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

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Forbes.com
Associated Press

Mixed Results on Destroying Russian WMDs

By DOUGLAS BIRCH 08.28.07, 2:09 PM ET

MOSCOW -

Sen. Richard Lugar and former Sen. Sam Nunn are in Russia this week to celebrate the United States' 15-year effort to help Russia destroy or lock up its vast arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. But along with the program's successes, there have been notable setbacks.

Under the Cooperative Threat Reduction program authored by Nunn and Lugar, former Soviet nations have deactivated 6,982 nuclear warheads, destroyed 653 intercontinental ballistic missiles and chopped up 30 nuclear submarines.

But according to General Accounting Office reports and Defense Department officials, several CTR projects in Russia have been marked by regulatory headaches, unexpected costs and sometimes outright failures - at a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars.

Lugar, R-Ind., told The Associated Press on Tuesday that, given the level of mutual mistrust in the wake of the Cold War, it was remarkable the two former enemies had achieved so much.

The program was established at a time when Russia was weak, and the vulnerability of its nuclear, chemical and biological arsenals were "an emergency for the world," he said.

Today, Russia is economically strong, politically stable - and increasingly determined to challenge the United States on diplomatic and military issues. Despite heightened tensions, Lugar said, he believes the disarmament program remains the bedrock of U.S.-Russian relations.

As part of their trip, Nunn and Lugar are to visit a sprawling facility for destroying shells filled with lethal nerve agents near the Siberian city of Shchuchye. The project, which has cost the U.S. more than \$1 billion - more than any other single Nunn-Lugar effort in Russia - is a quarter of a billion dollars over budget and at least two years behind schedule.

Lugar aide Kenneth A. Myers III said the facility was built to destroy 2 million artillery shells filled with the poisons now being stored in Shchuchye like wine bottles on wooden racks. Each round is capable of killing enough people to fill a stadium and might easily be smuggled out of Russia, he said.

But construction of the facility has been delayed by disagreements over its design, problems with local contractors, and regulatory concerns, according to a 2006 GAO report.

In November 2005, the Russian Federal Service for Ecological, Technical and Nuclear Oversight inspected Shchuchye and found violations of environmental, industrial safety, licensing and environmental regulations, interrupting work. The GAO said the U.S. had to hire Russian consultants to negotiate the regulatory process.

At another point, Russia demanded construction of a \$12 million lab the U.S. believed wasn't needed, the GAO said. Moscow also issued U.S. contractors visas good for only six months, requiring them to leave the country frequently to renew their visas - at an added cost to the project of about \$3 million, the GAO said.

One of the main Russian contractors on the project said in 2005 it could no longer pay its workers after it discovered an executive had embezzled millions of dollars, the GAO reported.

The U.S. general contractor, Parsons Global Services, sought bids from other companies to complete the work, the GAO said. But Russian authorities insisted only a handful of contractors were qualified. Parsons estimated the work should cost \$56 million, but in one round of bidding, the Pentagon received a single bid of \$310 million. Two other rounds failed to yield a contract.

Last winter, the U.S. gave Russian officials authority to seek their own bids for the work - with the stipulation that only \$200 million was left of the \$1 billion the U.S. had pledged for the project. Work resumed on the project about three months ago. Officials on Monday could not immediately say how much the contract eventually cost.

The cost of Russia's overall chemical weapons destruction program was estimated last year at more than \$5.6 billion, with the United States, Canada, Britain and other nations contributing \$2 billion of that figure. Russia, meanwhile, had contributed about \$400 million as of 2006, the GAO reported.

Shchuchye is one of seven planned Russian chemical weapons destruction facilities. Only two of those facilities are now operating, according to the GAO, two are under construction, and three haven't broken ground.

The GAO last year concluded that Russia "will likely fail" to destroy its chemical weapons stockpile by 2012, as required under the Chemical Weapons Convention treaty, which outlawed chemical weapons. But the Russian government insists that it will meet the deadline.

Viktor Kholstov, deputy head of the Federal Industry Agency, last week scolded the United States and other signatories of the Chemical Weapons Convention, saying Russia's foreign partners had "failed to meet their commitments to Russia in chemical weapons destruction." He said slow payments by foreign donors had "complicated the implementation" of the program, although he did not say it was behind schedule.

Shchuchye is not the only Nunn-Lugar project to face setbacks.

_ According to the GAO, the U.S. spent 10 years and \$95 million planning and building a facility for burning heptyl, a military rocket fuel. But as the facility was completed, Moscow said that it had already used or planned to use the fuel for its commercial space program. The destruction facility was never used.

_ The Pentagon spent 10 years and \$100 million preparing to build a factory for disposing of solid rocket motors, the GAO said. But local officials refused to grant title to the property where it was to be built, citing environmental concerns. The facility was never completed.

_ The Mayak nuclear material storage facility was completed in 2003 at a cost to the United States of \$335 million. The GAO said American officials were barred from observing the loading of fissile materials there.

That lack of access, the report said, meant the U.S. had "no reasonable assurance that Russia will only use the facility to store materials from dismantled nuclear weapons and not re-use the materials."

<http://www.forbes.com/feeds/ap/2007/08/28/ap4061421.html>

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Victories Come Slowly In Cleanup Of Soviet Bloc Nuclear Materials

By David E. Hoffman, Washington Post Foreign Service

PODOLSK, Russia, Aug. 29 -- Heavily guarded trucks rolled up to the Luch nuclear institute here on Tuesday night and unloaded five green reinforced containers holding a total of 21 pounds of uranium, about a third of it highly enriched, which had been quietly removed from a research reactor in Otwock, Poland.

