



# USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL

Maxwell AFB, Alabama

---

---

Issue No. 617, 14 March 2008

## Articles & Other Documents:

[Gulf War Syndrome's Chemical-Origin Theory Upheld](#)

[U.N. Alleges Nuclear Work By Iran's Civilian Scientists](#)

[Bush Vows He Will Upgrade Poland's Air Defenses](#)

[Bush Links U.S. Aid, Missile Defense Deal](#)

[Analysis: New threats for NATO](#)

[U.S., N. Korea To Work Toward Ending Weapons Impasse](#)

[StratCom Chief Wants Study Of Warheads](#)

[U.S. and North Korea stay in contact in Geneva](#)

---

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

*Established in 1998, the USAF/CPC provides education and research to present and future leaders of the Air Force, as well as to members of other branches of the armed services and Department of Defense. Our purpose is to help those agencies better prepare to counter the threat from weapons of mass destruction. Please feel free to visit our web site at <http://cpc.au.af.mil/> for in-depth information and specific points of contact. Please direct any questions or comments on CPC Outreach Journal to Jo Ann Eddy, CPC Outreach Editor, at (334) 953-7538 or DSN 493-7538. To subscribe, change e-mail address, or unsubscribe to this journal or to request inclusion on the mailing list for CPC publications, please contact Mrs. Eddy, [joann.eddy.ctr@maxwell.af.mil](mailto:joann.eddy.ctr@maxwell.af.mil).*

*The following articles, papers or documents do not necessarily reflect official endorsement of the United States Air Force, Department of Defense, or other US government agencies. Reproduction for private use or commercial gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. All rights are reserved*

Los Angeles Times

March 11, 2008

## **Gulf War Syndrome's Chemical-Origin Theory Upheld**

By Jia-Rui Chong, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

A review of medical studies on Gulf War syndrome supports the theory that the still-hazy disorder was caused by a group of related chemicals found in pesticides used around military facilities and anti-nerve-gas pills given to soldiers, according to a study released Monday.

A similar chemical was also found in nerve gas that was inadvertently released when U.S. soldiers destroyed a munitions depot just after the 1991 war, according to the study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The group of chemicals, known as acetylcholinesterase inhibitors, has long been discussed as a possible cause of Gulf War syndrome.

The review "thoroughly, conclusively shows that this class of chemicals actually are a cause of illness in Gulf War veterans," said Dr. Beatrice Golomb, an associate professor of medicine at UC San Diego and the author of the latest paper.

Other researchers, however, said the syndrome's symptoms are so varied that it's probably difficult to place the blame on a single cause.

"It seems clear at this point, 17 years beyond the conflict, that the chances we will ever resolve this with any single 'smoking gun' exposure grows smaller with time," said Dr. Charles Engel, director of the Department of Defense Deployment Health Clinical Center at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington.

Gulf War syndrome is a complex -- and controversial -- illness typically characterized by a variety of symptoms, including fatigue, muscle or joint pain and mood problems. About 200,000 veterans are believed to suffer from it, according to the study.

But there is still uncertainty. A panel of the federal Institute of Medicine said in 2006 that it could not say if there was a coherent set of symptoms that pointed to an identifiable syndrome.

Researchers have proposed a number of potential causes, including psychological stress and exposure to toxic materials from oil-well fires and depleted-uranium ammunition, experts said.

In toxic doses, acetylcholinesterase inhibitors cause unbridled signaling between cells, potentially leading to muscle paralysis, seizures and excess secretion in the airways.

Previous studies have estimated that at least 250,000 soldiers were exposed to some form of the chemical.

Golomb's study looked at more than 70 studies on Gulf War syndrome and acetylcholinesterase inhibitors.

She found that 18 of the 21 epidemiological studies looking at chronic health problems in Gulf War veterans showed a connection to at least one kind of acetylcholinesterase inhibitor exposure.

Golomb also noted several studies that found sick veterans were more likely to have an enzyme problem that lowered their ability to clear the chemicals from their bodies.

Several studies also found Gulf War syndrome-like symptoms in farmworkers exposed to pesticides and victims of the 1995 sarin gas attacks in Japan. Some of the studies showed similar enzyme deficiencies.

