



# **USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER**

# **CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL**

Maxwell AFB, Alabama

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Issue No. 768, 11 December 2009

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YAHOOnews.com

8 December 2009

### ***US, Russia Push Toward Post-START Agreement: Mullen***

WASHINGTON (AFP) – The United States and Russia are both intent on reaching agreement on a successor to the START I treaty but it must be "ratifiable" by the US Senate, the head of the US military said Tuesday.

The two sides failed to reach an agreement before the December 5 expiration of the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, a cornerstone of the Cold War arms control regimes that kept in check the two nuclear-armed superpowers.

But Admiral Michael Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said US President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev have "spoken to the importance of solving these differences and getting to the point where we have an agreement."

While declining to go into details of the negotiations, Mullen said officials at the highest levels of both governments were involved in the deliberations.

"The national security team in the United States, and I would also add in Russia, are very focused on bringing this out to a positive conclusion," he said at a news conference.

Mullen said the differences stemmed in part from "the asymmetries in our nuclear structures, if you will -- whether it's the kind of launcher, or where we have them, or those kinds of things."

"But we do need in the United States, from our perspective, we do need a treaty that is ratifiable, that can be ratified by our Senate," he said.

A reported sticking point is Russia's opposition to continuing US inspections of missile facilities.

With the expiration of the START I treaty, a US inspection team on Friday quit their post at Russia's leading missile production plant in Votkinsk, about 580 kilometers (360 miles) north of Moscow, the US Embassy in Moscow said.

The broad outlines of the successor treaty had been agreed in July at a summit in Moscow.

At the meeting, Obama and Medvedev agreed to reduce the number of warheads on either side to between 1,500 and 1,675 and the number of "carriers" capable of delivering them to between 500 and 1,100.

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20091208/pl\\_afp/usrussiadisarmamenttreaty](http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20091208/pl_afp/usrussiadisarmamenttreaty)

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The Star – Malaysia

9 December 2009

### ***New Arms Pact Coming Soon - Russian Foreign Minister***

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russia and the United States are close to signing a new pact to cut nuclear arms and replace the expired START-1 treaty, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Wednesday.

"The treaty will be signed soon," Lavrov told a news conference in Moscow, without specifying a date.

Despite intensive negotiations lasting months, Moscow and Washington did not agree a replacement pact by Dec. 5, when START-1 expired. But both countries said they were committed to having it ready before the end of the year.

(Reporting by Conor Sweeney, writing by Oleg Shchedrov; editing by Michael Stott)

[http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/12/9/worldupdates/2009-12-09T161449Z\\_01\\_NOOTR\\_RTRMDNC\\_0\\_-445907-1&sec=Worldupdates](http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/12/9/worldupdates/2009-12-09T161449Z_01_NOOTR_RTRMDNC_0_-445907-1&sec=Worldupdates)

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Xinhua News – China  
10 December 2009

### ***U.S. Expresses Limited Optimistic On New Arms Control Deal With Russia***

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9 (Xinhua) -- The United States on Wednesday voiced its limited optimism over a new arms control treaty with Russia to replace the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which expired on Saturday.

"Obviously, our hope is to get one done, but we can't plan for a signing ceremony until something's done, and we've certainly made no arrangements for that," White House spokesman Robert Gibbs told reporters at the daily press briefing.

According to the spokesman, the negotiators from the two sides have still been talking on the replacement of START treaty. "We're getting closer and making progress on an agreement. But there are still issues that have to be worked out that stand in the way of that ultimate agreement."

"We are optimistic that we can get one. Whether or not that happens by Copenhagen at this point's just hard to say," Gibbs added.

Under the START, which was signed in 1991 between the United States and the Soviet Union, the two nuclear powers should reduce their respective nuclear warheads to less than 6,000 and launchers to less than 1,600.

U.S. President Barack Obama and his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev have agreed on an ambitious and aggressive reduction to their nuclear arsenals by hammering out a new treaty, under which the nuclear warheads each side holds will be reduced to 1,500 to 1,675, while the launchers will be limited to 500 to 1,000.

Negotiators from the two countries, led by Assistant Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller and her Russian counterpart Anatoly Antonov, have been busy talking in Geneva, in order to resolve remaining differences.

In a joint statement issued on Friday, Presidents Obama and Medvedev said they will continue to work together in the spirit of the START treaty following its expiration, in order to ensure that a new treaty on strategic arms enter into force at the earliest possible date.

Steven Pifer, an expert on arms control and proliferation in Brookings Institution, told Xinhua that the main differences may be related to two big issues. One is reaching agreement on the number of launchers, and the other is the verification questions.

But the expert believes that the two countries can wrap up the final details.

"If they don't get it done in December, I think they will get it done early next year. Both presidents have made repeatedly clear that they want the treaty and both sides have strong motivations," said Pifer, adding "it is not a question on whether will get the treaty but on when will get the treaty."

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-12/10/content\\_12620321.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-12/10/content_12620321.htm)

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YAHOOnews.com  
11 December 2009

### ***Russia, US Could Sign Arms Deal Next Week: Report***

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

MOSCOW — Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and his US counterpart Barack Obama could sign a new deal on cutting nuclear arsenals in Europe next week, a newspaper report said on Friday.

The new agreement -- the successor to the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) that expired on December 5 -- could be signed by the two leaders on December 18-19 in a European capital, the Vedomosti newspaper reported.

Both men are to attend the climax of the UN climate summit in Denmark but the new arms deal would be signed "not in Copenhagen but in another European capital," the paper quoted a source close to the foreign ministry as saying.

Officials from both sides have expressed confidence in reaching a new agreement for major arms cuts despite failing to seal a deal before the old treaty expired earlier this month.

Russian news agencies reported meanwhile that Russian and US negotiators would be continuing talks on the new deal next week.

"The arms talks will continue next week" in Geneva, a foreign ministry official was quoted as saying by all Russian news agencies.

The Russian delegation would be led by the foreign ministry's director for disarmament Anatoly Antonov while Assistant Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller would lead the US side, the official said.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said Thursday both sides were working hard on the negotiations and it was merely a question of when the new accord would be agreed.

Medvedev and Obama in July set as a goal slashing the number of warheads on either side to between 1,500 and 1,675 and the number of "carriers" capable of delivering them to between 500 and 1,100

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20091211/pl\\_afp/usrussianuclearweapons\\_20091211153602](http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20091211/pl_afp/usrussianuclearweapons_20091211153602)

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Washington Post  
9 December 2009

### ***Administration Affirms Bush Stance On Biological Threats***

*Obama to release U.S. strategy for countering biological attacks*

By Mary Beth Sheridan and Spencer S. Hsu

The Obama administration has decided not to support a global monitoring system for biological weapons, a move that affirms an earlier determination by the Bush administration but that will disappoint some nonproliferation experts.

The decision is reflected in the administration's new strategy for countering biological threats, which is due out Wednesday, officials said. Its release comes amid growing concern about the number of nations -- and potentially terrorists -- developing the scientific expertise to create biological weapons.

