



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER

CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL

Maxwell AFB, Alabama

Issue No. 754, 20 October 2009

Articles & Other Documents:

[U.S. Russia to Resume Talks](#)

[Classified Info on Dangerous Chemicals Hacked](#)

[Russia To Do Its Best To Sign Arms Cuts Deal With U.S. By Dec.](#)

[N. Korea Demands Nations with Biggest Nuclear Arsenals Take Lead in Disarmament](#)

[Lowering the Alert Levels In U.S. And Russia](#)

[S. Korea Insists on Denuclearized N. Korea](#)

[U.S. Seeks To Keep Watching Russia's Weapons](#)

[Russian, U.S., U.K. Officials Consider Nuclear Security](#)

[US Faces Pressure to Rewrite NIE Report on Iran](#)

[Conferees Approve Study of Nuclear Bomb](#)

[Talks on Iranian Reactor Deal Show Divisions on Sanctions](#)

[NPT and Obama: How Long Can India Hold Out?](#)

[UN Nuclear Chief Calls for U.S.-Iran Talks on Nuclear Dispute](#)

[Nonproliferation Meeting Working on Concrete Cuts](#)

[Iran Vows to Enrich Uranium Further if Talks Fail](#)

[Chávez says Iran Helping Venezuela Find Uranium](#)

[Iran 'Doubts' Over Nuclear Deal](#)

[Iran's Expanding Nuclear Program Poses One of the Obama Administration's Most Vexing Foreign Policy Challenges.](#)

[Iran Sets Demands Ahead of Nuclear Talks](#)

[Islamist Conspiracy Theorists with Nuclear Weapons: Why Iran has to be Stopped](#)

[Talks Stall After Iran Vows No Curbs on Atomic Drive](#)

[Nuclear Swap](#)

[Iran Threatens to Back Out of Fuel Deal](#)

[Anniversary of the Chinese Bomb: The Road to the Nuclear Club](#)

Welcome to the CPC Outreach Journal. As part of USAF Counterproliferation Center's mission to counter weapons of mass destruction through education and research, we're providing our government and civilian community a source for timely counterproliferation information. This information includes articles, papers and other documents addressing issues pertinent to US military response options for dealing with chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) threats and countermeasures. It's our hope this information resource will help enhance your counterproliferation issue awareness.

Established in 1998, the USAF/CPC provides education and research to present and future leaders of the Air Force, as well as to members of other branches of the armed services and Department of Defense. Our purpose is to help those agencies better prepare to counter the threat from weapons of mass destruction. Please feel free to visit our web site at <http://cpc.au.af.mil/> for in-depth information and specific points of contact. The following articles, papers or documents do not necessarily reflect official endorsement of the United States Air Force, Department of Defense, or other US government agencies. Reproduction for private use or commercial gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. All rights are reserved.

Straits Times – Singapore
October 18, 2009

US, Russia to Resume Talks

MOSCOW - RUSSIA and the United States resume talks on Monday in Geneva to thrash out a new agreement on limiting their nuclear arsenals, amid signs they are moving towards an accord.

Negotiators from the former Cold War foes come together for the latest meeting in negotiations aimed at replacing or renewing the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), a cornerstone of arms control between the two countries.

Washington and Moscow agreed earlier this year to reach a new nuclear deal to succeed START, which was hammered out in the dying days of the Soviet Union and expires on December 5.

Monday's talks are the seventh round in the marathon negotiations.

The process is an attempt to reach agreement between two countries whose relations were severely tested under the administration of the former US president George W Bush.

Efforts to forge a new nuclear disarmament pact are also in line with a pledge made by US President Barack Obama in April during a speech in Prague to work towards a world free of nuclear weapons. -- AFP

http://www.straitstimes.com/Breaking+News/World/Story/STIStory_443666.html

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

RIA Novosti (Russian Information Agency)
19 October 2009

Russia to do Its Best To Sign Arms Cuts Deal With U.S. By Dec.

MOSCOW, October 19 (RIA Novosti) - Russia will do its best to sign a new strategic arms reduction treaty with the United States by December, President Dmitry Medvedev said prior to his visit to Belgrade scheduled for Tuesday.

"Talks to work out a new, legally binding Russian-American agreement to reduce and limit the strategic offensive armaments are currently being held in Geneva," he told Serbian online publication Vecernje Novosti.

"We are doing everything necessary to achieve the signing of a relevant document by December," Medvedev said.

Medvedev and his U.S. counterpart Barack Obama agreed in July in Moscow on the outline of a deal to replace the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START 1), which expires on December 5, including cutting their countries' nuclear arsenals to 1,500-1,675 operational warheads and delivery vehicles to 500-1,000.

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

Moscow and Washington have been involved in a series of closed-door talks to prepare a new arms reduction deal until December. Both sides have expressed hope that the new agreement would be signed before the expiration of the current treaty.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20091019/156514340.html>

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

Washington Post
October 20, 2009

Lowering the Alert Levels In U.S. And Russia

By Walter Pincus

The high alert levels for U.S. and Russian strategic nuclear forces are more political statements carried over from the Cold War than military necessities for the 21st century, according to a multinational study released last week.

The two nations "could examine how measures to reduce operational readiness can accompany the bilateral arms control process" as part of the current negotiations over renewal of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, according to the study by the EastWest Institute, a nonprofit think tank. The study, "Reframing Nuclear De-Alert: Decreasing the Operational Readiness of U.S. and Russian Nuclear Arsenals," was supported by the governments of Switzerland and New Zealand governments.

The study reminds readers that the United States "keeps roughly 1,000 nuclear warheads on alert" atop 450 Minuteman III land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and on the submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) aboard as many as four Trident subs patrolling in different parts of the world.

Russia "retains approximately 1,200 warheads on alert," according to the study, with most on ICBMs, although Moscow's few operational strategic subs could launch missiles from home ports and hit U.S. targets.

The study says political leadership in Washington and Moscow must take the lead on the issue, since the countries' military organizations that maintain the weapons cannot be expected to change institutionalized security objectives and operational principles on their own.

The Russians have been hesitant, according to the study, because "de-alerting appeared to be part of a set of well-coordinated measures to divest Russia of its nuclear deterrent." U.S. stress during the Bush administration on high-precision conventional weapons "only strengthened this view." The study concludes in part that de-alerting "is not possible without a regular dialogue on security issues and on strategic arms control."

The study does a good job of trying to move the debate away from the old fear of nuclear forces being on a "hair-trigger alert." It quotes Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton A. Schwartz as saying, "There is rigorous discipline and process involved, and it is anything but hair trigger." The president must be briefed, make his decision to authorize a launch and have that transmitted to the National Military Command Center, which sends authorization codes to launch crews made up of two officers. The officers must confirm the authenticity of the message and together begin the launch sequence.

That system, according to the study, is "more like a revolver tucked away in its holster with its safety catch on than a gun cocked and ready to fire."

A Russian expert described his country's system as being in " 'zero launch' mode": It cannot be launched at even designated targets without approval from officials in Moscow, and when any order is given three officers must act together.

One enlightening section of the study points out how other nuclear-armed states handle operational status. China keeps an estimated 30 strategic systems on high alert, according to the study. It identified 12 as liquid-fueled ICBMs with two-megaton warheads "ready to launch in approximately 30 minutes," and 18 solid-fueled ICBMs "in silos on a 20-minute alert."

France has eliminated its land-based nuclear missiles, keeping the weapons on its submarines in the " 'lowest possible' level consistent with the maintenance of the credibility of its deterrent." England, which has eliminated its bomber- and land-based nuclear forces, keeps its Trident subs untargeted and "on several days' notice to fire."

India, which subscribes to a no-first-use doctrine, reportedly keeps its warheads separate from its delivery systems, as does Pakistan. When it comes to Israel, which does not acknowledge the reported 200 nuclear bombs and missiles in its arsenal, the study said, "not enough is known . . . to warrant an assessment."

The study lays out what it calls the "undesirable side effects" of some de-alerting proposals, primarily the removal of warheads from delivery systems. That approach, it said, would make de-alerted weapons "in storage . . . an attractive target for a first strike, including with conventional weapons." It also "may provoke a dangerous reconstitution race" at times of crisis.

Hans Kristensen of the Federation of American Scientists, who first mentioned the EastWest Institute study on his Secrecy News Web site, said de-alerting is among the issues being analyzed in the Pentagon's Nuclear Posture

Review. When completed by the end of this year and approved by the White House, the review will set out the administration's strategic nuclear policies, including the appropriate alert levels.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/19/AR2009101903329.html>

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

New York Times
October 20, 2009

U.S. Seeks To Keep Watching Russia's Weapons

By Thom Shanker and Peter Baker

WASHINGTON — With a key arms control treaty set to expire soon, the Obama administration is searching for ways to keep inspectors in Russia or else it risks losing American eyes on the world's second most formidable nuclear weapons arsenal for the first time in decades.

The administration has been negotiating a replacement for the pact, the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or Start, which goes out of force on Dec. 5. But even if the talks produce a new agreement by then, the Senate and the Russian Parliament will not have time to ratify it before the old one expires — and some Republicans on Capitol Hill are warning that approval is far from certain.

In the absence of a treaty or an ad hoc but legally binding “bridge” authority, American inspectors would be forced to leave Russia when the treaty expired, and Russian inspectors would have to leave the United States. State Department lawyers are examining several options in hopes of preserving the ability to monitor and collect information about Russia's nuclear weapons, administration officials confirm.

