nations such as Iran and North Korea. Ahmadinejad is also scheduled to attend the U.N. meeting and has said he is ready to debate Obama publicly.

"It's not really responsive to our greatest concern, which is obviously Iran's nuclear program," State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said of Tehran's package of proposals. "Iran reiterated its view that as far as it is concerned, its nuclear file is closed. . . . That is certainly not the case. There are many outstanding issues."

But Crowley did not shut the door completely. He said the United States was consulting with its negotiating partners -- Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany. "We'll be looking to see how ready Iran is to actually engage, and we will be testing that willingness to engage in the next few weeks," he said.

A senior administration official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said the administration had determined it would not reject the package out of hand but would see whether there were elements that could form the basis for substantive talks. The written offer notably did not include criticism of the United States.

France said Thursday that it is studying the proposals along with the other "P5-plus-one" members. Russia said it hopes negotiations with Iran will resume soon.



The negotiating group, known as the P5-plus-one because it includes the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council plus Germany, has sought since 2006 to reach a deal with Iran on its nuclear program. The group wants Iran to abandon its program to enrich uranium, which the latter insists it needs to ensure an independent source of fuel for nuclear power plants. Highly enriched uranium can also be used in nuclear weapons, however, leading the United States and other Western nations to suspect that Iran secretly plans to divert the material to a weapons program.

Earlier this year, the group offered to provide economic and security benefits to Iran in return for suspension of Tehran's enrichment activity and international oversight. The proposals delivered Wednesday amounted to Iran's counteroffer.

In the interview, Samareh Hashemi called Washington's Iran policy a "paradox," influenced by "Zionists." He said Iran has offered "practical proposals" in the past to improve relations, including a request for direct airline flights between Tehran and New York. "But the Americans gave no response," he said.

He said the United States has not asked to open a consular office or interests section in Tehran, an idea that was floated in Washington last year. "If such a request comes, we will study it positively," he said.

Samareh Hashemi also called on the United States to apologize for "interfering in Iran's election and other instances of meddling," attacked America's two-party political system and denounced "liberal democracy" in Western nations. "Both the internal and external signs of this Western liberal democracy show that it's approaching defeat and collapse," he said.

Ahmadinejad began a second term last month after his government effectively crushed opposition protests over his disputed reelection in June. He has accused the West of orchestrating the protests.

Addressing the nuclear issue, Samareh Hashemi rejected an accusation Wednesday by Glyn Davies, Washington's chief envoy to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), that Iran "is now either very near or in possession" of enough low-enriched uranium to produce one nuclear weapon and appeared to be attempting to preserve a nuclear weapons option. Iran's continuing enrichment activity, in defiance of three U.N. Security Council resolutions, "moves Iran closer to a dangerous and destabilizing possible breakout capacity," Davies said.

"This is the Israelis speaking," said Samareh Hashemi, who managed Ahmadinejad's reelection campaign and has held key positions in the Foreign and Interior ministries. "It's better that the Americans give their own opinion."

"Iran not only does not want to make nuclear weapons but is actually intensely against nuclear weapons," he said. "In all truth, Iran is trying to establish a new regime to prevent nuclear weapons worldwide." He said the threat from nuclear weapons today comes from the countries that possess them, not from Iran.

Asked whether Iran's proposal contains any mention of suspending its uranium enrichment program, a key demand of the P5-plus-one group, Samareh Hashemi said that would not be necessary, asserting that the country's activities are in accord with the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and agreements with the IAEA. "Lawful activities are the right of every nation," he said.

The IAEA has said it has no conclusive evidence that Iran is trying to militarize its nuclear program. But the agency said Wednesday that it is in a "logjam" with Iran and that questions remain about the nature of its atomic program.

With the package it is proposing, Iran wants to remove those doubts by establishing an international system that would force not only Iran but countries that have not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty, such as Israel, India and Pakistan, to be open about their nuclear intentions, Samareh Hashemi said.

"Since nuclear weapons are an international threat, with the cooperation of all countries we can design an international framework that, basically, prevents research, production, multiplying and keeping weapons and also moves toward destruction of present nuclear weapons," he said. "Iran is ready in this path to offer any and every kind of cooperation and effort. No country must be exempt from this international framework against nuclear weapons."

Iran maintains that archenemy Israel possesses nuclear weapons, and it has often accused the West of having a double standard regarding Israel's nuclear arsenal.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/10/AR2009091003964.html>

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Times of India  
9 September 2009

## **US Overlooked Pak Nuke Program, Bomb was Ready in 1983: Khan**

WASHINGTON: Pakistan's nuclear program was overlooked by the US in its initial year as Islamabad got involved in the Afghan war against Soviet Union, which resulted in making the bomb in a quick period of six years, A Q Khan, the maligned Pakistani nuclear scientist, has said.

"I maintain that the war had provided us with space to enhance our nuclear capability," the Pak nuclear scientist said in an interview to a Pakistani Urdu television channel.

"The credit (for the nuclear bomb) goes to me and my team, because it was a very difficult task, almost next to impossible. But given the US and European pressure on our program, it is true that had the Afghan war not taken place at that time, we would not have been able to make the bomb as early as we did," Khan told the Aaj News Television.

The interview with Khan, who was recently released from house arrest, was broadcast in Karachi on August 31. It was translated from Urdu by the Directorate of National Intelligence's Open Source Center.