The analysis found few studies that confirmed connections to other causes for Gulf War syndrome.

"The importance of this paper is that it brings together research from different realms, which are all parallel and point in the same direction," said Lea Steele, an epidemiologist who has served as scientific advisor to the Department of Veterans Affairs. She was not involved in the analysis.

Engel, of Walter Reed, said he was unconvinced -- in part because there is little, if any, accurate measurement of chemical exposures during the war.

"It is well known that significant error results from looking back years after the fact and asking people to try to recall potential exposures," he said.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/science/la-sci-gulf11mar11.0.1416479.story>

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

Washington Post

March 11, 2008

Pg. 1

## **U.N. Alleges Nuclear Work By Iran's Civilian Scientists**

By Joby Warrick, Washington Post Staff Writer

Iranian nuclear engineer Mohsen Fakhrizadeh lectures weekly on physics at Tehran's Imam Hossein University. Yet for more than a decade, according to documents attracting interest among Western governments, he also ran secret programs aimed at acquiring sensitive nuclear technology for his government.

Experts at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have repeatedly invited Fakhrizadeh to tea and a chat about Iran's nuclear work. But for two years, the government in Tehran has barred any contact with the scientist, who U.S. officials say recently moved to a new lab in a heavily guarded compound also off-limits to U.N. inspectors.

The exact nature of his research -- past and present -- remains a mystery, as does the work of other key Iranian scientists whose names appear in documents detailing what U.N. officials say is a years-long, clandestine effort to expand the country's nuclear capability. The documents, which were provided to the IAEA, the U.N. nuclear agency, in recent months by two countries other than the United States, partly match information in a stolen Iranian laptop turned over by Washington.

IAEA officials say these documents identify Fakhrizadeh and other civilian scientists as central figures in a secret nuclear research program that operated as recently as 2003. So far, however, Iran is refusing to shed light on their work or allow U.N. officials to question them. After being presented with copies of some of the new documents, Tehran denied that some of the scientists exist.

"When the allegations are raised, Iran simply dismisses them," said a Western diplomatic official familiar with the agency's dealings with Iran. "It insists that the documents are mostly fakes."

The standoff over interview requests has cast a shadow over a five-year U.N. effort to excavate the truth about Iran's nuclear past. In that search, Western anxieties have been compounded by Tehran's reluctance to clarify the history of its interest in technologies that could be used for either nuclear power or weapons.

A similar set of uncertainties helped provoke the U.S. war with Iraq, which the Bush administration justified partly by positing that Baghdad was deliberately concealing nuclear weapons research from U.N. inspectors. The outcome

of that invasion suggests caution, however, since U.S. troops were unable to find any convincing evidence of banned weapons work, and deposed Iraqi officials said they had been secretive to conceal from regional opponents that they had ended such work, not continued it.

In Iran's case, U.N. officials say, the new evidence does not prove that the scientists carried out plans to build a nuclear device, but shows that Fakhrizadeh and other scientists struggled to master associated technologies. Several of the scientists, including Fakhrizadeh, appear to have moved freely between military and civilian research venues. The documents purport to show advanced research into a variety of nuclear-related technologies, including uranium ore processing, warhead modification and the precision-firing of high explosives of the type used to detonate a nuclear device. Other documents point to attempts by civilian scientists to purchase sensitive equipment of the kind Iran would eventually use in its uranium enrichment plants.

Some of the new documents came from inside Iran, according to European officials familiar with them. None specifically include the word "nuclear," and IAEA officials say there is no evidence that any of the plans advanced beyond the paper stage.

The National Council of Resistance of Iran, a major opposition group that claims to have informants inside Iran's government, contends in materials provided to The Washington Post that nuclear weapons design work persists and has migrated to universities and schools. But U.S. and U.N. officials say they cannot corroborate the group's claim. Instead, U.S. intelligence officials have said that Iran worked on weapons design in the past but halted the research in 2003. But government officials and weapons experts acknowledge concerns over Iran's refusal to answer questions or explain what key scientists are doing now.

"It's not the first time we've seen individuals who seem to wear white hats but are working on very different projects behind the scenes," said Leonard Spector, a former Energy Department nonproliferation official who is now deputy director of the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies. He noted that other countries, particularly Pakistan, have used civilian scientists as cover for secret nuclear research.