White House officials said the strategy includes an increased focus on international collaboration and on the prevention of biological attacks, as well as on the response to them. It is scheduled to be presented in Geneva by Undersecretary of State Ellen O. Tauscher at the annual meeting of countries that have forsworn germ-warfare agents under the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention.

"We've got an approach that is looking at affirmative ways of engaging, trying to increase international collaboration and cooperation, and increasing resources to do that type of work," said a senior White House official made available to speak on the condition of anonymity before the unveiling of the initiative.

Still, the strategy is notable for what it doesn't include: a way to enforce the Biological Weapons Convention. Although the treaty has been ratified by 163 countries, it has no verification mechanism; experts speculate that countries such as North Korea could be cheating. A seven-year negotiating effort to create a compliance system collapsed in 2001 when the Bush administration abruptly rejected the draft protocol, saying it could lead to harassment of U.S. government laboratories and undermine U.S. regulations against exporting technology used in bioweapons.

The White House official said it makes no sense to spend years negotiating another enforcement mechanism that might not catch offenders taking advantage of the latest scientific techniques.

"Things that were breakthroughs 10 years ago are now something you can do in your garage. That's not a context in which verification is going to be very realistic or very effective," the official said.

Daryl Kimball, director of the Arms Control Association, said he was disappointed that the administration didn't come up with a creative way to "put some teeth into" the convention. But many analysts were unsurprised.

Randall J. Larsen, executive director of the congressionally chartered Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism, praised the strategy's emphasis on preventing biological attacks. He said the bipartisan commission, headed by former senators Bob Graham (D-Fla.) and James M. Talent (R-Mo.), determined that a verification regime could be achieved only at an unacceptable cost and unanimously supported the Bush position.

The commission issued a report last December warning that an attack involving weapons of mass destruction, probably biological weapons, was more likely than not to occur somewhere in the world by the end of 2013.

The new strategy, according to a copy obtained by The Washington Post, envisions increased U.S. assistance to countries to develop systems to detect and respond to outbreaks of infectious disease, whether from natural causes, like the H1N1 flu, or from the release of a germ agent. The plan calls for promoting international guidelines for the handling of high-risk pathogens and supporting countries' efforts to criminalize the development of biological weapons.

It also says the U.S. government will promote universal membership in the Biological Weapons Convention.

On the domestic front, the strategy emphasizes improving intelligence on biological threats, enhancing policies to secure high-risk toxins and establishing better data-sharing among law enforcement and health professionals.

"It is still important the United States has the policy and leads the international community in taking whatever actions can be done to prevent an attack," despite the slim chances of success, Larsen said. "Understanding that it's extremely improbable and difficult to do doesn't mean you shouldn't try to do it."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/09/AR2009120900803.html>

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Washington Times

10 December 2009

**Inside the Ring**

### ***Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty***

By Bill Gertz

The Obama administration has launched a new effort to win ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, known as CTBT, which was voted down by the Senate in 1999.

The effort is being led by Jon Wolfsthal, an arms-control specialist at two think tanks until he became a national-security aide to Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. and a staffer on the White House National Security Council in January.

Mr. Wolfsthal was making the rounds in the Senate on Wednesday, checking to see if the administration can drum up the 67 votes needed - a two-thirds majority - to ratify the treaty, which prevents underground nuclear tests.

Congressional and administration officials said the CTBT ratification effort is part of the administration's new emphasis on reaching arms-control agreements. The officials said the intelligence community is working on a National Intelligence Estimate that the administration hopes will bolster ratification efforts, and a federal scientific study also is being done as part of the push. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to speak on the record.

A White House spokesman had no immediate comment.

The treaty was rejected on a party-line 51-48 vote in the Senate on Oct. 13, 1999. Republicans opposed the treaty, saying the pact would undermine national security by encouraging nuclear proliferation and preventing the United States from ensuring the reliability of its nuclear stockpile.

Democrats favored the treaty as a needed arms-control agreement to prevent nuclear testing.

Republicans at the time did not have the 60 votes needed to kill the treaty. As a result, the pact was tabled in a procedure that allows it to be brought up again for a future vote.

President Obama said during the presidential campaign that he planned to seek CTBT ratification as a high priority.

The treaty was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in September 1996 but has not entered into force because nine states are needed to ratify it, including the United States and China.

The treaty was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in September 1996 but has not entered into force because nine states are needed to ratify it, including the United States and China.

The United States signed the treaty and has imposed a moratorium on nuclear testing.

However, a blue-ribbon commission set up by the Pentagon recently identified major flaws in the aging U.S. nuclear arsenal, which has called into question whether future testing of new nuclear weapons may be needed, according to sources familiar with the classified report.

The administration hopes to push through the CTBT ratification before seeking ratification of a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.

The 1991 START expired Dec. 5, and its several hundred pages of provisions were replaced temporarily by a 45-word joint U.S.-Russian statement saying both countries will continue to abide by its terms.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/dec/10/inside-the-ring-10951020/>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency  
10 December 2009

### ***Russia's Latest Bulava Missile Test Unsuccessful***

The latest test launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile in the White Sea in northern Russia ended in failure, the Defense Ministry said on Thursday.

Wednesday's test was Bulava's seventh failure, according to official reports. Russia hopes the submarine-launched missile will be a key element of its nuclear forces.

"The first two stages functioned smoothly, but the flight faltered at the third stage. There was a technical failure in the third stage engines rendering them unstable," the ministry said in a statement.

The statement came after media reports on a mysterious light in the form of a spiral over Norway's northern areas several hundred kilometers from the launch site on Wednesday. Norwegian media suggested it could be a Russian missile spinning after a faulty launch.

Only five out of 12 Bulava launches have been reported successful. The previous failure occurred in July, when the missile self-destructed after its first stage malfunctioned. The latest launch had since been delayed several times.

But some analysts suggest that in reality the number of failures has been considerably greater. According to Russian military expert Pavel Felgenhauer, of the Bulava's 11 test launches, only one was entirely successful.

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

But the military has insisted 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.

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

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20091210/157186305.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency  
10 December 2009

### ***Russia Successfully Test Launches Topol ICBM***

Russia successfully test launched a Topol intercontinental ballistic missile on Thursday, a spokesman for the Strategic Missile Forces said.

Col. Vadim Koval said a RS-12M Topol missile was launched from the Kapustin Yar test site in south Russia's Astrakhan Region, and hit the designated target in Sary-Shagan, Kazakhstan.

He said the launch was designed to test the operational capability of the Topol ICBM.

The missile was in active service from 1987 until 2007, and deployed with the 54th Strategic Missile Division near the town of Teikovo, about 150 miles (240 km) northeast of Moscow.

The RS-12M Topol (SS-25 Sickle) is a single-warhead intercontinental ballistic missile, approximately the same size and shape as the U.S. Minuteman ICBM. The first Topol missiles were put into service in 1985.

The missile has a maximum range of 10,000 km (6,125 miles) and can carry a nuclear warhead with a yield of 550 kilotons.

Although the service life of the SS-25 was extended after a series of successful test launches last year, the missile will be progressively retired over the next decade and replaced by mobile Topol-M (SS-27 Stalin) missile systems.

