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Fort Detrick Unit To Track Diseases That Affect U.S.

By Jonathan Bor, Sun reporter

FREDERICK -- A military unit that has tracked diseases threatening U.S. forces overseas for more than a half-century will now assess infections that could endanger civilians at home, too, officials announced yesterday at a dedication ceremony.

Renamed the National Center for Medical Intelligence, the agency will gather information on diseases and contaminants that could make their way into the United States through food, animals, travelers, immigrants and returning troops.

It will work in close partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, which also looks for infectious agents entering the country at border crossings, officials said.

"These medical threats we see globally affect not only our armed forces, but other elements of the federal government ... and are threats to our homeland, to our civilian population and to the security of the United States of America," Lt. Gen. Michael D. Maples, director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, said before a gathering of about 100 employees and officials.

The unit, which employs about 150 people, is in a low-slung building at Fort Detrick, the military base where scientists at another unit have studied pathogens such as anthrax, Ebola and other hemorrhagic diseases.

In December, the medical intelligence center expects to begin construction of a 15,000-square-foot addition to its existing home.

Until yesterday, the organization was known as the Armed Forces Medical Intelligence Center. It traces its roots to World War II, when it was part of the Army surgeon general's office. Later, it became part of the Defense Intelligence Agency.

In recent years, the center has provided information about diseases that troops in Iraq and Afghanistan might encounter, as well as intelligence on the threat of roadside bombs containing chlorine gas, said Col. Anthony M. Rizzo, its director.

"When the tsunami occurred, we provided intelligence to all deployers across the entire government," Rizzo said.

"When the Pakistani earthquake struck, we provided predictive intelligence about the risks and what forces would face."

It also assessed the possibility that the North Korean nuclear program could expose overseas personnel to radiation, he said.

Even before yesterday's name change, the center had begun to focus more broadly on epidemics that could enter the United States, endangering civilians as well as government personnel, he said.

For several years, it has written "predictive reports" on avian flu, a strain of influenza spread by birds that has also killed more than 220 people, most of them in Southeast Asia and Indonesia.

Experts worry that the viral strain, called H5N1, could trigger a pandemic similar to the flu of 1918-1919 if it should undergo a genetic change that makes it easily transmissible from person to person.

"The evolution into a national center today is also a recognition of what we've been doing for some considerable period of time," Rizzo said.

Also speaking at yesterday's festivities were Charles E. Allen, Department of Homeland Security undersecretary for intelligence and analysis, and James R. Clapper Jr., undersecretary of defense.

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/bal-md.intel03jul03,0,7787277.story>

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Los Angeles Times

July 3, 2008

Pg. 11

No Decision Yet On Missile Defense

By Associated Press

WARSAW -- The United States and Poland have completed talks on a missile defense installation, but Polish leaders have yet to decide whether to accept a base, the country's chief negotiator said Wednesday.

Deputy Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski said he and John Rood, the U.S. undersecretary for arms control and international security, had ended their negotiations on Washington's proposal to place 10 missile interceptors in Poland after almost 18 months of meetings.

He said the results had been given to Poland's prime minister and foreign minister, who "now have to make a political decision -- yes or no."

There was no immediate comment from Prime Minister Donald Tusk or Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski.

In Washington, U.S. State Department spokesman Tom Casey said the negotiations had "pretty much concluded, but there's no deal yet." He would not provide details about any potential U.S. offer, nor would he say when Washington expected an answer from the Poles.

The missile interceptor site would be linked to a missile tracking radar that Washington wants to place in the Czech Republic.

Washington says the entire system would protect Europe from possible missile attacks from the Middle East.

Talks with Poland had bogged down, however, over Polish demands for billions of dollars in U.S. military aid. Most Poles strongly oppose the base.

Russia is staunchly opposed to the U.S. plans, arguing that U.S. military installations in former Soviet satellites so close to its borders would pose a threat to Russian security. Moscow has threatened to aim its own missiles at any eventual base in Poland or the Czech Republic.

The United States maintains that the plan poses no threat to the Kremlin's vast nuclear arsenal, and instead is aimed at thwarting possible attacks from Iran.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-missile3-2008jul03.0.1620193.story>

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Yahoo! News

July 2, 2008

Russian lawmakers OK US weapons dismantling deal

MOSCOW - Russian lawmakers on Wednesday approved agreements in which the United States will provide aid to help the country dismantle its nuclear, chemical and other weapons.

The lower house of parliament, the State Duma, voted 336-9 with four abstentions to approve two protocols to the 1992 U.S.-Russian agreement on safe transportation, storage and disposal of weapons.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak said the U.S. aid under that agreement has totaled more than \$2 billion and Russia expects to receive another \$1 billion through 2013 to help dismantle its aging arsenals.

"The agreement is in the interests of the Russian Federation," Kislyak said. "It allows us to save significant budget funds."

The 1992 agreement was signed at a time when the cash-strapped Russian government desperately needed foreign aid to safely store and dispose of huge Soviet-era arsenals of nuclear and chemical weapons.

While surging oil prices have reversed Russia's economic fortunes, Moscow has continued to receive aid from the U.S. and other Western nations for its weapons dismantling programs.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080702/ap_on_re_eu/russia_us_dismantling_weapons_1

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INSIDE THE PENTAGON - www.InsideDefense.com

July 3, 2008

16 of 24 sites secure

DOD Nuclear Nonproliferation Work In Russia To Wrap Up In 2012

Officials from the Pentagon's Defense Threat Reduction Agency have completed security upgrades to 16 of 24 nuclear weapon storage facilities in Russia and are on track to wrap up work on the remaining eight locations by the end of this year, a Defense Department official tells *Inside the Pentagon*.

"Some of those [remaining sites] we will finish up in the next couple of months and the rest we will finish by December," according to the official who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Upgrades to the current security systems at the 16 completed sites include improved sensor fences around the perimeter of the weapon installations and next-generation detection and control technology to secure the Cold Warera

nuclear warheads stored at the facilities, the official said.

"We are in the main construction period right now, so they are still stringing fence at the sites that will be finished in December, they are still finishing some of the construction on guard facilities and making sure the detection systems are operational," the official said of the remaining work at the eight warhead repositories.

Funding for the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program is financed jointly by both Russian and U.S.

governments, with DOD officials putting up a majority of the money to procure necessary hardware and installation of the equipment. Russian officials are primarily responsible for training operations for security forces at the various

facilities, the official added.

Once work is complete at the remaining eight sites, there are no plans to upgrade any other weapon storage facilities in Russia, the official said. "With what [the Department of Energy] and we have done, and what the Russians

have done themselves . . . as far as we know, there are no other sites that need to be done," the official added.

The 24 facilities under DOD's purview in the facility upgrade program are former Soviet nuclear weapon storage sites, either temporary sites such as rail-transfer points where warheads are brought in for a short period of time to be

transferred elsewhere or permanent weapon storage sites.

DOE's nuclear nonproliferation directorate under the National Nuclear Security Administration is responsible for security upgrade work on 125 nuclear facilities in Russia, NNSA's deputy nonproliferation chief William Tobey said during a June 30 briefing in Washington.

The plan to upgrade nuclear weapon storage facilities in Russia was mandated in a joint agreement between President Bush and then Russian President Vladimir Putin as part of the 2005 Bratislava Initiatives.

The commitment agreed to in Bratislava noted all sites would be upgraded by either the U.S. or Russia by 2012, which is when DOD is slated to end its commitment at the weapon storage facilities and hand over operations to Russian authorities.

"Our main goal now . . . is to build a cadre of [Russian] personnel that understands how to operate and maintain these systems," the official said. "That is what we will be doing over the next three years." -- *Carlo Muñoz*

<http://insidedefense.com/secure/print/PENTAGON.pdf>

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INSIDE THE PENTAGON - www.OutsideDefense.com

July 3, 2008

Former Soviet states eyed

DOD Mulling International Pacts To Support Nuclear Security Ops

The Defense Department has begun preliminary negotiations with a handful of former Eastern Bloc nations to forge a slate of new international agreements that could provide U.S. support for nuclear counterterrorism operations being carried out by border security forces in eastern Europe, *Inside the Pentagon* has learned.

Border security and nuclear counterterrorism operations in various former eastern European satellite states of the Soviet Union are split between the Pentagon's Defense Threat Reduction Agency and the Energy Department's National Nuclear Security Administration.

NNSA has worked with border security and customs officials to upgrade security measures at official points of entry in various former eastern European satellite states of the Soviet Union. "DOE has been putting in [security measures] at ports of entry on several borders," said a Defense Department official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Conversely, DTRA has assumed responsibility on "green border" areas, or areas outside the official point of entry designation, under the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, the official said.

Specifically, the Ukraine-Moldova border is currently the only area where DTRA officials are assisting Ukrainian border security forces in the detection and interdiction operations of possible weapons of mass destruction, either nuclear, chemical or biological in nature, the official said.

But now, DOD has engaged in talks with "two to three countries" in the Eastern Bloc to carry out joint detection and interdiction operations with those nations.

"There has been some indications of a couple of other borders. We are still discussing with countries themselves whether they believe that there is sufficient smuggling or indications of smuggling to warrant a joint program,"

the official said. The official declined to comment on which nations DOD officials are currently engaged with on the issue.

However, the official noted none of the nations the United States is in talks with have agreed to a joint border security program. "We are still in discussions with two or three countries on potential green border areas that warrant

a more sophisticated detection and interdiction capability than they have now," the official said.

The Ukraine-Moldova border "was a section that was identified from a threat assessment as being the most likely to have illicit smuggling of potential [weapons of mass destruction]," the official said. "So that was the border that the Ukraine border guard and customs service, DOD and DOE have been working on."

To bolster interdiction and detection capabilities along the Ukraine-Moldova border, DTRA officials have

provided a combination of portable radiation and chemical detection equipment and associated training, a handful of motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles as well as short-range radar systems along various points on the border. In addition, DOD personnel are nearing completion of a joint program with Russia to secure nuclear weapon storage centers across that country. (See related story.)

On the current border security agreements being hashed out at the DOD-defense ministry level, the official said the level of assistance could mimic some of the elements of the Ukraine agreement, but would also reflect the varying requirements of the individual country.

“Each land border is unique,” the official said. “It could include some radar detection. It could be just something as simple as better mobility so they can patrol the borders better. It is not a set piece and we have not made any preconceived decisions about how we would approach the borders.”

