



# **USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER**

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National Public Radio

October 29, 2009

# US Security Adviser in Moscow Nuclear Arms Talks

By The Associated Press

Russia and the United States are scrambling to address disagreements over a new nuclear arms reduction treaty with little over a month left until the existing agreement between the Cold War adversaries expires.

Despite the narrowing timeframe, both sides expressed optimism at the end of a day of negotiations Thursday between U.S. National Security Advisor James Jones and Russia's foreign minister and National Security Council head.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Andrei Nesterenko said in televised remarks he was "sure" Jones' "successful" visit would help forge a new treaty. Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said "intensive efforts" would be required to reach an accord but he struck a generally optimistic tone.

On leaving the Foreign Ministry, Jones told The Associated Press that the two had a "very good discussion on a number of bilateral issues," without elaborating.

President Barack Obama and his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev agreed at a Moscow summit in July to cut the number of nuclear warheads each possesses to between 1,500 and 1,675 within seven years.

But the Washington-based Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation recently noted several sticking points that may take negotiations into the 11th hour.

The obstacles include a divergence on the number of so-called delivery vehicles — a reference to missiles and bombers. Washington has reportedly proposed a limit of 1,100 such weapons platforms, while Russia wants less than half, a discrepancy too great to forge an agreement, the center concluded.

Other hurdles may include the issue of whether to include stockpiled weapons — those not operationally deployed — in the warhead count. The U.S. says no, while Russia would prefer blanket inclusion.

The U.S. has sought to separate the issue of arms reduction with plans to station a missile defense system in Central Europe, near Russia's western fringe, but Moscow — a bitter opponent of the idea — is unlikely to overlook them.

Referring to arms reduction and missile defense, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov claimed "an objective interconnection between these two platforms of strategic stability has not disappeared," according to comments published Thursday in Russian daily Vremya Novostei. "It is wrong not to recognize this."

Jones' visit comes as Iran was to respond to a U.N.-drafted plan on shipping the country's low-enriched uranium to Russia for further processing. The plan proposes a curtailment of any covert nuclear arms making abilities by Iran. Jones was expected to discuss the matter with Moscow.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=114275697>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency  
29 October 2009

## Medvedev, Obama to Discuss New Arms Control Deal in November

MOSCOW, October 29 (RIA Novosti) - The Russian and U.S. presidents will discuss a new arms control agreement in mid-November in Singapore, the Russian foreign minister said on Thursday.

"The presidents will meet in the middle of November in Singapore, where they will be briefed on the progress made," Sergei Lavrov said at a news conference after talks with U.S. National Security Adviser James Jones.

Asked whether the United States had submitted any new proposals, the minister said, "there are some proposals pointing to progress at the Geneva talks," but did not elaborate.

Jones met with Lavrov earlier in the day for nuclear disarmament talks, which the Russian minister described as "very timely."

The Kremlin said on Saturday that Dmitry Medvedev and Barack Obama discussed the progress towards a replacement for the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) and the presidents expressed the hope a new pact would be ready by early December.

START I, the basis for Russian-U.S. strategic nuclear disarmament, expires on December 5.

The latest round of talks took place in Geneva last week. The presidents will meet on the sidelines of this year's gathering of APEC leaders, hosted by Singapore on November 14-15.

The outline of the new pact was agreed during the presidents' bilateral summit in Moscow in July and includes cutting their countries' nuclear arsenals to 1,500-1,675 operational warheads and delivery vehicles to 500-1,000.

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

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20091029/156638342.html>

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Tehran Times – Iran

October 28, 2009

## **UN Approves Nuclear Disarmament Resolution Proposed by Iran**

Tehran Times Political Desk

TEHRAN - The UN General Assembly on Tuesday approved a draft resolution proposed by the Islamic Republic of Iran on total nuclear disarmament amid strong opposition by the major powers.

The United States -- despite its fanfare about a change in policy -- Britain, France, Israel, and a number of Western countries voted against the resolution, but over 100 countries, including the non-nuclear members of the Non-Aligned Movement, voted for it.

The resolution was ratified in a session of the First Committee of the UN General Assembly held in New York on Tuesday, the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported.

This is the third time the resolution has been approved by the UN.

It was approved for the first time at the UN summit in 2005, when the issue of total nuclear disarmament was brought up by Iran's president.

The resolution calls on all nuclear powers to dismantle all their nuclear weapons.

The Zionist regime must also sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and allow its nuclear installations to come under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), part of the resolution says.

Israel is the only player in the Middle East that possesses a nuclear arsenal, and it is not a signatory to the NPT or any other international convention on nuclear weapons. And The Zionist regime has never allowed IAEA inspectors to visit its nuclear sites or arsenals.

The First Committee is one of six sub-committees of the UN General Assembly. Its mandate is to vote on resolutions that address disarmament and international security issues. It meets annually to consider approximately 50-60 resolutions and decisions on myriad international security issues including nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, other weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons and reform of the UN disarmament machinery.

[http://www.tehrantimes.com/Index\\_view.asp?code=206673](http://www.tehrantimes.com/Index_view.asp?code=206673)

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Khaleej Times – U.A.E.

28 October 2009

## **US Prepared to Respond if Iran Falters**

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

WASHINGTON - The United States is prepared to respond if Iran does not abide by its commitments over its controversial nuclear program, a top aide to US President Barack Obama has said.

“Iran now needs to follow through on its commitments,” National Security Adviser James Jones said Tuesday.

“Nothing is off the table,” Jones warned in a Washington speech to the liberal pro-Israel lobby group J Street, without specifying details of a possible response.

World powers have warned that Tehran could face a fresh round of tougher sanctions targeting its oil sector if it continues to defy international demands.

“We will see if engagement is able to produce the concrete results we need, and we’ll be prepared if it does not,” Jones said.

His comments came after Iranian state television said Tehran wanted “very important changes” to a UN-brokered nuclear fuel deal and would offer its formal response by Thursday.

In a reversal from the more confrontational policy of his predecessor, Obama has sought to engage Iran diplomatically to thaw three decades of frozen ties.

“We also have a long, long way to go,” the retired US general cautioned, noting that the Obama administration had consulted with Israel, as well as with members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany.

Iran’s state-owned English language Press TV earlier reported that Tehran will not shift its entire stock of low-enriched uranium abroad for refining, as hinted at by the proposed deal — indicating that Iran would demand changes.

Iranian officials meanwhile continued to express conflicting views on the draft deal.

State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said it would be “unfortunate” if Iran rejected the deal, while refusing to rule out changes to the original accord.

Western officials hope the arrangement would strip the Islamic republic of any need to produce highly-enriched uranium, which they fear could be used as fissile material for a nuclear bomb.

“If implemented, this arrangement would set back the clock on Iran’s breakout capability because it would reduce Iran’s stockpile far below the amount needed for a weapon, and it would take time to reconstitute the amount needed for a breakout,” said Jones.

“But there should be no doubt: suspension of Iran’s enrichment program remains our goal.”

[http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/October/middleeast\\_October754.xml&section=middleeast&col=](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2009/October/middleeast_October754.xml&section=middleeast&col=)

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Khaleej Times – U.A.E.

29 October 2009

## **IAEA says had “Good Trip” to Iran Enrichment Site**

(Reuters)

VIENNA - The head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog’s mission to a newly disclosed plant in Iran said on Thursday the inspectors had what he termed a good trip but he declined to give any details.

The site, which Iran revealed last month, has heightened Western fears of a covert programme to develop atomic bombs. Tehran says its nuclear programme is only for power generation.