Russia's SMF reportedly has a total of 541 ICBMs, including 306 Topol missiles and 59 Topol-M missiles.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20091210/157187972.html>

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Atlanta Journal-Constitution

9 December 2009

### ***Iran Says UN Observatory Near Border Is For Spying***

By ALI AKBAR DAREINI

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran claimed Wednesday that a newly built U.N. station to detect nuclear explosions was set up near its border so that world powers could spy on the country, an accusation that underscored the growing bitterness in Tehran's relations with the West.

Construction was completed last week on the seismic monitoring station in neighboring Turkmenistan, a few miles from the Iranian border. It is one of roughly 275 such facilities operating around the world to detect seismic activity set off by blasts from nuclear tests — such as ones in recent years by North Korea.

Iran protested the facility even though it asserts it is not trying to produce nuclear arms. Tehran has been resisting heavy pressure in recent months to sign on to a U.N.-backed plan aimed at thwarting any attempt to build atomic weapons.

Abolfazl Zohrehvand, an adviser to Iranian nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili, said the international treaty that allows for setting up such observatories is an "espionage treaty."

"With the disclosure of the identity of such stations, it is clear the activity of one of them (in Turkmenistan) is to monitor Iran," Zohrehvand told state IRNA news agency.

The U.N. commission that seeks to ban all nuclear tests said the decision to build the station was made more than a decade ago with Iran's involvement. There are already three similar stations inside Iran itself — in Tehran and the southern towns of Shushtar and Kerman, according to the commission.

The network of sensors monitors nuclear explosions worldwide, not in a specific country, said Annika Thunborg, a spokeswoman for the Vienna-based Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, or CTBTO. She said the new facility was unconnected to concerns over Iran's program.

"The building of the station has nothing to do with recent reports about Iran," Thunborg said. "Iran is a member state of the CTBTO, together with 181 other countries, and is party to the decisions made by the CTBTO."

The CTBTO announced last week on its Web site that the new nuclear warning station has been set up between Turkmenistan's Karakum Desert and the Kopet mountain range. It said the station has now been fully constructed and is currently undergoing testing.

But Iran's Zohrehvand said the CTBTO is a "security and espionage treaty, even more dangerous" than the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty's additional protocol, which allows intrusive inspections of nuclear facilities in particular member states. Iran is a member of both the CTBTO and the NPT.

The U.S. and some of its allies suspect Iran's nuclear program is a cover to secretly develop nuclear weapons. Iran has denied it and said the program is geared toward generating electricity.

Iran and the West are deadlocked over a U.N. proposal for Tehran to send the bulk of its enriched uranium abroad. Uranium enriched to low levels can be used as nuclear fuel but enriched to higher levels, it can be used as material for a nuclear bomb.

The U.N. proposal is aimed at drastically reducing its stockpile of enriched uranium in hopes of thwarting the country's ability to make a nuclear weapon. So far, Iran has balked at the offer and defiantly announced it intends to build the 10 new uranium enrichment sites. That statement drew a forceful rebuke from the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency.

The U.S. and its allies are threatening to impose more sanctions on Iran if it does not cooperate.

Thunborg dismissed the idea that the new station was specifically focused on Iran, saying the placement of a particular station was unrelated to the location of a test it detects. She pointed to North Korea's nuclear tests in May 2009 and in 2006. The CTBTO's system detected seismic waves from the blasts.

In the 2006 test, "23 stations worldwide, among them a station as far away as La Paz, Bolivia picked up the signals loud and clear," she said.

"In May 2009, when the DPRK declared another nuclear test, 61 seismic stations picked up the event — from Ussuriysk, Russia to Texas," she added, referring to North Korea by the initials of its official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The decision to build the seismic station in Turkmenistan was made between 1994 and 1996, with Iranian involvement, said Thunborg. At that time, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, a relative pragmatist, was president of Iran.

Rafsanjani is now the most senior member of the clerical establishment believed to side with the opposition movement against hardline President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad over the disputed June presidential election.

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Associated Press Writer Veronika Oleksyn in Vienna contributed to this report.

<http://www.ajc.com/news/nation-world/iran-says-un-observatory-233737.html>

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Al Jazeera Magazine

9 December 2009

### ***Iran Pinpoints Five Sites For New Nuclear Plants***

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says that Iran has finalized sites for five of the 10 new nuclear enrichment plants it seeks to build to expand its nuclear program.

The president, quoted by the Iranian Labour News Agency (ILNA), said on Wednesday that five other sites are being studied for the remaining plants.

Iran, a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), is running a nuclear program which it says is aimed at the civilian applications of the technology.

The country's first nuclear power plant in Bushehr is going through its final preparations. Tehran plans to expand its nuclear program to meet the growing electricity demand in the country.

The West, however, accuses the country of seeking to develop nuclear weapons. The IAEA, which is continuously monitoring Iran's activities, says there are no evidence to prove West's allegations. It, however, has asked the country to increase its cooperation to remove remaining ambiguities.

Last month, twenty five members of the 35-member Board of Governors of the IAEA condemned Iran for starting the construction of its second enrichment plant in Fordo. Ahmadinejad says the decision to build 10 new plants is not a reaction to the move.

"We had tasked Iran's atomic agency to locate several sites for the new plants months ago," the president said.

The clarification came after Head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization (AEO) Ali Akbar Salehi had earlier linked plans for the construction of ten new nuclear sites to the resolution adopted by the IAEA Board of Governors on November 27.

"The West adopted an attitude toward Iran which made the Iranian government to pass the ratification on construction of ten sites similar to the Natanz enrichment facility," Salehi had earlier said.

Ahmadinejad stressed that Iran does not "welcome arguments and harsh words" and will not tolerate "illogical interactions" regarding its nuclear program.



Iran seeks nuclear fuel for a research reactor in Tehran that produces isotopes for medical use. The IAEA, however, has failed to provide the country with a deal that would guarantee Tehran receives the supply.

Source: *Press TV (IRAN)*

<http://aljazeera.com/news/articles/34/Iran-pinpoints-five-sites-for-new-nuclear-plants.html>

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Tehran Times – Iran  
10 December 2009

### ***Iran To Limit Cooperation With IAEA If New Resolution Issued: MP***

TEHRAN – MP Kazem Jalali of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee said on Wednesday that Iran will “greatly reduce” its cooperation with the IAEA in case the UN Security Council issues any new resolution against Tehran.

In an interview with the Mehr News Agency, the MP pointed out that Iran would not be obligated to do its duties fully while the UN Security Council’s decisions are “purely politically motivated”.

IAEA resolution was not proportionate with inspections

The IAEA Board of Governors adopted a resolution against Iran on September 30. The resolution criticized Iran for beginning construction of a new uranium enrichment facility at Fordo and demanded that it immediately halt its construction.

Jalali said the resolution was not based on the agency’s inspections which was declared by its former director general Mohammad ElBaradei.

The resolution was “purely politically motivated” which was ratified under a pressure from major powers, the parliamentary committee spokesman emphasized.

The Iranian cabinet has voted overwhelmingly in favor of a directive that requires the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) to formulate plans for the construction of 10 more uranium enrichment facilities on the scale of the Natanz nuclear plant within two months.