Should these pacts under negotiation be formalized, DOD and the respective country’s defense counterparts would forge a concept of operations for the border security mission and “figure out what would be needed to make sure that concept of operations works,” the official said. -- *Carlo Muñoz*

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INSIDE THE PENTAGON - *www.InsideDefense.com*

July 3, 2008

‘Yongbyon is not the entire complex’

Official: North Korea Must Disclose Other Parts Of Nuke Program

While the move by North Korea to disclose portions of its nuclear weapon development program is a positive step toward denuclearization in the region, concerns remain that the Asian nation is not being completely forthright in

disclosing all elements of the program, a senior Energy Department official said this week.

William Tobey, deputy administrator of nuclear non-proliferation for the National Nuclear Security Administration, said it “remains to be seen” how much of the information provided on North Korea’s nuclear program can be verified.

Last week, North Korean officials submitted a declaration of their nuclear weapons development program to the United States and other countries involved in the ongoing six-party talks on North Korea’s nuclear enrichment program.

Pyongyang also took the largely symbolic step of demolishing the cooling tower at its nuclear facility in Yongbyon. Subsequently, the United States lifted its trade embargo on the country and the White House removed North Korea from its list of state sponsors of terrorism.

U.S. officials are currently in a 45-day verification period, to review the information detailed in North Korea’s declaration, Tobey said. But the NNSA official added that the declaration only covered a portion of the entire scope of North Korea’s weapons development effort.

“As I understand it, [this] is a declaration of North Korea’s plutonium program, and it’s a portion of their plutonium program,” Tobey said. “Over the long haul, we have to be mindful that there are other aspects that we have to look at.”

Along with the actual reactor, Tobey said the primary work conducted at the Yongbyon facility focused on fuel fabrication and reprocessing, adding that there are other elements of the development cycle that are not located at the Yongbyon facility.

“There are elements of the program that one could logically infer that go beyond the [Yongbyon] site. At that site, they have got fuel fabrication, the reactor and a reprocessing facility. Logically speaking, there must be a weapons fabrication effort,” Tobey said. “Yongbyon is not the entire complex.”

Declining to comment on where U.S. officials think those weapon fabrication facilities might be, the NNSA nonproliferation chief said that over time Pyongyang would have to come clean on all aspects of its nuclear weapons effort.

“We certainly understand the fuel cycle pretty well,” Tobey said. “We know . . . the North [Koreans] have set off a nuclear device, so we know what it takes to get to that device and they are going to have to declare all the steps they have taken to get there.”

When asked where those weapon development facilities could be located, Tobey replied, “That’s a matter for the North to declare.”

Tobey declined to comment as to whether North Korea would include more details of its weapons development

program as an annex to the recently released declaration. But he was quick to point out that efforts by North Korea to be more forthcoming on its nuclear weapons program was a move in the right direction.

“This declaration has been a long time coming, so I am not in a position to predict when [they] would provide the full accounting,” he added. “I think that it depends a lot of what [they] are willing to say and do.” -- *Carlo Muñoz*

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INSIDE THE PENTAGON - *www.InsideDefense.com*

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Critics weigh in

State's Nonproliferation Study Sparks Civil Nuclear Power Debate

Critics say a new Bush administration study that purports to examine the proliferation implications of the growth of civil nuclear power focuses more on promoting nuclear power than safeguarding security.

But the project's chairman says the review thoroughly addresses the issues it set out to explore.

The study is the work of the State Department's International Security Advisory Board, led by former Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz. The study's chairman was Paul Robinson, formerly of Lockheed Martin and Sandia National Laboratories.

Some of the strongest criticism of the report comes from Henry Sokolski, who served under Wolfowitz from 1989 to 1993 as deputy for nonproliferation policy in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

In an interview with *Inside the Pentagon*, Sokolski said the report's title -- "Proliferation Implications of the Global Expansion of Civil Nuclear Power" -- sounds good, but the document disappoints in numerous ways.

"It does not deliver on that title," said Sokolski, the executive director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, a Washington-based nonprofit organization.

Leonor Tomero of the Center for Arms Control and Nonproliferation and the Council for a Livable World and Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, also expressed concerns about the study.

"This report seems to be more about promoting nuclear power and reprocessing and GNEP than it is about promoting nuclear restraint," Sokolski added.

GNEP is short for the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership, a Bush administration effort unveiled in 2006. GNEP envisions the expansion of nuclear energy worldwide, the establishment of a system of supplier and recipient states and the resumption in the United States of reprocessing. The administration argues the program will use a nuclear fuel cycle that enhances energy security, while promoting nonproliferation.

The report urges the State Department to pursue strategies that would provide reliable, economical supplies of fuel to nations undertaking new or additional nuclear energy plants. The study also argues the United States should consider endorsing U.S. fuel reprocessing options as a key step toward undermining other nations' rationale for obtaining reprocessing and/or enrichment technologies.

Robinson spoke to *ITP* about the study, but noted his comments do not represent official positions or policies of the State Department or any other entity of the U.S. government.

He said that Sokolski had volunteered to brief the panel while the study was ongoing. But Robinson said he turned down Sokolski, instead suggesting he brief a separate International Security Advisory Board team focused on discouraging a "cascade" of other nations from developing nuclear weapons. Robinson said the civil nuclear power study was an "if then" review that examined if there is a revolution in nuclear power what the United States should do about it, and Sokolski was questioning the "if."

In response to Sokolski's criticism, Robinson noted the report's second appendix details the full scope of the issues and approaches mulled by the panel.

"We took at face value the references from world bodies on projections of nuclear power growth, and the apparent push within many nations, e.g. China, to have nuclear power supply a significant amount of their proposed electrical power growth," Robinson told *ITP*. "We chose not to pass judgment on these, as some might have us do, but took it as information and reported it as we heard or found it."

Robinson said the report takes no position on the term "nuclear restraint" but does focus "quite strongly" on proliferation restraint. The first page, he said, notes that "the rise in nuclear power worldwide, and particularly within

Third World nations, inevitably increases the risks of proliferation."

"We proposed ways to remove, or at least greatly lessen, the risks of proliferation, and did propose ways to restrain the growth of nuclear power, per se," Robinson said.

The panel was tasked with providing an overview of the anticipated evolution of the nuclear power industry worldwide; an evaluation of the implications of the expansion of civil nuclear power for the nuclear nonproliferation regime; an evaluation of the initiative being developed to expand nuclear energy and strengthen nonproliferation, including ideas for making the initiative more effective; and ideas for new international initiatives or changes to existing programs that could address the nuclear proliferation concerns associated with the anticipated expansion of nuclear power.

“The proliferation implications,” Sokolski argued, “should spell out how much proliferation is likely, how much diversion is being risked, how much theft might occur, how good the safeguards are to deal with this if nuclear power goes to more countries. I don’t think they talk about that.”

Sokolski said it is “appalling” that the panel failed to address whether the United States can effectively inspect for or verify the presence of dangerous nuclear materials. The track record suggests there is no capability to do the inspection and verification mission very well, he said.

“And if that’s the case, getting pledges from folks that they won’t get certain materials or engage in certain nuclear activities might not buy you very much,” he said.

In response, Robinson said the fourth page states that the United States proposed an additional protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty that would “require all member nations to grant the IAEA expanded rights of access to information and sites regarding both declared and possible undeclared activities.” The next page, he added, states that the additional protocol itself is not comprehensive enough to block all of the paths to proliferation that are possible under the current nonproliferation treaty. “Neither are the corresponding IAEA safeguard protections comprehensive enough,” the report says.

It is also “stunning,” Sokolski said, how “argumentative” the report is in “promoting certain nuclear power propositions rather than focusing on the real question before the group which is how would you square the expansion

of nuclear power with the need to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.”

“So we have a great deal about GNEP, how wonderful it is,” he added. “We have a great deal about the wonders of recycling [nuclear waste] and why we have to do this and why our current policy gets in the way of nuclear power’s promise. But we really don’t get what are the associated dangers of the expansion of nuclear power activities

to additional countries. It’s just stunningly absent, which seems odd.”

Robinson said this criticism “seems misplaced.”

He said the panel’s assigned task, “which we believe is the right issue to address,” was to look at the impending worldwide growth in nuclear power and to “determine what the U.S., as a nation, can do” to prevent an inevitable rise in proliferation from accompanying such a growth in nuclear power use.

Sokolski argued the study lacks a discussion of any forces that would repress demand for nuclear power other than the United States or other countries wagging their fingers.

“One of those, quite clearly, is economics,” he noted. “They said not a word about that. And instead they made recommendations that would undermine the repressive force of economics by subsidizing fuel and assistance to expand nuclear power. It’s not a very impressive effort.”

Robinson disagreed. The question of influencing the economics of nuclear power is not within the State Department’s nor the United States’ capacity to control, he argued, and would be “inconsistent with our long embraced

declaratory policies of Atoms for Peace,” which formed the basis of the NPT itself -- that all nations should have the benefits to be obtained from nuclear energy without making the world more unsafe through nuclear proliferation.

Sokolski said the report makes an incorrect assertion that no nation has followed United States in its decision during the 1970s to stop reprocessing nuclear waste, noting that Germany, Great Britain and Belgium have all followed. Russia does not turn weapons-grade plutonium into mixed-oxide (MOX) fuel, though it would like to, he said. The only countries doing reprocessing are France, Japan and possibly India, he said.

“The states mentioned in this criticism did develop the technology for reprocessing and have not, repeat not, stopped their reprocessing in order to embrace the U.S. proposed ‘once through’ fuel use,” Robinson insisted. “They have temporarily made local decisions to cease reprocessing while they re-examined their own nuclear power commitments.”

Robinson argued these countries will similarly resume reprocessing if they continue to embrace nuclear power growth, as appears likely.

“I believe the score is still ‘zero’ nations who have sought to follow the ‘U.S. example’ to eschew reprocessing because of non-proliferation concerns in the rest of the world,” Robinson said.

Sokolski also said it appears the panel did not seek out the full spectrum of views on GNEP by looking outside

the government for information. GNEP has drawn strong criticism from groups like the Council for a More Livable World, the Union of Concerned Scientists and the National Resources Defense Council, as well as local and state energy organizations.

Tomero, of the Center for Arms Control and Nonproliferation and the Council for a Livable World, said the State Department report's endorsement of GNEP initiative runs counter to U.S. security interests.

"This proposal has very dangerous consequences for U.S. and international nonproliferation efforts," she told *ITP*. While GNEP's goal was to limit the spread of sensitive fuel cycle technology like uranium enrichment and reprocessing, the results have been exactly the opposite, she argued.

Since GNEP was proposed in 2006, several countries that do not enrich uranium or reprocess -- including South Africa, Argentina, South Korea and Canada -- have expressed interest in acquiring the technologies needed to do so to be considered supplier states, she said. In the case of South Korea, the U.S. Energy Department is collaborating with South Korea on research and development on reprocessing, she said.