The translated interview has not been publicly released, but a copy was obtained by Secrecy News of the Federation of American Scientists (FAS).

Khan, put under house arrest by the previous Musharraf regime from which he was released early this year, said, "Pakistan was ready to test a nuclear weapon just six years after it first began to enrich uranium."

"It was 6 April 1978 when we achieved our first centrifugal enrichment of uranium. We had achieved 90% (enrichment) by early 1983," he said.

"I wrote a letter to General Zia on 10 December 1984, telling him that the weapon was ready and that we could detonate it on a notice of one week," Khan said. "But Zia decided against testing the bomb."

"We were allying with the United States in the Afghan war. The aid was coming. We asked Gen Zia and his team to go ahead with the test, but they said they could not conduct the test as it would have serious repercussions. They argued that since the United States had to overlook our nuclear program due to our support in the Afghan war, it was an opportunity for us to further develop the program. They said the tests could be conducted any time later," Khan said, according to the translation of the transcripts of the interview.

In addition to a timeline for the Pakistani nuclear weapons program, Khan in his interview also discussed the costs and logistics involved, and his successful efforts to evade export controls. "They could not outmanoeuvre us, as we remained a step ahead always," he said.

"Since I had been living in Europe for 15 years, I knew about their industry and suppliers very well. I knew who made what. When I came to Pakistan, I started purchasing equipment from them until they proscribed the selling of equipment to us. Then we started purchasing the same equipment through other countries like Kuwait, Bahrain, UAE, Abu Dhabi, and Singapore," Khan said.

"The interview also provides interesting information about Pakistan's supply chains, which he says were the same for Iran and Libya as well," said Ivanka Barzashka, an FAS researcher who is studying the proliferation of centrifugal technology.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/news/world/pakistan/US-overlooked-Pak-nuke-program-bomb-was-ready-in-1983-Khan/articleshow/4988774.cms>

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Washington Post  
September 9, 2009

## **Pakistani Scientist Cites Help to Iran**

By R. Jeffrey Smith, Washington Post Staff Writer

The creator of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program boasted in a recent television interview that he and other senior Pakistani officials, eager to see Iran develop nuclear weapons, years ago guided that country to a proven network of suppliers and helped advance its covert efforts.

A.Q. Khan, whom Washington considers the world's most ambitious proliferator of nuclear weapons technology, told a television interviewer in Karachi, Pakistan, that if Iran succeeds in "acquiring nuclear technology, we will be a strong bloc in the region to counter international pressure. Iran's nuclear capability will neutralize Israel's power."

Although Khan has previously claimed nationalist and religious justifications for helping to spread sensitive technology, several experts said his latest statement was an unusually direct claim of broad, official Pakistani support for an Iranian nuclear weapon.

The interview with Khan was broadcast Aug. 31 by Aaj News Television. A translation of his remarks -- describing covert purchases by Iran of equipment through Pakistan's "reliable" suppliers in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates -- was prepared by the Director of National Intelligence's Open Source Center and posted Tuesday on Secrecy News, a blog of the Federation of American Scientists.

The Pakistani government has repeatedly asserted that Khan acted alone in illicitly spreading nuclear weapons technology, and it has denied that there was official support for helping either Iran's nuclear program or North Korea's. But Khan, who has spent the past several years under a form of house arrest, has long insisted privately that his contacts with both countries were approved by top military officials.

In the interview, Khan was less direct about his contacts with North Korea. He confirmed that Pakistan obtained critical missile technology from the country, but he refused to comment "at the moment" on aiding its nuclear program. U.S. and allied proliferation experts, and some former senior Pakistani officials, have said that Khan assisted North Korea in developing a capability to enrich uranium for a bomb.

Several years ago, North Korea said it was pursuing uranium enrichment, then denied it. Last week, it said it was in the "final stage" of enriching uranium. Khan, in the interview, said North Korean engineers have visited "our director generals in their departments to observe different operations." But he added that "nuclear technology cannot be learned by visiting a nuclear site and observing a few machines."

Stephen P. Cohen, a proliferation expert at the Brookings Institution, said Khan has "always threatened to tell more - perhaps who authorized the transfer of designs and samples of technology, if not more, to several states." But he said Khan appeared to hold back a lot in the interview.

A spokesman at the Pakistani Embassy in Washington, Nadeem Kiani, emphasized that Khan has no "official status" and that Pakistan "does not want proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region."

"These are the views of a person who has been rendered ineffective, and his network has been completely shut up," Kiani said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/08/AR2009090803731.html>

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Times of India  
9 SEPTEMBER 2009

## **Lankan Muslims in Dubai Supplied Nuclear Materials to Pak: Khan**

WASHINGTON: Pakistan's nuclear scientist A Q Khan has said that Sri Lankan Muslims based in Dubai were suppliers of nuclear material and equipments not only to Pakistan but also to Iran and Libya.

"Be it Libya, Iran, or Pakistan, the same suppliers were responsible for providing the material through the same third party in Dubai," Khan has revealed in an interview to a Pakistani news channel.

"It was a company with which we had established links when we could not receive the material from Europe. They were Sri Lankan Muslims," Khan said in his interview in Urdu, aired in Karachi on August 31.

The Directorate of National Intelligence's Open Source Center translated the interview into English, which has not been made public yet. However, a copy of it was obtained by the Secrecy News of the Federation of American Students (FAS).