The directive envisages the construction of five plants, for which the land has already been set aside, to begin within two months.

According to the Fourth Development Plan (2005-2010), Iran’s nuclear power plants should eventually generate up to 20,000 megawatt-hours of electricity annually, so the administration should supply the power plants with the needed nuclear fuel by establishing new enrichment plants, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said on Sunday.

Declaration of Fordo was indicative of Iran’s goodwill

The MP emphasized the declaration of the Fordo nuclear power plant showed Iran’s goodwill.

Jalali added the relations between Iran and the United States could be improved if the U.S. provided nuclear fuel for the Tehran research reactor.

U.S. President Barack Obama could prove his goodwill by taking Iran’s nuclear dossier out of the Security Council agenda and providing nuclear fuel for the Tehran reactor, the veteran lawmaker observed.

He also reiterated that Iran will produce nuclear fuel with a purity of 20 percent if other countries decline to sell it.

According to a deal drafted by the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran would exchange a large consignment of its low-enriched uranium for 20 percent enriched uranium for the Tehran reactor, which produces radioisotopes for medical treatment.

Iran has not yet accepted the proposal insisting that there is no guarantee that the Westerners would give Iran the 20 percent enriched uranium after they take the 3.5 enriched uranium out of Iran

[http://www.tehrantimes.com/Index\\_view.asp?code=209551](http://www.tehrantimes.com/Index_view.asp?code=209551)

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Ha'aretz Daily – Israel  
10 December 2009

## ***Experts Say Iran Has Clear Path To Nuclear Weapons***

By Yossi Melman

Last week the Harvard Kennedy School held a simulation game of the Iranian nuclear crisis, and Israel should be very concerned about its course and its outcome.

The game made it clear: Iran will not stop on its path to producing nuclear weapons. The United States will not embark on a military action and will find it difficult to enlist support at the United Nations for imposing more severe sanctions, while relations between Israel and the United States will deteriorate.

Prof. Graham Allison, a leading analyst of American security policy for decades, conducted the game, whose participants were representatives from countries and organizations likely to be affected by the real outcome.

Israel was represented by Dore Gold, former ambassador to the United Nations, and Dr. Shai Feldman, currently at Brandeis University, and by a former brigadier general and a nuclear physicist. Their decisions were made by consensus. The U.S. team, headed by Nicholas Burns, who was an assistant to former secretary of state Condoleezza Rice during the administration of George W. Bush and was responsible for the "Iranian portfolio," included Admiral William Fallon, head of U.S. Central Command from 2007-2008.

Iran was represented by Prof. Gary Sick of Columbia University, who was a member of the U.S. National Security Council under Jimmy Carter.

Also participating were American and European academics (some of them former government officials), representing Russia, China, U.K., France and Germany and the Gulf Cooperation Council (Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar). Also present as observers - the game lasted an entire day - were journalists David Ignatius of the Washington Post and David Singer of The New York Times, who "played" the media. All the participants promised to maintain secrecy about the game and not to reveal the identity of the participants, but details have leaked in the United States and now here as well.

### **Dynamic revealed**

The rules of the game permitted the participants to conduct bilateral or multilateral discussions and contacts, to leak information to the media, to make public declarations and to provide one another with intelligence information. True, it was only an exercise, but it tried to simulate reality. It's possible the decision-making process of the participants was biased because of their worldview, because of partial information or the absence of genuine responsibility for the outcome. But the game revealed a dynamic that is reminiscent of the reality familiar to anyone who keeps tabs on the nuclear crisis with Iran and reflects that reality. Burns in the role of President Barack Obama tried everything possible to prevent a military confrontation fearing this would lead to a serious retaliation from Iran and effect the hundreds of thousands of U.S. soldiers deployed in Iraq, in the Gulf and in Afghanistan.

Gold, in the role of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, tried to enlist all the participants in imposing serious economic sanctions on Iran, designed to hit its "soft underbelly" - its oil and gas industries. Saudi Arabia and the other members of the GCC, which worry about the possibility of Iran having nuclear weapons, joined in the effort. But when Israel tried to reach clandestine understandings with them, they refused (in reality, there is a secret cooperation). The United States operated exclusively through the UN Security Council in reaching a decision on sanctions, but encountered evasion by China and Russia. In the final analysis the U.S. failed to impose the sanctions on Iran, and it turned out that Russia and China even maneuvered behind its back. Their companies made deals with Iran to provide what it requires instead of Western companies.

### **New tactic**

At this point the U.S. administration switched to a new tactic, one designed to extort a promise from Israel that under no condition would it attack Iran without U.S. permission. Gold-Netanyahu refused, and a very unpleasant exchange of words developed between him and Burns-Obama. "Our most serious problem is how to restrain Israel," Burns told Ignatius after the game. In a desperate attempt the Americans tried to tempt Israel and offered it a defensive treaty and a nuclear umbrella if it gave up the military option. Israel rejected the offer, with Gold insisting on the principle that Israel has a right to self-defense and refusing to subordinate the little freedom of action Israel still has to American interests.

"The game," summed up Gold, who conveyed its findings to the relevant authorities in Israel (as the leaders of the game presumably did to their colleagues in the Obama administration) "made it clear to me that the U.S. is going

from a policy designed to prevent Iran from having nuclear weapons to an approach that accepts the possibility that it will have nuclear weapons and to deter it from using them by means of containment. Israel continues to believe that Iran must be prevented from arming itself with nuclear weapons."

Conclusions: The U.S. will not attack Iran. Russia and China will not agree to imposing serious sanctions. The U.S. will pressure Israel to prevent it from attacking Iran, and so a serious crisis is liable to develop between the two countries. Under these circumstances and in view of operational capability, Israel does not in effect have a real option of attacking Iran. If it so desires, Iran can produce nuclear weapons.

### **Bar Gil will stay**

The degree to which the Defense Ministry continues to show contempt for public opinion and to make decisions based on individuals rather than on practical considerations is evident in the latest episode concerning Victor Bar Gil, its deputy director general. His boss, Pinhas Buchris, wanted to transfer him and, as published in Haaretz, cushioned his exit with a tailored-made post - head of the ministry delegation in Thailand. Bar Gil prepared and even made three preliminary tours to Bangkok and neighboring Cambodia and Vietnam. But, it turns out, Buchris is retiring. Bar Gil says he is not interested in going to Thailand and wants to remain deputy director general. He now has the hutzpah to advise his ministry to close the Bangkok office, arguing that it is unneeded.

<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/1134064.html>

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The Star – Malaysia  
9 December 2009

### ***Iran To Hit Israeli Nuke Sites If Attacked - Minister***

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Iran would strike back at Israeli weapons manufacturing sites and nuclear installations if the Jewish state attacked the Islamic Republic's nuclear facilities, Defence Minister Ahmad Vahidi was quoted as saying on Wednesday.

Israel has refused to rule out military action if diplomacy fails to resolve an international dispute over Iran's nuclear programme, which the West suspects is aimed at making bombs.