Although the IAEA has not publicly described the contents of the new documents, the U.N. Security Council adopted new sanctions against Iran last week, in part because of what European leaders described as Tehran's "abysmal" performance in answering the IAEA's questions about past nuclear research.

"As long as Iran's choice remains one of non-cooperation, we for our part will remain determined to demonstrate the costs and consequences of that choice," British Ambassador Simon Smith said in a statement last week on behalf of Britain, Germany and France, which have taken the lead in trying to persuade Iran to stop making enriched uranium, a critical ingredient used in both nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants.

Calls placed to Iran's U.N. mission in New York were not returned.

Fakhrizadeh is prominent in several of the documents, according to two officials who have seen them. A personnel chart listed him as the senior authority overseeing all the research projects. Another paper, purportedly signed by Fakhrizadeh, establishes spending guidelines for the research programs, while a third sets rules for communication among scientists, suggesting, for example, that researchers avoid putting their names on correspondence that might eventually become public, according to a Europe-based diplomat who viewed the documents.

Fakhrizadeh, 47, who became a Revolutionary Guard Corps member after the overthrow of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi in 1979, is a former leader of the Physics Research Center, which U.N. officials say was heavily involved in drawing up plans and acquiring parts for Iran's first uranium enrichment plant. He was among eight Iranians placed under international travel and financial restrictions under the terms of a U.N. resolution adopted last year because of his alleged ties to "nuclear or ballistic missile" research, U.N. records show.

According to the Iranian opposition group, in addition to holding the university post, Fakhrizadeh recently was appointed the director of a new Center for Readiness and New Defense Technology, which is in Tehran and is under direct military command. Several of his deputies have been reassigned to nuclear departments at ostensibly civilian schools such as Shahid Beheshti University, also in Tehran.

"Fakhrizadeh is a key person, but he is not the only player," said Mohammad Mohaddessin, chairman of the opposition group's foreign affairs committee.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/10/AR2008031003097.html>

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

Washington Post

March 11, 2008

Pg. 12

## **Bush Vows He Will Upgrade Poland's Air Defenses**

By Peter Baker, Washington Post Staff Writer

President Bush promised yesterday to upgrade Poland's antiquated armed forces with a plan to be developed before he leaves office in January as he sought to secure an agreement that would allow the United States to establish an antimissile system in Eastern Europe despite vigorous Russian objections.

Meeting with Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk at the White House, Bush appeared to boost efforts to get his missile defense program on track in the face of deep skepticism in Warsaw. Tusk came to office in November far cooler to the idea of stationing U.S. interceptors on Polish soil than his predecessor, and until recently talks had bogged down.

Poland has maintained that its air defenses must be upgraded before it accepts any U.S. system, particularly given Russian threats to target the country if American interceptors are based there. Bush implicitly linked the two issues yesterday. "Mr. Prime Minister, before my watch is over, we will have assessed those needs and come up with a modernization plan that's concrete and tangible," he told Tusk in front of television cameras in the Oval Office. Tusk interpreted that as a deal, saying that he and Bush "came to a conclusion . . . that the missile defense system and the modernization of the Polish forces . . . come in one package." He called it "a breakthrough" that the president and his administration "understand quite clearly our expectations." Although neither leader detailed what might be done to upgrade Poland's air defenses, Warsaw has sought Patriot missile systems, which are used to take down incoming missiles.

White House press secretary Dana Perino later rejected an explicit linkage because Washington would naturally help Poland as a fellow NATO member. "It's certainly not a quid pro quo because, as we would with any ally, we would help them modernize a different part of their defense system," she told reporters.

Either way, the emerging agreement appeared to clear a key hurdle, building on progress last month by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski. Bush also met last month with Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolanek to discuss building a radar station in his country, but Poland has been seen as a more reluctant partner.

"We've gotten past the impasse and started the engines again," said Julianne Smith, head of the Europe Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington think tank. "It doesn't mean we've got all the details settled, but both sides are moving again."