Under Start, the United States is allowed a maximum of 30 inspectors in Russia to monitor compliance with the treaty. Russia likewise has interests in finding a bridge mechanism to continue its similar rights to inspections in the United States.

If negotiators for President Obama and President Dmitri A. Medvedev of Russia reach agreement on a follow-up treaty that the two leaders can sign by Dec. 5, then the administration may seek what is called “provisional application,” putting the terms of the treaty into place on a temporary basis pending a Senate vote.

If the two sides do not settle on a new treaty, then the administration may seek some form of executive agreement with the Russians permitting inspectors to stay and information to be shared on terms similar to the current Start agreement while negotiators continue to talk.

Such an agreement, at least according to administration officials, would not require Senate approval, although lawmakers are demanding that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee be brought into the discussion. Administration officials said they would consult with Senate leaders on the plan.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton raised the issue with her Russian counterpart, Foreign Minister Sergey V. Lavrov, during talks in Moscow last week, according to senior officials. But the two sides have not yet agreed to any specific measures to continue verification efforts in the absence of a new treaty, these officials said.

“We are working on options to provide transparency on strategic forces during the time before the new treaty enters into force,” a senior administration official said Friday. “But I think it's premature to discuss specifics of any transparency options. Our focus is on getting the new treaty finished.”

The impending lapse of the treaty is already raising significant concerns on Capitol Hill.

Senator Richard G. Lugar of Indiana, the ranking Republican on the Foreign Relations Committee, asked the State Department for a report on what legal instruments were being considered as a “bridge” between the expiration of Start and a new treaty, and for a description of what verification activities could take place without a treaty.

Andy Fisher, a senior adviser to the senator, said Mr. Lugar had also asked whether any of the proposed verification mechanisms would require Congressional authority. The senator has expressed specific concern that verification measures not be allowed to lapse, Mr. Fisher said.

The Start agreement was signed in 1991 before the collapse of the Soviet Union and went into effect in 1994, requiring both sides to reduce their arsenals to 6,000 warheads. The two sides are trying to produce a new treaty that keeps many of the verification and inspection elements of Start, while bringing the legal ceiling on strategic warheads and delivery vehicles down even below today's much lower levels.

The administration hopes to follow up with a new round of negotiations on another treaty with Russia that would enact more far-reaching reductions in nuclear weapons as part of Mr. Obama's goal of eventually ridding the world of all nuclear arms.

Mr. Obama and Mr. Medvedev struck a preliminary agreement on the terms of a new treaty during a meeting in Moscow in July that would cut the arsenals of both sides by at least a quarter. The two presidents agreed to cut each side's strategic nuclear warheads to between 1,500 and 1,675, down from the 2,200 called for in 2012 by the Treaty of Moscow, which was signed in 2002.

The number of delivery vehicles, like land-based intercontinental missiles, submarine-based missiles and long-range bombers, would be cut to between 500 and 1,100, down from the 1,600 currently allowed under Start.

Negotiations are progressing, but Russia continues to press for restrictions on missile defense systems to be included in the treaty, something the United States has refused to consider. Even though Mr. Obama reshaped President George W. Bush's plan for an antimissile shield based in Europe, Russian officials insist on legal limits.

Senior Republican aides in the Senate said a number of members were angered that the administration had undermined relations with two important NATO allies by canceling the Bush plan. It had called for 10 interceptors in Poland and radar in the Czech Republic; some senators have vowed to fight any post-Start treaty that includes provisions limiting missile defense.

Republicans also have called attention to comments by Russian military officers, who said that they might decide to field missiles with multiple warheads, which is seen as destabilizing and contrary to any new effort to lock in nuclear arms reductions.

Ratification of a follow-up treaty would require Mr. Obama and the Democratic leadership to hold all members of their party and gain at least seven more votes from Republicans.

Senators from both parties who specialize in arms control and military issues are asking that the president concentrate as well on how to enhance the safety of the nuclear stockpile and modernize the nation's weapons facilities in parallel with submitting a draft treaty for ratification.

Senators Jon Kyl and John McCain, both Republicans of Arizona, are leading that effort. A senior Republican Senate aide said some members were gearing up to push the administration to commit to developing a new warhead, although a number of senior Democrats argue that reopening a warhead assembly line would undermine the administration's nonproliferation message.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/20/world/europe/20arms.html>

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

Press TV – Tehran, Iran-based

October 17, 2009

US Faces Pressure to Rewrite NIE Report on Iran

Policymakers in Israel and the West are pressuring the US into rewriting the 2007 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iran, which concedes that the country does not seek nuclear weapons.

Quoting American secret agents, *The Wall Street Journal* revealed Friday that the US intelligence community is under a considerable amount of pressure to repudiate the 2007 NIE assessment, and instead pen a new report that is more consistent with the policies of Israel and Western powers.

One intelligence official, who was speaking on condition of anonymity, claimed that the spy community now has more information on Iran's uranium enrichment than two years ago.

"At some point in the near future, our analytic community is going to want to press the reset button on our judgments on intent and weaponization in light of Qom and other information we're receiving," he said.

Some of it "tracks precisely with what we've seen before," while other information "causes us to reassess what we've seen before," the official added.

Another US intelligence official noted that although officials were not "ready to declare the findings invalid," the fact that the previous report only covered the 2003-2007 timeframe, begs the need for a new assessment.

Citing the findings of more than 16 US spy agencies, the 2007 National Intelligence Estimate overturned earlier conclusions on Tehran's nuclear activities of two years ago, asserting with "high confidence" the non-diversion of Iran's nuclear program.

Israeli leaders reacted in shock and anger to the publication of the report, which disputed their long-standing claims of "an Iranian nuclear threat".

Tel Aviv, which reportedly houses an arsenal of some 200 nuclear warheads, views Tehran's nuclear program as a mortal threat.

Israeli leaders have repeatedly threatened to bomb Iranian nuclear facilities out of existence, but the release of the report significantly weakened their drive for war.

This is while the Islamic Republic, since its establishment in 1979, has gone to war only once, to defend itself against an Iraqi offensive in 1980, whereas Israel has invaded Lebanon twice, bombed Syria and Iraq, and regularly bombed and attacked Gaza and other Palestinian areas at will.

The Israeli regime has also masterminded a wave of undercover operations and terror plots in numerous countries, including Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Switzerland, and the US.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail.aspx?id=108921§ionid=3510203>

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

Washington Post
October 18, 2009

Talks on Iranian Reactor Deal Show Divisions on Sanctions

By Glenn Kessler
Washington Post Staff Writer

A team of Obama administration officials, joined by officials from France and Russia, will begin negotiating in Vienna on Monday with Iranian diplomats over terms of an unusual deal that could remove a significant amount of Tehran's low-enriched uranium from the country.

The administration views the deal -- which would convert the uranium into fuel for a research reactor used for medical purposes -- as a test of Iranian intentions in the international impasse over the nation's nuclear program. The reactor is running short of fuel, according to Iran, and so the administration proposed that 80 percent of Iran's enriched uranium stockpile be sent to Russia for conversion into reactor fuel. France would then fashion the material into metal plates, composed of a uranium-aluminum alloy, used by this reactor.

U.S. officials argue that if Iran fails to follow through on a tentative agreement on this deal, then it will help strength the case for sanctions. But the negotiations already have highlighted splits between the United States and two of the key players -- Russia and China -- in the effort to restrain Iran's nuclear ambitions.

During a visit to Moscow last week, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton was rebuffed by Russian officials when she tried to discuss the need for tougher sanctions if negotiations with Iran do not progress quickly. "All efforts should be focused on supporting the negotiating process," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said, with Clinton at his side. "Threats, sanctions and threats of pressure in the current situation, we are convinced, would be counterproductive."

Meanwhile, China signaled impatience with talk of new sanctions. On Thursday, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao met in Beijing with Iranian First Vice President Mohammad Reza Rahimi and declared that his government would seek "close coordination in international affairs" with Iran. "The Sino-Iranian relationship has witnessed rapid development, as the two countries' leaders have had frequent exchanges, and cooperation in trade and energy has widened and deepened," Wen said, according to the official New China News Agency.

Three other key players -- France, Germany and Britain -- are more willing to press for sanctions if progress is not apparent by the end of the year. A secret French Foreign Ministry strategy paper, published this month by the French weekly *Bakchich Hebdo* and translated by the Web site *ArmsControlWonk.com*, depicted France as the most eager for substantial sanctions.

There were "minor differences about the envisioned sanctions" with Germany and Britain, the paper said.

"The United States, which made an unprecedented overture to Iran in the spring, apparently does not intend to review this strategy until the end of the year. Its strategy is a bit more wait-and-see than ours." Russia and China, it added, "very clearly emphasize dialogue and do not wish to raise the idea of further sanctions."

French officials declined to comment on the document.

In a sign of American seriousness, the U.S. delegation for the talks in Vienna will be headed by Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel B. Poneman and include White House and State Department officials. The make-up of the Iranian delegation is unclear, but a Reuters report from Vienna quoted an Iranian official as saying Iran was sending relatively low-level officials rather than the head of its nuclear energy program.

Since officials announced a tentative agreement on the deal in Geneva on Oct. 1, Iran has sent a series of contradictory signals. Different Iranian officials have suggested at various times that there was no agreement; that Iran wanted to produce the fuel itself; that Iran wanted to purchase the fuel rather than convert its enriched uranium stock; and that Iran wanted to convert even more uranium. U.S. officials said they have no idea what Iran will propose in Vienna but they expect hard bargaining over timetables, payments and other issues.