Iran denies the charge and has often warned it would retaliate if attacked. The head of the elite Revolutionary Guards said earlier this year that Iranian missiles could reach Israeli nuclear sites, a warning underlined by Vahidi.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran's armed forces are fully prepared," Vahidi told reporters during a visit to Syria when asked about any possible Israeli strike on Iran's nuclear sites, the semi-official Mehr news agency reported.

If attacked by Israel, Iran's first response would target various weapons manufacturing sites, including "dirty weapons and other unconventional nuclear centres," Vahidi said.

Israel is believed to be the only nuclear-armed Middle East state.

Iran has often said it has missiles able to reach the Jewish state. Western defence analysts have questioned whether they could hit long-range targets accurately.

Vahidi said "recent threats" by Israeli officials were aimed partly at covering up their own problems and to gain approval for an increased military budget, Mehr reported.

"But at the same time the Zionists know that they are not able to carry out any of their threats against Iran and they are aware of Iran's firm response," Vahidi said.

Iran does not recognise Israel, which it refers to as the "Zionist" state.

Iran, the world's fifth largest oil exporter, says its nuclear work is aimed at generating electricity, not making bombs, but its failure to convince world powers about the peaceful nature of its work has led to U.N. and U.S. sanctions.

Tension increased further last month when Iran said it would build 10 new uranium enrichment sites, shortly after the 35-nation board of the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency adopted a resolution rebuking Tehran for carrying out such work in secret.

Iran's hardline president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, said on Wednesday that last month's announcement was not made to retaliate for the U.N. agency's resolution, contradicting a statement by the head of Iran's atomic energy organisation.

Ahmadinejad said Iran had started preparations several months ago for constructing new enrichment plants and the sites of five of them had been finalised, state broadcaster IRIB reported.

Enriched uranium can be used as fuel for nuclear power stations and, if refined much further, can provide material for bombs.

(Reporting by Reza Derakhshi; Writing by Fredrik Dahl; editing by Tim Pearce)

[http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/12/10/worldupdates/2009-12-09T184809Z\\_01\\_NOOTR\\_RTRMDNC\\_0\\_-445940-2&sec=Worldupdates](http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/12/10/worldupdates/2009-12-09T184809Z_01_NOOTR_RTRMDNC_0_-445940-2&sec=Worldupdates)

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***Wall Street Journal***

***11 December 2009***

### ***U.S. Growing Impatient With Iran***

By Gerald F. Seib

Gen. James Jones has the ramrod-straight demeanor and no-frills speaking style befitting someone who once was the commandant of the Marine Corps. And so it is with matter-of-fact precision that President Barack Obama's national security adviser describes where things stand in the quest to walk back Iran's nuclear program.

"Iran still controls its destiny on this issue," he says in an interview in his West Wing office. The door to diplomatic discussion with the Iranians remains ajar, "but it's not going to stay open much longer."

If Iran doesn't show it's serious about addressing international concerns that it is pursuing nuclear weapons, the action will shift in January to imposing sanctions at the United Nations Security Council. The effort to pass a sanctions resolution will take perhaps a month. And steps to penalize Iran may not stop there.

That, then, is the road just ahead on the U.S. foreign-policy problem most likely to dominate 2010. Washington is obsessed right now with Afghanistan and the tortured process of deciding on a new dose of troops for that troubled land. But Iran is moving to the front burner, and soon.

The Obama administration has tried the diplomatic track with Iran that the president championed in last year's presidential campaign, by attending a high-profile October meeting in Geneva. That produced high drama, followed by great promise, followed by frustration.

The drama came when, just before the meeting, Mr. Obama and his British and French counterparts announced that Iran was building a secret uranium-enrichment facility, undisclosed to U.N. watchdogs. The promise came when, at the meeting, Iran promised to open that facility to inspectors and seemed to agree to ship more than half its low-enriched uranium abroad to be refined into fuel for a research reactor -- a step that would have removed a big chunk of Iran's potential bomb-making material.

The frustration has come in the weeks since, as Tehran has backed away from that nuclear swap. It hasn't exactly said yes or no, and tried to offer alternatives. So the International Atomic Energy Agency's board of governors -- made up of 35 countries from around the world -- has formally censured Iran, which responded by declaring, with more bombast than realism, that it would build 10 more uranium-enrichment plants.

Meanwhile, Iran's internal woes intensified this week, when students and dissidents returned to Tehran's streets to protest the dubious summer election that gave President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad a second term. Iran's rulers appear both distracted and imperiled, and maybe not in a great position to make tough international decisions.

So now there is just uncertainty. Gen. Jones says the diplomatic track hasn't yet reached a dead end, nor the turn toward punitive measures made. The administration always intended that the door to diplomacy would "stay open as long as we could leave it open," he says. In reality, he adds, that means "the end of this calendar year, which is rapidly approaching."

Then the game shifts to sanctions -- and Mr. Obama proclaimed in his speech Thursday accepting the Nobel Peace Prize that "sanctions must exact a real price." The point of diplomacy and sanctions is the same, Gen. Jones says: "The goal very simply is to give Iran a chance, without sanctions or with sanctions, to give a clear statement of policy with regard to their future ambitions concerning the development of nuclear weapons and the delivery means to go with them. As long as there's an open question on both of those issues, then Iran is just asking the world to trust them. And Iran hasn't reached that status in the world where people will just trust them."

More bluntly, he says: "Our goal is to get 1,200 kilograms of low-enriched uranium out of Iran." Perhaps, he acknowledges, Iran hasn't agreed to consummate the Geneva deal because, in the tradition of the Middle Eastern bazaar, it's simply bargaining until the last minute to get the best deal it can. Hence, Tehran suggested at one point that the world simply bring in the fuel rods before it lets go of any of its uranium.

So maybe an Iranian turn to the positive is still coming. "If Iran pivots and does the right thing, whether it's Dec. 30 or Jan. 20, that's what everybody wants," the general says.

But in any case, the American focus will be on sanctions next month, and Gen. Jones seems confident Russia and China are moving Washington's way on the subject.

Turkey, though, is a potential problem. Ankara is a traditional bridge between Iran and the West, and happens to hold a rotating seat right now on the U.N. Security Council. Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited Washington this week, and Mr. Obama asked him to "use his good offices to convey the seriousness of the situation to Iran," Gen. Jones says. Yet Mr. Erdogan made clear that he disapproved of sanctions.

Gen. Jones says merely that there's "hope" Turkey will come along.

A Security Council agreement on sanctions might be followed by tougher penalties arranged by the U.S. and its allies outside U.N. channels. Gen. Jones can only guess at the Iranians' attitude, but surmises: "They think they can withstand anything the U.N. or the coalition of like-minded nations can put together. They might be right. They might be wrong."

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB126049205433686663.html>

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Washington Post  
11 December 2009

### ***Iran Could Face 'Significant Additional Sanctions,' Gates Says***

By Glenn Kessler

KIRKUK, Iraq -- Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said Friday that world powers will soon impose "significant additional sanctions" on Iran over its failure to engage in talks on its nuclear ambitions.

Gates, speaking to a group of about 300 U.S. soldiers in northern Iraq during a weeklong tour of war zones in Afghanistan and Iraq, played down the prospect of military action against Tehran.