Giving an interesting insight into acquiring of nuclear technology by Iran, he said, "The Iranian officials would meet (suppliers) them in Dubai. We had told the Iranians that the suppliers were very reliable."

Noting that Iran was interested in acquiring nuclear technology, Khan said, "Since Iran was an important Muslim country, we wished Iran to acquire this technology. Western countries pressured us unfairly."

If Iran succeeds in acquiring nuclear technology, we will be a strong bloc in the region to counter international pressure. Iran's nuclear capability will neutralize Israel's power. We had advised Iran to contact the suppliers and purchase equipment from them."

Denying that Pakistan did not transfer any nuclear technology to North Korea in exchange of the missile technology, Khan, however, refrained from making any comment on the accusation that he transferred nuclear technology to North Korea. He did concede though that he went to North Korea twice in 1994 and 1999.

"In 1999, Gen Musharraf sent me along with Gen Iftikhar, who was the then chief of Air Defense Command. We were fighting India at Kargil, and we were in dire need of anti-aircraft missiles. Musharraf said that we could purchase the missiles from North Korea. We went to North Korea and purchased 200 missiles from them."

He said a North Korean team visited the Kahuta plant during the same period, as the missile deal was taking place. It was no secret, he argued, adding everyone knew about it.

"They would stay at a guest house in the vicinity of Kahuta plant, because we did not have any other nuclear facility and our missiles were also being manufactured there. We did not spend any additional amount on the missile program," he said.

"The expense that was incurred on the missile program was that of the construction of prefabricated shades, which we would use in those missiles, and purchase of a few machines.

The North Korean engineers would visit our director generals in their departments to observe different operations. But nuclear technology cannot be learned by visiting a nuclear site and observing a few machines," he said.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/news/world/pakistan/Lankan-Muslims-in-Dubai-supplied-nuclear-materials-to-Pak-Khan/articleshow/4988776.cms>

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New York Times  
September 9, 2009  
WORLD BRIEFING | ASIA

## **U.S. Acts on North Korea Assets**

By REUTERS

The United States State Department moved Tuesday to freeze the assets of two North Korean entities believed to be involved in atomic and missile programs, in what analysts said was an attempt to raise pressure on the North to resume disarmament talks. The entities are the General Bureau of Atomic Energy, which oversees the nuclear program, and the Korea Tangun Trading Corporation, thought to support the North's missile programs. It was unclear whether either had any assets under American jurisdiction, but American officials said the government hoped that the move would discourage other countries from doing business with North Korea.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/09/world/asia/09briefs-Nkorea.html>

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Bloomberg.com  
September 9, 2009

## **North Korea May Test Third Nuclear Bomb, Defector Agency Says**

By Heejin Koo

Sept. 9 (Bloomberg) -- North Korea may test a third nuclear bomb late this month or early next should the United Nations and the U.S. strengthen sanctions against the communist nation, a South Korean group of North Korean defectors said.

North Korea leader Kim Jong Il told his top military and party officials last month to prepare for another nuclear weapons test in the event the U.S. continues to pressure North Korea and reject its attempts at starting dialogue, the Seoul-based Open Radio for North Korea said in an e-mailed newsletter, citing an unidentified high-ranking North Korean official.

The U.S. is orchestrating financial restrictions under UN auspices against North Korean companies suspected of being involved with its nuclear development program. The State Department said yesterday it would freeze assets of North Korea's state-run General Bureau of Atomic Energy and the Korea Tangun Trading Corp.

North Korea, which in May tested a second nuclear device, last week said it's in the final stages of weaponizing plutonium and can either engage in negotiations or accelerate its program. The communist nation walked out of disarmament talks involving the U.S., China, Russia, South Korea and Japan in April.

Stephen Bosworth, the top American envoy on North Korean nuclear issues, said over the weekend that the U.S. would hold talks with Kim's government only within the six-party framework.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601080&sid=a.R3wxVSAX78#>

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Xinhua News – China

9 September 2009

## **China Advocates Negotiated Settlement of Regional Nuclear Issues**

VIENNA, Sept. 9 (Xinhua) - The Board of Governors Meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Wednesday discussed the topic of the denuclearization process on the Korean Peninsula as well as the Iranian nuclear issue. China called for the solution of regional nuclear issues through consultation and dialogue.

Hu Xiaodi, permanent representative of China to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Vienna, stressed that "the nuclear issue in the Korean Peninsula could only be resolved peacefully through consultation and dialogues."

He pointed out that "the six-party talks is a practical and feasible means" to solve the issue and urged all parties to "continue to maintain and make good use of this effective platform."

Hu stressed that the Iran nuclear issue is related to the effectiveness of international nuclear non-proliferation regime, the rights of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) State Parties to peaceful use of nuclear energy, as well as regional peace and stability.

The Chinese government maintains that "it serves the interest of all parties to find a peaceful solution to the Iranian nuclear issue through dialog and negotiation," he said.

As Iran has said that it would put forward new package for negotiation, and the six-parties also reaffirmed the determination to resolve the issue through negotiation, "There still exists an opportunity for a negotiated settlement to the Iranian nuclear issue," he said.

China hopes that "all interested parties should make use of every positive factor, set up diplomatic efforts to achieve resumption of negotiations as soon as possible and find a proper and negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue," said Hu.