"This is a significant shift from U.S. practice of discouraging countries from acquiring nuclear weapons capability by developing and acquiring these technologies," Tomero said. Until GNEP came along, U.S. policy for 30 years had been to forgo reprocessing because of proliferation and cost concerns, she said.

Robinson argued the decisions made by the nations Tomero cited were "independent" of any of the panel's recommendations. The countries have stated that rather than being only commodity suppliers of natural uranium, which occurs in large amounts within their territories, it would be in their self-interest to move up the value chain by enriching, then exporting uranium, he said. On the contrary, he said, these are exactly the states that should be brought within proposed supplier agreements -- to not supply fuel to nations that refuse the conditions of the Additional Protocol.

William Tobey, the deputy administrator for defense nuclear nonproliferation with the Energy Department's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), defended the Bush administration's during a June 30 session with journalists.

Noting some Middle East countries see nuclear power as a hedge against Iran's potential development of nuclear weapons, a reporter asked whether GNEP might undermine nonproliferation.

"A light-water reactor isn't much of a hedge," Tobey replied. "It's enrichment and reprocessing that pose the greatest danger. And we're encouraged that in negotiating some of these agreements that State Department has actually done a great job in getting agreements that make clear those countries' determinations that they're not doing it for proliferation reasons and that they don't have any interest in enrichment and reprocessing."

The Bush administration's aim has been able to provide the benefits of nuclear energy without spreading sensitive nuclear technologies -- enrichment or reprocessing capacity, he said.

"We have endorsed a variety of mechanisms that could provide an assured supply of fuel. We actually think the credibility of the overall guarantees is improved by this plurality of mechanisms to assure fuel supply," Tobey said, noting each of those may have a slightly different requirement.

"Our view is that we could take a pragmatic approach, rather than arguing with nations about rights or giving up rights and just look at their behavior," he said. "If, in fact, a nation has chosen of its own volition not to have an enrichment or reprocessing capability . . . to rely, in short, on the international market, we believe it should be eligible for an assured supply of nuclear fuel."

GNEP is intended to deal with some of the issues concerning nuclear waste by providing new technology that allows for both better disposition and a better nonproliferation outcome, he argued.

But Tomero and other critics see things differently.

"The shift to resume reprocessing in the United States and encourage the expansion of nuclear energy worldwide has resulted in many more countries becoming interested in these dangerous technologies, and may result in many more countries acquiring a nuclear weapons capability," Tomero warned.

Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, told *ITP* the recommendation to resume reprocessing is the part of the report he disagrees with the most. This approach was abandoned in the 1970s and should remain off the table, he argued.

Kimball also downplayed the idea of pursuing strategies that would provide reliable, economical supplies of fuel to nations undertaking new or additional nuclear energy plants. This approach would work only for states that do not have the economic or technical means to proceed, he said, arguing a strategy that advocates developing a nuclear fuel

bank that could reliably supply fuel for states is of limited value.

Congress has been skeptical of the efforts to promote GNEP and reprocessing and cut over 50 percent of the funding request last year, Tomero said, noting Capitol Hill will likely cut the funding again this year.

The report also says the State Department should work with other supplier states to jointly establish guidelines by which to judge compliance with recipients' commitments to forgo enrichment and reprocessing capabilities. The suppliers should also develop criteria and procedures for shutting off fuel and hardware supply in the event that a recipient is found to be non-compliant, the study says. The contract of supply should make clear the full range of diplomatic and economic responses that would ensue in event of noncompliance, the panel writes.

Kimball said there is a need to strengthen and tighten guidelines for the nuclear suppliers group, but he said he is disappointed that the report is not more specific about what steps could be taken. Much more must be done to restrict

access to uranium enrichment, plutonium reprocessing and technology related to the production of heavy water, he said.

Sokolski said international agreements mean little if they are not backed up by scientific verification methods.

“You would want to ask what you could do to improve our verification capabilities to find dangerous materials and facilities,” he said. “My hunch is that what’s stunning is that if you were honest about that question the answer would be not a whole heck of a lot. And that that’s your problem -- that either they assume that or they never asked it, but we sure don’t learn anything about it. And that strikes me as a fundamental lapse.”

He also slammed the report for holding out the carrot that the United States might take in foreign-spent fuel.

“There have been many studies showing it is foolish to think that reprocessing buys you anything with regard to waste management for geological disposition,” Sokolski said. “You create vast quantities of mediumlevel waste that you didn’t have before. . . . What you end up doing is leaving stuff above ground longer that you would otherwise put directly in. So it’s a very technical topic and the treatment they gave this here . . .

reads like something from the Nuclear Energy Institute or somebody promoting Yucca Mountain. It’s not really a complete discussion.” -- *Christopher J. Castelli*

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New York Times

July 5, 2008

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Pakistani Says Army Knew Atomic Parts Were Shipped

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP) — Pakistan gave centrifuges to North Korea in a 2000 shipment supervised by the army, Abdul Qadeer Khan, the architect of Pakistan’s nuclear program, said on Friday.

Dr. Khan said in a telephone interview that the uranium enrichment equipment was sent from Pakistan in a North Korean plane loaded under the supervision of Pakistani security officials.

His claims stood in stark contrast with his 2004 confession that he was solely responsible for spreading nuclear technology to Iran, North Korea and Libya. But Dr. Khan has since renounced that confession, saying he made it to avoid implicating other Pakistani officials.

The Pakistani government, however, has repeatedly denied that its officials, or the army, knew about Dr. Khan’s nuclear proliferation activities. Dr. Khan said that the army had “complete knowledge” of the shipment of used P-1 centrifuges to North Korea. “It must have gone with his consent,” he said, referring to Pervez Musharraf, who was the army chief and in control of the government at the time of the shipment.

Dr. Khan’s accusations could prove embarrassing for the army and for Mr. Musharraf, who is now the president and a main ally in American efforts against terrorism. Army and Foreign Ministry spokesmen declined to comment on Friday. But Mr. Musharraf’s spokesman, Rashid Qureshi, rejected Dr. Khan’s claims.

“I can say with full confidence that it is all lies and false statements,” he said.

Many Pakistanis regard Dr. Khan as a hero for his role in the program that gave Pakistan the Islamic world’s first nuclear weapon in 1998, seen as a deterrent against the country’s historical archrival, India.

After his 2004 confession and televised statement of contrition, Dr. Khan was pardoned by Mr. Musharraf but has been kept under house arrest at his villa in Islamabad.

Since a new civilian government took power after the elections in February, eclipsing Mr. Musharraf, Dr. Khan has increasingly spoken out in the news media.

Asked why he had taken sole responsibility for the nuclear proliferation, Dr. Khan said friends, including a central figure in the ruling party at the time, had persuaded him that it was in the national interest. Dr. Khan said that in return he had been promised complete freedom.

Dr. Khan also said that he had traveled to North Korea in 1999 with a Pakistani Army general to buy shoulder-launched missiles from the government there.

Also on Friday, a lawyer for Dr. Khan said listening devices had been planted in the scientist's tightly guarded home.

Earlier this week, Dr. Khan's wife petitioned the Islamabad High Court to end the restrictions on her husband's movements and to allow him more freedom to speak to the news media.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/05/world/asia/05pstan.html?scp=1&sq=Pakistani%20Says%20Army%20Knew%20Atomic%20Parts%20Were%20Shipped&st=cse>

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Washington Post

July 5, 2008

Pg. 11

Indian Leader Rescues Nuclear Deal With U.S.

By Rama Lakshmi, Washington Post Foreign Service

NEW DELHI, July 5 -- After months of political uncertainty, the Indian government appeared Friday to have saved a beleaguered civil nuclear-energy agreement with the United States. After a flurry of political meetings with allies and adversaries in the past week, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh gained the support of a regional political party that will not only back the deal but prevent his government from falling.

On Friday, Shakeel Ahmed, spokesman for the ruling Congress party, thanked its newfound ally, the socialist Samajwadi Party, "for supporting the nuclear deal in the national interest." Singh is to meet President Bush in Japan next week during a summit of the Group of Eight industrialized nations.

The deal had been attacked by Singh's coalition allies, a group of four communist parties, on grounds it would give the United States too much influence over India's nuclear programs and violate national sovereignty. They threatened to withdraw their support from Singh's government. Now Singh appears to have averted the risk of an early election this year amid inflation that hit 11.6 percent this week, a 13-year high.

The contentious deal seeks to end 30 years of nuclear isolation, give India access to nuclear fuel and technology, and address India's severe power shortage.

"We have been opposing the nuclear deal before, because we did not have any new details," said Mulayam Singh Yadav, leader of the Samajwadi Party, which has a strong base among lower-caste and Muslim Indians. "But now these new details have come."

Prime Minister Singh's office issued a statement this week trying to allay concerns about the deal. "The civil nuclear cooperation agreement did not and would not affect the autonomy of decision-making in regard to foreign affairs," the statement said. "There is nothing in the agreement which places an embargo on India's right to carry out a nuclear test if it thinks this is necessary in India's supreme national interest."

Political analyst Mahesh Rangarajan called Singh's single-minded campaign to promote the accord in the past year a "tectonic shift in Indo-U.S. relations."

"The deal is Manmohan Singh's quest for a legacy," he said. "It is not just about nuclear power but about how India will engage with the U.S. in the new century and shape the new world order."

Singh now faces talks with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the 45-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group.

The U.S. Congress will then vote on the deal.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/04/AR2008070402399.html>

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New York Times

July 5, 2008

Pg. 9

North Korea: Foreign Quid Wanted Before Providing The Nuclear Quo

By Associated Press

North Korea said it would take no additional steps to dismantle its nuclear program until the United States and other negotiating partners provided all the oil and political benefits promised under an aid-for-disarmament agreement.

The North Korean Foreign Ministry said in a statement that it had disabled 80 percent of its main nuclear complex, but that the six countries involved in disarmament talks had made only 40 percent of the energy shipments they had promised. North Korea said it would move to the next phase of the denuclearization process, abandoning and

dismantling its nuclear weapons programs, only when it has been awarded all the energy and political benefits it had been promised.

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/05/world/asia/05briefs-FOREIGNQUIDW_BRF.html?scp=1&sq=North+Korea%3A+Foreign+Quid+Wanted+Before+Providing+The+Nuclear+Quo&st=nyt

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Financial Times

July 5, 2008

Warsaw Brands US Missile Deal 'Unsatisfactory'

By Jan Cienski and Daniel Dombey

The Polish prime minister yesterday put a dent in US hopes that a deal had been reached on locating a missile defence base in Poland, saying Washington's latest offer was "unsatisfactory."