The uranium shipment was the latest, small step in an ambitious but incomplete effort to clean up nuclear materials left strewn across the former Soviet bloc and beyond in the aftermath of the Cold War.

On Wednesday, as workers prepared to open the casks from Poland, Sen. Richard G. Lugar (R-Ind.) and former senator Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) got a firsthand look on a visit to Luch at the struggle to locate the fissile material and keep it from falling into the wrong hands, a program that they created more than 15 years ago and now faces new challenges.

The uranium inside the containers will be blended down to lower levels of enrichment so it potentially can be used as fuel for nuclear power plants.

The Poland operation, carried out in secret, cost the United States about \$490,000 under an Energy Department program that has, overall, converted more than 9.2 metric tons of highly enriched uranium to lower levels at Luch and another site.

Lugar, ranking Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said, "People around the world would be reassured if they saw what we saw today." But the amounts shipped from Poland are tiny compared with what officials say are hundreds of tons of uranium and plutonium still in storage and in weapons in Russia.

By some estimates there was as much as 1,200 tons of highly enriched uranium and plutonium in the Soviet Union when it collapsed in 1991. The United States made a 20-year deal in 1993 to buy 500 tons of highly enriched uranium and blend it down into fuel for nuclear power plants. Yet, hundreds of tons are still scattered across Russia. The Luch facility was the scene of one of the first post-Soviet uranium thefts. Between late May and September of 1992, chemical engineer and longtime employee Leonid Smirnov stole approximately 1.5 kilograms (3.3 pounds) of weapons-grade uranium, accumulating it in some 20 to 25 diversions -- taking the powder home in glass jars and storing it on his balcony, according to congressional testimony in 1996. He was arrested at the Podolsk train station on Oct. 9, 1992, with most of the uranium in three lead cylinders. He was planning to travel to Moscow to sell it but apparently had no ready buyers.

Back then, the facility, which worked on a project to build a space-based nuclear reactor, was surrounded only by wooden fences and protected by little security. Nuclear materials were spread across 28 locations on the compound. Valentin Deniskin, deputy director, said that in Soviet times, "no one thought it was even fathomable" that someone would steal fissile materials.

But the chaos that followed the Soviet collapse spurred Nunn and Lugar to push for the legislation, fearing that Russia, with chronic financial troubles, would be unable and unwilling to secure the materials and might become an inviting target for terrorists. Russia's economic troubles were so severe that guards around nuclear facilities were paid late, if at all.

Over the last decade and a half, the United States has invested about \$15 billion in Nunn-Lugar and related programs aimed at securing the Cold War weapons.

Now, however, Russia is no longer a basket case. Customs officials have been quoted as estimating that the country's oil export duty revenue this year will be \$48.7 billion. The country has salted away colossal budget and currency reserves.

The director of the Russian Federal Atomic Energy Agency, Sergei Kiriyyenko, told reporters that the Nunn-Lugar programs "cannot stop now" but that Russia must pay more of the costs.

David Huizenga, assistant deputy administrator of the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration, said Congress had ordered that the financial burden of the programs be shifted to Russia by 2012.

At the same time, nuclear smuggling, theft or diversion remains a worrisome prospect for U.S. officials. "We know, unfortunately, that stuff is still moving," Huizenga said.

The origin of radioactive polonium-210 that was used in London last year to kill a critic of Russian President Vladimir Putin has not been identified, but the episode gave fresh reminder that fears about smuggling have not abated even as billions of dollars have been spent to prevent it.

Later Wednesday, Nunn and Lugar witnessed the burn-off of a solid-fuel second-stage engine from an SS-25 intercontinental ballistic missile at a site northeast of Moscow. The burn is part of Russia's effort to destroy the missiles in keeping with the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.

Along with U.S. Ambassador William J. Burns, Nunn and Lugar were invited to press a large red button on a boxy panel in a control room to start the burn. They then watched on closed-circuit television as the engine roared for two minutes 15 seconds.

Nunn, co-chairman of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a public charity group, and a former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said it was "astounding" how far Russia and the United States have come since the end of the Cold War. He noted that much of the highly enriched uranium taken from Russian warheads is being blended down for use to power U.S. civilian nuclear power reactors.

So far, the Nunn-Lugar program has led to the deactivation of 6,982 strategic nuclear warheads, the destruction of 653 intercontinental ballistic missiles and elimination of 30 nuclear submarines and 155 bombers, among others, according to a statement from Lugar.

The program has also paid for security improvements such as \$25 million to upgrade buildings at Luch. The 28 locations of nuclear material have been reduced to five.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/08/29/AR2007082902382.html>

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YAHOO! News

IAEA: Iranian cooperation significant

By GEORGE JAHN, Associated Press Writer

Thu Aug 30, 11:43 AM ET

VIENNA, Austria - The U.N. nuclear agency said Thursday that Iran was producing less nuclear fuel than expected and praised Tehran for "a significant step forward" in explaining past atomic actions that have raised suspicions.

The assessment is expected to make it more difficult for the United States to rally support for a new round of sanctions against Tehran.

At the same time, the report confirmed that Iran continued to expand its uranium enrichment program, reflecting the Islamic republic's defiance of the U.N. Security Council. Still, U.N. officials said, both enrichment and the building of a plutonium-producing reactor was continuing more slowly than expected.