He stressed that China has always been committed to safeguarding the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, and maintaining regional peace and stability, and that it will make unremitting efforts to "promote a proper and negotiated settlement" to the nuclear issues in the Korean Peninsula and Iran.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-09/10/content\\_12023974.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-09/10/content_12023974.htm)

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Yonhap News – South Korea

## **U.S. to Pursue N. Korean Denuclearization through 6-way Talks: State Dept.**

By Hwang Doo-hyong

WASHINGTON, Sept. 9 (Yonhap) -- The United States Wednesday reiterated that it will pursue North Korea's denuclearization through the six-party talks.

"I think we've been clear all along that whatever we do has to be in very close consultation with our parties, because we believe that's the best way to solve this conflict, in a six-party context," State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said in a daily news briefing.

Kelly did not respond directly to the question whether the U.S. will have a one-on-one meeting with North Korea to facilitate the six-party talks, stalled over international sanctions on North Korea for its nuclear and missile tests earlier this year.

"I want to give a chance to the delegation to come back and debrief us on it," the spokesman said, referring to the just-concluded trip to Asian capitals by Stephen Bosworth, U.S. special representative for North Korea policy, to discuss ways to persuade Pyongyang to return to the multilateral nuclear talks.

Reports said that other parties to the six-way talks, including South Korea, China, Japan and Russia, have already agreed that Washington should have a bilateral dialogue with Pyongyang as part of the six-party process to promote resumption of the multilateral talks.

North Korea insists on having bilateral talks, saying the six-party forum has been used to violate its sovereign right to develop nuclear and rocket technologies. Pyongyang also warned of "further self-defensive countermeasures" if the international community continues its sanctions.

Winding up a weeklong Asian trip, Bosworth said in Tokyo Tuesday that Washington will soon decide how to respond to North Korea's demand for bilateral talks.

"As we have indicated in the past, the United States is willing to engage with North Korea on a bilateral basis, and we are currently considering how best to respond to a North Korean invitation for bilateral talks," he said. "We have not reached a decision on how to respond to this invitation, and we will be considering that in Washington over the next few weeks. We have made no decisions on whether and when and how to hold bilateral talks with the North Koreans."

North Korea said last week it was entering the final stages of a uranium enrichment process that can produce nuclear weapons and was building more nuclear weapons with spent fuel rods extracted from its plutonium-producing reactor. Its plutonium-based program was to be dismantled under a six-party deal.

Amid concerns that North Korea is building its nuclear arsenal without active engagement by the U.S., analysts say Bosworth may visit Pyongyang on his next Asia trip, describing it as part of consultations with other six-party members. Christopher Hill, the former chief U.S. nuclear negotiator, frequently used this method in years past to woo North Korea back to the table.

"We have to decide that we think that these would be useful and that it's timely," Bosworth said of the North's proposal for bilateral talks.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2009/09/10/13/0301000000AEN20090910000100315F.HTML>

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Boston Globe  
September 10, 2009

## **N. Korea Marks Anniversary**

By Hyung-Jin Kim, Associated Press

SEOUL - North Korea, facing international pressure to abandon its nuclear program, marked the communist country's 61st anniversary yesterday with a vow to "mercilessly annihilate the US imperialists" if they attack.

North Korean state TV played patriotic songs calling for eternal loyalty to leader Kim Jong Il for building a "paradise" on the Korean peninsula, while the country's main newspaper issued a lengthy editorial pledging to defeat any US aggression.

"Today, the US imperialists and other enemies are increasingly running amok over its new war plot to stifle our republic with its forces," the Rodong Sinmun editorial said. If the United States attacks, the North will "mobilize all military strengths and mercilessly annihilate the aggressors."

It also praised Kim's "military first" policy, under which he has devoted much of the impoverished country's scarce resources to his 1.2-million-member army, making it one of the world's largest.

"The military power is the centerpiece of the national strength and we cannot think about our country's prosperity without powerful guns," the paper said.

The anniversary of the country's founding is a major holiday in North Korea, along with the birthdays of the leader and his father, late founder Kim Il Sung.

North Koreans streamed to Mansu Hill in Pyongyang yesterday to lay flowers and bow before a towering statue of Kim Il Sung, footage from television news agency APTN showed.

A year ago, Kim Jong Il's failure to appear at a massive military parade for the country's milestone 60th anniversary sparked feverish speculation about his health and concern that his sudden death could trigger a succession crisis in the nation he rules with absolute authority.

US and South Korean officials later said Kim was believed to have suffered a stroke. However, the 67-year-old leader appears to have recuperated and remains in charge, US and South Korean officials said.

The anniversary comes at a time of heightened tensions over North Korea's nuclear defiance, following its abandonment of a 2007 disarmament-for-aid pack and pullout from talks with the United States, South Korea, China, Russia, and Japan.

Earlier this year, North Korea earned international condemnation for conducting nuclear test, launching a rocket, and test-firing a barrage of missiles. However, the regime has reached out to Washington and Seoul in recent weeks by releasing detained Americans and South Koreans and reportedly inviting US officials to Pyongyang for one-on-one talks.

The United States has said it would meet the North Koreans - but only in the context of the now-stalled six-nation disarmament negotiations.

[http://www.boston.com/news/world/asia/articles/2009/09/10/n\\_korea\\_marks\\_anniversary/](http://www.boston.com/news/world/asia/articles/2009/09/10/n_korea_marks_anniversary/)

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Washington Post  
September 11, 2009

## **A Succession Saga Goes Silent**

By Blaine Harden  
Washington Post Foreign Service

SEOUL -- The murky process of hereditary succession in North Korea appears to have been suspended, at least for now, and the rise to power of Kim Jong Il's third son may be on hold, according to South Korean analysts and three organizations with informants inside the secretive state.

