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U.S. Department of State

China's Nonproliferation Practices

Patricia McNerney, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, International Security and Nonproliferation

Statement before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission

Washington, DC

May 20, 2008

Chairman Reinsch, Commissioner Brookes, Commissioners of the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, I'd like to express my appreciation for the opportunity to appear before you today and discuss China's nonproliferation practices. In my opening remarks I'd like to point out areas where the United States and China have successfully cooperated on matters of nonproliferation, areas of continuing concern, and some promising areas for new cooperation.

Let me say at the outset that the United States remains committed to working toward a relationship with China that enhances America's security, addresses China's legitimate concerns, and supports the security interests of our friends and allies. To that end, we continue to engage China on nonproliferation matters in a constructive and forthright manner – building upon shared interests when possible and raising concerns when necessary. We remain

committed to expanding our areas of common interest with China, and improving our existing cooperation on nonproliferation. At the same time, we have serious concerns about the proliferation activities of certain Chinese entities and we continue, when necessary, to take action in response to those activities. We work constructively with China on a number of important proliferation issues, yet we also have made it clear that China must do more to halt the spread of WMD, missiles, and conventional weapons and related technologies.

Areas of Chinese Cooperation

The Government of China has come to recognize that it has a fundamental security interest in preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction. In many ways, it has demonstrated its interest in becoming a responsible nonproliferation partner. It is now a party to many international nonproliferation instruments, including the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and is also a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and the Zangger Committee. China has adopted export controls similar to the Australia Group control lists on chemical and biological related items, and has enacted missile-related export controls. And, the Government of China has approved a series of new laws and regulations designed to establish comprehensive national export control regulations.

China has cooperated in efforts to put pressure on Iran and North Korea via their role in the Six Party Talks. In the case of North Korea, China has made it clear that it does not condone Pyongyang's nuclear aspirations but admittedly has not actively cooperated to ensure closure of North Korean front companies inside China that facilitate proliferation or the Chinese companies that supply them. Following North Korea's missile launches of July 2006, and its October 2006 nuclear test, China joined in the Security Council's unanimous vote to adopt strong measures under UNSCR 1695 and UNSCR 1718, the latter of which imposed Chapter VII sanctions including a prohibition on transfers to North Korea of a broad range of conventional weapons, WMD-related items and luxury goods. China continues to serve as host to the Six-Party Talks, and has played a constructive role in formulating and implementing both the February 13, 2007 Initial Actions and the October 3, 2007 Second-Phase Actions agreements. With Chinese cooperation, the Six-Party process has brought us to the point where North Korea has agreed and begun to disable the three core facilities at Yongbyon -- the 5MW(e) Experimental Reactor, the Reprocessing Plant (Radiochemical Laboratory), and the Nuclear Fuel Rod Fabrication Facility. As we work to ensure that North Korea honors its commitments, continued Chinese support is pivotal in maintaining a united front.

With regard to Iran, China shares our goal of preventing Tehran's acquisition of a nuclear weapons capability. Though differences of opinion remain on how to best achieve this end, China has supported sanctions as a mechanism to increase pressure on Iran. China joined the other members of the Security Council in adopting UN Security Council Resolutions 1737 and 1747, and, just this March, UNSCR 1803. These Security Council resolutions impose a series of Chapter VII sanctions on Iran. Among other things, these resolutions require Member States to prevent the supply to Iran of certain items, technology, training or financial assistance that could contribute to its proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities or its development of a nuclear weapon delivery system. The resolutions also require Member States to freeze the assets of entities and individuals who are identified in the UNSCR Annexes as having a significant role in Iran's nuclear and missile programs, and those acting on their behalf, or owned or controlled by them. Moreover, these resolutions prohibit Iran from exporting arms, urge Member States to restrict heavy arms transfers to Iran, and call for vigilance in the activities of financial institutions in their territories with all banks domiciled in Iran and their branches and subsidiaries abroad. Resolution 1803 calls on states to inspect certain cargo to and from Iran to prevent trafficking in the items prohibited under the relevant resolutions, and also targets those who have assisted designated entities and individuals in evading or violating UNSC sanctions. As a member of the P5+1, China has reiterated that, should Iran continue to refuse verification and compliance negotiations, additional sanctions will be necessary to augment those already in place.

These Chapter VII sanctions imposed on Iran and the DPRK send a clear and compelling signal that the international community will not tolerate the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. And it is up to the entire international community to remain unified and consistent in its message to North Korea and Iran that international concerns regarding their nuclear and missile ambitions must be resolved.

Beyond our cooperation in multi-lateral venues that address proliferation, there are a number of instances where the Chinese have expressed an interest in export control cooperation, including technical exchanges and training. To the extent that it is permissible within the law, we have endeavored to provide such assistance.

One such example is the State Department's Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program, which has supported training for Chinese licensing and enforcement officials. Since 2006, the EXBS program has coordinated two training events to help Chinese Customs officers identify controlled commodities. These events were sponsored by the Department of Energy's International Nonproliferation Export Control Program (INECP) and

took place in Shanghai and Dalian, focusing on training Chinese frontline Customs enforcement officials and technical experts responsible for interdicting illicit shipments of WMD-related, “dual-use,” strategic commodities. EXBS also plans to offer Chinese Customs seaport interdiction training at the working seaport in Charleston, South Carolina.

Other interdiction-related activities include China’s participation in the Department of Homeland Security’s Container Security Initiative and the Department of Energy’s Megaports Initiative. Both initiatives are aimed at improving detection of radiological and nuclear items at seaports.

In the area of industry-related export control-related training, EXBS sponsored a successful “Industry-Government Forum” for Chinese inter-ministry participation in mid-January, and plans to work with China on its development of an industry “Internal Control Program.” Additionally, in coordination with the EXBS program, the INECP program is collaborating with the China Atomic Energy Authority (CAEA) within the CAEA-DOE Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Technology (PUNT) framework on the development of technical guides on nuclear and nuclear dual-use materials, equipment and technology. It is expected that these guides will enhance the capacity of Chinese licensing and industry specialist to evaluate export license applications and train Chinese industry and enforcement officials.