“We had a good trip,” International Atomic Energy Agency official Herman Nackaerts told reporters on arrival at Vienna airport with the three other members of his team.

“We visited the Fordo enrichment plant. Now we are going to analyse the data and the director-general will then report in due time,” Nackaerts said after the four-day trip.

He declined to say whether the team of experts had discovered anything surprising or if they had been able to carry out a full visit of the site, built inside a mountain about 160 km (100 miles) south of Tehran.

The Islamic Republic revealed the plant’s existence to the Vienna-based IAEA on Sept. 21. It said the site, which is still under construction, would enrich uranium only to the low 5 percent purity suitable for power plant fuel.

IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei will issue his next report on Iran around mid-November.

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The Star – Malaysia  
Thursday October 29, 2009

## **Iran Ready to Cooperate on Nuclear Fuel - Ahmadinejad**

By Reza Derakhshi

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Iran will not retreat "one iota" on its nuclear rights but is ready to cooperate on issues regarding atomic fuel, power plants and technology, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said on Thursday.

He said the provision of fuel for a Tehran research reactor was an opportunity for Iran to evaluate the "honesty" of world powers and the U.N. nuclear agency watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Later in the day Iran was expected to present its formal response to a U.N.-drafted nuclear fuel deal which is meant to help ease tension over Tehran's disputed nuclear programme. Iranian media say the Islamic Republic will accept the framework of the deal but demand changes to it.

"As long as this government is in power, it will not retreat one iota on the undeniable rights of the Iranian nation," Ahmadinejad said in a speech in the northeastern city of Mashhad, broadcast live on state television.

"Fortunately, conditions have been prepared for international cooperation in the nuclear field," he said. "We welcome cooperation on nuclear fuel, power plants and technology and we are ready to cooperate."

The draft nuclear fuel deal was hammered out by IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei in follow-up talks to an Oct. 1 meeting between Iran and six world powers in Geneva, where Iran also agreed to open a new enrichment site for U.N. inspections.

Ahmadinejad did not say whether Iran would accept the deal or what changes it might want. Iranian demands for changes in the deal could unravel the plan and expose the country to the threat of harsher Western sanctions.

"HONESTY"

The West suspects Iran is trying to develop nuclear bombs. Tehran denies this and says its programme is aimed at generating electricity.

Under the draft deal put forward by ElBaradei after consultations last week in Vienna with Iran, the United States, France and Russia, Iran would send low-enriched uranium (LEU) abroad for processing and eventual use in a research reactor.

It calls for Iran to transfer about 75 percent of its known 1.5 tonnes of LEU to Russia for further enrichment by the end of this year, then to France for conversion into fuel plates.

These would be returned to Tehran to power the reactor, which produces radio isotopes for cancer treatment.

"Nuclear fuel supply for the Tehran reactor is an opportunity to evaluate the honesty of the powers and the agency (IAEA)," said Ahmadinejad.

He said Iran expected the world powers -- the United States, Russia, China, France, Germany and Britain -- to fulfil their commitments and keep their promises.

"We are moving on the right track ... and we have absolutely no concerns about a just and legal cooperation which observes the legal rights of the Iranian nation," he said.

Senior Iranian lawmakers have cast doubt on the fuel plan, some saying Tehran should import the fuel it needs for a research reactor rather than send its stockpile abroad. Others have suggested Iran should only agree to send its enriched uranium out of the country in stages.

(Writing by Fredrik Dahl; editing by Tim Pearce)

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Reuters

October 29, 2009

## **Iran's Mousavi Criticizes Nuclear Fuel Plan: Report**

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Opposition leader Mirhossein Mousavi has sharply criticized the outcome of Iran's talks with world powers this month, making clear he was against a proposal to send enriched uranium abroad, a reformist website reported.

The report came as Iran was expected later on Thursday to present its official position on a U.N.-drafted plan for it to ship much of its uranium stockpile abroad for further processing, meant to help ease tensions over its nuclear drive.

The draft agreement was hammered out by U.N. nuclear agency chief Mohamed ElBaradei in follow-up talks to an October 1 meeting between Iran and six world powers in Geneva, where Iran also agreed to open a new enrichment site for U.N. inspections.

Senior Iranian lawmakers have cast doubt on the fuel plan, saying Tehran should import the fuel it needs for a research reactor rather than sent its stockpile out of the country.

Iranian media say Tehran will accept the framework of the proposal but also seek changes to it, a move that could unravel the plan and expose the Islamic Republic to the threat of harsher sanctions.

"The discussions in Geneva were really surprising and if the promises given (to the West) are realized then the hard work of thousands of scientists would be ruined," Kaleme website quoted Mousavi as saying, in a clear reference to the fuel plan.

"And if we cannot keep our promises then it would prepare the ground for harder sanctions against the country," he said in a meeting with pro-reform cleric Mehdi Karoubi on Tuesday evening, Kaleme reported.

The West suspects Iran is seeking to develop nuclear bombs. Tehran denies this and says its program is aimed at generating electricity.

Under the draft deal put forward by ElBaradei after consultations last week in Vienna with Iran, the United States, France and Russia, Iran would send low-enriched uranium (LEU) abroad for processing and eventual use in a research reactor.

It calls for Iran to transfer about 75 percent of its known 1.5 tonnes of LEU to Russia for further enrichment by the end of this year, then to France for conversion into fuel plates.

These would be returned to Tehran to power the reactor, which produces radio-isotopes for cancer treatment.

For the world powers, the plan's appeal lies in reducing the stockpile of Iran's LEU below the threshold needed for conversion into highly-enriched uranium for an atom bomb.

This would buy about a year of time for negotiations on halting enrichment in Iran in exchange for benefits to forge a long-term solution to a standoff over its nuclear ambitions.

The Islamic Republic has ruled out any restraints on its "legal and obvious" right to enrich, and says it is doing so only for power plant fuel, not nuclear warheads.

But its history of nuclear secrecy and continued curbs on U.N. inspections raised Western suspicions that it ultimately seeks to derive bombs from enrichment technology.

(Reporting by Reza Derakhshi; writing by Fredrik Dahl; editing by Robin Pomeroy)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/gc08/idUSTRE59S0ZB20091029>

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New York Times

October 30, 2009

## **Iran Delivers Response to U.N. Nuclear Watchdog**

By ROBERT F. WORTH and ALAN COWELL

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Iran has made an initial response to the United Nations nuclear watchdog on a plan to send the country's uranium abroad for processing, but neither the agency nor Iran made the response public.

However, it came as the Iranian president made his most positive comments to date on the effort, saying, "We welcome cooperation on nuclear fuel, power plants and technology, and we are ready to cooperate."

The plan, hammered out in talks in Vienna last week, is designed to bridge the gap between Iran's insistence that its nuclear program is for civilian purposes and the West's suspicion that it is building a bomb.

The proposal provides for Iran to ship 2,645 pounds of low-enriched uranium to Russia for further processing. That amount, representing most of the country's known stockpile of low-enriched uranium, would take about a year to replace.

The uranium would be returned to Iran in the form of fuel rods, usable only in a civilian nuclear facility and not for weapons.

A crucial question is whether Iran will demand alterations to the plan or will insist on shipping the material in installments, which would undercut the intent of the deal: to leave Iran without enough nuclear material to build a weapon as the West works toward an international agreement on Iran's nuclear ambitions.

In his comments from the northeastern city of Mashad, broadcast on state television, Mr. Ahmadinejad did not address the possibility that Iran might insist on gradual shipments or seek changes to the agreement. His remarks seemed to extend Iran's two-track public position on the nuclear dispute, offering a degree of compliance with one hand while insisting on the other that there were limits to its readiness for cooperation.