Iran promptly touted the report as supporting Iran's stand that the U.S.-led calls for a third round of U.N. Security Council sanctions on Iran over its refusal to halt uranium enrichment were unjustified.

International Atomic Energy Agency Deputy Director General Olli Heinonen, who brokered the cooperation deal with Iran, highlighted the importance of the agreement, noting that Tehran's past refusal to answer the IAEA's questions triggered Security Council sanctions in the first place.

But he cautioned that Iran still needed to fully implement its commitments.

"The key is that Iran ... provides the information that we need" in a time frame that results in clarity about Iran's past suspicious activities by year's end, he told reporters.

The United States played down the reports of progress.

"There is no partial credit here," State Department spokesman Tom Casey said when asked if the report changed U.S. plans for tough U.N. action.

"I don't see anything, at this point, in this report, that changes the basic facts. ... Iran has refused to comply with its international obligations, and, as a result of that, the international community is going to continue to ratchet up the pressure," he added.

U.S. officials said Iran's pursuit of uranium enrichment is an indication it is trying to produce nuclear weapons.

"If Iran's leaders truly want to close the nuclear file, they would ... suspend activities that are not necessary for civil purposes but are necessary for building bombs," Gregory L. Schulte, America's chief IAEA delegate, told The Associated Press.

France, a close U.S. ally on Iran, said cooperation by Tehran was not enough to eliminate the threat of new U.N. penalties.

"As long as there is not a clear ... decision from Iran about the suspension of activities linked to enrichment, we will pursue ... looking into a third sanctions resolution," French Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Pascale Andreani said in Paris.

Iran immediately praised the U.N. agency for "its professional approach toward the case."

"This report ended all the baseless U.S. accusations against Iran," Mohammad Saeedi, deputy head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, was quoted as saying by the state IRNA news agency. "Once again the agency confirmed validity of Iran's stances," he said, adding that "the U.S. had deceived the world over Iran's nuclear activities by claiming that Iran was reprocessing plutonium."

Drawn up by IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei, much of the confidential report obtained by The Associated Press focused on the already publicized action plan finalized just a few weeks ago between the agency and Iran, restating progress in some areas and time frames for Iran to respond to additional questions.

In that plan, Iran agreed to answer the final questions from agency experts by November.

If that and all other deadlines are met and Iran provides all the information sought, the agency should be able to close the file on its more than four-year investigation of Tehran's nuclear activities by year's end, a senior U.N. official said.

He and other U.N. officials — all speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment to media — declined to comment, however, on whether a clean bill that banishes suspicions about Iran's former nuclear programs and experiments would be enough to derail the threat of new U.N. sanctions.

The United States and its closest allies said more were needed because of Tehran's defiance of council demands that it mothball its uranium enrichment program and stop building a plutonium-producing reactor. Both can create the product that can serve as the fissile component of nuclear warheads.

Like the joint plan on cooperation between Iran and the agency, the report — to be considered at a meeting by the 35-nation IAEA board starting Sept. 10 — said the agency felt that information provided by Iran on past small-scale plutonium experiments had "resolved" agency concerns about the issue.

In Tehran, the official Islamic Republic News Agency cited senior nuclear official Mohammad Saeedi as saying that conclusion "ended all the baseless U.S. accusations against Iran over reprocessing plutonium."

The agency report also noted cooperation on other issues, while specifying that Tehran still needed to satisfy the agency's curiosity about its enrichment technology and traces of highly enriched uranium at a facility linked to the military.

The report also said Iran agreed to study documentation from the agency on the "Green Salt Project" — a plan that the U.S. alleges links diverse components of a nuclear weapons program including uranium enrichment, high explosives testing and a missile re-entry vehicle.

Diplomats told the AP last year that the agency was made aware of the alleged program by U.S. intelligence. One of the U.N. officials suggested the IAEA might share its confidential documents — possibly including secret U.S. information — with Iran in its investigation of the "Green Salt Project," but declined to offer details.

As expected, the report also confirmed that, while Iran continued to expand its uranium enrichment program, it was doing so much more slowly than expected, and had produced only negligible amounts of nuclear fuel that was far below the level usable for nuclear warheads.

One of the U.N. officials also noted that construction of the plutonium-producing reactor at the city of Arak had slowed in recent months.

He said that "design difficulties, getting equipment, materials and components, and fuel technology, plus perhaps some political considerations," could be causing the delay.

The allusion to "political considerations" appeared linked to reports that Iranian officials might be considering stopping construction of the Arak reactor in another sign of good will calculated to blunt the threat of new U.N. sanctions.

Citing unidentified Iranian sources, Jane's Defense Weekly earlier this week said some members of Iran's Supreme National Security Council were pushing for such a move.

That — along with the months-long slowdown in enrichment activity, plus significant Iranian readiness to cooperate with the IAEA investigation — could combine to stymie the U.S.-led push for new U.N. penalties, diplomats said.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20070830/ap_on_re_mi_ea/nuclear_iran;_ylt=AgPb_vLDzfsX.ch6gOmCuCxI2ocA

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Washington Post

August 31, 2007

Pg. 11

Soviet Stockpiles Of Chemical Arms Closer To Demise

U.S.-Funded Plant Could Open in '08

By David E. Hoffman, Washington Post Foreign Service

SHCHUCHYE, Russia, Aug. 30 -- Out of the flatlands and swamps about 100 miles from Russia's southern border, a huge gray box of concrete, brick, pipes and wires is rising, a factory that next year may begin to neutralize one of the most threatening legacies of the Cold War.