"In the key matter of the need to increase Polish security we did not reach a result," Mr Tusk said. A day earlier he had spent 40 minutes on the telephone with Dick Cheney, the US vice-president, trying to break the impasse over the base.

The move by the Polish prime minister is a blow to one of the central foreign policies of George W. Bush, the US president. "We made a very generous offer to the Poles," a US official involved in the negotiations told the Financial Times. "We are obviously disappointed they have not accepted it, but we will keep working with them and see what happens."

US officials had said that tentative agreement on a text had been reached this week after two days of negotiations in Washington. However, they were nervous about the final response from Warsaw.

Mr Bush has focused on missile defence throughout his time in office, including at this year's Nato summit, where he enlisted allies' support for the initiative, and at the subsequent US-Russian summit, where he sought to allay Russian concerns.

The missile defence shield also consists of a radar base in the Czech Republic. Public opinion there, as in Poland, is opposed but the right-wing Czech government has struck a deal with the US and Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state, is expected in Prague next week to sign the agreement. US officials were preparing for the possibility of a stopover in Warsaw in the event that agreement with the Poles was reached.

Now that the prospect of a swift agreement has receded, it will be much harder for the US to begin construction on the European sites this year - a move that would have made it more difficult for the next president to reverse course. Mr Tusk has been holding out for US aid to help modernise the Polish military as well as for the advanced Patriot air defence system. The US, officials say, offered to station Patriots on a rotating basis in Poland but -Warsaw wants the batteries to be under its operational control.

While insisting it is a willing partner in the war on terror, Poland is not as convinced as the US that there is a real danger of a missile attack by Iran - the kind of strike the 10 missile interceptors to be based in Poland are supposed to be able to stop. In Warsaw's eyes, the base itself poses a danger to Poland, both because it has aroused fierce opposition from Russia and because the base could become the target of an attack.

"The installation of the shield increases US security," said Mr Tusk. "But it increases the risk on the Polish side. It is understandable that the American side is seeking to enhance its own security; Poland is seeking its own."

http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/484cb740-4a2c-11dd-891a-000077b07658.html?nclink_check=1

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New York Times

July 5, 2008

Iran Responds Obliquely To Nuclear Plan

By Elaine Sciolino

PARIS — Iran formally responded Friday to an international proposal of incentives aimed at resolving the impasse over the country's nuclear program, but failed to address the central issue of whether it would halt its uranium enrichment activities, according to officials involved in the diplomatic effort.

Instead, the response, in a letter by Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki, said Iran would be willing to open a comprehensive negotiation with Javier Solana, the European Union foreign policy chief, and the six world powers involved in confronting Iran's nuclear ambitions.

It did not specifically address any of the proposals they presented to it last month.

“The time for negotiating from the condescending position of inequality has come to an end,” the Iranian response said, according to the officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity under normal diplomatic rules. It also criticized the United Nations Security Council sanctions against it as “illegal” and spoke of a “lack of trust” because of the “duplicitous behavior of certain big powers,” the officials said. Iran’s response was handed to Mr. Solana’s office on Friday evening, according to Cristina Gallach, Mr. Solana’s spokesman.

But in their public statements on Friday, the governments involved declined to discuss the substance of the Iranian letter.

“We intend to study the Iranian response,” said Gordon D. Johndroe, deputy White House press secretary, in a statement. He said the United States would discuss the letter with the five other governments — Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China — “before responding formally.”

Similarly, a British Foreign Office official said, “We have received the Iranian response and we are consulting” with the other governments before responding.

Officials in Mr. Solana’s office also said there would be no immediate comment on the substance of the letter. Still, some officials involved in the negotiations expressed disappointment. “There is nothing new in the response,” one said. Western officials have long contended that Iran wants to prolong the diplomatic back-and-forth so that it can continue its nuclear activities.

Another official said that there might have to be a positive spin by the six nations, simply because the Iranians had responded at all, without rejecting the incentives outright.

Russia and China have shown interest in pursuing some sort of negotiations with Iran even if it does not stop producing enriched uranium, as required by the United Nations Security Council.

The United States, France and Britain, by contrast, are eager to continue to press Iran with additional sanctions if it does not comply.

In late June, the European Union agreed to new sanctions on Iran that went beyond what the United Nations Security Council had mandated. Sixty-one Iranians or companies — all said to have links to Iran’s nuclear or ballistic missile programs — will now be subject to a European visa ban, a freeze on assets or both.

The Iranian letter noted that there were “certain similarities” — apparently a reference to points of agreement — between a letter Mr. Mottaki presented to the United Nations earlier this year and the one presented last month by the six powers. The new letter said that Saeed Jalaili, Iran’s chief nuclear negotiator, would lead the Iranian delegation.

Earlier on Friday, Mr. Jalili told Mr. Solana by telephone that Iran’s government had prepared its reply “with a focus on common ground and a constructive view,” Iranian state television said.

He also expressed the desire to meet Mr. Solana “rather soon” to continue talking, Ms. Gallach said.

Any compromise on the part of Iran regarding its nuclear program could help tamp down talk of an Israeli military attack against Iran.

Even the rumor of a positive response from Iran, OPEC’s second-largest oil producer, was enough to send crude oil prices down slightly on Friday.

In their proposal, the six powers left Iran room to maneuver with a timetable for start-up talks. Under their plan, preliminary talks would start with a mutual six-week “freeze,” in which the Security Council would not take more punitive action against Iran, and Iran would not expand its uranium enrichment program.

That could allow Iran to start negotiations about the future of its nuclear program while continuing to enrich uranium at current levels.

The Iranian letter of response did not address that approach, which has been called a “freeze-for-freeze.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/05/world/middleeast/05iran.html?scp=1&sq=Iran%20Responds%20Obliquely%20To%20Nuclear%20Plan&st=cse>

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Los Angeles Times

July 6, 2008

Uranium From Iraq Reaches Canada

By Associated Press

MONTREAL — The last major remnant of Saddam Hussein's nuclear program -- a huge stockpile of concentrated natural uranium -- reached this Canadian port Saturday, completing a secret U.S. operation that included an airlift from Baghdad and a voyage across two oceans.

The removal of about 550 tons of "yellowcake" -- the seed material for high-grade nuclear enrichment -- was a significant step toward closing the books on Hussein's nuclear legacy. It also brought relief to U.S. and Iraqi

authorities who had worried that the cache would fall into the hands of insurgents or Shiites hoping to advance Iran's alleged nuclear ambitions.

What's left is the final and complicated push to clean up the remaining radioactive debris at the former Tuwaitha nuclear complex, about 12 miles south of Baghdad, using teams that include Iraqis recently trained in the Chernobyl fallout zone in Ukraine.

"Everyone is very happy to have this safely out of Iraq," said a senior U.S. official who outlined the nearly three-month operation. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the subject.

Yellowcake alone is not considered potent enough for a "dirty bomb" -- a conventional explosive used to disperse radioactive material -- but it could cause widespread panic if incorporated in a blast. Yellowcake also can be enriched for use in reactors and, at higher levels, weapons.

The Iraqi government sold the yellowcake to a Canadian uranium producer, Cameco Corp.

A Cameco spokesman, Lyle Krahn, said the yellowcake would be processed at facilities in Ontario for use in nuclear power plants.

The deal culminated more than a year of diplomatic and military initiatives, kept hushed in fear of ambushes or attacks once the convoys were underway: first carrying 3,500 barrels by road to Baghdad, then on 37 military flights to the Indian Ocean atoll of Diego Garcia and finally aboard a U.S.-flagged ship for a 8,500-mile trip to Montreal.

Tuwaitha and an adjacent research facility were well known for decades as the centerpiece of Hussein's nuclear efforts. U.N. inspectors had documented and safeguarded the yellowcake, which had been stored in aging drums and containers since before the 1991 Persian Gulf War. There was no evidence of any yellowcake dating from after 1991, the senior U.S. official said.

U.S.-led crews transferred the yellowcake to secure barrels for the shipment.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-cake6-2008jul06.0.4296828.story>

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London Sunday Telegraph

July 6, 2008

US Pentagon Doubts Israeli Intelligence Over Iran's Nuclear Programme

By Tim Shipman, in Washington

Pentagon chiefs fear that Israeli plans for an attack on Iran's nuclear programme will fail to destroy the facilities because neither the CIA nor Mossad knows where every base is located

American commanders worry that Israel will feel compelled to act within the next 12 months with no guarantee that they can do more than slow Iran's development of a weapon capable of destroying the Jewish state.

Gaps in the intelligence on the precise location and vulnerabilities of Iran's facilities emerged during recent talks between Admiral Mike Mullen, the Chairman of the American Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Israeli generals, according to an official familiar with the discussions who has briefed Iran experts in Washington and London.

The assessment emerged as Iran in effect thumbed its nose at proposals by the West to freeze its uranium enrichment programme in exchange for easing economic sanctions. In its reply, sent to the European Union's foreign policy chief, Javier Solana, Iran said it was prepared to negotiate but only from a position of equality – and made no reference to the specific proposals.

At the same time Gen Mohammed al-Jafari, the head of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, warned that any attack on Iran would be "regarded as the beginning of war".

A former head of Mossad, the agency whose main responsibility is overseas intelligence, told *The Sunday Telegraph* last week that Israel would have to act within a year to prevent Iran securing nuclear weapons.

Those familiar with the Israeli-American military talks believe that Israel is still determined to act before Iran has enough highly enriched uranium to build a bomb, and before Tehran has acquired the Russian SA-20 air defence system to protect its nuclear facilities. "The Israelis have a real sense of urgency," the official said. "They are stepping up their preparations. But the Israelis and the Americans are worried about the other's lack of intelligence. "The Americans had spies in Iran until they were rounded up in 2003 and now they do not have much by way of humint [human intelligence] on the ground. The Israelis have better information. But the Americans went away from the meetings unconvinced that the Israelis have enough intelligence on where to strike, and with little confidence that they will be able to destroy the nuclear programme."

The shortage of good intelligence could explain reports that President George W Bush has quietly sanctioned a dramatic increase in covert operations by American special forces inside Iran. These intelligence gaps lay behind Admiral Mullen's decision to speak out on Wednesday against military action, saying it would be "extremely

stressful" to "open a third front" in the war on terror. But the admiral is at odds with hawks in the Bush administration, led by Vice-President Dick Cheney.

A former CIA officer with three decades of Iranian experience said: "Their belief... is that the US would get the blame from Iran whether or not we play a major role in any attack, so we might as well do the job properly."