For the future, we expect China will agree to further exchanges on a wide variety of legal regulatory, industry outreach and enforcement issues, including practical inspection, targeting, and investigation techniques.

In addition to bilateral training initiatives, we also hope that China will join the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), which was created by President Bush to facilitate cooperation in the interdiction of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, their delivery systems, and related technologies. The hallmark of the PSI is the close, innovative interaction between diplomatic, military, intelligence, law enforcement, and economic tools to combat proliferation. The PSI has become an important tool to interdict shipments, disrupt networks, and hold companies accountable for their activities. Beijing has thus far been reluctant to join with the almost 90 nations participating in the PSI, citing legal concerns. It also is quite possible that Beijing feels it must take regional concerns into account regarding its participation in the PSI, even though we have repeatedly clarified that PSI is not directed at any particular country. China’s commitment and participation in the PSI effort would be in keeping with China’s stated commitment to nonproliferation and would be a valuable contribution to international security. We will continue to address Beijing’s concerns and emphasize that all PSI actions are taken in accordance with states’ domestic authorities and international law.

Real Concerns Remain

The proliferation policies of the Government of China have improved. However, a number of Chinese entities continue to supply items and technologies useful in weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery, and advanced conventional weapons to regimes of concern. We continue to find that China has important deficiencies in translating its declared nonproliferation objectives into its export control system, particularly with regard to thorough implementation, transparent enforcement and possibly, willingness.

We continue to engage the Chinese government in an effort to halt commercial transactions that violate UNSC Chapter VII sanctions, nonproliferation norms, and Chinese law, but our efforts are met with mixed results. We still observe Chinese firms and individuals transferring a wide variety of weapons-related materials and technologies to customers around the world that we judge would use or retransfer the weapons in a manner that threatens regional stability and international security – including to Burma, Cuba, Iran, Sudan and Syria.

In addition, we have raised with the Chinese government our concerns that Chinese seaport facilities and international airports are transit and transshipment points for governments and entities that wish to ship sensitive materials to programs of proliferation concern. Certainly we would hope that China wishes to avoid a global reputation as a safe transit and transshipment point for foreign proliferators.

Judging the extent to which the Chinese government or Chinese officials are witting of the proliferation activity of Chinese entities is difficult given the lack of transparency noted earlier. One factor enabling proliferation activities is the decentralization that has become a key feature of China’s economic reform. We simply do not know enough about China’s export control regime, and cannot assess the level of control or awareness that Chinese officials have over increasingly free-wheeling companies that trade in dual-use materials applicable to WMD and their delivery systems. These transfers remain a serious concern, and we will continue to press Chinese officials to be vigilant and act vigorously to investigate and enforce their export control regulations.

We are particularly concerned that Chinese firms have continued to supply Iran with a range of conventional military goods and services in contravention of the restrictions within these UN Security Council Resolutions.

Inevitably, some of this weaponry has found its way to insurgents and militants operating in Iraq, as well as Hizballah terrorists in the Levant. The United States has sanctioned a number of Chinese entities under the Iran and Syria Nonproliferation Act and Executive Order 13382 for the sale of items on multilateral control lists or items with the potential to make a material contribution to ballistic or cruise missile programs or WMD programs.

With specific reference to conventional weapons, China, like many other countries, views its trade in conventional weapons as helping nations to meet their perceived defense needs and asserts that these transfers are in accordance with international norms. Despite this assertion, evidence indicates that Iran has transferred Chinese weapons to Shia militants in Iraq as well as terrorist groups such as Hizballah. For example, the Misagh-1 (the Iranian version of a Chinese MANPADS with Chinese components) was used in Iraq in 2004. In 2006, a Chinese C-802 anti-ship cruise missile, which has been supplied only to Iran in the region, was used by Hizballah to attack an Israeli naval vessel. China appears to accept at face value the end-use assurances and pledges against retransfers it receives from its customers, despite the fact that some of its customers have links to terrorists and have records as unreliable end-users, such as Iran. Nevertheless, China has demonstrated sensitivity to growing international concerns about recipients of some of its arms sales, notably Sudan. We continue to seek greater Chinese cooperation in curtailing transfers to state sponsors of terrorism and in stricter and more uniform application of its export control safeguards.

We have discussed with China the importance of addressing its weak export control enforcement and detection capabilities in order to rein in the proliferation activities of certain Chinese companies. If China is to have in place a rigorous export control system, it must devote additional resources, increased enforcement, rigorous implementation of catch-all provisions, and more investigations and prosecutions of violators of its export control laws. Moreover, we have encouraged China to share timely and substantive information on actions the government has taken in response to U.S. demarches. A level of transparency in China's nonproliferation activity is absolutely essential; heretofore this has been notably lacking. We will continue, as warranted, to impose sanctions against Chinese entities engaged in proliferation and will continue to highlight our ongoing concerns about China's proliferation record with the Chinese government.

An area of potential concern is possible additional Chinese support for Pakistan's civil nuclear program. As a member of both the NPT and the NSG, China has shown its commitment to enforcing international nonproliferation and export control norms. When China joined the NSG in 2004, it made a statement regarding the safeguarded nuclear facilities in Pakistan it would continue to support as "grandfathered." These are: the Karachi nuclear power plant; Chasma nuclear power plants 1 and 2; and Parr research reactors 1 and 2. Recently, Pakistan has expressed interest in increasing domestic nuclear power generation and has made overtures to China for support. This is something we continue to watch closely to ensure both that China abides by its commitments to the NSG and to ensure that ongoing Chinese cooperation with Pakistan does not support Pakistan's un-safeguarded nuclear weapons program.