The talks, to be held under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency, will last at least two days.

The French document suggested that Paris is concerned the U.S. gambit could lead to endless haggling. "We have given the United States our agreement for this operation, with conditions," it said. "In particular, it seems essential that . . . the entire 1,200 kg [2,640 pounds] of uranium leave Iran on a short deadline (Iran should be asked for an answer in principle by the end of October; the uranium should exit before the end of the year)."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/17/AR2009101701856.html>

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

Reuters

October 17, 2009

UN Nuclear Chief Calls for U.S.-Iran Talks on Nuclear Dispute

VIENNA (Reuters) - Direct talks without preconditions between the United States and Iran are the only solution to the conflict over Tehran's nuclear program, the U.N. nuclear agency's head was quoted as saying on Saturday.

New sanctions against Iran would only aggravate the dispute rather than push it to give in to international demands, Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, told Austrian daily Die Presse.

"Of course you can impose further sanctions. But I consider it rather unlikely that new sanctions will make Iran come around," ElBaradei said in an interview to be published on Sunday.

"President Barack Obama has understood that talks with Iran are the only possible solution," the Nobel Peace laureate said. "If you want to make progress, you have to start talks without preconditions."

Iran won itself a reprieve from the threat of harsher U.N. sanctions by engaging six world powers in high-level talks on October 1 in Geneva that opened the door to detente over its nuclear program after a seven-year standoff.

Iran says its nuclear program is for producing electricity. Western powers fear Iran wants to develop nuclear weapons.

ElBaradei said he was optimistic that follow-up talks in Vienna next week to finalize an agreement with Iran on processing its uranium abroad could open the door to broader talks about Iran's nuclear program.

"With this first step to build trust we could make an important contribution to defuse the crisis," he said.

(Reporting by Boris Groendahl; Editing by Angus MacSwan)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/topNews/idUSTRE59G1XV20091017?feedType=RSS&feedName=topNews>

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

The Star – Malaysia

October 19, 2009

Iran Vows to Enrich Uranium Further if Talks Fail

By Parisa Hafezi

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Iran will not hesitate to make more-highly-enriched uranium itself if there is no deal at talks with major powers starting in Vienna on Monday, an Iranian official said.

The talks with the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency, Russia, France and the United States offered the first chance to build on proposals for defusing tensions over Iran's nuclear activity that were raised at a high-level meeting in Geneva on Oct. 1.

But Iran struck a defiant tone hours ahead of the latest talks, due to begin at 1300 GMT.

Nuclear energy agency spokesman Ali Shirzadian said it was not "economically feasible" for Iran to further purify low enriched uranium (LEU) itself to yield the 150-300 kg of material that it needs for the reactor, but that it would do so if the Vienna talks "do not bring about Iran's desired result".

Iran won a reprieve from harsher U.N. sanctions by agreeing on Oct. 1 to inspections of a hidden nuclear site and, in principle, to send low-enriched uranium abroad for further enrichment into fuel for a Tehran reactor that makes cancer-care isotopes.

But it sent only a junior-level technical delegation to the Vienna talks, not its nuclear energy chief, indicating it may not be ready for a final agreement this week.

"The talks this week are supposed to seal the deal," said a senior Western diplomat, who requested anonymity due to political sensitivities.

"But, since we have had no negotiations thus far with the Iranians, the next couple of days could reopen a lot of what we hoped was already agreed in principle."

ALLEGATIONS OVER BOMBING

The talks may also be clouded by Iranian allegations that the United States and Britain backed militants who killed 42 people including six senior Revolutionary Guards commanders in a suicide bombing on Sunday.

Shirzadian told the official IRNA news agency that providing fuel for the Tehran reactor was "a good test to see whether the West is honest with Iran".

And he said Iran's programme to produce 5-percent LEU would continue, whatever the outcome.

"We will never abandon our right (to enrich)," he said.

Western diplomats say Tehran must ultimately curb the programme to dispel fears of a growing LEU stockpile being highly enriched to produce nuclear weapons.

LEU is used as fuel for nuclear reactors, while a nuclear bomb requires highly enriched uranium.

The West fears Iran's nuclear programme is a front to obtain a bomb. Iran says it needs nuclear technology to generate power.

The Vienna talks were likely to run 2-3 days and intended to finalise technical and legal aspects of the uranium proposal.

Western diplomats said Iran had signalled in Geneva that it was ready to ship about three-quarters of its declared stockpile of 5-percent-enriched uranium to Russia for refinement to 19.7 percent purity, then to France for fabrication into fuel rods.

The material would replace the dwindling reactor fuel with material in a form that is resistant to higher enrichment.

For the powers, the deal's payoff lies in greatly reducing Iran's LEU reserve.

The stockpile has no apparent civilian use since Iran has no operating nuclear power plants, but is now enough to fuel one atomic bomb, if Tehran chose to enrich it to 90 percent.

Western officials expect the deal to entail Iran sending out 1.2 tonnes of its LEU in one consignment before the end of 2009.

http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/10/19/worldupdates/2009-10-19T173747Z_01_NOOTR_RTRMDNC_0_-432570-5&sec=Worldupdates

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

BBC News – United Kingdom
October 19, 2009

Iran 'Doubts' Over Nuclear Deal

A state TV channel said Iran wanted to import fuel for its research reactor, without sending its own enriched uranium out of the country.

Russia, France and the US are preparing for talks with Iran on sending its uranium abroad for enrichment.

Iran had agreed in principle to have some uranium shipped out.

Monday's meeting in Vienna, hosted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), is being seen as a test of the diplomatic process now under way.

But BBC Tehran correspondent Jon Leyne reports from London that the TV report, if true, would be a major blow to the West's hopes of a new dialogue.

It appeared on Press TV, a government-run foreign news channel that often reflects government thinking.

Western powers say Iran is seeking a nuclear weapon, a charge Iran denies.

It says its nuclear programme is for purely civilian, peaceful purposes.

'Deal suits all'

The proposed deal hinges on an arrangement in principle that western negotiators say was reached in Geneva earlier this month.

Under this arrangement, Russia and France would treat low-enriched Iranian uranium and turn it into fuel rods for a research reactor in Tehran.

Our correspondent says in theory this is a deal that could suit everyone.

Iran would have the fuel it needs, tacit acknowledgement of its right to enrich uranium, and no new sanctions, while the West would get a guarantee that Iran's existing stockpile will not be diverted to make nuclear bombs.

But the Press TV quoted unnamed sources as saying Tehran was opposed to taking low-enriched uranium out of the country for further enrichment for reactor fuel.

Instead, the report said, it wanted to buy highly-enriched uranium directly from France, Russia or the US.

The talks in Vienna have many details to resolve, our correspondent adds.

Abolfazl Zohrehvand, an aide to Iran's lead nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili, was quoted as saying that under the current proposal, only enrichment above 5% would be done outside Iran.

"The importance of this is that Iran will retain the techniques and technology of enrichment... and we will keep our sites and research centre," he said, according to the Irna news agency.

"It is possible that in certain circumstances we will need uranium enriched to 63%, which we will buy under the supervision of the IAEA or indeed we will do the enriching ourselves."

Last month, the revelation of a second uranium enrichment plant in Iran further raised Western fears that Iran was trying to develop nuclear weapons.

The Iranian government has said it will allow IAEA inspectors into the site, thought to be near Qom.

The Iranian media has reported that the talks in Vienna could run into Tuesday.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8313679.stm

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

New York Times
October 20, 2009

Iran Sets Demands Ahead of Nuclear Talks

By DAVID E. SANGER

VIENNA — Iran on Monday opened its nuclear talks with the United States, Russia and France with veiled threats that it could back away from an agreement reached this month to ship more than three-quarters of its stockpile of nuclear fuel out of the country, unless the West accedes to Iranian demands for new fuel.

The threats, broadcast on Iranian television and in statements from the country's atomic energy organization, may have simply been negotiating tactics ahead of negotiations that started in Vienna, the city that saw so many Cold War nuclear talks between the United States and the Soviet Union.

In the runup to the talks, President Obama's aides said the talks, while advertised as a meeting of technical experts about a proposal to ship three-quarters of Iran's nuclear fuel out of the country for conversion into a form that could be useful in a medical research reactor, would take on far more importance.

"By the end of these next two days," one senior administration official in Washington said, "we'll know if the Iranians are serious and whether we have time" to pursue further diplomacy with Iran without fearing that it could race ahead to produce a weapon.

If Iran carries through on what the European nations said was its commitment on Oct. 1 to temporarily send its nuclear fuel to Russia and France, Washington will be able to claim that its diplomacy reduced the threat of an Iranian "nuclear breakout," a sudden race to convert reactor fuel into bomb fuel.

Iran's total known stockpile of fuel amounts to enough for one to two bombs, if it were further enriched. If it exports that fuel for further refinement abroad, experts believe it could not replace it for another year.

But in recent days the Iranians have repeatedly suggested that they may not ship the fuel out of the country at all, and would demand that the West sell it new fuel for its research reactor in Tehran, which is used largely for medical purposes. That would leave the existing fuel in the country, a situation that the United States, Europe and Israel has said is too dangerous, given Iran's history of hiding nuclear activity from international inspectors.

"The talks will be a test of the sincerity of those countries," Iranian Atomic Energy Organization spokesman Ali Sharisadian said. "Should talks fail or sellers refuse to provide Iran with its required fuel, Iran will enrich uranium to the 20 percent level needed itself," he said.