"There are no good options in Iran," he said, in response to a question from a soldier about the prospect of war with the Islamic Republic. "One of the things that weighs on me is that if we have learned anything from Iraq over the past six years is the inherent unpredictability of war."

He said that military strikes "would only buy time, perhaps two or three years," to halt Iran's possible pursuit of a nuclear weapon.

Iran insists that it only wants to develop nuclear expertise for peaceful purposes, but it has refused to return to talks with world powers on restraining its nuclear program. On Oct. 1, in talks in Geneva, Iran signaled that it would return to talks and agree to give up a substantial portion of its stockpile of enriched uranium in exchange for fuel for a medical research reactor.

The Obama administration has pushed for the agreement in an effort to buy time for negotiations, but in recent weeks Iran has walked away from the tentative agreements.

"Frankly Iran's stiffing the international community on some of the proposals that they actually agreed to at the beginning of October, I think has brought the international community, including the Russians and the Chinese, together in a way that they have not been, in terms of significant additional sanctions on the Iranians," Gates said.

President Obama had set a Dec. 31 deadline for Iran to respond to the proposals before he turns to pursuing what Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton called "crippling sanctions."

"I think that you are going to see some significant additional sanctions imposed by the international community, assuming that the Iranians don't change course," Gates said.

European Union leaders also warned Iran on Friday that it faced "appropriate measures" if it failed to respond to calls for negotiations. In a draft statement, the 27-nation body said it "expresses its grave concern that Iran has so far

done nothing to rebuild confidence of the international community in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear program." EU foreign ministers are expected to approve the draft statement at a Brussels meeting next month.

Gates, who returns to Washington late Friday, met in the morning with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki before flying to Iraq's oil-rich Kurdistan region, for meetings with soldiers and Kurdish officials. Tensions remain high between the Kurds and Iraq's Arab majority, particularly over the division of oil wealth and property rights. Gates is urging both sides to reduce the potential for conflict to prevent any delays in U.S. plans to reduce troop levels in the coming months.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/11/AR2009121101183.html>

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Bloomberg.com  
11 December 2009

### ***EU Sets Deadline For Iran To Resume Nuclear Talks***

By James G. Neuger and Jonathan Stearns

Dec. 11 (Bloomberg) -- European Union leaders set a seven-week deadline for Iran to return to talks over its nuclear program or face stiffer sanctions, seeking to deepen Iran's international isolation.

EU government heads told their foreign ministers to consider a U.S.-led push for tighter penalties at a Jan. 25-26 meeting unless Iran bows to international demands for ironclad assurances that it isn't trying to build nuclear weapons.

"Our ongoing concern about Iran's nuclear program means we agreed to begin working on options for sanctions in the new year," U.K. Prime Minister Gordon Brown told reporters after an EU summit in Brussels today.

China and Russia loom as the main obstacles to fresh United Nations sanctions after their diplomats urged patience in a Security Council debate yesterday.

Iran says it is operating a civilian nuclear energy program and rejects Western suspicions that it is trying to build weapons. Iran has ignored three sets of sanctions designed to force it to come clean on its nuclear ambitions.

"Iran's persistent failure to meet its international obligations and Iran's apparent lack of interest in pursuing negotiations require a clear response, including through appropriate measures," an EU statement said. "The European Union stands ready to take the necessary steps."

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601100&sid=aRXIjeK8qjRU#>

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Washington Post  
8 December 2009

### ***For North Korea, Giving Up Atomic Weapons Is A Risk***

By Jonathan Thatcher

SEOUL (Reuters) - In wintry Pyongyang this week, the challenge for President Barack Obama's first envoy to North Korea is how to convince its obsessively secretive leader that he would be mad not to talk with the outside world about disarming.

From leader Kim Jong-il's point of view, the insanity might be to give up his nuclear weapons.

Kim's bid to become a nuclear warrior not only underpins the legitimacy of his 15-year iron grip over the world's first communist dynasty, it also forces world powers to treat his backwater state with respect.

Since succeeding his father in 1994, Kim has put his million-strong military at the top of society and made the building of an atomic bomb a patriotic masterstroke that keeps at bay a United States portrayed as just itching to invade.

His propaganda machine also squarely places the blame on a hostile outside world for the economic shambles the North has descended into under Kim's rule.

"North has absolutely no interest in normalizing relations with the United States. As soon as the North does that, it loses all reason to exist," said B.R. Myers, an expert on the North's ideology at Dongseo University.

"As soon as people think it is possible to get along with America, they will ask themselves why they need a 'military first' policy."

Obama has waited almost a year since taking office to send an envoy to the North, a visit that follows an array of not-quite-official meetings between the two sides, most notably a trip to Pyongyang in August by former President Bill Clinton to arrange the release of two jailed U.S. journalists.

Few, including the U.S. government, expect a breakthrough and it was unclear if part-time envoy Stephen Bosworth would even be able to meet anyone more senior than the North's top official to the six-party talks that Pyongyang walked away from a year ago.

#### NO NEW INCENTIVES

Washington has made clear it has no new incentives to offer Kim and will not countenance a return to the years of on-off nuclear negotiations, which have allowed him to wring a series of financial rewards for agreements on which he later reneged.

A 2005 agreement, under which the North starts on the road to disarmament and receives substantial aid and security guarantees in return, is in place. It is that which Washington is urging Pyongyang to implement, as well as to resurrect talks with it, China, Japan, Russia and South Korea.

Some analysts believe Kim's key objectives are for Washington to accept his country as a nuclear weapons power -- which Obama has refused to do -- and sign a peace treaty to finally end the 1950-53 Korean War, whose most visible sign in one of the world's most heavily defended borders that has divided the peninsula ever since.

For many analysts the underlying principle for the man dubbed at home the "Dear Leader" is simply to keep his unquestioned grip on power and ensure one of his sons continues the Kim dynastic rule over what has become one of the world's poorest societies.

The latest sign of that was an abrupt, and potentially high-risk, revaluation of the currency that overnight reduced the value of all local currency savings by 1/100th.

"I've never seen the place look so poor," said one regular visitor to the North who had just returned from his latest trip.

He argued the currency change were aimed at taking away the relative wealth of those who had prospered in the 9 mushrooming markets outside state control.

"People would see traders getting wealthy and would want to be like them. That poses a threat to the government," he said.

The new measure itself is also laden with risk for Kim, who basks in state-managed idolatry and whom human rights groups say routinely dispatches to prison, or worse, those who commit even minor offences that might be interpreted as a challenge to his government's authority.

There have been widespread, but unconfirmed, reports of outrage over the government's currency revaluation.

South Korea's biggest newspaper, Chosun Ilbo, quoted unnamed sources as saying North Korean women trading in the private markets were emerging as a formidable force against the move.

"The women are tough and defiant. And now they are angry. Markets are turning into places of protest against (Kim)," it quoted one source as saying.

(Additional reporting by Jon Herskovitz; Editing by Alex Richardson)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/08/AR2009120804887.html>

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New York Times  
9 December 2009

## ***U.S. Envoy Makes Rare Visit To North Korea***

By Choe Sang-Hun

SEOUL, South Korea — President Obama's special representative to North Korea arrived in Pyongyang, the North's capital, on Tuesday, the highest-level American official visit in more than a year. The rare trip is part of an effort to halt the North's reactivated nuclear weapons program and persuade the North Koreans to return to nuclear disarmament talks.