Bush repeated yesterday that the missile defense system is intended as a deterrent against Iran or other threats, not against Russia, whose nuclear arsenal could easily overwhelm the 10 planned interceptors. But his meetings with Polish and Czech leaders, coming just weeks before he will see Russian President Vladimir Putin at a NATO summit in Bucharest, are sure to further rile the Kremlin, which sees the prospect of an antimissile system in its former satellite countries as a direct threat.

Just last month, Putin said Russia would target missiles against Poland and the Czech Republic if they allow U.S. installations.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/10/AR2008031002546.html>

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

Los Angeles Times

March 11, 2008

## **Bush Links U.S. Aid, Missile Defense Deal**

*President's meeting with Prime Minister Donald Tusk of Poland on interceptor plan follows a similar conference with the Czech premier.*

By James Gerstenzang and Peter Spiegel, Los Angeles Times Staff Writers

WASHINGTON — President Bush promised Poland's visiting prime minister on Monday that the United States would help modernize the country's military, as Poland moved closer to joining a U.S.-sponsored missile defense system.

Bush's Oval Office meeting with Prime Minister Donald Tusk followed a similar conference last month with the Czech prime minister, who said Prague was close to an agreement with Washington on the missile defense arrangement.

The U.S. says it is seeking to install a missile-detection radar system in the Czech Republic and interceptor missiles in Poland to defend against any missiles launched in the Middle East.

With Tusk at his side, Bush said that "before my watch is over," the United States and Poland would "come up with a modernization plan" for Polish forces, which are seeking to acquire a Patriot antimissile system. Bush's aides insisted that Poland's eased objections to the U.S. deployment of missile interceptors on Polish territory was not a quid pro quo for military aid. However, the president linked the two, pledging the modernization assistance and then saying, "Along those lines," he and Tusk discussed the risk posed by "a missile with dangerous materials in its warhead."

The proposed missile defense network has become perhaps the most sensitive issue in U.S.-Russian relations. President Vladimir V. Putin has denounced it as a threat to his nation's defense. Bush has insisted that it would be used to protect part of Europe and the United States from any missiles launched by Iran or terrorist groups. Bush said a missile equipped with nuclear, chemical or biological warheads is "the most significant" security threat of the 21st century, and he assured Tusk that "this system is not aimed at Russia."

He said he would continue to give Putin similar assurances.

Tusk, speaking through an interpreter, called plans for the missile defense system and the modernization of Polish forces "very good." He expressed support for the proposal to protect Poland from "any undue security risks," but cautioned that work remained on the diplomatic front, saying, "A strategy on paper is a little different from the details."

White House Press Secretary Dana Perino said that the Pentagon would evaluate Poland's air defense needs and that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates would then review those needs with Polish officials.

The system the administration wants to build would use the radar to spot missile launches and send interceptors to ram the missiles above the Earth's atmosphere. Iran has developed medium-range missiles capable of striking Israel and parts of Europe.

The Bush administration predicts that Iran will be able to develop long-range ballistic missiles by 2015. The missile defense system could be completed by 2012 or 2013, officials have said.

Even before formal negotiations over basing interceptor missiles on Polish soil began last year, Polish officials demanded that the United States provide Patriot antimissile batteries to the Polish armed forces. They argued that a new U.S. missile defense site would make Poland a target of Russian rockets.

The Bush administration has been reluctant to make the air defense upgrades a condition of the deal. Geoff Morrell, the Pentagon press secretary, emphasized that talks to modernize the Polish military were separate from the missile defense negotiations.

"They came to us some months ago and expressed a desire to also modernize their air defenses, if they were going to take on this additional, what they believe to be, risk by hosting the interceptors," Morrell said at the Pentagon. Morrell, suggesting that sticking points remain, emphasized that no formal agreement had been reached on either point. He acknowledged that the administration had hoped to have a deal with both Poland and the Czech Republic by now.

"Unfortunately, we are not yet at the point where I have something tangible to announce to you," Morrell said. "I think we are obviously closer with the Czech Republic than we are with Poland, but we continue to work hard on both fronts and remain confident that we will reach an agreement."