So far Iran is not known to have enriched fuel beyond 5 percent, the level needed for reactors. Enrichment at 90 percent or more is needed for a sophisticated weapon.

Next Sunday the International Atomic Energy Association, the United Nations nuclear watchdog agency that is playing host to the talks here, is also supposed to begin inspecting Iran's just-revealed enrichment center at Qum, beneath a mountain on an Iranian revolutionary guard site.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/20/world/middleeast/20nuke.html?hp>

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

YAHOO News.com

October 20, 2009

Talks Stall After Iran Vows No Curbs on Atomic Drive

Reuters

By Mark Heinrich

VIENNA (Reuters) — Talks between world powers and Iran on an accord to ease fears about its nuclear program stalled on Tuesday after Tehran vowed not to agree to curbs on uranium enrichment and said France could not be part of a deal.

The negotiations presided over by the U.N. nuclear watchdog offered the first chance to build on tentative deals hatched on October 1 to defuse a long standoff over fears Iran's nuclear energy campaign is a front for efforts to develop atomic bombs.

The talks were meant to flesh out details of an Iranian agreement in principle in Geneva to send low-enriched uranium to Russia and France for further refinement.

This would be converted into fuel rods to replenish dwindling fuel stocks of a Tehran reactor that makes radio-isotopes for cancer care.

But the negotiations between Iran and Russia, France and the United States on International Atomic Energy Agency premises failed to resume on Tuesday morning after Tehran suddenly refused to deal directly with France.

Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki and other officials in Tehran accused Paris of renegeing on contracts to deliver nuclear materials in the past.

A senior diplomat familiar with the talks said the parties were considering a face-saving compromise drafted by the U.N. nuclear watchdog. Under this Iran would sign a contract with Russia, and Russia would sub-contract further work to France.

French, U.S. and Russian delegations were seen circulating a draft document during the day. But a 1430 GMT target for resuming the meeting was not met, with Western diplomats saying Iran was hesitating to give its position.

Iran's delegation chief was later spotted leaving the IAEA compound in a car. "Consultations are continuing with the delegations involved," Iranian Ambassador Ali Asghar Soltanieh told reporters chasing him, without elaborating.

Other tough issues were requiring back-door consultations to settle before the meeting could resume to seal an agreement.

They included how much low-enriched uranium (LEU) Iran would send out, and when. Western powers wanted this to be about 75 percent of its declared stockpile, and to be shipped abroad in one consignment before the end of the year.

The West hopes that farming out a large amount of Iran's LEU reserve for reprocessing into fuel for the medical isotope reactor -- using technology Iran lacks -- will minimize the risk of Iran refining the material to high purity suitable for bombs.

Western diplomats say Tehran must ultimately curb the program to dispel fears of a growing LEU stockpile being further enriched, covertly, to produce nuclear weapons.

NO ENRICHMENT CURBS EVEN IF DEAL STRUCK

But Mottaki said Iran would not curtail enrichment as part of the LEU deal, as demanded by the U.N. Security Council, which has imposed some sanctions on Iran.

"Iran will continue its uranium enrichment. It is not linked to buying fuel from abroad," he told a Tehran news conference.

"The meetings with world powers and their behavior shows that Iran's right to have peaceful nuclear technology has been accepted by them. Iran will never abandon its legal and obvious right," he added.

LEU is used as fuel for nuclear reactors, while a nuclear bomb requires highly enriched uranium. The West fears Iran's declared civilian nuclear energy program is a front for producing fissile material for atomic bombs. Iran denies this.

Mottaki said Iran did not need France for the fuel plan.

"There are Russia, America ... I believe these countries are enough. Not too many countries are needed to provide Iran with the fuel," he said. "France, based on its shortcomings to fulfill its obligations in the past, is not a trustworthy party to provide fuel for Iran."

Iran has been hit by three rounds of U.N. sanctions for refusing to halt enrichment-related work. It said on Monday it would not hesitate to produce higher enriched uranium on its territory if the talks failed in Vienna.

Iran won a reprieve from harsher U.N. sanctions by agreeing on October 1 to IAEA inspections of a hitherto hidden enrichment site and to sending LEU abroad to ease concerns that it could achieve nuclear weapons "breakout" capacity in short order.

(Additional reporting by Sylvia Westall; Writing by Parisa Hafezi and Mark Heinrich; Editing by Jon Hemming)

http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20091020/wl_nm/us_iran_nuclear_5

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

New York Times
October 20, 2009

Iran Threatens to Back Out of Fuel Deal

By DAVID E. SANGER

VIENNA — Iran opened two days of nuclear talks with the United States, Russia and France on Monday with veiled public threats that it could back away from an agreement to ship more than three-quarters of its stockpile of nuclear fuel out of the country, unless the West acceded to Iranian demands to provide it with new fuel.

At the end of a nearly four-hour session, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohamed ElBaradei, said little about the negotiations other than “We’re off to a good start.”

Other participants in the talks, which filled an oversize conference room at the agency’s headquarters, said that although Iran’s representatives did not reject outright the idea of sending the country’s fuel to Russia and France for further enrichment, its negotiators stopped well short of reaffirming the statements the country made in talks on Oct. 1.

“This was opening-day posturing,” one participant in the talks said, declining to be identified because all sides had agreed not to discuss the specifics of the negotiations. “The Iranians are experienced at this, and you have to expect that their opening position isn’t going to be the one you want to hear.”

The talks are advertised as a meeting of technical experts, but much more is at stake. If Iran carries out its plan to use its own low-enriched uranium — produced in violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions — to fuel a reactor in Tehran used for medical purposes, American officials say that that use would set aside, for about a year, fears that Iran could use the fuel to produce a nuclear weapon. After that, Iran’s continuing production of uranium would refill its stockpiles.

“Our object is to get a sizable amount of low-enriched uranium out of the country of Iran, making the world more secure,” said Robert Gibbs, President Obama’s press secretary, at a White House news briefing.

A senior administration official said, “By the end of these next two days we’ll know if the Iranians are serious and whether we have time” to pursue further diplomacy without fear that Iran is racing ahead to produce a weapon from fuel ostensibly intended for other purposes.

Iran’s public statements about the agreement this month have not been entirely negative; some have expressed support for the deal. American officials say they still cannot determine Iran’s real position, if it has decided on one.

“Publicly it’s hard for them to be seen making a concession,” one American official said. “But maybe they have decided, for their own reasons, that this sets a precedent that they like, because it legitimizes to some extent the fuel they made when the Security Council ordered them to stop.”

Iran’s chief negotiator did not attend the session here, evoking memories of nuclear diplomacy in the cold war, when the Soviet Union and the United States often met on the comparatively neutral ground of the Austrian capital. Instead, Iran’s delegation was led by its ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency, Ali Asghar Soltanieh. Some participants emerged from the meeting with the impression that Mr. Soltanieh’s instructions were to drag out the talks.

The proposal under negotiation originated from Iran’s request to refuel the small medical reactor, which has long been subjected to international inspections and is not considered part of a nuclear weapons program. In early summer, Mr. Obama’s top arms control aide, Gary Samore, came up with a proposal to test Iran’s declarations that it had been enriching uranium solely for peaceful uses: offer to help Iran fabricate fuel for the reactor, but only from its own supplies. By most estimates, Iran’s total known stockpile of fuel amounts to enough for one to two bombs, if it were further enriched.

If Iran exports 2,645 pounds of that fuel, the amount it says it needs for the medical reactor, for further refinement abroad, experts say that it could not replace that fuel for another year. Russia embraced the idea, most recently when President Dmitri A. Medvedev met Mr. Obama at the United Nations last month. If the fuel enrichment went ahead on Russian territory, Russia would profit significantly.

But in recent days the Iranians have repeatedly suggested that they might not ship the fuel out of the country at all, and would demand that the West sell them new fuel for the medical reactor. Leaving the existing fuel in the country would be too dangerous, the United States, Europe and Israel have said, given Iran’s history of hiding nuclear activity from international inspectors.

“The talks will be a test of the sincerity of those countries,” said Ali Sharisdian, the Iranian Atomic Energy Organization spokesman. “Should talks fail or sellers refuse to provide Iran with its required fuel, Iran will enrich uranium to the 20 percent level needed itself.”

So far Iran is not known to have enriched fuel beyond 5 percent, the level needed for reactors. Enrichment at 90 percent or more is needed for a sophisticated weapon.

On Sunday, the International Atomic Energy Agency is supposed to begin inspecting Iran’s newly revealed uranium enrichment center near Qum.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/20/world/middleeast/20nuke.html>

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

Korea Times
October 17, 2009

Classified Info on Dangerous Chemicals Hacked

Hackers stole classified information on dangerous chemicals in their raid on the South Korean army computer network in what was believed to be an attack by North Korea, Yonhap News Agency reported Saturday, quoting government officials.

The Chemicals Accident Response Information System, used by 589 South Korean government agencies including fire and police stations, was accessed by hackers on March 5. Hackers appear to have broken into the system using the ID of a South Korean army officer whose personal computer was infected by a virus, according to officials.

"We believe the hacker tapped into the system using the ID, withdrawing classified information of 1,350 dangerous chemicals," an army official was quoted as saying by Yonhap. "The government believes North Korea could be behind the hacking. We are continuing our investigation."