Areas of Promising New Cooperation

Sanctions, of course, always remain an option to deter proliferating behavior. We have made an effort to use these sanctions in a targeted and constructive way. Avoiding those sanctions is a strong inducement for legitimate Chinese corporations to enact and enforce rigorous nonproliferation policies. As an alternative to sanctions, we have worked to encourage China to become a willing partner in addressing a common nonproliferation agenda.

Mr. Chairman, to this end, I would like to discuss one particular initiative that my bureau has pursued. As I have already noted, there are a number of Chinese entities who, after being sanctioned by the U.S. for proliferation related activity, have seen their international reputations damaged and their exports dramatically reduced. Several Chinese firms sanctioned under U.S. law or Executive Order have expressed an interest in taking actions that would result in relief from the sanctions. We can leverage this desire by Chinese firms to come out from under sanctions and advertise the tangible benefits that can accrue to companies that wish to abandon proliferation.

As part of a broader nonproliferation strategy that we devised last year, we held discussions with two major Chinese companies – the China North Industries Corporation (NORINCO) and the China Great Wall Industries Company (CGWIC) – both of whom have been sanctioned repeatedly in the past for proliferation-related activities. We have made absolutely clear to these entities that any trade in technologies useful in WMD programs or delivery systems would constitute proliferation-related behavior, and would subject them to possible future sanctions. We also continue to make it clear to them that any conventional arms transfers to countries such as North Korea and Iran are equally unacceptable. But, we have indicated that their decision to cease such proliferation activity would be recognized by the United States. A commitment to end their proliferation-related activity and concrete, positive action towards this end would likewise increase prospects that Western companies and international financial institutions would have no concerns in developing broad economic and trade ties with these Chinese companies.

The response of NORINCO and CGWIC has been very encouraging. Both companies have adopted comprehensive internal compliance programs and are implementing policies to ensure that inadvertent transactions do not occur. NORINCO, for example, has committed to refrain from selling armaments to North Korea or Iran and claims to have turned down over \$100 million in potential contracts with sanctioned regimes. And there are indications that the positive results are not limited only to these two companies. I fully anticipate that if tangible benefits of a solid nonproliferation record begin to accrue, additional Chinese companies will seek to emulate the nonproliferation policies of NORINCO and CGWIC.

This effort is, of course, only in its early stages. We need to ensure that these entities actually perform as they have pledged. We need to make sure they do not simply spin-off their proliferation-related activity to subsidiaries or sister companies so that the problem remains under another guise. And, these companies need to demonstrate that they are committed to the path of good corporate citizenship over the long haul. However, the possible impact of success would be dramatic. To have a commitment from a company such as NORINCO, a firm that has been sanctioned seven times since 2001, to get out of the proliferation business is a very positive development and one that could serve as an example to other Chinese companies. I am guardedly optimistic that our efforts can bring about meaningful results.

Conclusion

The United States will continue to press China to implement effectively its export control regulations, eliminate loopholes, and reign in the proliferation activities of certain companies. And we will continue to work with Chinese entities that have a serious desire to become good corporate citizens of the international business community. Continued proliferation by Chinese entities to countries of concern is neither in U.S. interests, nor China's. Working together, we can build upon our shared commitment to ensure an end to such proliferation activity.

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Washington Times
May 22, 2008
Pg. 18

India's Missile Power Lifts Off

By James T. Hackett

The spread of long-range ballistic missiles took a step forward on May 7 with India's successful flight test of its Agni-III missile that can carry a nuclear warhead as far as Beijing.

But the difference between this and other missile developments is that India's missiles — like those of the United States, Britain, France and Israel — are not used to threaten others and instead help deter potential aggressors.

With nuclear missile-armed neighbors like China, Russia and Pakistan, India needs an effective deterrent. But for years New Delhi concentrated on developing tactical missiles to deter Pakistan, which India fought three times since independence in 1947. India's nuclear-capable short- and medium-range missiles, in addition to its supersonic cruise missiles, are an existing deterrent to Pakistan.

Now India emphasizes development of strategic weapons, clearly worried about China's rapid military buildup. In 1962, India fought a war with China over their disputed frontier. When Chinese forces put down the 1959 uprising in Tibet and the Dalai Lama fled to India, New Delhi began military patrols along its northern border. Conflict with Chinese troops occurred, and in 1962 war broke out.

In three months of fighting China won every battle, showed the Indian army to be badly unprepared and redrew the border. Now, 46 years later there is unrest again in Tibet as China rapidly modernizes its military. With an arsenal of nuclear missiles that can reach India, including some reportedly based in Tibet, and a growing navy that could challenge for control of the Indian Ocean, China has become a threat to the Subcontinent.

The May 7 flight test was the third for Agni-III. The first test in 2006 failed, but the second in April last year was successful. This year's test was to validate last year's success and check out a new ring laser gyro-based navigation system. The Indian Defense Ministry said everything worked in textbook fashion in terms of range and accuracy. The missile traveled 3,000 kilometers (1,860 miles) and splashed down on target. Its full range is said to be 3,500 kilometers, which enables it to reach Shanghai and Beijing.

The government said Agni-III is now being turned over to the army, which has a missile regiment ready to receive it. The army will conduct the next flight test by the middle of next year, after which Agni-III is expected to become operational.

India's defense research organization now turns to complete the development of Agni-IV, a 3-stage solid fuel missile with a range of 5,000 kilometers (3,100 miles) or more, which would enable it to cover all of China from launch sites deep inside India. The Initial flight of Agni-IV is expected in 2010.

Indian defense analysts are concerned about the huge nuclear submarine base being built by China on Hainan Island in the South China Sea and Beijing's plan to build up to five ballistic missile-firing submarines. Consequently, India is building its own ballistic missile-firing submarine and in February carried out a successful test launch of a K-15 missile from an underwater platform. The plan reportedly is to develop a version of the Agni family of solid-fuel missiles to be carried on Indian submarines.

New Delhi also is working on ballistic missile defenses. In 2006, an Indian interceptor destroyed a target missile outside the atmosphere and last December a shorter-range interceptor stopped a missile inside the atmosphere. This two-stage missile defense is undergoing further testing, but components could be ready for deployment as soon as 2010. On a trip to New Delhi in February, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said the United States and India are studying the possibility of a joint missile defense system.