"Fortunately, the conditions for international nuclear cooperation have been met," Mr. Ahmadinejad said. "We are currently moving in the right direction and we have no fear of legal cooperation, under which all of Iran's national rights will be preserved, and we will continue our work."

He also insisted, as he often has, that Iran would not retreat from its rights to nuclear power. "As long as this government is in power, it will not retreat one iota on the undeniable rights of the Iranian nation."

Reports from Tehran this week have suggested persistently that Iran will not agree to ship the uranium all at once, as France — one of the deal's brokers — has insisted.

The pro-government newspaper Javan said Thursday that Tehran would insist on the gradual transfer of low-enriched uranium rather than a single shipment, and the "simultaneous exchange" of fuel for a research reactor in Tehran.

The Iranian Students News Agency quoted Iran's representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency, Ali Asghar Soltanieh, as saying Tehran held a "positive view" of the Vienna talks. But he also hinted that Iran wanted to broaden the debate to cover the supply of nuclear fuel for the research reactor.

Iran's response to the nuclear proposal has underscored the internal divisions that have worsened since its disputed presidential election in June, as well as its longstanding suspicion of Western intentions. Some of Mr. Ahmadinejad's conservative rivals have already criticized the plan as a risky concession to the West, and on Thursday, the opposition leader Mir-Hussein Moussavi joined them, suggesting that any response to the plan would have negative consequences for Iran.

"If they are put in place, all the efforts of thousands of scientists will go to the wind," Mr. Moussavi said of the proposed plan's conditions, according to opposition Web sites. "If they are not put in place, the foundations will be laid for wide-ranging sanctions against Iran, and this is the result of a confrontational stance in foreign policy and the neglect of national interests and principles."

American officials are concerned that the Iranians are planning to run out the clock and continue processing uranium so that they can either build a weapon or attain "breakout capacity," the ability to build one within a few months. Some diplomats involved in the negotiations are also concerned that Iran may have more nuclear fuel in its stockpile than it has acknowledged, and may indeed already possess breakout capacity.

A team from the I.A.E.A. returned to the agency's headquarters in Vienna on Thursday after inspecting a second nuclear enrichment plant at Fordo near the city of Qum, the state-run Press TV reported on its Web site.

Iran had kept the plant a state secret until a few days before the United States and other Western powers disclosed its existence last month.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/30/world/middleeast/30nuke.html>

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Russia Today  
29 October, 2009

## **Russian Diplomacy Cools Iran's Nuclear Ambitions – But For How Long?**

By Robert Bridge, RT

Iran says it is ready to accept a proposal for its nuclear program that demands Tehran send its low-enriched uranium to Russia for processing. Should the global community feel more at ease?

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has been engaged in heated talks with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), described a proposal presented by the UN Security Council as a move from “confrontation to cooperation” with the western powers.

Russia, which has pushed for diplomacy over sanctions in dealing with Iran, has agreed to accept 75 percent of Iran's estimated 1.5 tons of low-enriched uranium for processing into fuel rods, which cannot be used for the production of nuclear weapons.

*“We welcome fuel exchange, nuclear cooperation, building of power plants and reactors and we are ready to cooperate,”* Ahmadinejad announced in a televised speech in the city of Mashhad, as quoted by AFP news agency.

UN nuclear chief Mohamed ElBaradei has not released exact details of the agreement, but diplomats say it calls on Iran to hand over 1,200kg of the low-enriched uranium it has to Russia by the end of the year. The processed uranium will then be shipped to France where it will be converted into fuel plates.

Russia would enrich the low-level enriched uranium to the 19.75 per cent needed to power a research reactor that makes radio-isotopes for medical use.

Iran's declared willingness to send its enriched uranium to Russia for processing has been presented as a way to curb Iran's ability to build a nuclear weapon, which it denies it plans to do, as well as diffuse a tense stalemate brewing between Iran and Israel.

### **Will Israel be satisfied?**

Ahmadinejad, while declaring his support for the plan on the one hand, continues saber rattling against Israel on the other hand.

The Iranian president commented on Tuesday during talks in Tehran with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan that as long as Israel was in possession of nuclear weapons, Iran would not halt its nuclear program.

*“When an illegal regime possesses nuclear weapons, the other countries' rights for peaceful nuclear energy cannot be denied,”* the Iranian news agency ISNR quoted Ahmadinejad as saying.

Israel has never confirmed or denied that it has nuclear weapons.

President Erdogan told his host that relations between Ankara and Jerusalem have remained strained following the Turkish president's harsh condemnation of Israel's behavior during the Gaza War in December, which killed over 1,000 Gazan civilians and left some 400,000 Gazans homeless.

Israel defended their actions, saying Gaza used "human shields" around their military installations.

*“Those who claim they are after nuclear disarmament in the world,”* Erdogan said, *“should start the measure in their own country.”*

Tehran attracted heightened suspicion to its nuclear program when Iranian officials revealed to the five permanent members of the UN Security Council – Britain, China, France, the United States and Russia – about the existence of a uranium plant near the city of Qom.

The Fordo plant, built into a mountainside near the city of Qom, was previously secret, although western observers say Iran made the decision to go public about the nuclear plant when it discovered western intelligence agencies had discovered it.



On Sunday, a team from the IAEA carried out an inspection of the plant.

*"We had a good trip,"* announced delegation head Herman Nackaerts, who refused to answer specific questions about the data collected at the site.

### **A question of contracts**

The Iranian president then made reference to ongoing nuclear projects that have been in the works for decades.

*"We have nuclear contracts. It's been 30 years. We have paid for them...,"* Ahmadinejad said. *such agreements must be fulfilled... for technical activities, for reactors and power plants. If we intend to cooperate, such contracts must be addressed and the previous commitments must be fulfilled."*

The Iranian president made reference to the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant that was begun by German companies in 1975, and was scheduled for completion in 1981, but work came to a sudden halt due to the eruption of the Iranian Revolution of 1979.

Russian company Atomstroieexport took over the contract in 1995, but a series of delays, as well as concerns over Iran's true nuclear ambitions, once again put the massive project on hold.

*"Once they told us to stop [the nuclear project],"* Ahmadinejad told Iranian television. *"Now they express readiness to cooperate with us in exchange of fuel, development of the technology and construction of power plants and atomic reactors."*

Some nations, most notably the United States and Israel, believe that Iran is pursuing its nuclear program in order to build nuclear weapons. Tehran denies the charges, saying it needs nuclear energy for purely civilian purposes.

### **A big win for Russian diplomacy?**

Although everybody continues to hold their breath as to what "important changes" Tehran may demand in the agreement, so far it looks like Moscow has chalked up a major diplomatic win over the "Iran question" and Russian media is basking in the victory.

*"Iran's agreement (if expressed)... will become a major win for Moscow,"* wrote Vedomosti, Russia's business daily. *"And the point is not only that the Russian nuclear industry will secure an order for upgrading Iranian uranium (estimated price of the contract will be up to tens of millions of dollars). A more important fact is that other countries conducting negotiations on the Iranian nuclear problem have accepted the Russian proposal without the usual skepticism..."*

In the past, the talks often ground to a halt over difference of opinion on how to get Iran to come clean with its nuclear program.

Russia, together with the heavy support of China, endorsed diplomacy over sanctions, whereas Washington seemed to favor the strong-handed approach, complete with economic sanctions and a heightened atmosphere of animosity in the region.