Kim Jong Un, 26, is the likely heir to the dynasty that rules North Korea, South Korean intelligence officials told lawmakers here in June. His nomination was apparently triggered by the ill health of his 67-year-old father, who suffered a stroke 13 months ago and looked sickly in television footage in the spring.

But Kim Jong Il has since shown signs of improved health. He has appeared relatively robust on state-controlled TV this summer and reportedly acted spry in his meeting last month with former president Bill Clinton, who flew to Pyongyang to secure the release of two jailed U.S. journalists.

"When Kim Jong Il's health was deteriorating and the outside world was speculating on a power struggle, there was a need to launch a visible succession campaign to quell rumors," said Koh Yu-hwan, a North Korea specialist at Dongguk University in Seoul. "Now that he appears to be back in the saddle," Koh said, there is a need to suspend the succession process to prevent elites in Pyongyang from dividing into camps for or against Jong Un.

In an interview Thursday with a Japanese news agency, North Korea's No. 2 leader, Kim Yong Nam, denied foreign media reports that Kim Jong Il has selected his third son to be his successor.

"We haven't even had discussion on such an issue in our country," he told Kyodo News. He added that Kim Jong Il is now running the party, the government and the military "with an abundance of energy."

There is little certainty about internal political developments in Pyongyang, where the government has denied that Kim Jong Il suffered a stroke and has made no official public announcements about succession. No recent photographs of Jong Un have been released, and his name has not been published in official documents.

But three organizations that closely monitor North Korea, two from Seoul and one from Japan, report that the succession process for Jong Un went oddly silent in mid-summer.

The North Korean government issued an order in July that the succession issue was not to be discussed, said Lee Seung-yong, director of Good Friends, a Buddhist charity that says it has informants in North Korea.

The Daily NK, a Seoul-based Web newspaper that often quotes unnamed midlevel officials in the North, reported that "authorities have commanded the people to stop all propaganda" about Jong Un.

The Web site quotes what it said was a July 28 decree from the Workers' Party central committee: "Stop sending out propaganda regarding Captain Kim [Jong Un] in lecture meetings or on Channel 3 [a television station in Pyongyang], and refrain from using the expression, 'Young General of Mt. Paektu.' "

Mount Paektu is the highest peak on the Korean Peninsula and a revered place. North Korea says that the country's founder, Kim Il Sung, organized guerrillas to fight Japanese occupation from bases on the mountain and that his son, Kim Jong Il, was born there.

Since July, there have been "absolutely no public relations activities by high-ranking officials vis-à-vis the succession," said Jiro Ishimaru, a Japan-based journalist who edits Rimjingang, a journal of dispatches, photos and videos smuggled out of North Korea by anonymous eyewitnesses. "Before that, it had been almost noisy, and the impression was given that formalization of succession would be soon."

A propaganda song titled "Footsteps," which was widely sung in the North in the spring as part of the state's campaign to prepare the public for Jong Un, has not been heard since July, Ishimaru said.

Lyrics of the song, which had been posted on many factory and company bulletin boards, have been taken down, Daily NK said, citing an unnamed source.

According to Open Radio for North Korea, a Seoul-based group with contacts in North Korea, Pyongyang began holding lectures in June for select audiences to trumpet the "greatness" of Jong Un. He was described as a "genius of literary arts" and a patriot who "is working without sleep or rest" to promote North Korea as a nuclear superpower, according to the organization.

The South Korean government had no comment on reports that the succession campaign in the North has been suspended. "It is our policy not to comment on intelligence or internal matters regarding North Korea," said Chun Hae-sung, a spokesman for the Unification Ministry.

Analysts in Seoul are divided about what the apparent suspension of the succession process may mean. Several said Kim's improved health would enable him to stretch out the succession, better prepare his third and youngest son for power, and persuade elites in Pyongyang that Jong Un is up to the job.

There is a precedent for taking it slow. Before succeeding his father as leader, Kim Jong Il won an internal endorsement in 1974, but it took an additional six years for him to consolidate power.

"Kim Jong Il needs time so Jong Un can get his credits and there are tangible achievements to show," said Cheong Seong-chang, a senior fellow at the Sejong Institute, a Seoul-based think tank.

He said that before Kim Jong Il's next birthday, on Feb. 16, there is a "high chance" that Jong Un will be given an official government position that would make him part of the country's decision-making process.

But Andrei Lankov, a North Korea specialist at Kookmin University in Seoul, said it is premature to talk about succession. "Now that Kim Jong Il has recovered, he has pushed aside the idea of having an heir," Lankov said.

There is also speculation among analysts that Jong Un may have run afoul of high-level officials in the Workers' Party or the National Defense Commission, which is the country's supreme ruling body and is chaired by his father.

"Kim Jong Un may have a head start, but the succession game isn't over yet," said Yoo Ho-yeol, a North Korea specialist at Korea University in Seoul.

Jong Un's eldest brother, Kim Jong Nam, may also still be in the running, Yoo said.



Jong Nam has many contacts in China, but many thought he lost his chance to succeed his father after he tried to sneak into Japan in 2001 using a phony passport. He told Japanese officials that he wanted to go to Disneyland in Tokyo.