The visit by the representative, Stephen W. Bosworth, signaled a new phase in United States diplomacy toward North Korea. For months, the United States had focused on punishing North Korea, leading an international campaign to enforce sanctions imposed on it for testing a long-range rocket in April and detonating a nuclear device in May.

Mr. Bosworth is the most senior American official to visit North Korea since October 2008, when Christopher R. Hill, who was then an assistant secretary of state, met North Korean officials in Pyongyang. Mr. Bosworth flew from a United States air base south of Seoul. Later, a one-line dispatch from the North's official Korean Central News Agency confirmed his arrival. He is scheduled to return to Seoul on Thursday.

His two-day stay in South Korea this week had been shrouded in secrecy as both Seoul and Washington struggled to resolve what analysts perceived as a division over how to deal with North Korea. Members of the conservative government of President Lee Myung-bak have questioned the wisdom of sending a high-level American envoy to North Korea without waiting for international sanctions to weaken the North's bargaining power.

"South Korea fears that Bosworth's trip can create a split in the international efforts to put pressure on the North through sanctions," said Chang Yong-seok, an analyst at the Institute for Peace Affairs, in Seoul. "The rift may grow, depending on the outcome of his trip."

Mindful of this concern, Washington emphasized that Mr. Bosworth was traveling with a narrow agenda: determining whether the North planned to return to six-nation nuclear talks and to recommit itself to a 2005 pledge to give up its nuclear assets in return for aid and security guarantees.

"We don't intend to reward North Korea simply for going back to doing something that it had previously committed to do," a senior American official said in Washington during a background briefing on the eve of Mr. Bosworth's trip.

But Mr. Bosworth's visit was bound to include discussions on what rewards the North could expect if it returned to the talks and proceeded with denuclearization. North Korea wants a peace treaty with Washington and an end to what it calls a "hostile" United States policy before it considers giving up its nuclear weapons capacity. As a first step, the North is likely to demand talks on normalizing ties with Washington, analysts in Seoul said.

The offer would be difficult for Washington to resist if such talks were conditioned on freezing the North's nuclear programs, said Mr. Chang and Chon Hyun-joon, an analyst at the government-run Korea Institute for National Unification in Seoul.

Washington wants to freeze North Korea's nuclear weapons programs and bring the North back into the fold of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty while the United States grapples with the war in Afghanistan and Iran's nuclear program.

But so far, United States-led sanctions have failed to tame the North. Rather, the North Koreans have declared that they turned more plutonium into atomic bombs and started a new uranium-enrichment program for possible weapons.

Mr. Chang said that establishing a diplomatic foothold in North Korea — like a liaison office as a preliminary step toward a full diplomatic mission — could serve Washington amid uncertainty over the health of Kim Jong-il, the North Korean leader, and the prospects of his government.

With the North Korean economy in tatters, Mr. Kim, for his part, needs a diplomatic victory as he plans to hand over power to one of his three sons.

The potential for Mr. Bosworth's visit to restart talks between the United States and North Korea has been regarded cautiously by the government in Seoul.



“Fundamentally, it doesn’t really matter whether Bosworth goes to Pyongyang or whether North Korea returns to six-party talks,” said a senior South Korean official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, citing the political delicacy of the issue.

Playing down the significance of Mr. Bosworth’s trip, the official added: “What matters is whether the North Koreans are willing to give up their nuclear weapons. We think they won’t, unless they feel enough pain.”

President Lee has repeatedly emphasized that the United States and its allies should avoid “repeating the past pattern” of not punishing the North sufficiently for violating its pledges and of allowing it to use international talks as a tool to extract aid while it retains its nuclear weapons.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/09/world/asia/09korea.html>

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Washington Post  
11 December 2009

### ***North Korea Hints Ready To Return To Nuclear Talks***

By Jack Kim

SEOUL (Reuters) - North Korea indicated on Friday it was ready to end its year-long boycott of nuclear negotiations, following talks in the reclusive state this week with a U.S. envoy trying to revive a disarmament-for-aid deal.

The three days of meetings in Pyongyang between Stephen Bosworth and top North Korean nuclear officials capped months of maneuvering to reduce tensions after the North test fired missiles and set off a nuclear device, triggering U.N. sanctions.

Analysts said Bosworth's trip marked a reasonable start to efforts to bring the impoverished state back to the table but it would take a lot more work before any real resumption in negotiations over Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions.

Even if North Korea returns to the talks, it has a record of dragging down discussions, backing away from pledges and storming out of sessions when it does not get its way.

The North's official KCNA news agency described the talks with U.S. President Barack Obama's first envoy there as "frank and businesslike."

"The two sides deepened the mutual understanding, narrowed their differences and found not a few common points," it quoted a foreign ministry spokesman as saying.

Bosworth met First Vice Minister Kang Sok-ju, considered to be the mastermind of its nuclear policy and close to leader Kim Jong-il, and Kim Kye-gwan, the top negotiator representing the North at the six-way talks.

KCNA said there were extensive talks on drawing up a peace treaty and normalizing ties, provision of economic and energy aid and denuclearizing the Korean peninsula.

Bosworth flew to Beijing from Seoul on Friday. He then goes to Tokyo and Moscow to brief the other members of the six-way talks before heading home to Washington next week.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called the talks "quite positive" as a preliminary meeting as the Obama administration pursues an approach of "strategic patience in close coordination" with allies.

Russia welcomed signs North Korea was ready to return to talks, Interfax news agency quoted the Foreign Ministry as saying.

#### **BROKEN ECONOMY**

North Korea walked away from the negotiating table a year ago. Five months later it detonated a nuclear device, its second such test, resulting in tightened U.N. sanctions that further damaged the North's crippled economy.

Analysts said it may be the North's broken economy that is pushing it back to talks, when it hopes to win aid in return for a fresh promise to give up its nuclear arsenal.

"For the situation to move forward, North Korea needs to take irreversible steps in denuclearization," said Yang Moo-jin of the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul. "For this to happen, actions must be taken on both sides simultaneously."

Bosworth said he passed on Obama's message that failure to move ahead on the disarmament deal was an obstacle to realizing Pyongyang's long-sought goal of improving ties with Washington.

Once the six-party process resumed, he said, progress could then be made on issues such as talks on a formal peace treaty to end the Korean War.

North Korea has blamed the U.S. military presence in the South as proof that Washington was intent on destroying it, which made it necessary to build a nuclear arsenal in self defense. The United States has denied such plans.

"It is clear that the North Koreans continue to attach unacceptable preconditions even to returning to the Six Party Talks, much less seriously negotiating about denuclearization," said David Straub, a former State Department official in comments to the Nelson Report.