But things slowly started to change with the election of US President Barack Obama, who spoke of "sitting down and talking" with Ahmadinejad, an approach that the Bush administration, which had ranked Iran amongst the so-called 'axis of evil', had completely ruled out.

Perhaps Ahmadinejad, despite his occasional diatribes against the west and Israel, came to the conclusion that this was his last opportunity to exit from the nuclear standoff in a face-saving manner, while detonating tensions with Israel, which has threatened to take unilateral action against Iran if it continues with its nuclear program.

On Wednesday, Tzipi Livni, the leader of Israel's biggest opposition party, Kadima, was in Moscow for talks with Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to discuss ways for finding a "political settlement" to the Iranian nuclear issue.

*"Lavrov confirmed Russia's principled support for the political and diplomatic defusing of the situation related to the Iranian nuclear program... with representatives of Iran in Geneva on October 1,"* a Russian Foreign Ministry report on the meeting says.

Against the background of the Iranian announcement on the nuclear agreement, the U.S. president's national security adviser, General James Jones, is in the capital for nuclear arms reduction talks.

Welcoming the U.S. general, Lavrov said the visit was "very timely," and would "allow us to fulfill our presidents' agreements to sign a new START treaty by the time the current treaty expires" in December.

Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev are working on the details of a new Strategic Arms Reduction treaty, which has been described as the “pillar” of Russian-US disarmament commitments that expires on December 5, 2009.

Analysts are hopeful that with the possibility of a nuclear-armed Iran behind them, Russian and the United States will have fewer distractions come December and yet another diplomatic win can be achieved.

<http://www.russiatoday.com/Politics/2009-10-29/russian-diplomacy-irans-nuclear.html>

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New York Times

October 30, 2009

## **Iran Rejects Deal To Ship Out Uranium, Officials Report**

By David E. Sanger, Steven Erlanger and Robert F. Worth

WASHINGTON — Iran told the United Nations nuclear watchdog on Thursday that it would not accept a plan its negotiators agreed to last week to send its stockpile of uranium out of the country, according to diplomats in Europe and American officials briefed on Iran’s response.

The apparent rejection of the deal could unwind President Obama’s effort to buy time to resolve the nuclear standoff.

In public, neither the Iranians nor the watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, revealed the details of Iran’s objections, which came only hours after Iran’s president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, insisted that “we are ready to cooperate” with the West.

But the European and American officials said that Iranian officials had refused to go along with the central feature of the draft agreement reached on Oct. 21 in Vienna: a provision that would have required the country to send about three-quarters of its current known stockpile of low-enriched uranium to Russia to be processed and returned for use in a reactor in Tehran used to make medical isotopes.

If Iran’s stated estimate of its stockpile of nuclear fuel is accurate, the deal that was negotiated in Vienna would leave the country with too little fuel to manufacture a weapon until the stockpile was replenished with additional fuel, which Iran is producing in violation of United Nations Security Council mandates.

American officials said they thought that the accord would give them a year or so to seek a broader nuclear agreement with Iran while defusing the possibility that Israel might try to attack Iran’s nuclear installations before Iran gained more fuel and expertise.

The Obama administration was anticipating that Iran would seek to back out of the deal, and in recent days the head of the nuclear agency, Mohamed ElBaradei, traveled secretly to Washington to talk about what to do if that happened, according to several American officials. Last weekend, President Obama called President Dmitri A. Medvedev of Russia and President Nicolas Sarkozy of France in an effort to maintain a unified front in dealing with Tehran’s leadership.

A senior European official characterized the Iranian response as “basically a refusal.” The Iranians, he said, want to keep all of their lightly enriched uranium in the country until receiving fuel bought from the West for the reactor in Tehran.

“The key issue is that Iran does not agree to export its lightly enriched uranium,” the official said. “That’s not a minor detail. That’s the whole point of the deal.”

American officials said it was unclear whether Iran’s declaration to Dr. ElBaradei was its final position, or whether it was seeking to renegotiate the deal — a step the Americans said they would not take.

Michael Hammer, a spokesman for the National Security Council, said that “we await clarification of Iran’s response,” but that the United States was “unified with our Russian and French partners” in support of the agreement reached in Vienna. That agreement explicitly called for Iran to ship 2,600 pounds of low-enriched uranium to Russia by Jan. 15, according to officials who have seen the document, which has never been made public.

News of the accord led to a political uproar in Iran, with some leading politicians arguing that the West could not be trusted to return Iran’s uranium, produced at the Natanz nuclear enrichment plant. Clearly, however, the Iranian government does not want to appear to be rejecting the agreement. Mr. Ahmadinejad, in a speech in the northeastern

city of Mashhad that was broadcast live on state television on Thursday, said, "We welcome cooperation on nuclear fuel, power plants and technology, and we are ready to cooperate."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/30/world/middleeast/30nuke.html>

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Washington Post  
October 30, 2009

## **Iran Counters U.N. on Uranium Plan**

WESTERN HOPES THWARTED

By Glenn Kessler and Thomas Erdbrink  
Washington Post Staff Writers

Iran on Thursday appeared to reject a key element of a U.N.-backed proposal aimed at quickly reducing its stockpile of enriched uranium, offering an informal oral counteroffer that diplomats said fell far short of a tentative deal reached earlier this month.

Mohamed ElBaradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), told the Iranian ambassador to the U.N. agency that the counteroffer, as structured, would not be acceptable to Russia, France and the United States -- the other parties to the arrangement -- and urged him to get more clarification from his government. Diplomats said they hope a formal, written answer from Iran will be delivered as early as Friday.

The long-awaited Iranian answer appeared to dash hopes that Tehran would be willing to quickly embrace engagement with the West on its nuclear program. Not only did Iran appear to reject a central element of the proposed agreement but it also has refused to commit to another high-level diplomatic meeting to discuss the program.

Obama administration officials will now need to assess whether the engagement gambit has begun to run its course - and whether to shift toward pressing for tougher sanctions against the Islamic republic.

In a statement, the IAEA said that ElBaradei "has received an initial response from the Iranian authorities" and that he "is engaged in consultations with the government of Iran as well as all relevant parties, with the hope that agreement on his proposal can be reached soon." The agency provided no other details.

### **Stockpile would remain steady**

In talks in Geneva on Oct. 1, Iran tentatively agreed to the arrangement, under which nearly 80 percent of its stockpile would go to Russia and France to be fashioned into fuel for a research reactor that produces isotopes that detect and treat diseases. As part of the deal, the United States would support the IAEA in an effort to help Iran ensure the safe operation of the reactor, built by the United States in the 1960s.

Iran has enough low-enriched uranium, in theory, to produce one nuclear weapon. If it agreed to the deal, most analysts estimate, it would be nine to 12 months before Iran would again have enough uranium to be able to enrich it to weapons grade.

Further talks were held last week in Vienna, with ElBaradei presenting a draft agreement that was embraced by the other countries, but Iran missed a Friday deadline to respond.

A central element of the plan, conceived by the Obama administration, is that Iran must ship the enriched uranium out of the country in one batch by the end of the year. Instead, the presentation by Iranian Ambassador Ali Asghar Soltanieh suggested that Iran would ship out its uranium in batches, swapping it for new material on a continuous basis, diplomats said. That would negate the main attraction of the proposal for the major powers dealing with Iran, because it would mean its stockpile of enriched uranium would not be significantly reduced.

The United States, France and Russia had no official response to the counteroffer, but they were consulting behind the scenes about how to respond if the formal offer differed little from the ambassador's apparent trial balloon. One U.S. official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, described Iran's answers as "a response of sorts" but said the three other countries remain united in support of the plan.