The U.S. missile defense sites remain unpopular in both European countries, and the new government in Warsaw has shown more skepticism toward the system than its predecessor. The system has also suffered setbacks on Capitol Hill, where congressional appropriators stripped funding for the European sites from this year's defense spending bill.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-bush11mar11,1,2799964.story>

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

United Press International

## **Analysis: New threats for NATO**

Published: March 11, 2008 at 12:33 PM

By STEFAN NICOLA

UPI Germany Correspondent

BERLIN, March 11 (UPI) -- As threats become increasingly asymmetrical, NATO and national military powers are under pressure to update the look and feel of their armed forces.

NATO, once an alliance aimed at stopping Soviet tanks at the height of the Cold War, is facing an epochal change, its Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said Monday in Berlin.

"We are no longer facing a classic military threat," he said at a meeting of German armed forces commanders near Germany's Defense Ministry. "The terrorism of the 21st century has no army and no concentration area."

De Hoop Scheffer added that a black market of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons had become a "grim reality," another threat linked to the changing world in times of globalization.

"We need armed forces that far from home are able to handle the entire military portfolio -- from peacekeeping to combat missions," he said, stressing that he is opposing the idea of individual countries helping the alliance with individual services. "Everyone must be able to do everything," he said.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who had spoken shortly before the secretary-general, had listed three more

scenarios she believes are threatening global security: regional conflicts and failed states, the violation of human rights (noting the crisis in Sudan's Darfur region) and the potentially catastrophic effects of water shortage, which may lead to severe social unrest in Africa and Asia.

To stem that danger, Merkel called for greater international security cooperation, calling on NATO and the European Union to more closely link up on future military steps.

"It has become clear that no one can solve the problems in the world alone -- not even a world power like the United States. Everyone needs partners," she said.

De Hoop Scheffer agreed, noting that non-NATO countries from all over the world, such as Australia, Japan and Singapore, have in the past participated in NATO missions.

The future roles of NATO, he added, could lie with future threat scenarios: De Hoop Scheffer indicated that NATO may be able to protect the "security of our energy infrastructure" (a statement that may sound offensive to Russian President Vladimir Putin) and provide help in cases of cyberattacks like the one that hit Estonia in 2007. Last but not least, NATO could play a leading role in the case of missile defense, he said.

That issue, and the ongoing transformation of the alliance, will be key issues at a NATO summit in Bucharest, Romania, next month, where NATO "will still have to come up with answers for many open questions," Merkel warned.

Germany itself has over the past years tried to answer security questions, especially regarding its own armed forces, the Bundeswehr, which has been an example of an army in transformation.

In the years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Bundeswehr integrated roughly 20,000 soldiers of former communist East Germany, downsized the troop strength and included more special, rapid-reaction equipment.

While the U.S. and British military budgets still dwarf Germany's, Berlin's military spending in 2008 will grow by \$1.5 billion compared with the year before, Merkel said.

That additional money, however, is desperately needed, as Germany has been taking part in an increasing number of international peacekeeping and security missions all over the globe.

German soldiers are stationed in the Balkans, in Afghanistan, off the coast of Lebanon and in Africa. Germany played a leading role in the EU mission aimed at securing the first democratic elections in three decades in the Democratic Republic of Congo, a mission that was "highly successful" also because German troops extensively took into account the local culture, an asset that often sets them apart from other countries' soldiers, Merkel said.

Yet the German chancellor and the NATO secretary-general disagreed over Afghanistan, where Germany is under pressure to move its troops into the volatile southern provinces.

Merkel on Monday denied those calls, arguing that the roughly 3,500 German troops stationed in the relatively peaceful northern provinces to do reconstruction work were utterly needed there.

"Our approach remains: No reconstruction without security, no security without reconstruction," she said, adding that Germany had already sent Tornado reconnaissance planes to fly missions all over the country and that the Bundeswehr would of course aid forces in the southern provinces in case of an emergency.

De Hoop Scheffer, however, made it clear that this was not enough, arguing that Afghanistan should not be divided into areas of responsibility for reconstruction, peacekeeping and combat missions.

"Whoever builds school in the North becomes a target for the Taliban, just as those fighting them directly in the South," he said. "This country will be won in its entirety or lost in its entirety."