The revelation comes less than three months after cyber attacks severely slowed or disrupted dozens of South Korean government and business Web sites, including those of the presidential office and ministries of defense and foreign affairs. Rumors were rampant then that North Korean hackers orchestrated the attacks, although they have yet to be substantiated.

"We are trying to find out exactly how much information has been withdrawn," another unnamed official at Seoul's Environment Ministry was quoted as saying, adding the government has asked organizations dealing with the chemicals to tighten security.

Unnamed intelligence sources in Seoul said in May that North Korea operates a cyber warfare unit that seeks to disrupt South Korean and U.S. military networks and visits U.S. military sites more frequently than any other country.

South Korea and the U.S. signed a memorandum of understanding on April 30 to bolster cooperation in fighting cyber terrorism against their defense networks.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2009/10/113_53708.html

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

Yonhap News – South Korea
18 October 2009

N. Korea Demands Nations with Biggest Nuclear Arsenals Take Lead in Disarmament

SEOUL, Oct. 18 (Yonhap) -- North Korea called for the worldwide removal of nuclear weapons and urged the United States first to end its atomic threat to Pyongyang for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula at a recent U.N. meeting, the North's state media said Sunday.

The North's Korean Central News Agency and other state media carried the remarks by an unidentified delegate at the Oct. 12 meeting of the First Committee of the 64th UN General Assembly.

North Korea "demands total and comprehensive elimination of nuclear weapons in the world," the North Korean official said at the meeting in New York, according to the reports.

"When the states with the largest nuclear arsenals take the lead in nuclear disarmament, it will positively influence the newly emerged nuclear weapons states in various parts of the world and also contribute to total elimination of nuclear weapons on this globe," he noted.

North Korea has hinted at rejoining the six-party talks it quit earlier this year after holding bilateral dialogue with the U.S. In addition, North Korean leader Kim Jong-il said to visiting Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao earlier this month that his country wants to have better relations with South Korea, the U.S. and Japan.

The six parties involved in the talks are the two Koreas, the U.S., China, Japan and Russia.

North Korea-U.S. contact is expected when a senior North Korean official attends a seminar in San Diego from Oct 26-27. The U.S. government has reportedly decided to grant a visa to Ri Gun, who is director general of the North American affairs bureau of North Korea's Foreign Ministry and deputy to the country's chief nuclear negotiator, Kim Kye-gwan.

The North Korean speaker at the U.N. meeting reiterated the country's demands to the U.S. to end its hostile policy toward it and replace the 1953 armistice of the Korean War with a peace treaty.

"If the Korean Peninsula is to be denuclearized, the U.S. should terminate its nuclear threat to the DPRK (North Korea) and definitely roll back its hostile policy toward the latter.

"Replacing the Korean Armistice Agreement with a peace arrangement is essential for peace and the reunification of the Korean Peninsula and peace and security in Northeast Asia and the rest of the world," he said.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2009/10/18/51/0401000000AEN20091018002700315F.HTML>

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

United Press International (UPI)

October 19, 2009

S. Korea Insists on Denuclearized N. Korea

SEOUL, Oct. 19 (UPI) -- South Korea will not improve relations with North Korea until Pyongyang takes serious steps to halt its nuclear programs, officials in Seoul said.

South Korean Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan Monday dismissed the possibility of an inter-Korean summit, despite recent conciliatory gestures from the North, the Yonhap News Agency reported.

"There is no real ground as yet to view the North's softening stance as an indication of a fundamental change in its position on the nuclear issue," Yu said at a seminar in Seoul.

In recent months, North Korea has released detained South Korean and U.S. citizens and allowed temporary reunions for family members living on opposite sides of the inter-Korean border.

This month, North Korean leader Kim Jong Il also reportedly told Chinese Premier Wen Jiabo that Pyongyang was preparing to rejoin denuclearization talks with a six-way forum involving the United States, South Korea, China, Russia, and Japan.

Those gestures, however, were tempered by North Korean missile tests this year, Yonhap reported.

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/International/2009/10/19/S-Korea-insists-on-denuclearized-N-Korea/UPI-88351255962926/

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

Global Security Newswire

October 19, 2009

Russian, U.S., U.K. Officials Consider Nuclear Security

Officials from Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States met last week to discuss measures to prevent terrorists from obtaining nuclear weapons, the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration announced (see *GSN*, Oct. 13).

The workshop was one of a series of meetings scheduled between the United States and Russia following the July Joint Statement on Nuclear Security signed by President U.S. Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, according to a press release.

The two-day session in Paris went over physical protection and other leading practices for preventing terrorists from acquiring nuclear materials and arms. It involved officials from the U.S. nuclear agency, the British Defense Ministry and the Russian State Atomic Energy Corporation.

"This workshop is an example of the high level of cooperation between our nations as we work together to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and to keep these weapons out of the hands of terrorists," said NNSA defense nuclear security head Brad Peterson in the release. "We are reconfirming our commitment to working together to prevent this nightmare scenario from becoming reality."

This is only the second time that the three nations have conducted a workshop to discuss best practices in nuclear security (U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration release I, Oct. 16).

On Friday, the U.S. nuclear agency also provided medical training in Vienna, Austria, for dealing with a radiation event. The training was attended by medical professionals from 20 countries at the headquarters of the International Atomic Energy Agency, a press release states.

Personnel received instructions on procedures for curtailing the spread of radioactive material during the treatment and movement of patients. Officials from the U.N. nuclear watchdog, France and Brazil provided context for the instructions by reviewing real-life radiological incidents.

"The breadth of our experience working in nuclear security over the past 60 years enables us to prepare other professionals for such incidents," said Joseph Krol, NNSA associate administrator for emergency operations, in a press release. "By working with the IAEA to share that expertise with other countries, we strengthen overall global preparedness" (U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration release II, Oct. 16).

http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20091019_2961.php

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

Washington Post
October 17, 2009

Conferees Approve Study of Nuclear Bomb

By Walter Pincus
Washington Post Staff Writer

The first step toward rebuilding one of the nation's tactical nuclear weapons so it could be put in the stockpile well into the 21st century has been approved by House and Senate conferees.

The lawmakers permitted \$32.5 million to be spent next year on feasibility, design and cost studies for the non-nuclear components of the B61-12 tactical nuclear bomb, according to their report released this week on the fiscal 2010 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill. The measure contains funds for the nation's nuclear weapons programs.

The rebuilding of the bomb has raised caused some members of Congress and anti-nuclear activists to question whether a new nuclear weapon is being assembled.

The Obama administration did not seek funds for studying the nuclear components of the B61-12, and the conferees made clear that no money could be spent for such a task without approval from the House and Senate Appropriations panels.

The Pentagon is midway through a congressionally mandated review to establish the Obama administration's nuclear weapons policies, including the number of weapons needed in the future. Called the Nuclear Posture Review, it is expected to be completed by the end of this year or early next year. The conferees said in their report that after that review, the National Academy of Sciences would look at the deterrence value of the B61 against nuclear terrorism

and other military threats, and that the independent JASON Defense Advisory Group would determine whether the B61-12 can be considered reliable without nuclear testing.

The Bush administration had looked at replacing the current stockpile of high-yield nuclear warheads with new, longer-lasting and more secure weapons. One candidate was a new version of the B61.

Focus has also been on the B61 because it is the nuclear weapon currently deployed in Europe for use by NATO, and must either complete refurbishing or be rebuilt, as is being considered. In a speech last month, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said the Nuclear Posture Review "in one or two cases" will "probably [recommend] new designs" for nuclear weapons "that will be safer and more reliable."

The B61 was first produced in 1966, with the number increasing in the 1970s as new modifications were introduced. In 2000, models of the B61-7 and B61-11 were put into refurbishment programs to extend their lives for 20 years.

In their report, the conferees approved \$9.9 billion for next year's operation of the National Nuclear Security Administration, which runs the nuclear weapons program within the Energy Department.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/16/AR2009101603619.html>

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

Times of India
17 OCTOBER 2009

NPT and Obama: How Long Can India Hold Out?

INDRANI BAGCHI, TOI CREST

"To achieve a global ban on nuclear testing, my administration will immediately and aggressively pursue US ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty." US President Barack Obama, Prague, April 5, 2009 "Nations with nuclear weapons have the responsibility to move towards disarmament and those without have the responsibility to forsake them." Obama, at the UN, September 24, 2009, while chairing a summit of the 15-member UN Security Council which unanimously adopted a resolution calling on countries that had not signed the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (like India) to join as "non-nuclear weapons states" and to "comply fully with all their obligations" pending their accession to the Treaty". The resolution also asked all states to refrain from conducting nuclear tests, and to sign and ratify the CTBT.

Even as New Delhi went into a frenzy over the mere thought that Barack Obama might indirectly be seeking to "pressure" India to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the real killer arrow was still in the American quiver, virtually forgotten but still enormously potent - the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) which is expected to knock on India's door yet again soon and with much greater purpose.

The intent was clear in Prague this April when Obama pledged to secure US ratification of CTBT which India once famously rejected with four eloquent words: "Not now, not ever." If he succeeds in his mission, pressure is certain to mount on India and eight other countries - including Pakistan, Israel and China - that have still not ratified the treaty. The other eight are expected to fall in line once US ratifies, leaving India with perhaps little option but to sign.

Obama's reiteration, at the UN, of his non-proliferation and disarmament policy has stirred the coals of strategic debate once again. How long can India hold out? As policy wonks went into a huddle, a few things got clear and have, in turn, reshaped the debate. To begin with, NPT - regarded by India as "discriminatory" - is not seen as the real threat. Within hours of Obama's grandstanding on NPT, Manmohan Singh clarified that he had been assured by Washington that the president's resolution was "not directed against India" and would not affect the India-US nuke deal.