"We need further clarification," State Department spokesman Ian Kelly told reporters. "And I think it's also fair to say that we need to have a formal response from Iran at this point. We've been given some details of it, but we're still talking to the Iranians about it."

### **Internal disagreement**

The proposal appears to have generated fierce debate within the Iranian government.

In a speech in the northeastern city of Mashhad on Thursday, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad defied harsh criticism from domestic opponents who accused him of giving away too much in the negotiations. He said the West has been forced to alter its confrontational stance toward Iran, state television reported.

"Nuclear fuel supply for the Tehran reactor is an opportunity to evaluate the honesty of the powers and the [IAEA]," Ahmadinejad said.

"We shake any hand that is honestly stretched toward us," he said. "However, if someone pursues plots and wants to be dishonest, the Iranian nation's response to him will be similar to the response we gave to Mr. Bush and his predecessors," a reference to former president George W. Bush.

Domestic opponents, including the parliament speaker, lawmakers and the leader of the political opposition, have spoken out against the proposed deal, arguing that the other partners in the arrangement might not return Iran's uranium after it has been sent abroad.

The strongest criticism has come from Mir Hossein Mousavi, the leading opposition presidential candidate in Iran's June 12 election. Even though the two-term government of his political partner, former president Mohammad Khatami, tried several times to reach a compromise with the West over Iran's nuclear program, Mousavi charged that the current proposal would lead to disaster.

"The discussions in Geneva were really surprising, and if the promises given [to the West] are realized, then the hard work of thousands of scientists would be ruined," the Kaleme Web site quoted Mousavi as saying in reference to the nuclear fuel plan.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/29/AR2009102900418.html>

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Xinhua News - China  
28 October 2009

## **Japan Testfires Missile Interceptor off Hawaii**

TOKYO, Oct. 28 (Xinhua) -- Japan has successfully test fired a missile interceptor off the coast of Hawaii in a joint exercise with the United States, the Defense Ministry said on Wednesday.

The interceptor missile was launched from the Japanese ship Myoko, and was the third such test that Japan has carried out since 1998.

Japan started to develop the weapons after the Democratic People's Republic of Korea sent a long-range missile over the nation in 1998. Since then, the DPRK has developed nuclear weapons, increasing the need for Japan to have interceptors.

The Myoko was not notified before the missile, which was not live, was launched by the U.S. military. The ship is one of four Japanese vessels that is capable of shooting down ballistic missiles.

The missile was shot down while it was in space, and the interceptor is the first part of Japan's missile defense system. If these interceptors miss, the nation also has missiles on the ground that can be used to down targets.

Since World War II, Japan has not been allowed to have an army, it does however, have a large self defense force that is equipped with some of the most advanced military technology in the world.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-10/28/content\\_12349572.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-10/28/content_12349572.htm)

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Hartford Courant  
October 28, 2009

# Japanese Naval Destroyer Intercepts Ballistic Missile in Test Off Hawaii

AUDREY McAVOY, Associated Press Writer

HONOLULU (AP) — A Japanese navy ship intercepted a medium-range ballistic missile in a test off Hawaii, the U.S. and Japanese militaries said Tuesday.

The drill was the third such test for Japan, which began investing in a U.S.-developed ballistic missile defense system after North Korea test-fired a long-range missile over northern Japan in 1998.

The U.S. fired the test's target from the Pacific Missile Range Facility on Kauai, and the JS Myoko destroyer detected the target, tracked it, then fired an SM-3 interceptor missile from its deck.

The interceptor hit the target in space about 100 miles above the Pacific Ocean, the militaries said in a joint news release.

The target's warhead separated from its booster rocket, so the interceptor had to distinguish between the two parts and hit the warhead.

Two U.S. Navy vessels based at Pearl Harbor, the USS Paul Hamilton and the USS Lake Erie, tracked the target alongside the Myoko.

The SM-3 interceptors fired from ships are designed to intercept missiles midway through their flights. The U.S. is developing other systems to shoot down missiles in their initial and final stages.

The Myoko is the third of four Japanese ships to be upgraded with ballistic missile defense technology.

The second, the JS Chokai, participated in a test off Hawaii last November but an unidentified problem prevented its interceptor from shooting down the target. An investigation is ongoing.

The first Japanese attempt, from the JS Kongo in 2007, was successful.

U.S. ships have intercepted target missiles multiple times in similar tests. The U.S.-created Aegis ballistic missile defense system is used by both nations but it's been modified slightly to suit Japanese ship specifications.

Japan and the U.S. are also jointly developing future upgrades to the SM-3 missile.

In addition to the Aegis-sea based systems, Japan has deployed four PAC-3 missile defense units — each including several launchers, a radar vehicle and a control station — around Tokyo.

Japan plans to deploy the units at several more bases by March 2011.

The land-based PAC-3 anti-missile batteries are designed to shoot down missiles in their final stage of flight.

<http://www.courant.com/news/nation-world/sns-ap-us-missile-defense-test.0.6360957.story>

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Yonhap News – South Korea

30 October 2009

## N. Korean Ministry Behind July Cyber Attacks: Spy Chief

SEOUL, Oct. 30 (Yonhap) -- Seoul's intelligence agency has named North Korea's telecommunications ministry as the origin of a series of cyber attacks in July on scores of state and private Web sites in South Korea and the United States, lawmakers said Friday.

The National Intelligence Service (NIS) had initially assumed North Korea was the likely cause of the distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks that affected 26 targets, including the Web sites of the presidential offices in Seoul and Washington. But the latest comments mark the first time the agency has named a specific organ as the user of the Internet protocol (IP) address linked to the attacks.

"Our search into the route of the DDoS attacks on South Korean and U.S. sites found a line coming from China," NIS chief Won Sei-hoon said in a closed-door meeting of the National Assembly intelligence committee on Thursday.

"The line was found to be on the IP that the North Korean Ministry of Post and Telecommunications is using on rent (from China)," he said. His remarks were quoted by committee lawmakers who attended the meeting.

No significant damage was reported from the July attacks, though investigators failed to determine who was behind them.

Won refused to comment further, saying that to "answer in specifics would risk revealing national strategies."

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2009/10/30/86/0401000000AEN20091030002200315F.HTML>

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Korea Herald  
October 30, 2009

## **US, North Korea 'Agree to Visit of US Special Envoy'**

The United States and North Korea reached a basic agreement that Stephen Bosworth, US special representative for North Korea policy, will visit Pyongyang, probably late next month, to hold the first high-level US-North Korean talks since US President Barack Obama took power, sources said.

The Bosworth talks are likely to take place shortly after Obama's visit to Japan and other Asian countries in November.

The United States has said it would ask North Korea at U.S.-North Korean high-level discussions to agree to resume the stalled six-party talks aimed at dismantling Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programmes. It is expected that crucial negotiations will take place during Bosworth's visit to prompt Pyongyang's return to the six-party process.

According to the sources, the basic agreement was reached Saturday during talks in New York between Ri Gun, a senior North Korean Foreign Ministry official, and Sung Kim, US special envoy to the six-party talks. The main purpose of Ri and Kim's meeting was to discuss a Bosworth visit to North Korea, the sources said.

"Since North Korea's return to the six-party talks was the necessary condition for (Bosworth's) visit to North Korea, there's more possibility the six-party talks will resume this year," the sources said.