After decades of considering Pakistan their principal enemy, Indian defense officials are beginning to see China as a more serious long-term threat, and they don't want to be caught unprepared again. Washington is embracing India as a rising power that can be a valuable ally to stand with this country, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Australia in defense of democracy in South and East Asia.

Defense against nuclear missiles can be achieved both through active missile defenses and deterrence. A combination of the two is most effective. Combining the U.S. and Indian nuclear deterrents, together with missile defenses in Alaska, California, India, Japan and on ships in the Pacific, will greatly diminish the ability of China or any other country to use nuclear missiles to threaten or intimidate others.

We should welcome India's development of both missile defenses and a strategic nuclear deterrent.

James T. Hackett is a contributing writer to The Washington Times based in Carlsbad, Calif.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080522/COMMENTARY/364944950>

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New York Times

May 24, 2008

Pg. 10

Russia And China Attack U.S. Missile Shield Plan

By Edward Wong and Alan Cowell

BEIJING — President Dmitri A. Medvedev of Russia and President Hu Jintao of China met on Friday to conclude a deal on nuclear cooperation and together condemn American proposals for a missile shield in Europe. Both countries called the plan a setback to international trust that was likely to upset the balance of power.

Mr. Medvedev's choice of China for an early diplomatic foray as president seemed to signal a desire to continue Moscow's assertive foreign policy — particularly toward the United States — that was a hallmark of his predecessor, Vladimir V. Putin, during his eight years in office.

Mr. Medvedev was inaugurated as Russia's president this month, but Mr. Putin retained significant powers as prime minister.

The announcements came as the neighbors, who challenged the United States — and each other — during the cold war, grapple with newer tensions over an array of military and economic issues, including their rivalry over the energy resources of Central Asia.

Mr. Medvedev arrived in China after a visit to Kazakhstan, which is seen as an important part of Moscow's regional energy ambitions.

His visit here is the first by a state leader since the May 12 earthquake that has resulted in the deaths of nearly 56,000 people in southwest China, the nation's greatest natural disaster in more than three decades. Russia is among the handful of countries to have sent both aid supplies and rescue teams.

In recent months, both countries have condemned America's plan for a missile shield. Russia in particular has long sought allies to act as a bulwark against what Moscow depicts as American global hegemony.

In a statement signed by Mr. Medvedev and Mr. Hu, the leaders took issue once more with plans for a missile defense system "in certain regions of the world," saying such measures "do not support strategic balance and stability, and harm international efforts to control arms and the nonproliferation process."

"It harms the strengthening of trust between states and regional stability," the statement said.

The White House's reaction to the statement was muted. A spokesman for the National Security Council, Gordon D. Johndroe, noted that on Thursday Mr. Medvedev made remarks indicating that he remained open to negotiations. A new round of talks involving American and Russian technical experts is expected to begin next month.

"We're having discussions with the Russians in good faith about the sites in the Czech Republic and Poland," Mr. Johndroe said. "So we'll see."

The Russian-Chinese statement did not specifically identify the United States, which has angered Russia with plans to deploy elements of a missile defense system in the Czech Republic and Poland. Washington says the shield is to protect against potential attacks by rogue states like Iran and North Korea.

For their part, Moscow and Beijing have not always supported Washington's efforts to characterize Iran as a sponsor of terrorism and a potential nuclear threat, particularly to Israel. Iran says its nuclear development program is for peaceful, civilian purposes.

The joint statement also took issue with America's attitude toward the promotion of human rights, insisting that "every state has a right to encourage and protect them based on its own specific features and characters."

The statement reflected an argument among Washington's critics that the United States uses the human rights issue as a means of exerting pressure. It said governments should "oppose politicizing the issue and using double standards" and should not use "human rights to interfere with other countries' affairs."

In late March, as China was coming under growing international criticism for a harsh crackdown on pro-Tibetan protests, President Bush called Mr. Hu to urge restraint and to advise the Chinese government to meet with the Dalai Lama's representatives, according to the White House. He also asked Mr. Hu to allow diplomats and foreign journalists into Tibetan areas.

As a signal of the warming ties between China and Russia, the two countries signed a \$1 billion agreement for Russia to build a nuclear fuel enrichment plant in China and supply uranium. Sergei V. Kiriyenko, the director of Rosatom, Russia's state nuclear corporation, described the deal as "a good addition to our presence in China." Xinhua, the Chinese state news agency, reported on Friday that trade between the countries rose to \$48.17 billion last year from \$10.67 billion in 2000.

Edward Wong reported from Beijing, and Alan Cowell from Paris. Clifford J. Levy contributed reporting from Moscow, and Steven Lee Myers from Washington.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/24/world/24china.html?scp=1&sq=Russia%20And%20China%20Attack%20U.S.%20Missile%20Shield%20Plan&st=cse>

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New York Times

May 27, 2008

Atomic Monitor Signals Concern Over Iran's Work

By Elaine Sciolino

PARIS — The International Atomic Energy Agency, in an unusually blunt and detailed report, said Monday that Iran's suspected research into the development of nuclear weapons remained "a matter of serious concern" and that Iran continued to owe the agency "substantial explanations."

The nine-page report accused the Iranians of a willful lack of cooperation, particularly in answering allegations that its nuclear program may be intended more for military use than for energy generation.

Part of the agency's case hinges on 18 documents listed in the report and presented to Iran that, according to Western intelligence agencies, indicate the Iranians have ventured into explosives, uranium processing and a missile warhead design — activities that could be associated with constructing nuclear weapons.

"There are certain parts of their nuclear program where the military seems to have played a role," said one senior official close to the agency, who spoke on the condition of anonymity under normal diplomatic constraints. He added, "We want to understand why."