In 1998, as a teenager, Jong Un enrolled under a fake name at a German-speaking state school in Liebefeld, Switzerland. He left the school in 2000 and is reported to have attended Pyongyang's Kim Il Sung Military University, an officer training school. Little else is known about him.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/10/AR2009091003966.html>

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Xinhua News – China  
9 September 2009

## **UN Secretary General Calls for More Nuclear Free Zones**

By Alexander Manda

MEXICO CITY, Sept. 9 (Xinhua) -- Ban Ki-Moon, the secretary general of the United Nations, on Wednesday called for more nuclear free zones, modeled on the Latin America wide area created in Mexico in the late 1960s, at the opening session of a disarmament conference here.

"We are hoping to see progress on this topic, especially in the Middle East," Ban told the opening session of the 62nd United Nations conference on disarmament which began on Wednesday in Mexico City.

He praise Central Asian nations for putting such a zone in place in 2006, and Latin America for pioneering the trend with the Tlateloco agreement, signed in Mexico City in 1967.

He said that disarmament is the United Nation's top priority under his administration, and that while nuclear weapons are the top priority, the UN also seeks to massively reduce the use of and trade in small arms including pistols and rifles which kill many more people each year.

Despite the end of the Cold War, "military spending continues to rise today and is now well above one trillion dollars," he said.

"Many of the world's 12,000 nuclear weapons are still on hair-trigger alert, threatening the survival of our species," he said.

UN statistics show that world weapons spending is above 200 dollars a person, while around a billion people worldwide are struggling to survive on a dollar a day, a widely used definition of absolute poverty. Ban said that the UN pursues the idea that development cannot be secured without disarmament and that disarmament cannot be secured without development.

"We are very pleased that the UN Security Council will hold a meeting on Sept. 24 to discuss nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament," he added. The meeting will be chaired by U.S. President Barack Obama, who Ban said had revived disarmament effort worldwide.

Ban said the UN was pursuing disarmament based on five guiding principles, the first of which was never to lose focus on disarmament.

The second is that "disarmament must be reliably verified. The UN is seeking a new convention or mutually reinforcing instruments," he said. Thirdly "disarmament must be related to legal obligations."

In this context he praised Obama for committing to the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty on nuclear weapons. The agreement requires ratification by all 44 nations that have nuclear reactors or weapons to enter into force. India, Pakistan and North Korea, which have nuclear capabilities, have not signed the treaty. Nuclear armed India and Pakistan went to war in the early part of this decade, but did not use nuclear weapons and signed a ceasefire in 2003.

"The UN will host a special meeting at the sidelines of the general assembly to urge early adoption of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty," he said.

The fourth principle is seeking the greatest possible transparency from nations with nuclear weapons and the fifth is that disarmament must anticipate new types of weapons like those based on vehicles in space.

Ban stressed that disarmament is needed because security can never be completely guaranteed by even the most spectacular weapons alone.

"No nation acting on its own, no matter how powerful, can solve this on its own," he said.

Ban said that he was hopeful for an agreement pursued by Obama, to check the production of fissionable materials, which can later be used for nuclear bombs.

The conference is run by the United Nations Department of Public Information alongside leading non-government organizations, under the headline "For Peace and Development: Disarm Now." It is the first time the annual conference has been held in Latin America and only the second time outside of UN headquarters in New York.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-09/10/content\\_12024007.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-09/10/content_12024007.htm)

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Wall Street Journal  
OPINION  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

## **Taking Iran Seriously**

By DANIEL R. COATS, CHARLES S. ROBB AND CHARLES WALD

President Barack Obama and other world leaders agreed two months ago that at the G-20 summit in Pittsburgh this month they would "re-evaluate Iran's posture towards negotiating the cessation of a nuclear weapons policy." That reassessment cannot come too soon.

Last year, a high-level Bipartisan Policy Center task force in which we participated concluded that a nuclear weapons-capable Iran would be "strategically untenable." Alarmed by how little diplomatic progress has been made, we have just updated that report. Not only has Iran continued its nuclear program unabated, but its regime has emerged from post-election turmoil more radical than ever.

From his first days in office, Mr. Obama has extended an open hand to Iran. His efforts have demonstrated the sincerity of U.S. diplomacy and built goodwill with our allies. But the virtue of perseverance should not devolve into the folly of futility. We believe it is now time to devise a new strategy.

The centrifuges at Natanz continue spinning. At its current pace, Iran's nuclear program will be able to manufacture enough highly enriched uranium for a nuclear weapon in 2010. A nuclear-armed Iran would not only pose a security threat to the U.S. and its allies. It would embolden Iranian-sponsored terrorist groups, destabilize the region, upset global energy markets, and spark a wave of proliferation across the Middle East. Moreover, if we do not act quickly and credibly to address this threat, we run the very real risk of Israel taking matters into its own hands.

It is critical that Mr. Obama use the upcoming special session of the U.N. Security Council and the G-20 summit to marshal support for a robust strategy aimed at preventing both Iranian nuclear-weapons capability and an Israeli strike. This new strategy needs to begin with the imposition of expanded and more effective sanctions on Iran's banking and energy sectors, as well as on companies that do business with them. Congress is already considering legislation to this effect. While its enactment would send a political signal to Tehran, such sanctions are unlikely to have much economic effect on Iran without international cooperation.