North Korea had long been demanding the US government arrange a visit by Bosworth, but the United States had pressed for talks with North Korean First Vice Foreign Minister Kang Sok Chu, a close aide to the country's leader Kim Jong Il. In addition, Washington did not make its stance clear, with the US State Department only saying it would carefully monitor whether North Korea intended to return to the six-party process and abandon its nuclear programs.

When Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao visited North Korea on October 5, Kim told him Pyongyang was ready to return to multinational talks, including the six-party process, but that such a move would depend on progress in the country's bilateral negotiations with the United States.

It appears the US government, during the talks between Sung Kim and Ri, got the impression North Korea would express its intention to return to the six-party process if Bosworth paid a visit and if Washington and Pyongyang agreed on what North Korea would receive in return for denuclearising.

The US government is prepared to cooperate with Japan and South Korea during the course of denuclearisation talks with North Korea, and to carefully proceed within the framework of the six-party talks, the sources said.

However, it is believed North Korea wants tangible rewards, such as a guarantee that the country's regime will not be toppled, during negotiations with the United States, which means some time might elapse before the US-North Korean bilateral talks transition to the resumption of the six-party discussions.

[http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html\\_dir/2009/10/31/200910310002.asp](http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2009/10/31/200910310002.asp)

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency  
28 October 2009

# Dmitry Donskoy Submarine Prepares for Future Bulava Missile Tests

MOSCOW, October 28 (RIA Novosti) - Russia's Dmitry Donskoy strategic nuclear-powered submarine returned on Wednesday from a short sea test run to prepare for upcoming test launches of the troubled Bulava missile.

"The sub left the base in Severodvinsk on Monday to test the readiness of the equipment for future launches of the Bulava missile," a Severodvinsk administration official said, without specifying the date for the next test of the missile.

The Typhoon-class submarine, based at a naval facility in northern Russia's Severodvinsk, is the only vessel in service with the Russian Navy capable of testing the new Bulava submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM).

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

However, the Bulava's development has been dogged by a series of setbacks, which has officially suffered six failures in 11 tests.

The latest Bulava failure during the launch from Dmitry Donskoy in the North Sea on July 15 was caused by a defective steering system in its first stage, a defense industry source said on Monday.

The future development of the Bulava has been questioned by some lawmakers and defense industry officials, who have suggested that all efforts should be focused on the existing Sineva SLBM.

But the Russian military has insisted that there is no alternative to the Bulava and pledged to continue testing the missile until it is ready to be put in service with the Navy.

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

[http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20091028/156626320.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20091028/156626320.html)

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New York Times

October 29, 2009

LETTER FROM EUROPE

## Ridding Germany of U.S. Nuclear Weapons

By JUDY DEMPSEY

BERLIN — Tucked away in one of Germany's finest wine regions close to the border with Luxembourg is the Büchel Air Base. Its perimeter is heavily guarded by the German Luftwaffe, or air force. And no wonder. Up to 20 nuclear weapons are stored in underground vaults, all in the custody of the 702nd Munitions Support Squadron, a U.S. Air Force unit, according to security experts.

No U.S., NATO or German Defense Ministry official will confirm or deny the existence of these weapons — at least not on the record — even though President Barack Obama has pledged to reduce and even rid the world of nuclear arms. "This issue is highly classified information," said a U.S. diplomat. "We simply do not discuss it. You can ask questions and raise hypothetical scenarios, but I will circumvent them."

But Germany's new foreign minister, Guido Westerwelle, has taken a different view on the continuing presence of these weapons on German soil. In a bid to distinguish himself as quickly as possible in his new job, he called Saturday — the day Chancellor Angela Merkel clinched an accord with her new coalition partners, the Free Democrats — "for a country free of nuclear weapons." But he refrained from saying where the weapons were located.

On the face of it, no issue could be better suited to Mr. Westerwelle who, as leader of the Free Democrats, has made this his foreign policy priority (and not Russia or Afghanistan). It is popular with a public staunchly opposed to nuclear weapons. All Mr. Westerwelle has to do, with support from Mrs. Merkel, is to ask the United States to remove the weapons when he visits the United States next month, days after Mrs. Merkel holds talks in Washington.

And if Mr. Obama is true to his word, there is no reason why the United States could not take them out, as it has quietly done over the past few years from other locations in Germany and other West European countries belonging to NATO, according to German defense experts.

There are, however, two hurdles Mr. Westerwelle will have to jump. One is Europe's two nuclear powers, Britain and France, which are afraid that after the U.S. arms are gone, their own nuclear weapons will come under scrutiny.

The other is resistance inside the U.S.-led NATO military alliance. Many member states are afraid that if the United States does pull all its weapons out from Germany and the rest of Europe, there would be negative consequences. The most important one is alliance solidarity, which is fragile enough because of the war in Afghanistan. "The weapons are the foundation of that solidarity. Take them away and what have we left?" said a NATO diplomat who requested anonymity because the issue is so sensitive in the 28-member alliance.

NATO diplomats who advocate keeping some U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe also say their mere presence dissuades other countries from considering acquiring such weapons. But Pakistan, India, Iran and North Korea have pursued their own nuclear weapons programs in spite of those arms. "The countries you mention do not give a toss about what NATO does with its weapons," said the NATO diplomat.

Other experts are more open about the real reason for retaining the dwindling nuclear arsenal. "The bombs are there because of bureaucratic resistance to change and NATO's inability to address the issue of the future of nuclear weapons in NATO," said Hans Kristensen. He is director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists in Washington, an independent research group that monitors U.S. nuclear weapons.

The continuing existence of these weapons has perpetuated Cold War thinking, which in turn has postponed a long overdue discussion, not only about the reason for the nuclear weapons, but the role of the trans-Atlantic alliance, said Mr. Kristensen.

"If you remove the weapons, the whole equation between Europe and the U.S. could change," said Professor Joachim Krause, director of the Institute for Security Policy at Christian Albrecht University in Kiel. "That is why some of Mrs. Merkel's Atlanticist conservatives have never wanted to touch the issue. But even the conservatives are beginning to change their minds about the utility of these weapons."

The United States placed the short-range tactical weapons in NATO West European countries during the early years of the Cold War to deter the former Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces. At its peak, during the early 1970s, there were more than 7,300 of the weapons in Europe. By 1990, the number had dropped to 4,000 and by 1992, to 700. Since 1994, according to the Federation of American Scientists, the number of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe has leveled off to around 480. They are based in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey.

The weapons now serve little purpose, said Professor Krause. Their range is too limited to deal with threats from the Middle East or farther. There is also the physical problem of carrying them by air. Germany's Tornado fighter aircraft will be phased out in a few years. The Eurofighter, its replacement, has no capability for carrying such weapons.

The United States has been much quicker to acknowledge these deficits than the Europeans. Even before the election of Mr. Obama, previous administrations have unilaterally decided to withdraw such weapons from certain bases or ceded to requests to do so. Secretly, according to security experts, the United States recently emptied its base in Ramstein, Germany, of nuclear weapons and earlier pulled nuclear arms out of Lakenheath in England. And when Greece asked the United States to withdraw its weapons from Araxos Air Base in 2001, it was done quietly as well. There was no fuss in NATO.

In that case, if Mr. Westerwelle is serious about ridding Germany of the U.S. nuclear missiles, maybe he should do it discreetly, and forgo the public's praise. But if he wants to continue making it a foreign policy issue, he could run the risk of rattling some NATO allies. That might not be a bad thing — provided that Germany can come up with some ideas about NATO's future. So far, there has been only silence from Berlin.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/29/world/europe/29iht-letter.html>

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## **Increasing Likelihood of Terrorist Getting Hands On N-Arms: Clinton**

WASHINGTON: Warning that there is an increasing likelihood of terrorists getting their hands on nuclear weapons if preventive measures are not taken now, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has said that too much of the world's atomic material remains vulnerable to theft or diversion.