The real challenge is CTBT which Obama, it is reckoned, would like to push through if only to burnish his disarmament credentials and live up to the Nobel Peace Prize that's fallen into his lap. At the same time, the assessment among India's nuclear pundits is that the situation has changed - and changed dramatically - since the feisty "not-now-not-ever" stance. India has tested once more in the period since - Pokhran II - enhancing its nuclear weapons capability.

The game-changer has been the civilian nuclear technology agreement with the US which will open up N-technology while keeping its weapons intact. Globally, India is now perceived to be inside the tent, a part of the global solution to nuclear proliferation issues. So while NPT is a no-no for New Delhi, at least in its present form, CTBT can leave room for manoeuvre.

Less than a day after Obama piloted the UNSC resolution through, India's permanent representative to the UN, Hardeep Puri shot off a strongly-worded letter to the president of the Security Council. "Nuclear weapons are an integral part of India's national security and will remain so, pending non-discriminatory and global nuclear disarmament. We remain committed to a voluntary, unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing. We do not subscribe to any arms race, including a nuclear arms race. We have always tempered the exercise of our strategic autonomy with a sense of global responsibility. We affirm our policy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons." (Please see box, 'ABC of NPT and CTBT' .)

Hamid Ali Rao, India's top diplomat at the Conference on Disarmament, had, earlier in May, said as much: "We will not accept obligations not in keeping with or prejudicial to our national security interests, or which hinder our strategic programme, our R&D and our three-stage nuclear programme."

All of this could be compromised, feel officials, if it were to sign the CTBT without certain guarantees. No one is quite spelling out the guarantees as that would show India's hand prematurely, but New Delhi may want the US to share the results of US tests (at least some key aspects).

India will almost certainly not sign the CTBT before the US ratifies the treaty in the Senate. In 1999, a Republican-majority Senate held up ratification of CTBT, and that had let India off the hook then. Ten years on, the Senate is Democrat-led, but the Obama administration is still six to seven votes short of the required 67.

As US nuclear expert Ashley Tellis explained to TOI-Crest, "The Senate's position will evolve only after the publication of the Nuclear Posture Review, scheduled for the year-end. If it indicates the US needs a new generation of nuclear weapon, then the debate is likely to veer towards whether the administration can guarantee new warheads without further testing."

Second, said Tellis, there are serious questions about the monitoring mechanism of CTBT, which basically means - can countries cheat? Tibor Toth, secretary general of CTBT Organisation (CTBTO) claims the international monitoring system (IMS) is now sophisticated enough to be able to detect even the smallest test on land or water. But the IMS is not yet foolproof.

Finally, Obama might be bluntly told by the US Senate to first get the signatures of India, China, Pakistan and Israel before it ratifies the treaty. That's the point at which the US would be forced to enter, as Tellis said, a "delicate discussion with India." That would also become the starting point for negotiations with the US for which New Delhi is now preparing.

Arundhati Ghose, India's permanent representative at the UN and chief negotiator on CTBT in the 1990s, and the protagonist of its "not-now-not-ever" stance, acknowledges that the situation has since changed and India's posture can't be the same today. Asked what assurances India needed to get if it were to sign the CTBT, she told TOI-Crest, "While the negotiations were going on in the 1990s, the P-5 nations (five nuclear powers) would meet every morning for their own negotiations. Later we found these were part of negotiations to swap data among them and we suspect an unwritten agreement among them to conduct hydronuclear tests (tiny yield underwater nuclear tests that may not be detected by the IMS) and share the results." These are the kind of things that India could demand access to, she suggests.

Shyam Saran, special envoy to the PM on nuclear matters, has also indicated that the Indian position might evolve. At a speech in Brookings Institution (in the US) earlier this year, Saran said, "It is our conviction that if the world moves categorically towards nuclear disarmament in a credible time-frame, then Indo-US differences over the CTBT would probably recede into the background." This effectively puts the ball in the US court.

At the same time, India is changing the terms of the CTBT debate from it being "discriminatory" to whether signing it can ensure India's national security interests. It's a shift that's happening at a glacial pace. What if things move fast at the US Senate, requiring India to speed up its response?

It's possibly in anticipation of this that Department of Atomic Energy secretary Anil Kakodkar and scientific advisor to the government R Chidambaram have sought to scotch doubts about the efficacy of Pokhran II - loudly voiced by scientist K Santhanam - and come out openly on the veracity of India's nuclear tests and its simulation capability. The signal is India does not need more tests - at least not for now. This is being read as the first steps taken by the government to put its nuclear czars on record, a lesson learnt the hard way during the nuclear deal.

India could learn from China. For decades China avoided the global nuclear regime, calling it an instrument of western hegemony, while it proliferated with impunity to Pakistan, North Korea and Iran. India's reputation is saintly by comparison. But after signing the NPT in 1992 as a nuclear weapons state, China drank up the entire alphabet soup of non-proliferation regimes, signing CTBT, FMCT, MTCR and so on. Suddenly, it looked not just

good but was gleefully shoving non-proliferation mantras down an enraged India's throat. India's diplomatic stance - which has always had a strong moral component to it - sets it apart from the Chinese, but in the amoral world of global realpolitik it's also a handicap. Now with assured supply of technology and fuel, it is better off. If New Delhi were to pull the right strings it could make the right music.

The ABC of NPT and CTBT

Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

A treaty between 189 countries, it prohibits manufacture or transfer of nuclear weapons, but allows peaceful use of nuclear energy under strict monitoring . The five permanent members of the UN Security Council -- US, Russia, UK, China and France - are recognized as having nuclear weapons (Nuclear Weapons States), while others cannot develop or acquire them. Countries that already have nuclear weapons, are supposed to destroy them once they sign the NPT - as South Africa, for instance , did. India, Pakistan and Israel are the only countries that have refused to sign the treaty; North Korea withdrew from the treaty in 2003. Iran is a signatory, but has been accused of violating it. India's objection: NPT arbitrarily divides nations into nuclear haves and have-nots .

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)

Adopted by the UN general assembly in 1996, 150 countries have ratified it while 32 have signed but not ratified including the US. It calls for a total ban on nuclear tests, whether peaceful or military. It can come into force only after all 44 countries mentioned in its Annex II ratify it. Of these, 35 have signed and ratified, nine (among them, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Israel and the United States) have signed but not ratified, and three (India , North Korea and Pakistan) who have not signed it at all. India's objection: the Nuclear Weapons States conducted over 2000 nuclear tests over the past 50 years, and have over 30,000 nuclear weapons in stockpile. Until they disarm, it is discriminatory to ask India not to conduct tests. Nobel Peace Laureate Obama is keen that US ratifies CTBT, but he needs a two-thirds majority (67 votes) in the Senate, and that won't be easy. The conservative/hawkish constituency doesn't want the US to foreclose its options, particularly the testing of a new generation of nuclear weapons. All the countries that haven't signed/ratified are likely to point at one another and say, you ratify first, then we'll do it.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/NPT-and-Obama-How-long-can-India-hold-out/articleshow/5134343.cms>

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

Japan Times
October 19, 2009

Nonproliferation Meeting Working on Concrete Cuts

HIROSHIMA (Kyodo) An international panel on nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament opened a meeting Sunday in Hiroshima, the world's first city to suffer an atomic bombing, seeking ways to bring about a world without nuclear weapons.

During the three-day conference, the International Commission on Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament is expected to discuss concrete measures for reducing the number of nuclear weapons and restricting their use.

The commission is cochaired by former Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi and former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans.

"We had a very productive discussion," Kawaguchi said of the opening day.

She said discussions on the cruelty and inhumanity of nuclear weapons, based on what atomic bomb survivors experienced in August 1945, were among the highlights of the session. She added some of the commission's members proposed emphasizing suffering resulting from nuclear weapons in its final report.

Commission members met with atomic bomb survivors at Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Museum when they toured Peace Memorial Park and other venues in the city, Kawaguchi said, adding they were deeply moved by the stories they heard.

Compiling a final report prior to the next Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty review conference in May "is the key effort we have to make in the next three days," Evans said earlier in the day.

In a draft report titled "Eliminating Nuclear Threats: A Practical Agenda for Global Policymakers," the panel wants to set an ambitious target of reducing existing nuclear warheads from more than 20,000 now to 1,000 or fewer and

to make every nuclear state commit to the no-first-use doctrine by 2025. The initial target for adopting the doctrine was 2010 in an earlier draft.

The doctrine is a pledge by a country not to use nuclear weapons unless it or its allies come under nuclear attack.

It plans to unveil a final report in early January on a road map to the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, which was proposed by U.S. President Barack Obama in April in Prague.

Survivors of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in 1945 and their supporters are asking the commission to stipulate in the report a clear deadline for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

They also want the report to call for early commencement of negotiations to conclude a Nuclear Weapons Convention to ban such arms.

"We want the complete elimination of nuclear arms to be realized while we are still alive," a member of a survivors' support group said during a meeting with the commission on Saturday.

The commission held its first meeting in Sydney last October. The Hiroshima meeting is the fourth session.

The panel was established at the initiative of Australia and Japan.