Former defence and intelligence officers who advise the Pentagon have disclosed that the US military is looking into possible outcomes for military attacks featuring varying levels of American involvement.

The ex-CIA officer told *The Sunday Telegraph* that the planned attacks ranged from a full-blown assault on 2,000 targets inside Iran to logistics and intelligence support for Israel, if the Jewish state decided to go it alone.

The United States is preparing ways to cope with retaliation from Iran, likely to include attempts to cut off oil supplies, block the Strait of Hormuz in the Gulf and launch attacks on American naval ships there and on US bases in Bahrain. The US Navy has recently changed its rules of engagement for warships in the Gulf to make them better able to combat "swarming" attacks by large numbers of small boats, used by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard.

Iran could also attack Israel's Dimona nuclear facility, or even oil production and processing facilities elsewhere in the Gulf, according to a report published last week by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, an influential think tank with close links to both the US and Israeli governments.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/2253414/US-Pentagon-doubts-Israeli-intelligence-over-Iran%27s-nuclear-programme.html>

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New York Times

July 6, 2008

Pg. 12

Iran Says Its Nuclear Policy Has Not Changed

By Elaine Sciolino

PARIS — Iran's nuclear policy has not changed, an Iranian government spokesman said Saturday in Tehran, confirming that Iran would not comply with Security Council resolutions requiring it to stop enriching uranium.

"Iran's stand regarding its peaceful nuclear program has not changed," the spokesman, Gholam Hossein Elham, said in his weekly meeting with reporters.

His remarks came a day after Iran formally responded to a proposal of incentives aimed at resolving the impasse over the country's nuclear program. Iran's response failed to address the crucial issue of its uranium enrichment activities, according to officials involved in the diplomacy.

Instead, the response, which came in a letter by Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki, said that Iran would be willing to open comprehensive negotiations with the European Union's foreign policy chief, Javier Solana, and the six world powers that proposed the incentives. The letter did not specifically address the proposals they presented last month.

A senior European official involved in the negotiations said Saturday that Mr. Solana would meet with Saeed Jalaili, Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, in the second half of July.

The official and others involved in the diplomacy expressed unease that they would be pressured to negotiate with Iran even though it continued enriching uranium.

"There is nothing unexpected in the response, but it forces us to say, 'They want to negotiate so we want to negotiate,'" one official said. "We still have to decide on the conditions for negotiations. We are very skeptical."

The Iranian response was filled with criticism of the way the six world powers — the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China — have conducted the diplomacy.

"The time for negotiating from the condescending position of inequality has come to an end," the response said, according to the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity under normal diplomatic rules.

The letter added that such treatment "will not remain unnoticed in the eyes of intelligent statesmen."

It also called United Nations Security Council sanctions illegal and spoke of a "lack of trust" because of the "duplicitous behavior of certain big powers," the officials said.

It accused some world powers of interpreting human rights according to their own "self-interest" and causing "irreparable harm" to the nations of the region and their own countries.

In contrast, the letter said, Iran shows a "compassionate approach and behavior" in its international relations and in its efforts to bring stability to the people of Iraq and Afghanistan.

It said Iran's policy on negotiations over its nuclear program was to "find common ground through logical and constructive actions" and a "positive attitude."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/06/world/middleeast/06iran.html?scp=1&sq=Iran+Says+Its+Nuclear+Policy+Has+Not+Changed&st=nyt>

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Washington Times
July 6, 2008
Pg. 7

Case For Nuclear Buildup 'Closed'

Proliferator's charges ignored

By Nahal Toosi, Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan--Pakistan's Foreign Ministry insisted Saturday that its nuclear proliferation case was closed, a day after the disgraced architect of the country's atomic program claimed the army under President Pervez Musharraf helped spread the technology.

Abdul Qadeer Khan told the Associated Press on Friday that Pakistan's army supervised a 2000 shipment of used P-1 centrifuges to North Korea. Mr. Khan said it must have been sent with the approval of Mr. Musharraf, the then-army chief who took power in a 1999 coup.

"It was a North Korean plane, and the army had complete knowledge about it and the equipment," Mr. Khan said. "It must have gone with his consent."

The comments caused a stir in Pakistani media, and newspapers played the story prominently on their front pages Saturday.

Mr. Musharraf's spokesman, Rashid Qureshi, rejected Mr. Khan's claims. "I can say with full confidence that it is all lies and false statements," he said.

Mohammed Sadiq, spokesman for the Foreign Ministry, offered only limited comment, however.

"The nuclear proliferation issue is a closed case," Mr. Sadiq said, reiterating a longtime Pakistani stance. "We do not think that a debate is required on it."

Pakistan has repeatedly denied its army or government knew about Mr. Khan's proliferation activities. Still, Mr. Khan's claims match expert assessments that running such a network would have been very difficult without some involvement from Pakistan's security apparatus.

Mr. Khan has been agitating for an end to his virtual house arrest and backed off his 2004 confession that he was solely responsible for spreading nuclear technology to Iran, North Korea and Libya.

In a speech Friday, Mr. Musharraf made no mention of Mr. Khan's allegations, but said he would not quit the presidency - as political opponents have demanded.

The army spokesman declined to respond Friday and could not immediately be reached Saturday.

Mr. Khan is regarded as a hero by many in Pakistan for his key role in giving it the Islamic world's first nuclear bomb in 1998, seen as a deterrent against historic archrival India.

After his 2004 confession and a televised statement of contrition, Mr. Khan was pardoned by Mr. Musharraf but has effectively been kept under house arrest at his spacious villa in Islamabad.

Since a new civilian government took power after February elections, eclipsing Mr. Musharraf, the retired scientist has increasingly spoken out in the media. He had not previously implicated anyone or explicitly said the army was aware of nuclear shipments.

His comments Friday appeared to stem from his growing frustration over the restrictions on his movements. Mr. Khan and his wife have appointed an attorney to petition the Islamabad High Court for an end to his detention.

Associated Press writer Munir Ahmad contributed to this report.

<http://www.washtimes.com/news/2008/jul/06/case-for-nuclear-buildup-closed/>

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New York Times
July 7, 2008
Pg. 6

U.S. Helps Remove Uranium From Iraq

By Alissa J. Rubin and Campbell Robertson

BAGHDAD — American and Iraqi officials have completed nearly the last chapter in dismantling Saddam Hussein's nuclear program with the removal of hundreds of tons of natural uranium from the country's main nuclear site.

The uranium, which was removed several weeks ago, arrived in Canada over the weekend, according to officials. The removal was first reported by The Associated Press.

Although the material cannot be used in its current form for a nuclear weapon or even a so-called dirty bomb, officials decided that in Iraq's unstable environment, it was important to make sure it did not fall into the wrong hands.

There are also health dangers associated with concentrated forms of natural uranium, and since little is secure in Iraq, officials wanted to remove it.

American military personnel helped move about 600 tons of uranium in the form called yellowcake. It had been stored at Tuwaitha, an installation 12 miles south of Baghdad, which had been the site of Iraq's nuclear program. Cameco, a Canadian company that produces uranium and sells it around the world, bought the material, according to foreign officials knowledgeable about the transaction.

"The Iraqi government requested our help; we helped them," said Leslie Phillips, a spokeswoman for the American Embassy in Baghdad. "It was their decision and we were happy to assist, at their request. This is a good example of Iraqis working with international companies to get done what they want to get done."

There has been a continuing international effort to remove nuclear material from countries that are no longer using it. The International Atomic Energy Agency has helped a number of countries, including Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania, get rid of highly enriched uranium and spent nuclear fuel.

The yellowcake removed from Iraq — which was not the same yellowcake that President Bush claimed, in a now discredited section of his 2003 State of the Union address, that Mr. Hussein was trying to purchase in Africa — is used in an early stage of the nuclear fuel cycle. Only after intensive processing does it become low-enriched uranium, which can fuel reactors producing power. Highly enriched uranium can be used in nuclear bombs.

The only neighboring country known to have the technology to process yellowcake is Iran, but Iran has its own stores of the uranium. A State Department official said that there was no indication that Iran had been seeking the material or was interested in using it.

This was not the first time that the United States intervened to remove potentially harmful nuclear material from Iraq. Just a few days before the Americans formally transferred sovereignty back to Iraq in June 2004, they removed 1.8 tons of low-enriched uranium, as well as other radioactive sources, according to the International Atomic Energy Agency. The material was taken to the United States.

The vast Tuwaitha site has been bombed repeatedly since 1981, when Israeli warplanes destroyed the Osirak nuclear reactor there before it could be used to make weapons-grade uranium. American warplanes bombed the site in 1991 during the first Gulf war.

After the American invasion in 2003, Tuwaitha was looted. Barrels used to store the yellowcake were stolen and sold to local people, who used them to store water and food and to wash clothes, according to a report by the atomic energy agency.

Most of the barrels have been recovered, but there is still concern that people might become ill by ingesting food or water stored in the barrels and from contamination in the area around Tuwaitha, where more than 1,000 people live, according to the atomic energy agency.

The final step in closing down Mr. Hussein's nuclear program will be the cleanup of any traces of radioactive contamination at Tuwaitha.

In other developments on Sunday, the United Arab Emirates announced that it was canceling nearly \$7 billion of Iraqi debt, making it the first Arab nation on the Persian Gulf to do so.

The United States has been pressing Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other Arab Gulf states to forgive Iraqi debt. While most of Iraq's international debt has been forgiven, much of what remains is owed to countries in the Gulf region.

There was also scattered violence in Iraq on Sunday. A bomb exploded in a parked car in Shaab, a neighborhood in Baghdad, killing six civilians and wounding 14 people, according to the Interior Ministry. The bomb was apparently intended for an Iraqi police convoy, and three police commandos were among the wounded.

In Diyala Province, Muhammed Ramadan Isa, a local official for the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, was killed by a roadside bomb as he headed to a village in the northern part of the province, a local police official said.

The explosion also killed five of Mr. Isa's family members, including his wife and three children, as well as two bodyguards.

And in Salahuddin Province, an Iraqi Army captain was killed by gunmen while on the way home to Dhuluiya, north of Baghdad, according to a local police official. Two suspects were arrested.

Iraqi employees of The New York Times contributed reporting from Baghdad, Kut, Baquba and Salahuddin Province, Iraq.

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/07/world/middleeast/07iraq.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=U.S.%20Helps%20Remove%20Uranium%20From%20Iraq&st=cse&oref=slogin

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Iran Has Resumed A-Bomb Project, Says West

By Con Coughlin

Iran has resumed work on constructing highly sophisticated equipment that nuclear experts say is primarily used for building atomic weapons, according to the latest intelligence reports received by Western diplomats.