"Recent developments underscore the threat," she wrote in an op-ed published in the latest issue of the prestigious 'Foreign Policy' magazine.

Besides citing the examples of North Korea, Iran and Syria, Clinton said "too much of the world's nuclear material remains vulnerable to theft or diversion, even as illicit state and non State networks engage in sensitive nuclear trade."

"If we do not reverse this trend and strengthen the international non-proliferation regime, we will find ourselves in a world with a steadily growing number of nuclear-armed states, and an increasing likelihood of terrorists getting their hands on nuclear weapons," she said.

Observing that no nation is safe from the threat of nuclear proliferation and no country can meet this challenge alone, Clinton said that in the early days of the atomic age, a handful of powerful countries could effectively set non-proliferation strategy.

"But in today's changing world, with information and technology leaping across borders, industrial capacity more widely distributed, and non-state actors wielding increasing influence, it will require unprecedented international cooperation," Clinton said and suggested that the UN atomic watchdog IAEA be given more teeth.

The US, she said, has launched a major diplomatic effort to forge a renewed international consensus on non-proliferation that is based on the shared interest of meeting a common threat and on the requirement that all nations understand and abide by their rights and responsibilities.

"We seek to strengthen each of the three mutually reinforcing pillars of global non-proliferation -- preventing spread of nuclear weapons, promoting disarmament and facilitating the peaceful use of nuclear energy. And to those three pillars, we should add a fourth: preventing nuclear terrorism," she wrote.

"The most effective way to reduce the threat of nuclear terrorism is to ensure that nuclear materials that can be used to build weapons are well protected against theft or seizure.

"That is why the United States has proposed a plan to secure all vulnerable nuclear material worldwide within four years -- a plan that has now won the endorsement of the UN Security Council," Clinton said.

The Secretary of State said the US and its international allies will use financial and legal tools to better disrupt illicit proliferation networks, including by tightening controls on trans-shipment, a key source of illicit trade.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics/nation/Increasing-likelihood-of-terrorist-getting-hands-on-N-arms-Clinton/articleshow/5180830.cms>

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Chicago Tribune  
October 28, 2009

### **Pentagon Speeds Up Work On Bunker Buster**

By Scott Canon, McClatchy/Tribune News

KANSAS CITY, Mo. -- Even as Washington emphasizes speaking softly to pry Iran away from its nuclear ambitions, the Pentagon is speeding the manufacture of a big stick.

This month, the Defense Department awarded \$51.9 million to McDonnell Douglas to more quickly adapt a 30,000-pound bunker buster to the B-2 stealth bomber.

The GBU-57 bomb and the fleet of B-2s -- stationed at Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri with deployments to Guam and an outpost in the Indian Ocean -- are widely seen as the likeliest U.S. military option for setting back Tehran's hopes for building nuclear weapons.

"There is a certain amount of wise military planning in all this," said Robert Hewson, editor of Jane's Air-Launched Weapons, "and a certain amount of saber-rattling."

But the weapon is behind schedule. In 2007, officials at the bomber base estimated the bomb would be B-2-ready in 2008. Budgetary hiccups pushed the delivery date to mid-2011.

Now the testing of the bomb and the delicate job of outfitting it for any of the \$2.2 billion planes is, as one Pentagon spokesman said, "back on track." It should now be ready "in the coming months," Defense Department spokesman Geoff Morrell said.

About 20 of the bombs are being made.

"This has been a capability that we have long believed was missing from our -- our quiver, our arsenal, and we wanted to make sure we filled in that gap," Morrell said this month. "I don't think anybody should read anything into it beyond what it is. And I don't think anybody can divine potential targets or anything of that nature."

Iran has many uranium-enriching centrifuges at an underground location at Natanz. But on a visit to the United Nations last month, President Barack Obama announced Iran was building a secret nuclear facility near the holy city of Qom, this one deep in a mountain. U.N. inspectors made their first visit to the site this week. Some speculate that locale was in response to a possible bunker buster.

The new bunker-buster bomb, by the reckoning of military analysts, is considered conventional -- by which they mean it does not carry a nuclear warhead. But it is unconventionally large.

The GBU-57 weighs about as much as two elephants, stretches 20 feet and carries more than 5,300 pounds of explosives. Two will fit in the belly of a B-2.

Published reports suggest the bomb can burrow through 200 feet of reinforced concrete before detonating, but many analysts are skeptical. The physics of bunker busting are tricky, and even nuclear bombs cannot punch into the world's most hardened targets.

Still, the bomb might be enough, if its shock can disturb the centrifuges.

### **Goodbye, mother**

The GBU-57 bomb is supplanting the MOAB -- Massive Ordnance Air Blast, or "Mother of All Bombs" -- as the biggest non-nuclear weapon in the U.S. arsenal.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-tc-nw-bunker-buster-1026-102oct27,0,3059564.story>

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Khaleej Times – U.A.E.

OPINION

29 October 2009

## **We Need More Erdogans**

By Aijaz Zaka Syed

Turkey's Ottoman Empire died an unwept death nearly a century ago. But the country continues to enjoy a unique eminence of leadership across the Middle East and in much of the Muslim world. And Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has repeatedly justified this love and respect for his country with his political courage and candour.

From the lashing Erdogan gave to Israel's Shimon Peres at the World Economic Forum in Davos following the Gaza offensive earlier this year to his call this week demanding UN action on Justice Richard Goldstone's report, Turkey continues to show rare leadership. Erdogan's nation stands up for justice and fair play, rather than go along with the shameful double standards that the rest of the world seems to take in its stride.

This is remarkable for a country that enjoys close, strategic relations with the United States, is a NATO member and hopes to be the first Muslim country to join the European Union. More important, it has full diplomatic relations with Israel and is perhaps the only Muslim country with which Israel has close economic and military ties. (So you can't really throw the regulation accusation of 'anti-Semitism' against Ankara.)

This is largely because of Turkey's historical relations with the Jewish community. The Ottoman caliphs sheltered and protected the Jews for centuries while they were being hunted and killed all across Christian Europe.

However, these close ties haven't deterred Turkey's present leadership from confronting Israel on its persecution of Palestinians.

Turkey, Erdogan told a huge public rally last week, had never been on the side of oppressors and it had always defended the oppressed: "We are not against any country, but we are against injustice." He stopped short of pointing out that yesterday's oppressed had become today's oppressors.

Meanwhile in an interesting interview with Britain's Guardian this week, Erdogan turned the spotlight on another piece of international theatre involving Israel. Commenting on Iran's nuclear conflict with the US and Europe, the Turkish Prime Minister has slammed the West for being unfair to Iran and applying double standards on the issue.

Dismissing the Western hysteria over Iran's non-existent nuclear weapons as 'gossip,' the Turkish leader pointed out that many of those lecturing Iran today on its alleged pursuit of nuclear weapons had large nuclear arsenals at their disposal.

In doing so, Erdogan has given voice to an overwhelming majority around the world that has long felt that the West is unreasonably targeting Iran—just as Iraq had been — even as it turns a blind eye to Israel's nukes.

This is not the first time Erdogan has underscored the international duplicity. During the UN General Assembly session and the debate on nuclear disarmament in New York last month, he reminded the world that Israel has nuclear weapons and has used the banned phosphorous bombs against Palestinians. "Why are these not on the UN agenda? Why is it always Iran?" he demanded.