The atomic energy agency's report highlights the amount of work still to be done before definitive conclusions about the nature of the program can be made, a task that the official associated with the agency said would require months. Iran's nuclear program has long been a flashpoint, with critics fearing that suggestions that Iran is developing weapons could embolden factions within the administration who have been pushing for a confrontation with Iran. Iran has dismissed the documents as "forged" or "fabricated," claimed that its experiments and projects had nothing to do with a nuclear weapons program and refused to provide documentation and access to its scientists to support its claims.

The report also makes the allegation that Iran is learning to make more powerful centrifuges that are operating faster and more efficiently, the product of robust research and development that have not been fully disclosed to the agency.

That means that the country may be producing enriched uranium — which can be used to make electricity or to produce bombs — faster than expected at the same time as it replaces its older generation of less reliable centrifuges. Some of the centrifuge components have been produced by Iran's military, said the report, prepared by Mohamed ElBaradei, the director general of the agency, which is the United Nations nuclear monitor. The report makes no effort to disguise the agency's frustration with Iran's lack of openness. It describes, for example, Iran's installation of new centrifuges, known as the IR-2 and IR-3 (for Iranian second and third generations) and other modifications at its site at Natanz, as "significant, and as such should have been communicated to the agency."

The agency also said that during a visit in April, it was denied access to sites where centrifuge components were being manufactured and where research of uranium enrichment was being conducted.

The report does not say how much enriched uranium the Iranians are now producing, but the official connected to the agency said that since December, it was slightly less than 150 kilograms, or 330 pounds, about double the amount they were producing during the same period about 18 months ago.

"The Iranians are certainly being confronted with some pretty strong evidence of a nuclear weapons program, and they are being petulant and defensive," said David Albright, a former weapons inspector who now runs the Institute for Science and International Security. "The report lays out what the agency knows, and it is very damning. I've never seen it laid out quite like this."

Ali Asghar Soltanieh, Iran's ambassador to the atomic energy agency, however, said that the report vindicated Iran's nuclear activities. It "is another document that shows Iran's entire nuclear activities are peaceful," the semi-official Fars News Agency quoted him as saying.

A National Intelligence Estimate published in December by American intelligence agencies concluded that Iran suspended its work on a weapons design in late 2003, apparently in response to mounting international pressure. That report added that it was uncertain whether the weapons work had resumed. It concluded that work continued on Iran's missiles and uranium enrichment, the two other steps that would be necessary for Iran either to build and launch a weapon or to announce that it is able to construct one quickly.

The Bush administration, in its waning days, seems powerless to modify Iran's behavior. The question seems to have been pushed to the future with the forceful disagreements in recent days between the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, Senator John McCain, and Senator Barack Obama, contending for the Democratic nomination, over whether an American president should negotiate with Iran's leadership.

Still, Javier Solana, the European Union's foreign policy chief, announced in Brussels on Monday that he would go to Iran soon — possibly "within the month" — to present a new offer of political, technological, security and trade rewards for Iran if it halts its uranium enrichment program.

Mr. Solana will travel with senior foreign ministry officials from five of the six countries involved in the initiative — Britain, France, Russia, China and Germany — but not the United States, which has refused to hold talks with Iran. The incentives, agreed on by the six countries in London this month but still not made public, repackaged and clarified an incentives package presented to Iran in 2006.

Iran rejected it at the time, saying that relinquishing its uranium enrichment program was non-negotiable. After the London meeting this month, the Iranian foreign minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, said the new package should not cross Iran's "red line" — shorthand for its uranium-enrichment program.

On May 13, Iran responded with its own package of proposals, calling for new international talks on political, economic and security issues, including its nuclear program and the Arab-Israeli peace process.

The proposal, made in a letter from Mr. Mottaki to the United Nations secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, includes the creation of international fuel production facilities in Iran and other countries — a longstanding goal of Iran — as well as improved supervision of Iran's nuclear program by the atomic energy agency, which is based in Vienna.

Over the years, the United States and France have led the way in opposing the idea of a fuel-production facility in Iran, contending that it would allow Iranian experts to master the complex process of enriching uranium and to use that knowledge in a secret bomb-making project.

Iran insists its uranium enrichment program is devoted solely to producing fuel for nuclear reactors that generate electricity.

The report, which was released on Monday to the agency's 35-country board of directors and the United Nations Security Council, will be formally discussed by the board next week.

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/27/world/middleeast/27iran.html?_r=1&ref=todayspaper&oref=slogin

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Israel Has '150 Or More' Nuclear Weapons, Carter Says

By Reuters

LONDON -- Former president Jimmy Carter has said Israel holds at least 150 nuclear weapons, the first time any US president has publicly acknowledged the Jewish state's atomic arsenal.

Asked at a news conference at Wales's Hay literary festival on Sunday how a future US president should deal with the Iranian nuclear threat, Carter put the risk in context by listing atomic weapons held globally.

"The US has more than 12,000 nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union has about the same, Great Britain, and France have several hundred, and Israel has 150 or more. We have a phalanx of enormous weaponry . . . not only of enormous weaponry but of rockets to deliver those missiles on a pinpoint accuracy target," he said, according to a transcript of his remarks.

While the existence of Israeli nuclear weapons is widely assumed, Israeli officials have never admitted their existence, and US officials have stuck to that line in public for years.

The Nobel Peace Prize recipient said Washington should talk directly to Tehran to persuade it to drop its nuclear ambitions.

Years of US policy, including sanctions and a debate about the possibility of military strikes, have not persuaded Iran to abandon its ambitions to produce enriched uranium.

President Bush has branded calls for negotiations with Iran's president as comparable to the appeasement of Adolf Hitler before World War II.

A former Israeli military intelligence chief criticized Carter's comments and said they would do more harm than good.

"It seems to me that in his last tour of the country and the region, he was apparently so offended that he thought it proper to say things which I think are irresponsible," said Aharon Zeevi-Farkash.

"The problem is that there are those who can use these statements when it comes to discussing the international effort to prevent Iran getting nuclear weapons," he said.