A sign identifies Works No. 1207 as a structure for the storage and liquidation of chemical weapons. But the description does not begin to tell the story of the Chemical Weapons Destruction Facility, at \$1 billion the largest

single project in the U.S. effort to clean up weapons of mass destruction left after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and also one of the most troubled.

After years of stalled plans and disputes over financing, contracting and services for residents of the area, construction of the facility is now beyond the halfway point, officials said, and it could begin to destroy chemical weapons in December 2008.

Sen. Richard G. Lugar (R-Ind.) and former senator Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), who authored the Nunn-Lugar program to secure the dangerous materials and weapons remaining in the former Soviet Union, returned here Thursday for the first time in five years to examine the project, a keystone of their larger effort.

Thirteen miles out from the facility, they drove past the source of their fears -- a storage base surrounded by wire fences and made up of wooden warehouses, some with corrugated metal roofing, which for years have stored 1.9 million artillery shells filled with deadly nerve agents.

The shells range in size from 85mm rounds to warheads for Scud missiles, including 1.2 million pieces filled with sarin, 514,000 filled with soman and 157,540 with VX, officials said. A tiny droplet of the nerve agents could be fatal to an individual, and the shells theoretically contain enough to kill millions of people.

Inside the warehouses, shells are stored on wooden racks, looking much like wine bottles in a dark cellar. Paul L. McNelly, program manager for the chemical weapons elimination program of the Pentagon's Defense Threat Reduction Agency, said the agents inside the shells are in "pristine condition."

Nunn expressed concern that the shells could be a target for terrorists. While the perimeter of the base has been reinforced, there are many shells to track and a few might be smuggled out in a suitcase. "I think it would be extremely hard to know if one was missing," he said. Noting estimates that it may take another five or 10 years to destroy the shells, Nunn added, "I don't think we have that much time."

The weapons here make up just 13 percent of Russia's overall declared chemical weapons stockpile of 40,000 tons in seven storage facilities. Under the 1997 Chemical Weapons Convention, Russia and the United States, which had the biggest Cold War arsenals, have until 2012 to destroy them.

Rogelio Pfirter, head of the Geneva-based Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, said this month that Russia had destroyed 22 percent of its weapons and that the United States had eliminated 46 percent.

In the years after the Soviet collapse in 1991, the problem of cleaning up such depots seemed urgent. Now, liquidating the weapons of the Cold War seems just as complicated as building them was in another age.

Progress at Shchuchye has been painstaking. The first agreements to neutralize the agents here were signed in 1996. But Russia's economy crashed in 1998, and improvements promised by the Russian government to schools and services around the facility were not made. The project then stalled for several years. Construction finally got underway in 2003.

When complete, the facility will be able to destroy 1,700 tons of agent a year. The warehouses here contain 5,400 tons. If the assembly lines begin working in 2008, destruction of just the shells in this one location could take until 2011, or two decades after the Soviet collapse.

When ready, the shells are to be drilled and the nerve agents drained, neutralized and mixed with bitumen, then buried in caskets on the site. The shells are to be cut up into scrap.

By some accounts, local people still feel some dissatisfaction. Green Cross International, an environmental group founded and chaired by former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, said in a report that nearby residents held a demonstration in June to demand social benefits that the government had pledged to give them.

Russia, now rich with oil revenue, has signed a new agreement in which it pledged to pay the excess if costs for the program at large exceed the U.S. budget. Other countries -- including Canada, Britain, the Czech Republic, Italy, Norway and Switzerland -- are also making contributions. The Nuclear Threat Initiative, a U.S.-based group that Nunn co-chairs, gave \$1 million to help construct a bridge for a rail line that will carry shells to the destruction facility.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/08/30/AR2007083002106.html>

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Washington Post

August 31, 2007

Pg. 9

Inspectors Find Decade-Old Iraqi Chemical Gas In U.N. Office

By Colum Lynch, Washington Post Staff Writer

UNITED NATIONS, Aug. 30 -- U.N. weapons inspectors stumbled upon evidence of Saddam Hussein's elusive weapons of mass destruction: a vial of potentially lethal chemical gas that was stored in a U.N. shipping crate in Midtown Manhattan more than 10 years ago and forgotten, U.N. officials announced Thursday.

Experts from the U.N. Monitoring and Verification Commission -- which is set to shut down its operations in the coming months-- found a small sample of phosgene, a choking agent, as they prepared to archive more than 16 years of documents on Iraq's weapons program. They said the gas, which was left by the agency's predecessor, the U.N. Special Commission, is under seal and poses no threat to the public.

"There is no immediate risk or danger," said Marie Okabe, a spokeswoman for U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon.

Okabe said that Ban reported the presence of the chemical gas to the U.N. Security Council and that the United Nations will launch an investigation to determine how the substance reached New York.

"It should never have been here in the first place, so we'd like it to be that way when the FBI takes it away," said Brian Mullady, an expert with the U.N. commission. "Since last night, when we discovered this, we've made an immediate sweep of all our archival materials to be sure that we have no more surprises, and we don't."