The work is aimed at developing the blueprint provided by Dr AQ Khan, the "father" of Pakistan's nuclear bomb, who sold Iran details of how to build atom bombs in the early 1990s.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard, which has overall responsibility for the country's nuclear programme, has set up several civilian companies to work on the programme whose activities are being deliberately concealed from the United Nations nuclear inspection teams.

The companies, based on the outskirts of Tehran, are working on constructing components for the advanced P2 gas centrifuge, which can enrich uranium to weapons grade two to three times faster than conventional P1 centrifuges. Iran's controversial nuclear enrichment programme at Natanz, which Tehran insists is designed to produce fuel for nuclear power, runs on P1 centrifuges. But Iranian nuclear scientists recently conducted successful tests on a prototype P2 centrifuge at Natanz, and the Revolutionary Guard has now set up a network of companies to build components for the advanced centrifuges.

This has raised concerns among Western experts that Iran is continuing work on its nuclear weapons programme, despite Tehran's protestations that its intentions are peaceful.

"If Iran's nuclear intentions were peaceful there would be no need for it to undertake this work in secret," said an official familiar with the intelligence reports.

A previous clandestine attempt by Iran to develop P2 centrifuges was halted in 2004 after the existence of a civilian company set up by the Revolutionary Guard was exposed. UN nuclear inspectors found traces of weapons-grade uranium at the company when they inspected the premises.

Reports that Iran has resumed work on sophisticated uranium enrichment technology follow Tehran's announcement at the weekend that it has no intention of halting its uranium enrichment programme at Natanz.

Iranian officials were speaking the day after they had formally submitted their response to a package put together by the world's leading powers – including Britain – offering a number of incentives in return for halting enrichment.

While European officials yesterday refused to disclose details of the Iranian response, one said that "it was not something that made us jump up and down for joy".

An Iranian government spokesman said: "Iran's stand regarding its peaceful nuclear programme has not changed."

According to recent intelligence reports, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Iranian President, personally ordered the Revolutionary Guard to set up companies for the secret manufacture of components for P2 centrifuges this year.

One of the companies is in a residential building in Amir Abad, western Tehran, where its work is unlikely to be detected by UN nuclear inspectors. One of the facilities is said to be run by a company owned by the Revolutionary Guard.

The operation is a direct copy of the Revolutionary Guard's previous attempt to develop P2 centrifuges, when research work was undertaken by the Kalaye Electric Company, which claimed it was manufacturing watches.

When its true activity was revealed to UN nuclear inspectors in 2004, they found the company had succeeded in building the centrifuges and enriching small quantities of uranium to weapons grade.

Senior officials from Iran's Atomic Energy Agency are supervising the current clandestine programme, which is based on the atomic weapons blueprint sold to Iran by Dr Khan in 1994.

Reports that Iran is actively working on Dr Khan's blueprint will deepen suspicions that Tehran has resumed work on its nuclear weapons programme.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/2259578/Iran-has-resumed-A-bomb-project%2C-says-West.html>

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UPI.com

Emerging Threats

Analysis: Will terrorists go nuclear?

By CLAUDE SALHANI, UPI Contributing Editor

Published: July 7, 2008 at 10:22 AM

WASHINGTON, July 7 (UPI) -- One recurring question that has been at the forefront of most intelligence agencies since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks by al-Qaida on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon just 1 mile outside Washington concerns the ongoing efforts by terrorist groups to acquire weapons of mass destruction: chemical, biological and mostly nuclear.

Each of the NBC (nuclear, biological, chemical) weapons comes with a certain advantage and disadvantage -- for the terrorist, that is.

Of the three sorts, biological weapons are quite possibly the easiest to safely reproduce in a lab, assuming one knows what to do. A biological agent, as a weapon of mass destruction or as a terror weapon, is the least expensive as well as the easiest to disseminate. A bio-agent does not need a delivery mechanism and can be transported by a single person. It can pass through customs and border guards undetected, given that it is odorless and colorless.

All that is needed to spread an epidemic of botulism, for example, or mad cow disease, is to hang around a truck stop for a few hours until a semi pulling a load of cattle on its way to market in a nearby town drives in. Wait until the driver leaves his load unattended, then scrub a previously infected rag around the railings and the mouths of a few of the cattle, and let nature do the rest. The disadvantage, for the terrorist, is that the person carrying the rag is most likely to become contaminated himself (or herself). But with no shortages of jihadists queuing up to become "martyrs," finding two or three volunteers willing to die a horrible, slow and excruciatingly painful death should be no problem.

From a financial and cost-effective perspective, biological agents remain most likely the cheapest and, in all probability, the most likely agent of mass destruction to become available to terror groups.

In their haste to leave training camps and bases of operation in Afghanistan in the wake of rapidly advancing U.S. forces, al-Qaida agents left behind piles of documents, including videotapes showing tests and effects of chemical agents on animals.

Chemical weapons are more cumbersome to produce; they require larger amounts to cause enough damage to leave a psychological scar; and they require a delivery mechanism, such as an artillery shell.

Realistically, a bio-agent can cause far more deaths than a nuclear weapon, because it is not limited geographically, unlike a nuclear bomb. For example, an infected truck driver in Omaha infects a U.S. Army sergeant he met in a diner outside Tulsa, Okla. The GI travels by plane to New York, where he changes planes and boards one bound for Frankfurt. Again he changes planes, this time flying to Kuwait, where he joins up with several members of his unit heading into Iraq. Along the way the GI will have infected scores of people at every airport between Omaha and Baghdad. Those people in turn would have traveled on to Australia, South America, Canada, every European city and other parts of the world. Within a few days people from Sydney to Seattle could start dying.

A nuclear device, on the other hand, would completely devastate the immediate area and, depending on its size, would contaminate everything in a radius of several miles, but the damage would be confined to the immediate area of detonation, plus the fallout zone; in addition, depending on the wind direction and speed, radioactive particles could be carried hundreds, if not thousands, of miles. But psychologically the image of a nuclear blast carries greater impact.

Brian Michael Jenkins, who has just released a book titled "Will Terrorists Go Nuclear?" writes, "There is no doubt that the idea of nuclear weapons may appeal to terrorists." However, Jenkins stresses: "Nuclear terror can also have another insidious effect, one that imperils our very democracy. Terrorism does pose a terrible danger, but our fear of real and imagined threats must not persuade us to diminish our freedoms or our core values. There is no tradeoff between security and liberty. One does not exist without the other."

As Jenkins points out, it is important to differentiate between real and existing threats. A perfect illustration is his description of al-Qaida: "Al-Qaida may have succeeded in becoming the world's first terrorist nuclear power without possessing a single nuclear weapon."

http://www.upi.com/Emerging_Threats/2008/07/07/Analysis_Will_terrorists_go_nuclear/UPI-21581215440567/

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New York Times
July 8, 2008

India's Nuclear Pact With U.S. Near Completion

By Somini Sengupta

NEW DELHI — India's prime minister went to the Group of 8 summit meeting in Japan on Monday with his government intact and enough political strength to complete a landmark nuclear agreement with the United States, ending months of speculation that either his government or the agreement, on which he has staked his reputation, would collapse.

The prime minister, Manmohan Singh, told reporters traveling with him to the summit meeting that his administration would “soon” complete an agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, though he did not offer a date, his spokesman, Sanjaya Baru, said here. Mr. Baru added that the text of an agreement was near completion, and that India could swiftly finish it and go on to secure approval from the 45 member nations of the Nuclear Suppliers Group. Only after those two steps have been completed can the United States Congress vote on the final agreement.

A Congressional delegation came here last week to urge India to hurry it along, so that Congress could vote on the deal in early September.

The nuclear agreement would allow India access to nuclear fuel and technology on the world market.

Mr. Singh’s comments on Monday were the first in many months to sound a note of political confidence. His Congress Party-led coalition government has been beleaguered by a difficult political choice: going through with the nuclear deal would mean losing the vital support of its Communist allies and in turn its majority in Parliament. The Communists have resolutely opposed the nuclear deal, on the ground that it would fortify strategic ties with the United States.

Saving the deal required a political gamble. Late last week, Mr. Singh’s administration secured the support of an old rival, a north Indian faction called the Samajwadi Party, and in so doing, seems to have preserved its majority in Parliament and deferred early elections, which it can hardly afford at a time of rising food and fuel prices and growing public disaffection.

“He said the government is not afraid to face the Parliament, we have the numbers,” Mr. Baru quoted the prime minister as saying, adding that Mr. Singh continued to hope that the Communists would “see reason” and lend their support to the deal.

That is unlikely. The Communist parties are expected to withdraw their backing of the government in the coming days.

Mr. Singh’s successful maneuver on the nuclear agreement does not diminish the government’s other problems. It continues to be buffeted by economic woes, along with a range of political fires across the country.

A Congress Party-led government collapsed on Monday in the northern state of Jammu and Kashmir. The crisis in that Muslim-majority state had nothing to do with the nuclear agreement. It stemmed instead from a bitter dispute over using government land for temporary camps for Hindu pilgrims. But it signaled a setback for the Congress Party, which now governs only 9 of India’s 28 states, and ushered in the election season in earnest.

Analysts said that the bargaining over the nuclear agreement may cost the Congress Party the next national election, and that it had already weakened the administration and the prime minister’s personal credibility.

“Hanging back on the deal has cost it its aura of authority, and has damaged the standing of the P.M.,” said Salman Haidar, a retired Indian diplomat. “It’s legacy time for him: no other way of restoring his position than to push for the deal, even at this stage.”

Hari Kumar contributed reporting.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/08/world/asia/08india.html?scp=1&sq=Indian%20Premier%20Expresses%20New%20Hope%20For%20Completion%20Of%20Nuclear%20Pact%20With%20U.S.&st=cse>

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Christian Science Monitor

July 8, 2008

Pg. 1

A U.S. Attack On Iran? Not Coming Soon

Tehran has softened its tone, but tough decisions await the next US president.

By Peter Grier, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON - A preemptive US attack on Iranian nuclear facilities may be unlikely anytime soon. But that does not mean it is off the table forever. And Israel – worried about the possibility of a hostile, nuclear-armed regional neighbor – may have its own timetable for possible military action.

That is the bottom-line conclusion of a number of US-based experts who have talked in recent days about the possibility of any preemptive strike on Iran intended to halt its uranium enrichment program.

US-Iranian relations may well be one of the two or three toughest foreign-policy problems the next American president will have to handle. That leader will have to decide, for example, whether the issue is important enough that the US should make further concessions to Russia to ensure greater cooperation in the struggle to control possible Iranian nuclear proliferation.