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20091019a3.html>

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

Buenos Aires Herald

October 17, 2009

Chávez says Iran Helping Venezuela Find Uranium

Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez said Iran is helping his country explore for uranium, but stressed his government would only seek to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Venezuela says it is working with Russia to develop nuclear energy for non-violent purposes, and the country's mining minister said last month Iranian officials were helping to look for uranium, with preliminary tests indicating big deposits.

"We're working with several countries, with Iran, with Russia. We're responsible for what we're doing, we're in control," Chávez told reporters in the central Bolivian region of Cochabamba during a gathering of leftist Latin American presidents.

US President Barack Obama and other western leaders have accused Iran of seeking to develop nuclear weapons, and Washington has expressed concern about Venezuela's increasingly close ties with the Islamic Republic.

Iran supplies the oil-rich South American country with tractors and consumer goods, including bicycles and dairy products, and last month Chávez agreed to supply Iran with 20,000 barrels per day of gasoline.

Chávez said Venezuela would only use nuclear energy for peaceful means, adding that neither Venezuela nor Iran was planning to build a nuclear bomb.

"What we propose is for nuclear bombs to be eliminated. Venezuela will never build a nuclear bomb," he said, adding that Venezuela had been unfairly singled out for planning to exploit uranium.

"What about those that already have atomic bombs? ... Why aren't the governments of France, the United States, China and Russia under pressure to eliminate their atomic bombs?", he asked.

Chávez said his government considers the development of a uranium mining industry as "strategic." Venezuela has known about the presence of deposits of the nuclear fuel, but it has not studied them extensively and uranium is not mined.

Latin American leftist presidents, Chávez, Ecuador's Rafael Correa and Bolivia's Evo Morales are fierce critics of US foreign policies and have forged close ties with Iran and Russia in recent years.

<http://www.buenosairesherald.com/BreakingNews/View/14790>

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

Washington Post
OPINION
October 18, 2009

Iran's Expanding Nuclear Program Poses One of the Obama Administration's Most Vexing Foreign Policy Challenges.

By Joseph Cirincione

Iran's expanding nuclear program poses one of the Obama administration's most vexing foreign policy challenges. Fortunately, the conditions for containing Tehran's efforts may be better today than they have been in years. The recent disclosure of a secret nuclear facility in Iran has led to an apparent agreement to allow in U.N. weapons inspectors and to ship some uranium out of the country, and the United States and Europe seem to be closing ranks on the need for sanctions and engagement.

Of course, the matter is far from resolved; Russia and China are sending mixed signals on their position, while even a weakened Iranian regime remains duplicitous. But the prospects for developing a strategy with a solid chance of success improve if we dispose of five persistent myths about Iran's nuclear program:

1. Iran is on the verge of developing a nuclear weapon.

For years we've heard conflicting accounts on this issue. There have been claims since the 1990s that Iran was a few years away from a bomb. Then, two years ago, U.S. intelligence agencies concluded that Iran had discontinued its dedicated nuclear weapon efforts in 2003. Today, the consensus among experts is that Iran has the technical ability to make a crude nuclear device within one to three years -- but there is no evidence that its leaders have decided to do so.

The regime's most likely path to the bomb begins in Natanz, in central Iran, the site of the nuclear facility where over the past three years about 1,500 kilograms of uranium gas has been enriched to low levels. Iran could kick out U.N. inspectors, abandon the Non-Proliferation Treaty and reprocess the gas into highly enriched uranium in about six months; it would take at least six more months to convert that uranium into the metal form required for one bomb. Technical problems with both processes could stretch this period to three years. Finally, Iran would need perhaps five additional years -- and several explosive tests -- to develop a Hiroshima-yield bomb that could be fitted onto a ballistic missile.

Of course, the United States and others would see Tehran moving in this direction, and exposure or inspection of suspected facilities would complicate Iranian objectives. We can further lengthen this timeline by ridding Iran of the essential ingredient for a bomb: low-enriched uranium. On Oct. 1, Iran agreed to ship most of this uranium to Russia for fabrication into reactor fuel; we will know in the next few weeks if it will keep that pledge. If it does, Iran's "break-out" capability -- the ability to produce a bomb quickly -- would be eliminated, at least for the two years it takes to enrich more uranium.

2. A military strike would knock out Iran's program.

Actually, a military attack would only increase the possibility of Iran developing a nuclear bomb.

"There is no military option that does anything more than buy time," Defense Secretary Robert Gates said last month. "The estimates are one to three years or so." And that's if the United States struck hundreds of targets. A less powerful Israeli attack could only damage, not destroy, Iran's facilities.

Worse, after such a bombing, the Iranian population -- now skeptical of its leadership -- would probably rally around the regime, ending any internal debates on whether to build a bomb. Iran would put its nuclear program on fast-forward to create weapons to defend itself. It could also counterattack against Israel or other U.S. allies. This month, a top official of Iran's Revolutionary Guard threatened to "blow up the heart of Israel" if the United States or Israel attacks first.

On the merits of a U.S. strike, Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has said he worries about "the possible unintended consequences of a strike like that . . . having an impact throughout the region that would be difficult to predict."

Attacking Iran would not end the problem; it could start a third U.S. war in the region.

3. We can cripple Iran with sanctions.

Sanctions rarely, if ever, work on their own. There is no silver bullet that can coerce Iran into compliance or collapse.

Some mix of sanctions -- whether restricting travel, making it harder for Iranian banks to do business, further limiting foreign investment or even denying Iranian citizens basic needs, such as gas -- may be necessary if Tehran does not restrain its nuclear program or live up to its pledges. But the key is to couple such pressure with a face-saving way out for the Iranian leadership. As the 2007 National Intelligence Estimate on Iran put it, a sanctions strategy must feature "opportunities for Iran to achieve its security, prestige, and goals for regional influence in other ways." These could include Iran's inclusion in regional security talks, the suspension of sanctions and a secure supply of reactor fuel, leading up to normalized relations with the West.

No nation has ever been forced to give up nuclear programs, but many have been persuaded to do so, including Brazil, Argentina, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, South Africa, Iraq and, most recently, Libya.

4. A new government in Iran would abandon the nuclear program.

Some believe that an irrational, apocalyptic government now rules Iran and that regime change is the only solution. But there is broad support across Iran's political spectrum for the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Recall that the country's nuclear program began with the shah, a U.S. ally who had plans to build 20 nuclear reactors, similar to the plans the mullahs promote today. The shah also started covert work on nuclear weapons. The U.S. government knew about this research but looked the other way, going as far as selling Iran its first nuclear reactor.

Even with a reformist government, it is unlikely that Iran would quickly end its nuclear program. But its leaders might be persuaded to limit the program's nuclear weapons capabilities. "Tehran's decisions," according to the 2007 National Intelligence Estimate, "are guided by a cost-benefit approach rather than a rush to a weapon irrespective of the political, economic, and military costs."

5. Iran is the main nuclear threat in the Middle East.

The real threat posed by Iran's nuclear program is that other states in the region feel they must match it. The race has already begun.

While Israel's possession of nuclear weapons has not spurred other countries in the area to develop their own, over the past three years a dozen states in the Middle East, including Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Libya (again), have begun civilian nuclear programs. These programs, alas, are not about reducing the countries' carbon footprint -- they are a hedge against Iran. These states have begun the decades-long process of developing the technical, commercial and engineering capabilities to build nuclear weapons, should they decide to do so. At this point, it is not clear that stopping Iran would stop these programs.

The real danger is not a nuclear-armed Iran but a Middle East with more nuclear-armed nations and unresolved territorial, economic and political disputes. That is a recipe for disaster, and that is why there is no country-specific solution; we cannot play nuclear whack-a-mole.

A comprehensive plan must build barriers against acquiring nuclear weapons and must reduce the motivation to do so. This means dealing with the regional security and prestige issues that motivate most countries to start nuclear programs. It requires a global approach that deals with both sides of the nuclear coin: disarmament and proliferation. Reducing existing nuclear stockpiles creates the support needed to stop the spread of the weapons; stopping the spread creates the security needed to continue reductions. We must keep flipping that coin over. Each flip, each step, makes us a little safer.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/15/AR2009101503476.html>

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

London Daily Telegraph
News Blog
October 19, 2009

Islamist Conspiracy Theorists with Nuclear Weapons: Why Iran has to be Stopped

By Will Heaven

Those who dismiss the threat of a nuclear Iran fail to appreciate the true nature of that country's regime. Consider, if you will, the suicide bomb which yesterday killed 42 people in Sistani-Baluchistan (a region of Iran which borders Afghanistan and Pakistan). General Noor Ali Shooshtari, the deputy commander of the Guard's ground forces, was killed – along with five other officers and ten tribal elders.

A Sunni insurgent group called Jundallah quickly claimed responsibility. But that didn't stop General Mohammad Pakpour, head of the Guard's ground forces, from blaming Britain and America. "The terrorists were trained in the neighbouring country by the Americans and British," he said. "The enemies of the Islamic Republic of Iran are unable to tolerate the unity in the country." And, more ominously: "The Guards will give a very harsh and crushing response to this group, so the group will never be able to launch another act like this in the country."

Let's be clear. There are a very few journalists who have inside knowledge of the CIA's activities, and I am not claiming to be one of them. Although the US has denied any involvement, it is not impossible that American funding has reached Jundallah in the last few years (a 2008 New Yorker article explores the issue here, and Con Coughlin doubts it here). But General Pakpour's comments surely represent something more profound. Iran, as a dictatorship, views unity as paramount. So whether it's Shia/Sunni infighting or tribal disobedience, it will always be the West, rather than deep-rooted domestic problems, which is to blame.