The FBI and the New York Police Department arrived Thursday at the commission's 48th Street office, just a block from U.N. headquarters, to examine the chemical materials before transporting them to a U.S. military laboratory in Aberdeen, Md. The FBI loaded three small containers of the materials onto a van before transferring them to a helicopter for the flight to Maryland.

The discovery provided an embarrassing coda to an unprecedented 16-year U.N. effort to find and destroy Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. "I'm sure that there are going to be a lot of red-faced people over at the U.N. trying to just figure out how [the materials] got there," said Tony Snow, the chief spokesman for the White House. Faulty intelligence suggesting that Hussein continued to produce weapons of mass destruction was used to justify the March 2003 invasion of Iraq.

The chemical gas was recovered from Hussein's Muthanna chemical weapons facility in 1996, according to Ewen Buchanan, spokesman for the U.N. commission. It remains unclear how the gas reached the agency's storage facility, where it shared space with an Iraqi Scud missile engine, Russian gyroscopes and 125 cabinets filled with sensitive information on Iraq's past weapons programs.

Buchanan said that no other organization is better equipped to deal with the situation. "We have the expertise and equipment to do this kind of work," he said.

Buchanan said U.N. experts discovered a collection of metal and glass containers with a mysterious liquid substance last Friday. But they did not find an inventory of the contents until Wednesday. It contained phosgene -- a chemical agent first used in World War I -- and other chemical samples.

"Following discovery of these items, UNMOVIC chemical weapons experts sealed the packages and placed them in a safe," the commission said. "The experts also tested the environment surrounding the packages using a portable chemical detector and found no concentration of toxic vapors."

Svetlana Utkina, a Russian weapons expert who works for the commission, said that the phosgene, if exposed, could have been deadly. "Your lungs would collapse immediately if you inhale this substance," she said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/08/30/AR2007083000978.html>

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YAHOO! News

Report faults tracking for missing parts

August 31, 2007

By JOHN HEILPRIN, Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON - Security officials for the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile sometimes had difficulty locating classified nuclear and non-nuclear components at two of three sites recently inspected by government auditors. Both sites "could not readily account for or locate some of the items included in our inventory sample," the office of the Energy Department's inspector general, Gregory Friedman, said in a summary report on classified weapons parts.

The full report was not made public because it contains classified information. It did not include inspections of parts that contain "special nuclear materials" such as plutonium or highly enriched uranium.

The one-page summary dated July 31 does not say, and Energy Department officials would not disclose Friday, when the inspections were done.

Officials in the Energy Department's National Nuclear Security Administration, which runs the weapons program, disagreed with the report's findings and characterized it as a dispute over paperwork.

The agency maintains the nation's nuclear weapons stockpile at eight sites and also operates research laboratories and a nuclear weapons assembly plant.

President Bush has ordered a reduction in the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile to between 1,700 and 2,200 by 2012, down from about 6,000 operational warheads in 2001.

NNSA spokesman John Broehm said the disagreement is over the level of paperwork required for tracking parts that fall into two different security categories.

Broehm said the agency's "accountability controls are more than enough when protecting 'non-war reserve' parts" because they are used "only for routine testing, research and development."

He characterized the IG's report as saying those parts should carry the same paperwork burden as "war reserve" parts for use in working weapons.

Some parts, such as the nuclear triggers for setting off an explosion, are always considered "war reserve" parts, even in testing.

"It would have been more helpful to us if the IG report would have looked at our controls for "war reserve" and "non-war reserve" parts separately, instead of applying the same standards for everything," Broehm said.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20070831/ap_on_go_ot/nuclear_parts:_ylt=AmwRD0zNFo9eLys2BHEb3IuyFz4D

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Washington Times

September 1, 2007

Pg. 1

U.S. Specialist Favors Putin's Missile Logic

By Rachel Kaufman

A leading U.S. technical authority on missile defense said this week that geography and topography would make Azerbaijan a better site to defend the United States and its allies from terrorist rockets than would the locations in Eastern Europe preferred by the Bush administration.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, a harsh critic of the original U.S. basing plan, has strongly pushed for the Azerbaijan site. U.S. officials cite a potential missile strike from Iran — thought to be seeking nuclear arms — as a key reason a shield is needed.

U.S. planners continue to express deep doubts about the Russian plan, but a senior Russian official said yesterday that American, Russian and Azeri specialists had agreed to meet in Baku on Sept. 15 for another round of technical talks on the issue.

The Baku meeting would discuss "the joint use of the radar and the question of anti-missile defense as a whole," Russian Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Naryshkin told Agence France-Presse on a visit to the Azerbaijan capital. U.S. and Azerbaijan officials did not confirm the Sept. 15 date, but acknowledged that expert discussions have been held.

Theodore Poston, a professor of science, technology and national security policy at MIT, said he favored NATO member Turkey as a possible location for interceptor missiles.

The most effective system to guard Europe from a terrorist missile would allow a U.S. missile-interceptor system to work with Russian radar already situated in Azerbaijan, Mr. Poston said at a Washington conference on missile defense Tuesday.

A joint system, he said, would combine the strengths of each system, and balance out their weaknesses.

Mr. Putin has argued that U.S. plans to establish a radar base in the Czech Republic to guide interceptor missiles based in Poland would directly threaten Russia's national security by neutralizing its nuclear arsenal. Bush administration officials counter that the modest system is no threat to Russia's vast nuclear stocks.

Mr. Putin expressed his anxieties at a meeting with President Bush before the June Group of Eight summit in Germany and made a surprise offer that the United States use a former Soviet base in Gabala, Azerbaijan, instead.