Given Iran's shortening nuclear timetable and diplomatic challenges for forging an international consensus on sanctions, we urge Mr. Obama simultaneously to begin preparations for the use of military options. Now is the time for the president to reinforce his commitment to "use all elements of American power to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon," as he stated in February. We believe only a credible U.S. military threat can make possible a peaceful solution.

By showing that he has not taken the military option off the table, Mr. Obama may also be able to convince Israel to forgo a unilateral military strike while forcing Tehran to recognize the costs of its nuclear defiance. Furthermore, making preparations now will enable the president, should all other measures fail to bring Tehran to the negotiating table, to use military force to retard Iran's nuclear program. We do not downplay the risks of this option and recognize its complications, but we do believe it to be a feasible option of last resort.

We understand the reluctance of Americans to consider confronting the Iranian nuclear threat, given their weariness from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and continued economic hardships. But after eight months of diplomatic overtures, numerous rebuffs and a brutal crackdown on its own people, Tehran's willingness to negotiate in good

faith is subject to considerable doubt . Leadership will be critical, and it will require making hard, even unpopular, choices to protect the interests of our country.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203440104574402583170409334.html>

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Wall Street Journal  
OPINION  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

## **Kim's Uranium Spin**

Only last month, the conventional wisdom was that North Korea was showing promising new signs of moderation, what with Kim Jong Il's parley with Bill Clinton, the release of two American journalists and some South Korean hostages, and a highly publicized meeting between a Pyongyang diplomat and New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson.

On Friday, the charm offensive ended. In a letter to the U.N. Security Council, the North announced that "reprocessing of spent fuel rods is at its final phase and extracted plutonium is being weaponized." As significant, Pyongyang also announced that an experimental uranium enrichment process—the second route to an atomic bomb—was nearing its "completion phase."

Some background: In 2002, U.S. officials presented North Korean negotiators with evidence that Pyongyang was secretly working on a uranium enrichment program, a violation of both the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and the Clinton Administration's 1994 "Agreed Framework" that supposedly put a stop to the North's nuclear ambitions. Remarkably, the Koreans admitted as much—an admission they later denied making. The admission triggered the Bush Administration's decision to suspend its obligations under the 1994 accord, which included fuel shipments and the construction of electricity-generating "light-water" reactors in the North.

The evidence that the North really did have an enrichment program was hardly circumstantial. Pakistani nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan shipped about a dozen centrifuges, along with the plans to make more, to North Korea in the late 1990s. In 2002 two Germans were convicted for attempting to ship 22 million tons of aluminum tubing to North Korea, made to the specifications of the vacuum cases of centrifuges used for uranium enrichment. Former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage—no partisan gunslinger—said in 2003 that Pyongyang had acquired "many more [centrifuges] than was originally thought" and was "intent on going to a full-up production program."

However, this uranium evidence became terribly inconvenient in President Bush's second term when diplomats Condoleezza Rice and Christopher Hill turned U.S. policy toward negotiating with the North. So it was music to their ears when an intelligence official told a Senate committee in early 2007 that the intel community only had "midlevel confidence" in the existence of a uranium program.

"The Administration appears to have made a very costly decision that has resulted in a fourfold increase in the nuclear weapons of North Korea," Rhode Island Democrat Jack Reed told the New York Times, suggesting that Bush Administration hawks had squandered a diplomatic opportunity with the North out of fear of a phantom enrichment program.

Now fast forward to the present, and the North has once again admitted—boasted—to the uranium program. It's possible Kim is exaggerating the scope of his program as a possible bargaining chip to demand more money and aid from the U.S. and Seoul. But that has to be weighed against the North's success in producing weapons-grade plutonium and its close nuclear ties to Iran, which does have a well-advanced enrichment program.

Whatever the case, the admission shows that John Bolton and other Bush Administration hawks weren't hyping anything when they accused the North of violating their Clinton-era commitments. It also shows that the negotiators at State were at the very least gullible when they decided to downplay the uranium program. Now it's the Obama team's turn to deal with the reality of the North's intransigence and dishonesty. And this time, they don't have the Bush Administration to kick around anymore.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203585004574395651704373822.html>

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Foreign Policy

OPINION

SEPTEMBER 10, 2009

## **Punishing A.Q. Khan**

BY LEONARD S. SPECTOR

Last week, a Pakistani court lifted the requirement that A.Q. Khan, mastermind of history's most notorious international nuclear-smuggling ring, remain under police escort when traveling about the country. With Khan having been pardoned of any crimes arising from his nuclear dealings by former Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf, and having been released after five years under house arrest last February, ending the escort requirement will leave Khan a free man, able once again to enjoy to the fullest the profits he made from his misdeeds. A higher court is reviewing the decision, but at best, it would seem, the police escort might be reinstated.

The rest of the world, however, does not have to go along with Pakistan's unseemly leniency. There are ways to punish Khan from outside Pakistan for his reckless (and highly profitable) activities, which supported nuclear weapon ambitions in Iran, Libya, and North Korea by providing equipment for enriching uranium to weapons grade and, in at least one case, details on how to fabricate a nuclear weapon.