(Additional reporting by Christine Kim in Seoul, Oleg Shchedrov in Moscow, editing by Jonathan Thatcher and Sanjeev Miglani)

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/10/AR2009121000627.html?nav=rss\\_business](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/12/10/AR2009121000627.html?nav=rss_business)

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

10 December 2009

### ***The Bulava Missile Saga***

MOSCOW. (RIA Novosti military commentator Ilya Kramnik) - The December 9, 2009 test of the RSM-56 Bulava (SS-NX-30) submarine-launched ballistic missile has failed, said the Russian Defense Ministry. There have been 12 other test flights since December 2003.

Without going into technical details, which must be clarified by experts, we must now assess the entire project's status and the implications of the latest abortive test on the future development of Russia's strategic nuclear forces.

The decision to develop the Bulava missile was adopted in 1998 when Moscow's Institute of Thermal Technology was directed to develop an advanced missile system for the Russian navy.

Institute management claimed that it could promptly develop a new ballistic missile based on the Topol M (SS-27 Sickle B) intercontinental ballistic missile, for the Russian navy. This concept was expected to simplify the deployment of the naval component of Russia's strategic nuclear forces and to require less maintenance costs.

Although it is hard to say who initiated such drastic changes, the press claims that Yury Solomonov, director of the Institute of Thermal Technology, Major-General Vladimir Dvorkin, director of the Defense Ministry's Fourth Central Research Institute, Navy Commander Fleet Admiral Vladimir Kuroyedov, the then Defense Minister Marshal Igor Sergeev, Economics Minister Yakov Urinson and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, are responsible for this.

It was decided to deploy the new Bulava missiles aboard the Project 955 Borei class and Project 955A Borei-A class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines.

The first submarine of the class, the Yury Dolgoruky, is currently undergoing sea trials. Another two submarines are under construction, and the keel of the fourth Borei class submarine is to be laid before New Year's Eve.

Initial tests of the new missile and its first images revealed that the Bulava will have little in common with the Topol-M. The Bulava was completely different in terms of its appearance, dimensions and warhead lay-out. Nevertheless, the plan had gone too far to back out.

Eleven full-fledged flight tests were conducted between September 27, 2005 and December 9, 2009. Only three launches, specifically the first, second and eighth, were deemed fully successful. Two other launches were rated partially successful.

Facilitating due control over missile component production and ready-made missile assembly, rather than project funding, is the main problem. Moreover, the companies involved require skilled, well-paid workers. However, wage raises alone cannot boost missile quality.

More expensive missiles would be manufactured, unless other measures are implemented.

Some experts think it would be appropriate to upgrade the Bulava missile and to hold a tender for another missile system, due to be installed aboard Project 955 submarines. In their opinion, the program should involve several leading design bureaus, and the most promising project should be implemented.

This would make it possible to develop another missile system for replacing the Bulava if its reliability is not improved.

Russia's president, who oversees the state of the Armed Forces as Commander-in-Chief, would be expected to personally monitor the program because this will ensure due supervision.

The project managers involved should be held personally liable in case of failure because material incentives are ineffective and because resignations no longer scare anyone.

Nuclear-tipped missiles largely facilitate national defense capability. Since the end of World War II and the break-up of the Soviet Union, too many high-ranking officials and production workers have become accustomed to the fact that resignations are the ultimate punishment for incompetence and mismanagement.

Obviously, this concept must be changed with regard to logistics support of the strategic nuclear forces, to say the least, because the price of possible mistakes is becoming too high.

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

<http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20091210/157190306.html>

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Wall Street Journal - REVIEW & OUTLOOK

11 DECEMBER 2009

### ***The Disarmament President***

*Obama's boffo Oslo speech versus the real nuclear world.*

President Obama gave a gracious speech yesterday accepting his Nobel Peace Prize, starting with the humble note that he has yet to earn it. If his Oslo hosts expected a woolly-headed address about peace in our time, they also didn't get it. He stated clearly that sometimes war is necessary to defend the peaceable and to serve justice and liberty. He even hit the George W. Bush note that "evil does exist in the world."

Congratulations, Mr. President.

On the other hand, Mr. Obama also didn't disappoint the Norwegians, who in giving the award had cited his "work for a world without nuclear weapons." He repeated his commitment to that cause, starting with his effort to rework the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty of 1991 that expired December 5. So it's worth checking in to see how his disarmament vision is faring in the rougher world of rogues and national interest. The answer is not so well.

The Administration decided that rather than negotiate an extension of the existing Start treaty, a whole new arrangement to limit warheads and delivery systems should be crafted. In July, the U.S. and Russia signed a "framework agreement" to reduce stockpiles by as much as a third. Alas, the Administration was so focused on the numbers that it neglected the stickier details—such as verification, and whether the current Start regime would stay in place if negotiations dragged on.

Though the far weaker party, the Russians have figured out their leverage over an Administration eager to show any progress. Pushing that advantage, Russia has already secured lower ceilings on nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles, scaled back verification, and pocketed other strategic concessions.

Let's take those in order. The U.S. looks likely to agree to cut the number of permitted delivery vehicles, such as missiles, long-range bombers and submarines, by half, to 800 or less. This is to Russia's advantage, which as of last spring had 814—and not all of them in working condition. Many of America's 1,198 nuclear delivery vehicles—from B-2 bombers to ICBMs—are being fitted with conventional weapons. The ceilings in a new Start would likely make no distinction between bomb types. If the goal is to move away from nukes, why limit the military's capacity to deploy conventional weapons?

As for verification, with fewer allowable warheads, Ronald Reagan's "trust but verify" maxim applies more than ever. Yet Russia wants to reduce oversight, and it specifically told the U.S. that continuous monitoring at the Votkinsk Machine Building Plant would end once Start expired. The Russians are building new RS-24 mobile nuclear missiles at Votkinsk. According to one Russian general, the RS-24 will by 2016 constitute four-fifths of its

ICBM forces. Without monitoring, the U.S. won't know for sure how many of these missiles the Russians make and where they are deployed.

While Russia invests in new warheads and missiles, the Obama Administration has yet to lay out its own plans for updating the U.S. nuclear arsenal. Even staunch proponents of arms control concede that to be able to reduce the quantity of U.S. arms, we have to improve the quality. The Senate should ask why the White House isn't.

The Russians also refused to discuss their huge advantage in tactical weapons, and the Administration said OK. After the July "framework agreement," Russia signalled that U.S. plans to deploy missile defenses in Poland and the Czech Republic stood in the way of a final deal. Mr. Obama obliged, informing the Poles and Czechs of his reduced defenses late on the day before the sixth round of Start talks in Geneva. The announcement pleased the Russians, though it still hasn't got Washington a deal. Stay tuned for more concessions as U.S. negotiators try to get it before the year's end.

Meanwhile, the world's rogues continue to pursue nuclear weapons, and Mr. Obama said yesterday that "it is incumbent upon all of us to insist that nations like Iran and North Korea do not game the system." He added that "we must develop alternatives to violence that are tough enough to change behavior." But all the President has to show for a year of courting these regimes is their refusal even to consider giving up either their weapons (North Korea) or their growing capacity to make them (Iran).

The French, for one, see this danger plainly and want the U.S. to press harder on Tehran. But on these hard cases, the Administration can't muster the same sense of urgency it is bringing to the cause of an unnecessary arms control pact with Russia. Mr. Obama is right that he still has to earn that Nobel.

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