Lt. Gen. Henry Obering, who heads the Pentagon missile defense agency, said the Azerbaijan radar site is too close to Iran to replace the system planned for Eastern Europe.

The Russian radar could track a missile early in its flight from Iran, but would have trouble directing interceptor missiles once the missiles were launched, he said.

"It's like having a car coming at you on the [highway]," the general said in Huntsville, Ala., on Aug. 16. "By the time you see it, you wouldn't be able to react to it."

Mr. Poston said the main issue in the U.S.-Russia talks is trust.

"People don't trust us; not only the Russians, but a lot of people," he said.

Some in the Bush administration argue that Mr. Putin floated his alternative plan as a way to undercut the U.S. effort. Gen. Obering said he could not judge the "sincerity" of the Russian offer, but noted that technical talks have proceeded despite the doubts.

Mr. Poston said there is a strong geographical argument for placing a ground-based interceptor in Turkey or Azerbaijan.

An interceptor placed in either location would be closer to any potential launches — from neighboring Iran or from Central Asia — and would work well with the curvature of the Earth, he said. Missiles could be intercepted more quickly.

Mr. Poston said it would be best if Russia and the United States could work out a joint plan, but added that a ground base for the missile shield in Turkey could be perceived as a threat by the Russians.

"If the Russians could somehow be assured that that wasn't the case, my guess is they might well be happy to work with us," Mr. Poston said.

David R. Sands contributed to this article.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/article/20070901/FOREIGN/109010026/1003/foreign>

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Washington Post
September 1, 2007
Pg. 18

Americans Given Rare Access To Russian Nuclear Warehouse

Lugar, Nunn First to Visit \$309 Million Facility Paid for by U.S.

By David E. Hoffman, Washington Post Foreign Service

YEKATERINBURG, Russia, Aug. 31 -- For the first time in 3 1/2 years, Russia on Friday allowed visiting American officials to look inside the world's largest fortified warehouse for nuclear materials, a graveyard for plutonium that Russia has tried to keep closed.

The Fissile Material Storage Facility, a hulking fortress with walls 23 feet thick that are designed to withstand earthquakes and airplane crashes, was built by the United States at a cost of \$309 million at the Mayak nuclear plant at Ozersk, about 80 miles from here. Since it was finished in December 2003 and turned over to Russia, U.S. officials have been kept in the dark about what was happening inside.

Russia has balked at signing an agreement, which Congress has mandated, that would allow U.S. officials to conduct measurements of the plutonium held in special containers inside the colossal vault, larger than a football field.

"There is a disagreement over the amount of information we require and what they are prepared to give," said Sen. Richard G. Lugar (Ind.), ranking Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Lugar and former senator Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), authors of legislation to secure dangerous materials left behind by the Cold War, were permitted a rare visit to the facility Friday.

Up to 100 tons of plutonium or 400 tons of highly enriched uranium could eventually be stored in the facility, but Lugar and Nunn were told that only about a sixth of the space is being loaded with material so far. Russian officials said they would probably fill only about a quarter of it. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia has struggled to find a place for the fissile material from nuclear bombs that are being disassembled.

The warehouse was built as a kind of Fort Knox for the most dangerous nuclear materials, but U.S. officials have been puzzled about why Russia has been slow to use it and worried that the materials may be lying around elsewhere and thus be more vulnerable to theft or diversion. Officials say Russia has also been more secretive in recent years about nuclear facilities.

Lugar said he wrote to Sergei Kiriyenko, head of the Russian Federal Agency for Atomic Energy, on May 15, pushing for an agreement on transparency at the vault. The letter went unanswered, the senator said. In Moscow this week, Kiriyenko promised Lugar and Nunn that an agreement would be signed by the end of the year.

Journalists were barred from Mayak. A spokesman for the Russian atomic energy agency, Igor Konyshchev, told reporters he could not provide basic information about the status of loading the facility, saying it was a state secret. The Mayak plant also produces radioactive materials for medicine and industry, but Konyshchev said he could "not confirm or deny" that one of its products is polonium, the substance used to poison and kill a critic of President Vladimir Putin in London last year.

In Soviet times, secrecy at Mayak covered up one of the worst accidents of the nuclear age. A tank containing radioactive waste exploded in September 1957, contaminating a wide area. The tragedy and its aftermath were concealed from the public for decades by the Soviet authorities.

Nonetheless, Nunn said he believed Russian officials were taking security more seriously than in the past, when it was under the purview of the Communist Party. Now, he said, Russian officials are trying to keep nuclear and other materials from falling into the wrong hands through technical methods rather than party control. "It is a major change for the better," he said.

The city of Yekaterinburg, then known as Sverdlovsk, was the scene of a biological weapons accident in 1979, when a military facility leaked airborne anthrax, killing dozens of people. Nunn and Lugar focused on chemical and nuclear weapons during a visit to Russia this week, not biological threats, but their program has poured money into

securing bioweapons facilities. Biological weapons were outlawed by a 1972 treaty that the Soviet Union signed but later violated. (The United States abandoned biological weapons in 1969.) While much of the Soviet program has been dismantled, Russia's military biological weapons laboratories have never been opened.

"I think we have further to go with that area than any other area," Nunn said. "I think it is certainly lagging behind in terms of the kind of cooperation that is required and possible."