The most potent response would be for the U.N. Security Council to impose a freeze of Khan's assets worldwide, potentially depriving him of his ill-gotten wealth. Three Security Council resolutions that seek to constrain Iran's nuclear program have demanded that Iran halt its uranium enrichment program and have required all U.N. member states -- including Pakistan -- to [freeze the assets](#) of persons designated by the Security Council "as being engaged in, directly associated with or providing support for Iran's proliferation sensitive nuclear activities." Because Tehran is currently utilizing technology that Khan provided in the country's U.N.-proscribed uranium-enrichment program, in legal terms Khan's offense can be considered a continuing one, providing the Security Council with ample basis to designate him and immobilize his financial resources.

The Security Council resolutions also bar designated individuals from traveling to any U.N. member state. If Khan were added to the list of designated individuals, this could help ensure he does not attempt to meet with former members of his ring and resuscitate his nuclear smuggling operations.

The Security Council's action, moreover, would be a powerful expression of the international community's condemnation of Khan's behavior, a painful rebuke that in itself would be a form of punishment. In addition, the asset freeze and travel ban might help deter future enablers of Iran's nuclear aspirations.

As a second avenue for penalizing Khan, Germany, Britain, South Africa, Switzerland, and the United States have each prosecuted individuals who violated national export-control laws while working for the Khan nuclear-supply network. These cases could be reopened or new cases brought to include Khan as a co-conspirator. Extraditing Khan from Pakistan may be politically impractical, but issuance of an Interpol "red notice," based upon prosecuting states' arrest warrants, could serve as the basis for his provisional arrest wherever he might travel outside Pakistan, pending his extradition. (The red notice enables any country to provisionally arrest him, pending his extradition to a state where he is the subject of a prosecution.)

Civil litigation could be another avenue for punishing Khan. Extensive evidence, including statements by Musharraf, establishes that Khan sold Iran uranium-enrichment centrifuge technology. The core technology was the property of Urenco, the British-Dutch-German consortium that developed the technology, as can be readily demonstrated by a comparison of the Urenco design and technical data from the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA's) inspections of Iran's centrifuges. Because Urenco never authorized Khan to possess this highly classified technology, these facts provide ample basis for Urenco to sue Khan for misappropriation of trade secrets.

Although Khan's unauthorized taking of the technology occurred in the 1970s, only in recent years has sufficient evidence emerged via Khan's exposure and the IAEA inspections in Iran to establish the trade-secret claim in a court of law. This should excuse the long delay in bringing the suit. If Urenco were successful before a Dutch or British court, executing any judgment in states where Khan's assets were held might prove a challenge, but it is one that is not uncommon in international litigation and often overcome.

Khan's actions are not considered crimes against humanity or war crimes, in part because -- most fortunately -- his activities have not caused mass suffering. But there is a grave risk that they might lead to catastrophe in the future. One legacy of the latest developments in the Khan imbroglio should be intensified attention to making nuclear technology smuggling in violation of national laws an international crime.

In the meantime, guilty of unjust enrichment in all senses of the phrase, Khan can and should be made to pay for his actions.

[http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/09/10/punishing\\_aq\\_khan](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/09/10/punishing_aq_khan)

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## **A Friend to Iran**

DEBATES IN Washington about Hugo Chávez often end with the dismissive conclusion that the Venezuelan strongman poses no threat to the United States. If that's right, it's not because he isn't trying. For years he has been traveling the world in an effort to build alliances with present or former U.S. enemies, from Cuba to Vietnam. He dreams of standing at the head of a global anti-American military alliance. Most of his efforts have been rebuffed; some have produced mere buffoonery, like his annual, ludicrous love-fest with Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko.

But Mr. Chavez has clearly forged a bond with one leader who is as reckless and ambitious as he is: Iran's Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. The growing fruits of this relationship, and its potential consequences for U.S. security, have not gotten as much attention as they deserve.

Mr. Chávez was in Tehran again this week and offered his full support for Mr. Ahmadinejad's hard-line faction. As usual, the caudillo made clear that he shares Iran's view of Israel, which he called "a genocidal state." He endorsed Iran's nuclear program and declared that Venezuela would seek Iran's assistance to construct a nuclear complex of its own. He also announced that his government would begin supplying Iran with 20,000 barrels of gasoline a day -- a deal that could directly undercut a possible U.S. effort to curtail Iran's gasoline imports.

Such collaboration is far from new for Venezuela and Iran. In the past several years Iran has opened banks in Caracas and factories in the South American countryside. Manhattan district attorney Robert Morgenthau, who has been investigating the arrangements, says he believes Iran is using the Venezuelan banking system to evade U.S. and U.N. sanctions. He also points out that Iranian factories have been located "in remote and undeveloped parts of Venezuela" that lack infrastructure but that could be "ideal . . . for the illicit production of weapons."

"The opening of Venezuela's banks to the Iranians guarantees the continued development of nuclear technology and long-range missiles," Mr. Morgenthau said in a briefing this week in Washington at the Brookings Institution. "The mysterious manufacturing plants, controlled by Iran deep in the interior of Venezuela, give even greater concern."

Mr. Morgenthau's report was brushed off by the State Department, which is deeply invested in the Chávez-is-no-threat theory. State "will look into" Mr. Morgenthau's allegations, spokesman Ian Kelly said Wednesday. Meanwhile, Mr. Chávez is off to Moscow, where, according to the Russian press, he plans to increase the \$4 billion he has already spent on weapons by another \$500 million or so. Mr. Chávez recently promised to buy "several battalions" of Russian tanks. Not a threat? Give him time.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/09/09/AR2009090902607.html>

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