The Iranian regime is peopled by conspiracy theorists, and its supporters are of a similar mindset. I have been continuously emailed by one such man since I wrote some weeks ago that we cannot rule out bombing Iran if its nuclear aims continue to near fruition. His last email arrived with a 17-page paper which described The Guardian as "a liberal, non-conformist wing of the British Establishment". I've yet to work out if my correspondent is an Iranian agent, but I'm beginning to think not – reading his emails is like being stuck at a bar next to a boring drunk.

But the conspiracy theories of the Iranian regime are far more dangerous. And they come into sharper focus when the religious beliefs of President Ahmadinejad and his colleagues are properly examined. As Con Coughlin has written for Standpoint magazine, these are very religious men. As Shia Muslims, many of them are devoted to the 12th Imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi, who they expect to return at the End of Days (after a period of bloody violence) to lead the world into an era of peace.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is as devoted to the coming of the 12th Imam as he is to Ayatollah Khomeini's 1979 revolution. Indeed, Con Coughlin has noted that Ahmadinejad once "made the outlandish suggestion that the Western powers were so concerned about the [12th Imam's] possible return that they were scouring the world trying to find him, to prevent him returning to Iran and establishing justice on earth." The US and Britain should remember all of this while they try to halt Iran's nuclear program. Ahmadinejad religiously believes he should export the Iranian revolution – and it is this, combined with the conspiracy theorist's promise of "revenge", that will be a much graver threat should Iran obtain a nuclear capability.

<http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/willheaven/100014037/islamist-conspiracy-theorists-with-nuclear-weapons-why-iran-has-to-be-stopped/>

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

Washington Post

EDITORIAL

October 20, 2009

Nuclear Swap

FOR NOW, at least, nuclear negotiations between Iran and the West have narrowed to an issue that was not even on the agenda a month ago: Iran's possible export of most of its existing stockpile of enriched uranium to Russia and France, which would turn it into fuel for an Iranian research reactor. This is both a bad and a good development. It is bad because it diverts attention from Iran's continuing refusal to comply with U.N. resolutions ordering it to cease uranium enrichment and from its failure to accept Western proposals even for a temporary freeze. But if Iran goes through with the agreement in principle announced by the Obama administration on Oct. 1, the tangible good would be the removal from Iran of most of the known raw material it could use to make a bomb -- and a probable delay of one to two years in the West's estimates of how quickly it could produce one.

It's still unclear whether Tehran will go through with the deal in a timely fashion. According to International Atomic Energy Agency Director Mohammed ElBaradei, talks on the arrangement in Vienna got off to a "good start" Monday; other reports were less positive. The discussions are supposed to cover technical matters and conclude in a

couple of days. But some reports from Iran suggest that Tehran will back away from exporting its stockpile -- a measure creatively proposed by the Obama administration after Iran asked to purchase fuel for the research reactor.

Administration officials rightly describe the uranium deal as a quick and clear test of Iran's intentions. If the export takes place by the end of this year -- the time frame fixed by the United States and its allies for progress in the nuclear negotiations -- the politically beleaguered regime of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei will have demonstrated, at least, that it wants to lower tensions with the West and delay a full confrontation over its nuclear program.

Conversely, if it reverses its position, or seeks to drag out the talks, then the administration will have a strong case for the adoption of new sanctions -- one that will put its relationship with Russia and China to the test.

An agreement could mean that the "crippling sanctions" the administration has said it would seek will not be applied soon, even if Iran continues to defy U.N. resolutions by installing new centrifuges at its existing enrichment plant and opening a new one. But as a practical matter, the prospects for success in the talks, or in winning Russian and Chinese support for tough sanctions, have been dim for some time. By proposing the uranium swap, the Obama administration may have found a way to buy some time and avoid an impasse in which it would have few options. Let's hope it works.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/19/AR2009101903043.html>

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

RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

OPINION & ANALYSIS

20 October 2009

Anniversary of the Chinese Bomb: The Road to the Nuclear Club

MOSCOW. (RIA Novosti commentator Ilya Kramnik) - On October 16, 1964, China conducted its first nuclear weapons test, codenamed "Experiment 596." From 1964 to 1996, the Chinese held 47 nuclear weapons tests, including 23 atmospheric (until 1980) and 24 underground tests (1976-1996).

Accordingly, China was the last country to join the "big nuclear club," which now consists of the five great powers that were victorious in World War II and simultaneously became members of the UN Security Council.

This was not a coincidence. A nuclear weapons programme is a luxury that only leading nations could afford. It was also no coincidence that the U.S., the richest and most prosperous country at the time, was the first to test a nuclear weapon. The bomb was subsequently built in the Soviet Union (1949), U.K. (1952) and France (1960). China rounded out this group.

Many doubted China's great power status immediately after World War II. Though it lost power in Mainland China after the end of World War II, the Kuomintang government was recognized as the legitimate government of China, enjoying the status of a member of the UN and an official ally of the Soviet Union, the U.S., and other countries. The People's Republic of China was not recognized in the West for a long time, and the Republic of China, which grew out of the Kuomintang and controlled only Taiwan and some other nearby small islands, held China's UN Security Council seat until 1971.

Mainland China had been involved in war since the early 1930s - longer than any other country in World War II - and it was in pitiful economic shape. The lack of industry and accompanying lack of scientific prowess all but ruled out such a project.

The Soviet Union played a considerable role in making China a nuclear power by extending substantial aid to it to build up scientific capabilities (including in physics) and develop industry capable of something as difficult as making a nuclear weapon.

There were various rumours about the Soviet Union's direct involvement in developing Chinese nuclear weapons, which ranged from "no participation" to "full provision of information and equipment." As often happens to be the case, the truth was somewhere in the middle.

China was working on its own nuclear weapon even before the official declaration of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949. In the spring of 1949, Chinese physicist Tsien San-Tsiang travelled to France with the goal of obtaining materials and equipment for establishing a nuclear laboratory and institute of physics. He was eventually successful with the support of Frederic Joliot-Curie. The French scientist thought that China should have nuclear

weapons and supported the plans of Mao Zedong, who had called nuclear weapons a "paper tiger," but nevertheless was not about to give up on acquiring them.

In the spring of 1953, China turned to the Soviet Union for help with its nuclear weapons programme; however, upon the recommendation of the leadership of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, China was given only some general scientific papers that lacked in-depth research into the subject. Furthermore, Nikita Khrushchev recommended that China abandon its nuclear weapons programme on account of the country's weak industrial and scientific base. Nevertheless, he offered assistance in peaceful nuclear research.

But the situation changed in 1957. Khrushchev needed political support due to a power struggle with the "Anti-Party Group," as well as events in Poland and Hungary. He had no choice but to cooperate with China. Beijing gained access to Soviet nuclear weapons technology.

In 1958, China developed its first nuclear reactor and cyclotron. It seemed that China would produce its first nuclear bomb within months; however, politics changed the course of events - the first disputes between the Soviet Union and China on a number of fundamental political issues ensued. In 1959, the transfer of materials was sharply reduced, and in 1960 Soviet nuclear experts were recalled from China.

China had to go the rest of the way on its own. By this time, Beijing already had at its disposal certain theoretical knowledge that it had gained from the Soviet Union. In addition, due to established contacts in Europe, where there were quite a few scientists of the calibre of Joliot-Curie who sympathized with the Chinese, China was able to obtain sufficient information from France and other countries.

It is hard to say which information played a major role, but one way or another, the first Chinese nuclear weapon was detonated on October 15, 1964 at the Lop Nur test site. As with the first Soviet nuclear weapons test in 1949, the bomb was housed in a test tower. The second test was conducted in 1965, when the bomb was dropped from a Tupolev Tu-4 plane. Accordingly, China joined the world's nuclear powers.

Nevertheless, one nuclear weapons test was not enough for nuclear status. The delivery vehicles were no less of a problem - these were primarily missiles and bomber aircraft. China already had short-range missile technology from the Soviet Union as well as Tupolev Tu-4 piston-engined bombers and reactive Ilyushin Il-28s and Tupolev Tu-16s, but these resources were insufficient.

In the last 30 years, China has followed in the footsteps of the U.S. and the Soviet Union, creating its own nuclear triad, which includes land- and sea-based missiles and long-range bombers. According to various estimates, China has the third-largest nuclear arsenal in the world, with around 150 strategic and 600-700 tactical warheads. Russia currently has approximately 3,000 strategic warheads at its disposal, while the U.S. has more than 4,500 nuclear weapons. In addition, both Russia and the U.S. have formidable tactical nuclear weapons arsenals.

China was the last member of the "big nuclear club" to acquire nuclear weapons before July 12, 1968, when the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was opened for signature. The treaty was nevertheless unable to stop the spread of nuclear weapons.

Other countries that currently have nuclear weapons are Israel (which does not officially confirm or deny nuclear status), India, Pakistan, and North Korea. Moreover, South Africa, which is thought to have developed nuclear weapons jointly with Israel, used to have a nuclear arsenal. Nevertheless, the South African nuclear weapons program was scrapped by the early 1990s and the weapons were dismantled. There are also a number of countries, such as Argentina, Brazil and Iran, that do not have nuclear weapons but have worked or are working on developing them. Still other countries have the capability to acquire nuclear weapons quickly given enough political will. These include Germany, Japan and a number of other industrially developed nations.

Nuclear weapons have been used only twice - as part of the most terrible war in human history. One can only guess when they will be used again.

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

<http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20091020/156530002.html>

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