[http://www.upi.com/International\\_Security/Emerging\\_Threats/Analysis/2008/03/11/analysis\\_new\\_threats\\_for\\_nato/9544/](http://www.upi.com/International_Security/Emerging_Threats/Analysis/2008/03/11/analysis_new_threats_for_nato/9544/)

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

Washington Post

March 12, 2008

Pg. 8

## **U.S., N. Korea To Work Toward Ending Weapons Impasse**

By Glenn Kessler, Washington Post Staff Writer

Top U.S. and North Korean diplomats will gather in Geneva tomorrow amid signs that the two sides, with the help of China, have structured a diplomatic framework that could resolve an impasse that has blocked a deal to end Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programs.

Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill, the chief U.S. negotiator, will meet with North Korean counterpart Kim Gye Gwan for one or two days. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said, "We're focused on trying to move the process forward."

Under an agreement reached in February 2007, North Korea was to have declared all of its nuclear programs and materials by the end of the year. Pyongyang admitted to possessing 30 to 40 kilograms of plutonium, U.S. officials

said, but balked at providing full details about a suspected uranium enrichment program and about whether it had cooperated with Syria in an alleged nuclear program destroyed by Israeli fighters last September. Now, diplomats said, a possible face-saving solution for North Korea may have been found in which those issues are separated from its initial declaration, such as in statements from Kim to Hill that would become part of the six-nation negotiations. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently signaled the new approach in a statement after talks last month in Asia: "I really have less concern about what form it takes or how many different pieces of paper there may have to be," as long as it results in progress.

Rice and Hill have increasingly focused on North Korea's stockpile of plutonium as the real threat to international security, officials said. But to persuade Pyongyang to abandon the plutonium, obtained from fuel rods in a small nuclear reactor, the administration must first settle the lingering questions concerning uranium enrichment and Syria. Increasingly, top U.S. officials view those as historical issues compared with the immediate proliferation risk posed by plutonium.

North Korea acquired much of its plutonium after the 2002 collapse of a Clinton administration agreement that froze the reactor. The Bush administration accused North Korea of cheating on the deal, citing evidence that Pyongyang had a clandestine uranium-enrichment program. Plutonium and highly enriched uranium are different routes to building nuclear weapons.

In a little-noticed speech at Amherst College on Jan. 30, Hill said that U.S. officials had largely concluded that thousands of aluminum tubes acquired by North Korea in 2002 -- which sparked the intelligence finding that Pyongyang was building a large-scale uranium-enrichment program -- were not currently being used to create fissile material.

"We have seen that these tubes are not being used for a centrifuge program," he said, according to an audio recording of the speech on Amherst's Web site. "We had American diplomats go and look at this aluminum that was used and see what they are actually using it for. We actually had American diplomats, people like myself, carry this aluminum back in our suitcases to verify this is the precise aluminum we knew the North Koreans had actually purchased."

Government scientists have discovered traces of enriched uranium on the aluminum samples, suggesting that they may have been used in such a program or that they came in contact with a centrifuge kit that North Korea acquired from a Pakistani smuggling network.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/11/AR2008031102544.html>

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

Omaha World-Herald  
March 13, 2008

## **StratCom Chief Wants Study Of Warheads**

By Joseph Morton, World-Herald Bureau

WASHINGTON — The United States needs to take a hard look at replacing its aging nuclear warheads with new and improved models, Air Force Gen. Kevin Chilton said Wednesday.

Chilton is commander of the U.S. Strategic Command. Headquartered at Offutt Air Force Base, StratCom is responsible for certifying that the country's nuclear stockpiles are reliable and secure.

But those stockpiles, estimated to include 6,000 warheads, are getting older and weren't designed to last forever. That situation is making him nervous, Chilton told a hearing of the Senate Armed Services subcommittee on strategic forces.

"I liken it to approaching a cliff — and I don't know how far away from that cliff I am," Chilton said.

He called for continuing a stalled feasibility study that would explore a replacement for aging warheads in the U.S. stockpile. Congress put the brakes on that study last year by cutting its funding.

Chilton said newer warheads would be safer, more reliable and easier to maintain.

Opponents of modernizing warheads have called it nuclear proliferation, arguing that it would send the wrong message to nations that the United States is trying to dissuade from building new nuclear weapons.

After the hearing, Sen. Ben Nelson, D-Neb., said he supports providing funding to complete the warhead study and expects Congress to approve it this year.

Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., also supports modernizing the nation's nuclear warheads, an aide said.

During Wednesday's hearing, senators also asked the StratCom commander about the shooting down of a spy satellite last month. StratCom coordinated the many agencies involved in the operation to destroy the failing satellite and its tank of toxic fuel.

Chilton told the lawmakers that the operation was much different from China's downing of one of its defunct weather satellite last year.

He said the United States was transparent about what it was doing and why, in contrast to the Chinese. Chilton said that while China hit its satellite so high up that pieces could be floating around for decades, the United States took pains to blast its satellite at as low an altitude as possible.

That means the larger pieces will be down within the next couple of months and the rest by the end of the year, he said.

"We took this intercept at an altitude that would ensure that that problem would go away in short order," Chilton said.

[http://www.omaha.com/index.php?u\\_page=2798&u\\_sid=10281895](http://www.omaha.com/index.php?u_page=2798&u_sid=10281895)

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

Reuters

## **U.S. and North Korea stay in contact in Geneva**

Fri Mar 14, 2008 8:27am EDT

By Jonathan Lynn

GENEVA (Reuters) - U.S. officials held further discussions in Geneva on Friday with North Korea a day after the two countries had substantive talks on getting the secretive communist state to abandon its nuclear activities.

The top U.S. negotiator on North Korea, Christopher Hill, told reporters he was departing for Warsaw, but leaving the state department's head of Korean affairs, Sung Kim, in Geneva to follow up on Thursday's talks.

The State Department's Kim is an expert on North Korea's nuclear program and has visited the Yongbyon facility that is at the centre of negotiations and is currently being disabled.

"There's a growing understanding of the issues that need to be resolved," said Hill, who is pushing North Korea to speed up the pace of the talks.

His comments showed that relations between the two enemies had improved to the extent that they remained in touch, but they have still not agreed on how to carry out the deal in which Pyongyang will abandon its nuclear program.

A spokesman for the U.S. mission in Geneva said State's Kim had held a brief follow-up discussion on Friday with his North Korean working-level counterparts, but gave no further details.

North Korea agreed to abandon its nuclear program in 2005 but the deal has been stalled by Pyongyang's failure to produce a detailed declaration of its nuclear projects by the end of last year.

That deal was worked out in talks between six countries -- North and South Korea, Russia, Japan and the United States, with China chairing the negotiations.

In return for abandoning its nuclear program, which can be used to produce nuclear weapons as well as energy, North Korea would receive humanitarian aid and fuel oil, and see relations with the rest of the world normalized.

That would include Washington dropping North Korea from its list of state sponsors of terrorism, and easing sanctions.

### **SIX PARTY TALKS**

At Thursday's meeting, Hill and North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye-Gwan discussed all the issues including enriched uranium, proliferation, humanitarian aid, heavy fuel oil for North Korea and the abduction of Japanese citizens.

For the talks to progress, North Korea must provide China with a full declaration of its nuclear activities.

That would culminate with the final dismantling of the Yongbyon facility, but Hill said they were not yet ready to move to that phase.

North Korea's reluctance to discuss transfers of nuclear technology to other countries and its suspected pursuit of uranium enrichment have delayed the declaration.

The United States has questions about a possible North Korean role in a suspected Syrian covert nuclear site bombed by Israel in September. A uranium enrichment program would give North Korea a second source of fissile material to produce nuclear weapons besides its plutonium-based facilities.

North Korea's Kim was quoted by Japanese and Korean media as denying any involvement in enrichment or proliferation.

"Our position is that there have never been such programs in the past, there are no such things going on currently and that we will not engage in them in the future," Kyodo News quoted him as saying.

Hill said further one-on-one meetings were needed before the six-party talks resumed, but said he had no meetings arranged.

"I think there might be another need for a consultation but frankly we'll all have to do a number of consultations with different parties before we have a six-party meeting," he said.

But Hill said the declaration from Pyongyang, whatever form it takes, was not the goal of the negotiations.



"The purpose of this six-party process is not a declaration. The purpose is the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and for that reason we really need to pick up the pace if we're going to achieve that," he said.  
(Editing by Ralph Boulton)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/politicsNews/idUSL1390600720080314?sp=true>

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