If only more Muslim leaders could think and act like Erdogan and confront big bullies of our world, their people wouldn't be in the mess that they are in today.

Speaking truth to power is never easy. But it is especially difficult in the Middle East. The rest of the world may have bid farewell to colonial hegemony long ago. But the world's most volatile and sensitive region remains a hostage of its imperial past and its divisive legacy in some way or the other. Which is why leaders such as Erdogan come as a ray of hope in an otherwise dark and dull Middle Eastern sky.

I wonder why no other Muslim leader has had the courage to hold a mirror to the West over Iran. You didn't hear a single voice of protest across the Middle East against this relentless campaign targeting Iran.

Is it because Iran is a Shia nation and majority of the Muslim world happens to be Sunni? Or do we truly believe the fiction that Iran's nuclear programme and its so-called expansionist ambitions are targeted at its Arab and Muslim neighbours?

How can we ignore the historical reality that until our colonial masters arrived, Arabs and Iranians and Sunnis and Shias had coexisted in peace and total harmony for centuries since the dawn of Islam? The disastrous, 8-year-long war between Iraq and Iran, the only Arab-Persian conflict in post Islam history, that claimed nearly a million lives had been a gift of the West.

When will we realise that from Palestine to Pakistan the Muslim world is on fire today because of our silence and inaction over the games big powers have been playing in the Middle East for decades. And we are silent once again even as the whole world debates the UN report on Gaza and demands action against Israel.

Hundreds of peace activists, human rights groups and bloggers around the world have been running a tireless campaign to hold Israel to account for its war crimes.

It was thanks to their noble efforts that the UN Human Rights Council decided to refer Goldstone's findings to the UN Security Council. Defying the US pressure and boycott by the Europeans, the council voted 19 against three to send the report on Gaza to the Security Council.

The matter now rests before the five permanent members of the Security Council.

The Big Five have to decide if Israel should be asked to probe the Gaza war crimes or recommend the International Criminal Court action against Israel. But the US is likely to do neither.

Israel's patron saint could simply veto any UN initiative against Israel, as it always has. The Gaza report stands no chance in the UN as long as the US is there to protect Israel. And it will continue to protect the Israelis even if their hands are dripping with the blood of innocents as long as the Arab and Muslim countries do not speak in one voice.

The report by the South African Jewish judge is not without its flaws. First of all it puts Israel and Hamas on the same level for crimes against humanity during the recent Israeli offensive on Gaza. Which is absurd. One is a

nuclear power and the most powerful military in the Middle East and the other is a resistance group. All Hamas has at its disposal are its rudimentary rockets.

Even more absurd is Goldstone's recommendation asking Israel to investigate its own crimes against Palestinians. How can Israel probe its own sins? And even if it does so to mollify the world opinion, how legitimate can be such an exercise and what would it achieve? Surely, Israel cannot resolve to punish itself!

However, the UN report is crucial in that it sets a historic precedent of confronting a criminal, ruthless power against an utterly defenceless and long persecuted civilian population. Israel has got away with murder, literally, all these years because the world has failed to confront it and its protectors. This is why it keeps killing and terrorising the Palestinians again and again. This would stop only if the Israelis are made to pay for their appalling crimes. And the Goldstone report provides a rare opportunity to do so.

By a strange coincidence, the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council and the larger General Assembly are with two countries that are sympathetic to Palestinians — Turkey and Libya.

UN chief Ban Ki-Moon is under intense pressure to end the world body's inaction on the issue. So it is possible to confront Israel even if its friends try to protect it once again. All it needs is unity in the ranks of Arab and Muslim states. Only this can persuade the US from blindly protecting Israel.

So can the Arab and Muslim countries, and all reasonable people everywhere, please stand up and speak out for a change? History will never forgive them if they fail to do so yet again.

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OPINION

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## **Talks with Iran Must Continue**

By Francis Matthew, Editor at Large

Iran and the United States may have a possible deal over Iran's alleged militarisation of its peaceful nuclear programme. The solution to the long-running dispute involves exporting Iran's nuclear fuel to other countries, with Russia and France mentioned as possible candidates.

But the deal is definitely not in the bag and there is still a very long way to go, in large part because it is not obvious that Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's government wants to make a deal. In the international arena, Ahmadinejad has done well by positioning himself as the main opponent of the US' role as global policeman, and he will not want to give up his carefully crafted status as the leading spokesman for the Third World.

Therefore it was not really a surprise when Iran's state TV reported that although Ahmadinejad's government would agree to the "general framework" of the proposed plan, it also wanted "very important changes" to the UN-brokered deal. These objections were then made more specific by Iran's Press TV, which reported that Tehran would not agree to its entire stock of low-enriched uranium being sent abroad for processing, as hinted at by the proposed deal.

Iran might seek to stagger the process by sending its low-enriched uranium abroad in batches, rather than all in one go. This should not really be a problem for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the US and its international allies, and could become a matter of negotiation.

But the deal on offer only covers the existing stock of fuel, not future product, which means that in the long term there is still plenty of room for failure. Iran will still have its existing capacity to enrich uranium, and will be able to produce more every day. Every Iranian political leader, from those in the current government to the opposition, from the conservative religious to the more liberal, has insisted on Iran's right to have the full nuclear cycle intact on its territory and under its control. They will not want to give this up, nor will they agree to disband Iran's enrichment sites. One long-term solution would be for Iran to continue to maintain its sites, but at the same time to allow complete transparency and to sign the Additional Protocol of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which allows IAEA inspectors access to anywhere at any time.

The current proposed deal requires Iran to transfer approximately 1,200 kilograms of its low-enriched uranium to Russia or France. And since Iran can produce about three kilograms of low-enriched uranium per day, it will be able

to replace all of the transferred stock in just over a year. Of course, that gives all parties a year to work with, and a lot can happen in a year.

Ahmadinejad is facing increasing and continual pressure from his internal opponents as the political row over the disputed elections continues. The series of trials since the end of September, launched by Ahmadinejad's administration against defendants accused of inciting post-election unrest, have kept the political row alive. This has not helped Ahmadinejad very much, and has given the opportunity to his accused opponents of portraying him as persecuting them and misusing the state apparatus to support his personal position.

But far more damaging for Ahmadinejad's standing in the country is the way that his poor economic record is now being assaulted in the most direct way, with a clear implication of dishonesty and personal gain. A report by Iran's State Audit found an astonishing total of around \$66 billion (Dh242.7 billion) was missing from the government's accounts, which is a huge amount of money and is equivalent to Iran's entire annual average oil revenue. This report was buried for some months, but it has just been publicised this week in Tehran by Farda, a newsletter linked to Tehran's mayor Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, who is one of Ahmadinejad's future rivals for the presidency.

Ahmadinejad is certainly under great pressure from his political opponents, and a lot depends on what he does next. If Ahmadinejad refuses the nuclear deal, he offers his opponents the chance to drag him down. If he agrees to the deal, he gives himself a chance to widen his narrowing political base, but he also weakens his hard-man position.

On the American side, any deal over Iran's fuel and nuclear programme will be seen as a victory for Barack Obama's administration, as he will have convinced Iran to give up maybe between 75 to 80 per cent of its stocks of low-enriched uranium. That will mean Iran will not be able to make a nuclear bomb in the immediate future, and Obama will be able to use this achievement to show his foreign policy can produce results, something that has been missing during his first year, perhaps understandably. But his Republican opposition has been taunting him with being all talk and no action, and he will relish the chance to snap back at them.

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