Carter visited the Middle East in mid-April, during which he met the leader of the Islamist group Hamas in Syria to try to move a peace process forward between Israel and the Palestinians.

The United States, European Union, and Israel regard Hamas, which is dedicated to Israel's destruction, as a terrorist group.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel refused to meet Carter, who has been critical of Israeli policy toward the Palestinians, during a regional visit that began on April 13.

http://www.boston.com/news/world/middleeast/articles/2008/05/27/israel_has_150_or_more_nuclear_weapons_carter_says/

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Washington Post

May 28, 2008

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Talks With U.S. Begin

The United States and North Korea began talks in Beijing on Tuesday on the communist nation's delayed nuclear declaration and the political concessions it will receive in return, including the North's goal of removal from a U.S. terrorism blacklist.

Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill said he met with his North Korean counterpart, Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye Gwan, to prepare the agenda for more detailed negotiations Wednesday.

The declaration, which would lay out the North's nuclear programs, has been key in preventing progress on the country's disarmament. Pyongyang officials had promised to complete the statement by the end of last year.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/05/27/AR2008052703040.html>

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The Guardian

Poland stalls Bush's 'lame duck' deal on missile shield

Ian Traynor in Brussels

Wednesday May 28 2008

President George Bush's hopes of sealing agreement to site parts of the Pentagon's missile shield in central Europe before he leaves office are fading fast, according to senior Polish officials who despair of reaching to reach a deal with the United States before the end of the year.

The US has been negotiating with the Polish and Czech governments for five years over deploying missile interceptors in Poland and a radar-tracking station in the Czech Republic - the first elements of the American missile defence programme that would be stationed outside the US.

But while the Americans and the Czechs recently concluded their negotiations, the Polish government has balked at the US terms on offer, insisting on large-scale military aid from the US to modernise its armed forces in return for agreeing to host the silos for 10 interceptor rockets.

"Bush promised us a package, but the US is not delivering," said a senior Polish official. "Bush is a lame duck and the Pentagon is now sabotaging him.

"Why should we do any favours for Bush?"

He indicated that Warsaw had decided to wait until a new US administration is installed in January in the hope that would produce a better deal.

The installations in central Europe are ostensibly aimed at intercepting potential missile attacks from Iran, although Russia contests this and insists that the Polish and Czech deployments are ultimately aimed at the Kremlin's nuclear arsenal.

The new Russian president, Dmitriy Medvedev, used his first foreign visit to China last week to drum up Beijing's support for Russian opposition to the missile shield, one of the key disputes that has led to worsening relations between Russia and the west in recent years.

Poland is keen to host the interceptor rockets because it believes that having American troops and military sites on its territory reinforces its security against its traditional enemy, Russia.

But unless it markedly improves its defences, the Polish government also believes hosting the shield will diminish, rather than enhance national security in the face of a strengthening Russia.

On Monday in Brussels, the Polish defence minister, Bogdan Klich, said Warsaw needed the kind of military aid from the US that Washington supplies to Pakistan or Egypt, indicating that the cost to America could run to billions. The Bush administration, meanwhile, could yet turn its back on Poland and shift to deploying the interceptor rockets either at sea or in Britain, say senior Nato officials in Brussels.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/may/28/poland.usa>

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ABC News

Al Qaeda Supporters' Tape to Call for Use of WMDs

Authorities: New Tape to Urge Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction on Civilians

By PIERRE THOMAS and THERESA COOK

May 27, 2008—

Intelligence and law enforcement sources tell ABC News they are expecting al Qaeda supporters will post a new video on the Internet in the next 24 hours, calling for what one source said is "jihadists to use biological, chemical and nuclear weapons to attack the West."

"There have been several reports that al Qaeda will release a new message calling for the use of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) against civilians," FBI spokesman Richard Kolko told ABC News in an e-mail.

"Although there have been similar messages in the past, the FBI and [Department of Homeland Security] have no intelligence of any specific plot or indication of a threat to the U.S.," the e-mail said. "The FBI and U.S. intelligence community will review the message for any intelligence value."

While there is no evidence of any direct threat, the FBI sent a bulletin to 18,000 law enforcement agencies across the country, out of an abundance of caution.

Some independent analysts don't think the public should worry much.

Ben Venzke, the CEO of IntelCenter, a group that monitors terrorist communications on the Web, said the video, entitled "Nuclear Jihad, The Ultimate Terror," is a jihadi supporter video compilation and not from an official group.

"Supporter videos are made by fans or supporters who may not have ever had any contact with a real terrorist,"

Venzke said. "These videos almost always are comprised of old video footage that is edited together to make a new video."

He said the material in these types of videos does not qualify as an official message from al Qaeda or any other group.

"Considering them so would be the equivalent of considering a 10-year-old's homemade fan video of his favorite sports team to be an official team message," Venzke said. "IntelCenter is not aware of any new imminent message

by al-Qaeda or any other leading jihadist group in audio or video form that will call for the use of WMD against civilians."

Word of the new tape comes on the heels of a spate of messages from Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda's second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahiri.

Earlier this month, al Qaeda released an audio message from bin Laden, excoriating the media and countries that are supportive of Israel. The release was timed to coincide with the nation's 60th anniversary and President Bush's trip to the region.

So far this year, four bin Laden tapes have surfaced.

In April, the terror group released audio recordings in which al-Zawahiri answered questions submitted to an online forum several months earlier.

The increasing volume of tapes seems to signal to the law enforcement and intelligence communities that top al Qaeda leadership is comfortable monitoring current events and communicating messages frequently.

Officials have tracked the trend, but FBI director Robert Mueller downplayed the surge of messages during an appearance earlier this month, noting that "there is a difference between al Qaeda's ability to communicate internally and al Qaeda's ability to post a message on the Internet. As we all know, the Internet is so broad. The access is absolutely open that just about anybody can post material on the Internet."