And the next president will have to decide on an overall tone with which to approach an Iranian government that of late has sounded more temperate.

"Right now, the Iranians feel they have the upper hand. They're just getting smarter about their rhetoric," says George Perkovich, a nuclear-proliferation expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington. Since the end of June, Iran has been talking in a less bellicose manner about its nuclear program. Talks are "in a new environment, with a new ... perspective," said Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki in a July 6 interview broadcast on CNN.

Meanwhile, the European Union official who is acting as lead negotiator on the nuclear issue with the Iranians reacted guardedly on July 7 to a new letter from Tehran.

The Iranian letter, which EU foreign-policy chief Javier Solana said he received late on July 4, was a response to an international offer of incentives meant to persuade Iran to halt its uranium enrichment program.

The contents of Iran's letter have not been made public. Mr. Solana called it difficult and complicated, and he said it did not make him "completely optimistic."

Solana said it was "not impossible" that he would soon meet with Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Saeed Jalili, but would not confirm any dates.

"I hope that we can continue the dialogue [with Iran] in the coming weeks, before the end of the month if possible, but I don't want to give you completely optimistic impressions," the EU foreign-policy chief said.

This change of tone came after weeks in which the US and Iran traded threats and warnings over possible American or Israeli military action.

In particular, an Israeli military exercise last month was widely seen as a warning to Tehran.

But that exercise may also have been intended to send a message to the US, noted Kenneth Pollack, a Middle East expert at the Brookings Institution, at a June 26 seminar on US policy toward Iran.

"They are trying to signal that they are really concerned about what is going on here. And [the US and other nations] don't want to let this go too far down the road," he said at a Center for Strategic and International Studies seminar on June 26.

The likelihood of Israel bombing Iranian nuclear enrichment facilities is not zero, but it is not as high as many experts seem to think, Mr. Pollack said at the CSIS seminar.

That is because Israel knows that it may face retaliation from Iranian allies in Lebanon and Gaza.

"The Israelis are very nervous that if they do it, what happens is actually that Hezbollah and Hamas are told [by Iran], 'We gave you guys 15,000 rockets for a reason. Use them,' " Pollack said.

Meanwhile, talk of force, either overtly or through hints and nods, may be counterproductive, according to Jon Alterman, director of the CSIS Middle East program.

"The more we talk about force, I think the less likely you are to get Gulf ally cooperation.... They are terrified," Mr. Alterman said at the CSIS event.

Elizabeth Cheney, former principal deputy assistant secretary of State for Near Eastern affairs, took issue with this position, saying that it is essential that the Iranians believe the US will use force if necessary.

Statements from those in power saying that force is off the table are counterproductive, Ms. Cheney said.

"Whenever you've got statements like that, in my view it actually makes the potential of having to use force greater because people will think, 'Well, the Americans aren't serious about using force,'" she said.

The key way for US officials to look at the issue may be to decide their bottom line as to whether they could live with a nuclear-armed Iran.

If they decide they can't live with an Iran that has a nuclear arsenal, what they are really saying is that they are willing to invade Iran to prevent that from occurring, Pollack said.

"And I don't think that the American public is ready to invade Iran to prevent it from having a nuclear weapon," he said at the CSIS seminar.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0708/p01s05-usfp.html>

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Washington Times

July 8, 2008

Pg. 11

Poland Tries To Save U.S. Missile-Defense Deal

Long-term arrangement sought; Rice to sign Czech accord

By Nicholas Kralev, The Washington Times

PRAGUE -- Poland urgently sent its chief diplomat to Washington on Monday for talks with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to salvage an elusive missile-defense deal, just hours before she flew to Prague to sign a similar agreement with the Czech Republic.

Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski also planned to discuss the latest U.S. proposal for basing 10 interceptors in Poland - which his government rejected Friday - with the presumptive Democratic and Republican presidential candidates, Sens. Barack Obama and John McCain, respectively.

"Poland presented a new variant of what stationing Patriot batteries in Poland could look like," Mr. Sikorski said after his meeting with Miss Rice, referring to the short- and medium-range U.S. anti-missile systems that Warsaw seeks to modernize its air defenses.

In its proposal, on which tentative agreement was reached last week, the Bush administration offered to station Patriot batteries on Polish soil for a year. In exchange, Poland would host the interceptors as part of a defense shield aimed at countering a missile attack from Iran.

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, however, said his government looks for a more permanent arrangement involving the Patriots. Warsaw is trying to negotiate a package worth billions of dollars in U.S. investment. Both Mr. Sikorski and State Department spokesman Sean McCormack indicated that no breakthrough was reached Monday, saying the negotiations will continue.

"We did not conclude them in time for the beginning of the secretary's travel, but that does not mean we are not going to keep working on it," Mr. McCormack said, leaving the door open to a stop in Warsaw should the situation change.

A spokesman for Mr. Sikorski, Piotr Paszkowski, was more optimistic, saying, "We are preparing for the visit as if it were to take place."

Miss Rice is scheduled to sign an agreement Tuesday to base a tracking radar, another key part of the \$3.5 billion system, in the Czech Republic. The accord, opposed by many Czechs, faces a tough ratification process in Parliament.

Even if the Czech deal receives that final approval, many analysts - and apparently the Polish government - are looking beyond the Bush administration and focusing on what Mr. Obama or Mr. McCain might do.

"While negotiations [with Poland] are 'ongoing,' I think it's clear that the decision will ultimately fall to the next administration," said Julianne Smith, Europe Program director at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Baker Spring, national security fellow at the Heritage Foundation, said that if a deal on the interceptors is not reached by the end of the summer, "it is unlikely that the administration will be able to conclude a deal before President Bush leaves office."

Mr. Sikorski's attempt to determine what Mr. McCain's and Mr. Obama's plans for the shield might be is understandable given the significant commitment Poland would be making, Mr. Spring said.

Mr. McCain supports the program, but Mr. Obama does not.

"I will cut investments in unproven missile-defense systems. I will not weaponize space," Mr. Obama said last year. Critics of the system say that there is no proof it works and that the Iran threat is too distant. The Pentagon's Missile Defense Agency estimates that Iran could develop a long-range missile capable of striking the United States by 2015. "I don't believe it is within the power of either McCain or Obama to promise anything, and it would be premature to do so, since the system doesn't work," said Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association. Last week, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said former Soviet republic Lithuania is a "good alternative" to Poland as a site for the interceptors. Both countries are members of NATO, which formally endorsed the missile-defense project in April.

Russia has said the shield would pose a direct threat to its territory, an assertion the United States has repeatedly denied. Moscow, which rejected Washington's proposal to cooperate, has threatened Poland and the Czech Republic with pointing Russian missiles at them if they agree to host the U.S. bases.

<http://www.washtimes.com/news/2008/jul/08/poland-tries-to-save-us-missile-defense-deal/>

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New York Times

July 9, 2008

Pg. 6

U.S. And Czechs Sign Accord On Missile Shield

By Judy Dempsey and Dan Bilefsky

BERLIN — The United States and the Czech Republic signed a landmark accord on Tuesday to allow the Pentagon to deploy part of its widely debated antiballistic missile shield on territory once occupied by Soviet troops.

The accord, the first of its kind to be reached with a Central or East European country, was signed in Prague by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and her Czech counterpart, Karel Schwarzenberg, despite strong opposition from Russia. It also needs to be ratified by Czech lawmakers, many of whom oppose it.

Russia warned on Tuesday that the accord could lead to a military response, which the Kremlin had previously threatened but never specified.

President Dmitri A. Medvedev and his predecessor, Vladimir V. Putin, who is now the Russian prime minister, have told the United States that the Kremlin sees a missile shield in this part of Europe as a threat to Russian security. Mr. Putin has said it could even lead to a new cold war.

But American and Czech officials said the system's radar component, to be stationed south of Prague, would defend the NATO members in Europe and the United States against long-range weapons from the Middle East, particularly Iran.

"Ballistic missile proliferation is not an imaginary threat," Ms. Rice said Tuesday after meeting with the Czech prime minister, Mirek Topolaneck. She said Iran continued to work toward a nuclear bomb, along with long-range missiles that could carry a warhead.

Ms. Rice is on a European tour that includes Bulgaria and Georgia, but not Poland. The United States hopes to base 10 interceptor missiles there, but the governments in Warsaw and Washington have so far failed to reach agreement on the terms.

Unlike the Czech Republic's government, the Polish center-right government led by Donald Tusk has taken a tough negotiating stance. In return for hosting the interceptors, Poland has asked the United States to modernize Polish air defenses so that the country can defend itself against incoming short-range and medium-range missiles.

The accord with the Czech Republic is not without its problems.

The deal signed on Tuesday does not ensure that the radar system will be built immediately or that the next American administration will stick to the project.

Negotiations are still taking place on a second treaty, to deal with the legal status of American troops to be deployed at the planned radar base. Both treaties require ratification by Czech legislators, many of whom are skeptical about the project, while the public is largely opposed.

Mr. Topolaneck's coalition government does not have enough seats to assure support for the plans and may need opposition votes. Legislators from the Green Party, the government's junior coalition partner, have indicated they may block the proposals, and opposition parties have demanded a national referendum. About two-thirds of Czechs oppose the radar deployment, according to opinion polls.

"Ratification will be difficult," said Jiri Schneider, program director at the Prague Security Studies Institute. "The missile defense plan has sparked a national debate about how exposed we want to be on the international stage."

Czech political analysts said that, for the older generation, the missile defense plans had tapped into a deep suspicion of security alliances that stretched back across the past century.

For the younger generation, opposition to the missile plan has become a way to express discontent with American policies, including the war in Iraq.

Judy Dempsey reported from Berlin, and Dan Bilefsky from Paris.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/09/world/europe/09shield.html?ref=world>

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Christian Science Monitor

July 9, 2008

Pg. 3

Top Task For Air Force: Rebuild Credibility

New leaders must better secure nuclear weapons after snafus led to firing of their predecessors.

By Gordon Lubold, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

Washington -- The US Air Force has developed a cultural indifference toward the proper care and handling of nuclear weapons, and analysts say the two men slated to take over the top civilian and uniformed positions will have to make fundamental changes to restore its credibility in the nuclear realm.

When Defense Secretary Robert Gates announced last month that he would replace Air Force Secretary Michael Wynne and the chief of staff, Gen. Michael Moseley, Mr. Gates cited their failure to properly safeguard nuclear weapons.

But whatever failures are attributed to Mr. Wynne or General Moseley, analysts say the firings capped more than a decade of negligence by the US military and the Air Force in protecting the American nuclear arsenal.