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<http://abcnews.go.com/TheLaw/FedCrimes/story?id=4941724>

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Bloomberg.com

U.S. Intelligence Group Dismisses Report of Al-Qaeda WMD Tape

By Ed Johnson

May 28 (Bloomberg) -- A U.S.-based intelligence group dismissed a media report that al-Qaeda may release a video recording calling on militants to attack the West with biological, chemical or nuclear weapons.

ABC News cited unidentified intelligence officials as saying the tape may be released on the Internet within 24 hours and that the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation sent a bulletin to 18,000 law enforcement agencies across the country.

The tape referred to in the report was made by supporters of al-Qaeda and released May 26, titled "Nuclear Jihad, The Ultimate Terror," IntelCenter, based in Alexandria, Virginia, said in an e-mailed statement today.

"The material in these types of videos does not qualify as an official message from al-Qaeda or any other group," said IntelCenter, which provides counterterrorism intelligence support to the U.S., British, Australian and Canadian armed forces. "Considering them so would be the equivalent of considering a 10-year-old's homemade fan video of his favorite sports team to be an official team message."

The FBI and the Department of Homeland Security have no intelligence of any specific plot or threat to the U.S., ABC News cited bureau spokesman Richard Kolko as saying.

"There have been several reports that al-Qaeda will release a new message calling for the use of weapons of mass destruction against civilians," the broadcaster cited him as saying on its Web site.

IntelCenter said it wasn't aware of "any new imminent message by al-Qaeda or any other leading jihadist group in audio or video form" that will call for the use of weapons of mass destruction against civilians.

Al-Qaeda's media production unit as-Sahab regularly releases messages on the Internet. Earlier this month, the terrorist network released an audio message from its leader, Osama bin Laden, timed to coincide with Israel's 60th anniversary and President George W. Bush's visit to the region. In it, bin Laden condemned countries that are supportive of the Jewish state.

To contact the reporter on this story: Ed Johnson in Sydney at ejohnson28@bloomberg.net.

Last Updated: May 28, 2008 00:01 EDT

http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601103&sid=azMBEk1_3hCk&refer=us#

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Yahoo! News

May 28, 2008

Gates Reviews Report On Mishandling Nuke Shipment

By Lolita C. Baldor, Associated Press

ABOARD A MILITARY AIRCRAFT -- Defense Secretary Robert Gates is reviewing a lengthy report on the Pentagon's handling of nuclear-related materials and the military's mistaken shipment of ballistic missile fuses to Taiwan.

Gates received the report and a briefing on the matter this week and is considering recommendations by Navy Adm. Kirkland H. Donald, who was asked to conduct a broad investigation of the delivery foul-up.

Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell, who is traveling with Gates to several Asian countries, said Wednesday that the recommendations address what happened in the incident and how well the department safeguards other sensitive components.

Morrell provided no details and would not say whether Donald recommended punishment for any personnel who might have been at fault for the Taiwan mishap.

Gates ordered a full inventory of all nuclear weapons and related materials after the incident, and he told officials with the Air Force, Navy and Defense Logistics Agency to assess inventory control procedures for the materials and to submit a report within 60 days.

Four cone-shaped electrical fuses used in intercontinental ballistic missile warheads were shipped to the Taiwanese instead of the helicopter batteries they had ordered.

It was the second nuclear-related mistake involving the military that has been revealed in recent months. In August an Air Force B-52 bomber was mistakenly armed with six nuclear-tipped cruise missiles and flown from Minot Air Force Base, N.D., to Barksdale Air Force Base, La. At the time, the pilot and crew were unaware they had nuclear arms aboard.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080528/ap_on_go_ca_st_pe/gates_missile_mistake_1

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Washington Post

May 29, 2008

Pg. 14

Search Is Urged For Syrian Nuclear Sites

U.S. Presses U.N. on 3 Alleged Facilities

By Joby Warrick and Robin Wright, Washington Post Staff Writers

The Bush administration is pressing U.N. inspectors to broaden their search for possible secret nuclear facilities in Syria, hinting that Damascus's nuclear program might be bigger than the single alleged reactor destroyed by Israeli warplanes last year.

At least three sites have been identified by U.S. officials and passed along to the International Atomic Energy Agency, which is negotiating with Syria for permission to conduct inspections in the country, according to U.S. government officials and Western diplomats. U.S. officials want to know if the suspect sites may have been support facilities for the alleged Al Kibar reactor destroyed in an Israeli air raid Sept. 6, the sources said.

The U.N. nuclear watchdog, which has been seeking access to the Al Kibar site since shortly after the bombing, has acknowledged receiving requests to expand the scope of its inspections, but provided no details.

U.S. government officials declined to describe the specific sites that have drawn interest, or to discuss how they were identified. However, the United States and other Western governments have long been interested in identifying possible locations for a facility in Syria that might have supplied nuclear fuel rods for a Syrian reactor. Although the Al Kibar site was described as nearly operational at the time of the Sept. 6 bombing, it had no clear source of the uranium fuel necessary for operation, according to U.S. intelligence officials and diplomats familiar with the site. Syria, which has denied having a nuclear weapons program, has not yet responded to IAEA requests for a firm date for inspections.

U.S. intelligence officials contend that the Al Kibar facility was built with North Korean assistance, to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons. CIA Director Michael V. Hayden said in an interview that the intelligence community's insight into Syria's nuclear ambitions has deepened since the Israeli raid.

"Do not assume that Al Kibar exhausted our knowledge of Syrian efforts with regard to nuclear weapons," Hayden said. "I am very comfortable -- certainly with Al Kibar and what was there, and what the intent was. It was the highest confidence level. And nothing since the attack last September has changed our mind. In fact, events since the attack give us even greater confidence as to what it was."

He predicted that Syria would "almost certainly attempt to delay and deceive" the IAEA. But he added: "We know what they did."

The absence of a clear fuel source for the reactor -- as well as a fuel-reprocessing facility for extracting plutonium -- has baffled experts who have studied the Syrian project. "It's like having a car but not enough gas to run it," said

David Albright, a former U.N. nuclear inspector in Iraq and the president of the Institute for Science and International Security.

But weapons experts also noted that Western intelligence has had a mixed record on the reliability of leads provided to U.N. inspectors. "U.S. intelligence has had a serious credibility problem on weapons of mass destruction for a decade," said John Pike of GlobalSecurity.org, adding that "they have been known to be right on occasions."

Weapons experts also noted that IAEA inspectors face a difficult task in assessing claims about Syria's program.

After the Sept. 6 bombing, Syria bulldozed the ruins of the Al Kibar facility and erected a new building on the same spot. "I think by now they've had enough time to cover their trail," Pike said.

In recent weeks, the Bush administration has increased diplomatic pressure on Syria. Yesterday, national security adviser Stephen J. Hadley said Syria was caught last year trying to procure equipment that could have been used to test ballistic missile components.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/05/28/AR2008052803061.html>

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Washington Times

May 29, 2008

Pg. 14

Iranian Official Slams IAEA

Report 'deplorable'; threatens to cut cooperation

By Ali Akbar Dareini, Associated Press

TEHRAN - Iran's new parliament speaker warned yesterday that Tehran could impose new limits on its cooperation with the U.N. nuclear watchdog after a critical report from the agency.

Ali Larijani, formerly the country's top nuclear negotiator, was overwhelmingly elected parliament speaker yesterday. Moments later, he told parliament a new report by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is "deplorable."

The unusually strongly worded report issued Monday said Iran might be withholding information needed to establish whether it tried to make nuclear weapons.

"We recommend them not to clandestinely keep passing Iran's nuclear dossier between the IAEA and 5-plus-1 group. This parliament won't allow such deception," Mr. Larijani told an open session of parliament broadcast live on state-run radio.

He was referring to IAEA reports and permanent members of the U.N. Security Council plus Germany. The council has imposed three sets of sanctions against Iran for its refusal to halt enriching uranium - a process that can be used to generate electricity or nuclear arms.

"Should this behavior continue, parliament ... will set new limits on cooperation with the IAEA," Mr. Larijani said. His comments drew chants of "God is great" and "Death to America" from the chamber.

The tone of the IAEA report suggesting Tehran continues to stonewall the U.N. nuclear monitor revealed a glimpse of the frustration felt by agency investigators stymied in their attempts to gain full answers to suspicious aspects of Iran's past nuclear activities.

Iran previously described its cooperation with the agency's probe as positive, suggesting it was providing information requested by agency officials.

In the past, Iran had extensive voluntary cooperation with the IAEA beyond its obligations under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), including allowing IAEA inspectors to visit its military sites as a goodwill gesture to build trust.

But Tehran ended all voluntary cooperation with the IAEA, including allowing snap inspections of its nuclear facilities, in February 2006 after being reported to the U.N. Security Council.

Ever since, Iran has limited its cooperation to only its obligations under the NPT. The treaty does not require Iran to allow short-notice intrusive inspections of its facilities.

Mr. Larijani didn't specify what measures parliament will take, but it could include further scaling back cooperation by not responding to questions originating from Western intelligence agencies.

<http://www.washtimes.com/news/2008/may/29/iranian-official-slams-iaea/>

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Reuters.com

May 29, 2008

Missile-Related Shipment To Syria Stopped, U.S. Says

By Arshad Mohammed, Reuters

WASHINGTON -- Four countries last year prevented Syria from receiving equipment that could be used to test ballistic missile components, a senior U.S. official said on Wednesday.

U.S. national security adviser Stephen Hadley described the previously undisclosed incident in a speech to members of the Proliferation Security Initiative, a network of countries that seeks to stop illicit weapons of mass destruction shipments.

The Bush administration has portrayed the PSI effort, which was launched five years ago and has more than 90 nations as members, as a significant success in its drive to prevent biological, chemical or nuclear terrorism. Analysts say it is hard to judge its effectiveness because members are reluctant to disclose successes to avoid betraying sources that provide intelligence needed to stop shipments.

"One example of its success occurred in February 2007, when four nations represented in this room worked together to interdict equipment bound for Syria -- equipment that could have been used to test ballistic missile components," Hadley said at a conference to mark PSI's fifth anniversary.

"Interdictions like this one have been successful all over the world -- and have stopped many shipments of sensitive materials destined for Iran, North Korea, and Syria," he said, providing no further details.

The United States in April released photographs of what it said was a Syrian nuclear reactor built with North Korean help. Israel destroyed the reactor in a September 6 air strike that was initially shrouded in secrecy out of what U.S. officials said was fear that its disclosure could prompt Syrian retaliation.

Syria has denied the facility was a nuclear reactor.

U.S. Acting Undersecretary of State John Rood on Tuesday said there had been dozens of PSI interdictions, including preventing the export of dual-use missile-related technologies as well as nuclear-related items to Iran. He gave no details.

Dual-use technologies are those with both civilian and military applications.

Hadley argued that the countries in PSI -- some of whom do not want their involvement publicized -- need to explain their efforts and to prevent their citizens from becoming complacent about the threat of weapons of mass destruction.

"This is no time to fall under the spell of an apparent calm or the illusion of false security," he said.

In an effort to deter countries, militant groups or individuals from promoting chemical, biological or nuclear attacks, Hadley repeated the long-standing U.S. position that it reserved the right to use "overwhelming force" in response. Echoing a speech he made in February, he also said the United States would hold "fully accountable" those who support "terrorist groups" to acquire WMD "by facilitating, financing, or providing expertise or safe haven for such efforts."

Robert Einhorn, a former assistant secretary of state for nonproliferation who is now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank, praised PSI but stressed that countries had made such efforts for years.

"PSI was a good idea and it provides value added to what was done before," he said, saying holding exercises had created habits of cooperation and smoothed the way for joint action.

"How do we measure success here, especially where the partners are understandably reluctant to share information about successes or failures?" he said. "It's very hard."

<http://www.reuters.com/article/newsOne/idUSN2844564120080529>

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