"It doesn't receive the kind of attention that it did 20 years ago," says Chris Hellman, a policy fellow at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, a policy group in Washington. "[Missile silo] duty in Minot, N.D., if it ever had a sexy aspect, doesn't have it any longer."

The new Air Force leadership – Michael Donley and Gen. Norton Schwartz, neither confirmed by Congress yet – must lead an Air Force stumbling through a gantlet of woes, from improper contract management to criticism that the service, while requesting billions of dollars more for new air platforms, is not relevant in today's ground wars. But the most pressing concern will be reversing the erosion of nuclear stewardship that allowed it to become seen as a peripheral tasking.

Gates took the unprecedented action against the two after two highly publicized incidents called their leadership into question: the accidental shipment of nuclear missile nose cone fuses, instead of helicopter batteries, to Taiwan, and a separate incident in which a B-52 bomber flew from Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota to Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana mistakenly armed with nuclear cruise missiles.

That occurred after ground crew pulled missiles from the wrong area of a storage facility that housed both conventional and nuclear weapons.

A number of investigations have looked at the issues. Gates cited numerous deficiencies in a report he had directed done by a Navy admiral; Gates also appointed former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger to lead a task force that will recommend improvements "necessary to ensure that the highest levels of accountability and control are maintained" in nuclear stewardship that will provide an initial assessment in coming weeks.

Mr. Donley, who is serving as acting Air Force Secretary for now, has created a task force to implement new recommendations from the Schlesinger group and to oversee other changes, an Air Force official says.

And last week, the Air Force released an internal investigation that showed major improvements must be made to its nuclear weapon sites in Europe, where weak security and poorly trained personnel threaten the integrity of some of the most dangerous weapons in the world.

The two services primarily responsible for the care and handling of nuclear weapons are the Air Force and the Navy, with the latter overseeing the crown jewel of American nuclear capability in submarine-based missiles. In contrast to the Air Force, the "nuclear Navy" lives by a code of "rigorous self-assessment" that prevents many problems, says a Navy official.

But regardless of what the Air Force and Pentagon do to address the problems, the US runs the risk of losing focus again as nuclear weapons become less and less relevant, says one analyst.

"Notwithstanding the best efforts of the Air Force, over time, you wouldn't be surprised to see that things sag again, simply because it has become an area of endeavor that the US military knows this is not where the future is," says Philip Coyle III, a senior adviser at the Center for Defense Information in Washington.

Such sentiments may drive a broader debate on the role nuclear weapons should play in the American military's arsenal.

Baker Spring, a research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, says the atrophy of the US nuclear arsenal began under President Clinton as part of the effort to make such weapons irrelevant. Now without that focus, the US has begun to lose a generation of nuclear know-how.

"The people who are most intimately familiar with building these weapons in terms of the demographics are reaching retirement age," he says. "New, smart people are not being drawn into that line of work." Mr. Spring calls for a new assessment of what nuclear capabilities are needed.

Meanwhile, Donley recently told airmen at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., that the Air Force's credibility has been "tarnished" and that the service needs to develop a "road map for the nuclear enterprise" to put the service back on track. "There is no quicker route to recovery than the power of tens of thousands of airmen and civilians rededicating themselves to the high standards of excellence that have always been the hallmark of the world's best Air Force," he said.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0709/p03s07-usmi.html>

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Washington Post

July 9, 2008

Pg. 10

China Says N. Korea Talks To Resume This Week

Six-Party Negotiations to Focus on Verification of Recent Nuclear Declaration

By Edward Cody, Washington Post Foreign Service

BEIJING, July 8 -- After a nine-month stall, China announced Tuesday that formal negotiations will resume this week on dismantling North Korea's nuclear weapons program, including ways to verify its recent accounting of plutonium-based nuclear material.

The talks, which the Chinese Foreign Ministry said will begin Thursday in Beijing and last three days, mark the latest attempt to maintain momentum in the start-and-stop six-party negotiations aimed at persuading North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons and the means to produce them.

The talks, which have been underway for nearly five years under Chinese sponsorship, reached a milestone June 26 with a declaration by North Korea outlining its plutonium-based nuclear program, along with private acknowledgment of U.S. concerns about what may be a separate uranium-enrichment program and provision of nuclear assistance to Syria. In return, the Bush administration said it would drop North Korea from its list of state sponsors of terrorism and abolish some trade restrictions against the isolated Stalinist state.

Qin Gang, a Foreign Ministry spokesman, qualified the exchange as "important progress" in the six-party process. The next step, U.S. officials said, is working out a schedule to verify North Korea's assertion that it has only 37 kilograms of plutonium and has destroyed the means to make more, including a cooling tower that was dynamited last month at the Yongbyon reactor near Pyongyang. Ultimately, according to past six-party accords, the goal is to have North Korea disclose and destroy its entire nuclear program, including whatever weapons may already have been produced.

North Korea pledged last October to do so. But it has balked in carrying out that pledge, saying fuel and other economic aid have failed to arrive as promised and refusing to discuss U.S. suspicions of the separate uranium-enrichment program. The announcement Tuesday left unclear when negotiators would approach that issue or seek answers about any stockpiled nuclear weapons and the ballistic missiles able to deliver them.

Accepting the partial June 26 declaration and taking the reciprocal steps without insisting on a complete report marked a significant concession from the Bush administration, drawing criticism in Washington. But Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill, the main U.S. negotiator, said that shutting down the Yongbyon reactor and ending North Korea's plutonium-based nuclear development was already a major accomplishment.

Responding to the critics, Hill pledged to keep pushing on the uranium-enrichment doubts, the degree of North Korean help to Syria and a complete disclosure of North Korea's weapons production. But North Korea announced recently that it would not move further until more of the 1 million tons of fuel promised in October lands in North Korean ports and the trade benefits set in motion by President Bush on June 26 start to bear fruit.

Delegates from the six nations resuming talks Thursday -- North and South Korea, Japan, Russia, China and the United States -- were expected to approve a long list of technical verification steps, including inspections and interviews with North Korean scientists, that are likely to take weeks if not months to complete.

President Lee Myung-bak of South Korea said in an interview released Tuesday by his office that the process will take time because it is complicated and requires complete cooperation from the North Korean government. But what Pyongyang has revealed so far, he added, is insufficient because it does not disclose the full extent of the weapons program.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/08/AR2008070800671.html>

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Yahoo! News
July 9, 2008

Iran test-fires missiles in Persian Gulf

By ALI AKBAR DAREINI, Associated Press Writer

Iran test-fired nine long- and medium-range missiles Wednesday during war games that officials said aimed to show the country can retaliate against any U.S. or Israeli attack, state television reported.

Oil prices jumped on news of the missile tests, rising US\$1.44 to US\$137.48 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

The military exercise was being conducted at the Strait of Hormuz, a strategic waterway at the mouth of the Persian Gulf through which about 40 percent of the world's oil passes. Iran has threatened to shut down traffic in the strait if attacked. It was not clear, however, whether the missile test also took place near the strait.

Gen. Hossein Salami, the air force commander of Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards, said the exercise would "demonstrate our resolve and might against enemies who in recent weeks have threatened Iran with harsh language," the TV report said.

Footage showed at least six missiles firing simultaneously, and said the barrage included a new version of the Shahab-3 missile, which officials have said has a range of 1,250 miles (2,000 kilometers) and is armed with a 1-ton conventional warhead. The television report did not specify where the launch took place.

That would put Israel, Turkey, the Arabian peninsula, Afghanistan and Pakistan within striking distance.

"Our hands are always on the trigger and our missiles are ready for launch," the official IRNA news agency quoted Salami as saying Wednesday.

The report comes less than a day after Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad dismissed fears that Israel and the United States could be preparing to attack his country, calling the possibility a "funny joke."

"I assure you that there won't be any war in the future," Ahmadinejad told a news conference Tuesday during a visit to Malaysia for a summit of developing Muslim nations.

But even as Ahmadinejad and other Iranian officials have dismissed the possibility of attack, Tehran has stepped up its warnings of retaliation if the Americans — or Israelis — do launch military action, including threats to hit Israel and U.S. Gulf bases with missiles and stop oil traffic from the Gulf.

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called Wednesday's tests "evidence that the missile threat is not an imaginary one."

"Those who say that there is no Iranian missile threat against which we should build a missile defense system perhaps ought to talk to the Iranians about their claims," Rice said while traveling in Sofia, Bulgaria.

On Tuesday, Rice and Czech counterpart Karel Schwarzenberg signed a deal allowing the U.S. to base a missile defense shield in the Czech Republic.

A White House spokesman called the tests "completely inconsistent with Iran's obligations to the world."

"The Iranian regime only furthers the isolation of the Iranian people from the international community when it engages in this sort of activity," said Gordon Johndroe, spokesman for the National Security Council.

"They should also refrain from further missile tests if they truly seek to gain the trust of the world," he added, speaking from Japan where President Bush is attending the Group of Eight summit.

Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama said that Iran's missile tests highlight the need for direct diplomacy as well as tougher threats of economic sanctions and strong incentives to persuade Tehran to change its behavior.

John McCain, the Republican seeking the presidency, said the tests demonstrate a need for effective missile defense, including missile defense in Europe and the defense system the U.S. plans with the Czech Republic and Poland.

In late June, Vice Adm. Kevin Cosgriff, who was then the commander of the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet, said any attempt by Iran to seal off the Strait of Hormuz would be viewed as an act of war. The U.S. 5th Fleet is based in Bahrain, across the Gulf from Iran.

Israel's military sent warplanes over the eastern Mediterranean for a large military exercise in June that U.S. officials described as a possible rehearsal for a strike on Iran's nuclear facilities, which the West fears are aimed at producing atomic weapons.

Iran says its nuclear program is geared only toward generating electricity, not weapons.

The Israeli exercise was widely interpreted as a show of force as well as a practice on skills needed to execute a long-range strike mission.

Shaul Mofaz, an Israeli Cabinet minister, set off an international uproar last month by saying in a published interview that Israel would have "no choice" but to attack Iran if it doesn't halt its nuclear program. Mofaz is a former military chief and defense minister, and has been Israel's representative in a strategic dialogue on Iran with U.S. officials.

On Wednesday, Israeli government spokesman Mark Regev said Israel "does not desire hostility and conflict with Iran."

"But it is clear that the Iranian nuclear program and the Iranian ballistic missile program is a matter of grave concern," Regev said.

The Guards and Iran's regular army routinely hold exercises two or three times a year.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080709/ap_on_re_mi_ea/iran_missiles;_ylt=AukX0MJ5VChUSPGGe3Z0wP0VvaA8F

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