On a trip to Russia this week to mark the 15th anniversary of the start of the Nunn-Lugar program, both men confronted fresh examples of the slow pace of cleaning up the Cold War legacy. For example, there originally were to be two fissile material storage facilities, holding 200,000 canisters. Then one was dropped. Then Russia hit economic trouble in 1998, and the United States had to pick up the entire tab. Then the lone facility was reduced to 25,000 canisters. Now, it is not clear how many of those will actually be filled.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/08/31/AR2007083102125.html>

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New York Times
September 1, 2007

U.S. And Russia Cooperate In Destroying Arms

By C. J. Chivers

KRASNOARMEYSK, Russia, Aug. 29 — At 5:34 p.m. Wednesday on a military compound northeast of Moscow, three men sat in a room before small metal boxes adorned with red plastic buttons. Each button was connected to a cable that snaked through a hole in the wall to the forest outside.

Upon a command from Sergei Shevchenko, a senior official at the missile technologies directorate of Russia's space agency, the men pushed the buttons. Outside, from a few hundred yards away, a roar filled the air. The ground began to shake.

The buttons had ignited the solid fuel in a rocket motor that had been removed from an SS-25 intercontinental ballistic missile.

In a little more than two minutes, the missile component burned itself out, the latest piece of Soviet-era nuclear hardware to be destroyed under an American taxpayer-financed effort known as Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction.

The brainchild of Senator Richard G. Lugar, Republican of Indiana, and Sam Nunn, a Democrat who was then a senator from Georgia, the effort has grown into one of the main areas of enduring collaboration between Russia and the United States. The two countries celebrated the effort's 15th anniversary this week.

Programs under its umbrella have helped Russia and other former Soviet states to account for, secure and destroy nuclear, chemical and biological materials and the equipment related to their delivery as weapons. This has happened even though some elements have suffered delays and bureaucratic resistance, and a renewed climate of secrecy in Russia has made negotiations and access difficult at some weapons or material storage sites.

Still, nearly 7,000 nuclear warheads have been deactivated, and silos, mobile launchers, submarines and strategic bombers that were once integral to their deployment and potential use have been destroyed. In addition, the effort has helped to safeguard highly enriched uranium from research reactors and nuclear power plants, and blend it down to low enrichment — still useful for generating electricity, but not as material for a nuclear device.

In a time of fresh diplomatic disputes between the Kremlin and the White House, the nonproliferation work is a rare area where Russia and the United States still agree. "This is one of the bright spots in the relationship," said William H. Tobey, a deputy administrator at the National Nuclear Security Administration, a semiautonomous agency that coordinates the Department of Energy's nonproliferation programs.

During the second terms of Presidents Bush and Vladimir V. Putin, each country has accumulated a list of grievances against the other. Russia has criticized the United States for what it has called a unipolar approach to foreign affairs. It has complained about what it characterizes as a reckless war in Iraq, efforts to expand NATO, support for opposition movements in former Soviet countries and a plan to install a missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic.

Washington has criticized Russia for the consolidation of political power at the Kremlin, for crackdowns on dissenters and for its creeping control over the country's broadcast media, as well as the manipulation of its energy exports to pressure neighboring countries. It also worries over Russia's foreign policy, from its support of separatists in Georgia and Moldova to its arms sales to Venezuela and Iran.

The public positions have hardened to the point that the United States has publicly questioned Russia's commitment to democracy and political pluralism. Mr. Putin has suggested that the United States could be compared to the Third Reich.

But an opposite sort of posture was evident as the two countries celebrated their work together this week. The three men pushing the buttons on Wednesday were Senator Lugar, Mr. Nunn and William J. Burns, the American ambassador to Russia. Mr. Shevchenko noted that it was the first time that Americans had been allowed to be so involved.

He said that the collaboration was an example of what the countries could achieve together, and suggested that the model could be extended to research and programs combating infectious disease. "This important problem, and many other important problems, can be solved when we work together," he said.

Mr. Lugar noted the "extraordinary circumstances of history that brought us together" with the collapse of the Soviet Union and he praised Russia for its work thus far. Mr. Nunn, in a sign of the discord inside foreign policy circles surrounding some of Mr. Bush's policy choices, expressed deep skepticism about the White House's proposals for a missile defense network in Europe. He urged cooperation with Russia in developing any shield, as the Kremlin has suggested.

"I think strongly that we ought to take very seriously Putin's proposals," he said.

Mr. Nunn is now a co-chairman of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a private organization that augments government nonproliferation efforts by underwriting complementary programs.

Several participants said that the Nunn-Lugar programs would probably be renegotiated and continue into the future, but suggested that Russia, a former pauper state that has paid down debts and built up large cash reserves as oil and gas prices have surged during Mr. Putin's terms, would be asked to pay for a larger share of the work.

The participants also noted that cases of nuclear smuggling continued, as recently as last year, when a Russian crossed into Georgia with a small amount of highly enriched uranium 235 — radioactive contraband that apparently had made its way out of nuclear facilities in Russia.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/01/world/europe/01russia.html>

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New York Times
September 2, 2007
Pg. 8

North Korea Begins Talks On Forgoing Nuclear Arms

GENEVA, Sept. 1 (Reuters) — High-ranking negotiators from the United States and North Korea convened Saturday for two days of talks meant to advance an international effort to end the North's nuclear program.

Their discussions are expected to focus on how North Korea will disable and account for its nuclear facilities, as promised in an agreement reached in February.

Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill and his North Korean counterpart, Kim Kye-gwan, did not speak to reporters when they arrived Saturday at the United States Mission in Geneva, where the negotiations began.

On Thursday, Mr. Hill indicated that Washington was ready to discuss dropping North Korea from its list of state sponsors of terrorism. That designation imposes a ban on arms-related sales and keeps North Korea from getting some types of aid.

"We will be figuring out at what stage that could be done," he told reporters. "I'm not prepared to say precisely when it could be done at this point, but obviously it's an important issue with respect to our working group." North Korea has agreed in principle to abandon its nuclear program in return for economic and diplomatic benefits, though progress has been slow.

Under a Feb. 13 deal with South Korea, China, Japan, Russia and the United States, North Korea said it would disable its nuclear facilities and give a full accounting of its entire nuclear program, though details of how it would do so have not been made clear.

United States officials contend that North Korea, which tested a nuclear device in October, may have enough nuclear fuel to make eight or more atomic weapons. Mr. Hill emphasized that the United States wanted to see details of North Korea's uranium enrichment program.

The talks this weekend are also expected to touch on the fate of Japanese citizens abducted by North Korea, a major issue in Japan.

North Korea admitted in 2002 that its agents had kidnapped 13 Japanese, 5 of whom have since been repatriated. North Korea has said the others are dead.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/02/world/asia/02nkorea.html>

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Ending The Nuclear Threat

Sam Nunn travels to Russia to discuss nuclear weapons

By Bob Deans, Cox Washington Bureau

Washington--In the decade since he left the U.S. Senate, Sam Nunn has become a leading force for trying to contain the threat of nuclear weapons. Nunn and Ted Turner are co-chairs of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, a Washington research and advocacy group devoted to the issue.

Nunn, a Georgia Democrat, spent the past week traveling in Russia with Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., to mark the 15th anniversary of the program the two men initiated to help Russia dismantle or destroy its Cold War arsenal of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Nunn spoke with correspondent Bob Deans in a telephone interview from Moscow. Excerpts follow.

Q. You met this week with Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and discussed Russian concerns over the Bush administration's plans for building a missile defense system in Central Europe. Are there opportunities for cooperation on that?

A. Clearly the Russians are very irritated, I think, mostly politically irritated now, but I think they also clearly see a long-term military threat with the missile defense. But President Putin has offered to work with us, even including putting possible warning systems in Russia, which would be available for joint use, so this gives us a real opportunity. There's an old saying, "If you want to go fast, go by yourself; if you want to go far, go together," and I think in this field we really ought to go far, not go fast. It will certainly take more time working with Russia, but there is a tremendous payoff in terms of the security of the American people and the security of the Russian people if we do work together, and I'm hoping the administration will do that.

Q. Did you discuss at all with Minister Lavrov Russian efforts to urge Iran to abandon its pursuit of nuclear weapons?

A. I think the Russians see the danger from Iran, but they have, of course, different tactical considerations, and they want the United States to talk bilaterally to the Iranians, as well as multilaterally, and I think on that point the Russians are right. I've said for a long time that we need to be talking to the Iranians. I don't think you have very much success by refusing to talk to people whose behavior you want to change, and certainly you want to change it without a war if that's at all possible.

Q. It's also been 15 years since that legislation you co-authored with Sen. Lugar set into place the Cooperative Threat Reduction program. It has helped to destroy or deactivate some 7,000 nuclear warheads, nearly 700 intercontinental ballistic missiles and hundreds of missile silos, mobile launchers and other equipment. How much safer is the world today as a result of those efforts?

A. You really can't prove a negative, but in my view there was a very high likelihood, if we had not had such a program, that the Russians' effort to deal with their own vast stockpile of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and materials would have moved at a very slow pace and we would have had enormous dangers of leakage of both know-how and of weapon-grade material.

I think there is a much higher probability that we would have had some type of terrible nuclear catastrophe by now if we had not had that program. That's my view, and it's not provable, but I think it's also the Russian view. Much more important than what we've already accomplished is the trust that has been built between thousands of people at the lower levels in the laboratories and defense establishments and military bases and chemical storage facilities. . . . That is the foundation on which trust can be built in both countries to really tackle these problems.

Q. Russia still has, according to the Federation of American Scientists, nearly 6,000 operational nuclear warheads, and perhaps 15,000 more in stockpiles. The United States still has some 5,000 operational warheads and another 10,000 in stockpiles. Why do the United States and Russia still need 35,000 nuclear bombs between them?

A. We don't, and both countries have fortunately recognized that. We're moving down to somewhere between 1,700 and 2,100 deployed weapons — each country — so we are heading downward in deployed weapons. But what we haven't done is made any agreement on substantial reductions of inventories, and I think that's very much in the interests of both countries. And I'd like to see us take all nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert — a couple thousand on both sides. We still have a situation where the chances of some type of accident or miscalculation or misjudgment would create serious dangers to each other.

Q. Proliferation. Since the Cold War ended, we've seen the rise of Pakistan and India as nuclear states. North Korea is a nuclear power — can't feed its people, can't make paper towels, our intelligence people tell us, but it's a nuclear state. Now we worry that Iran could soon have nuclear weapons. How serious a problem is this?

A. North Korea is a serious problem. Fortunately they have made, now, some commitments, and it's going to be like pulling teeth to get those implemented. The Iranians have had a nuclear program going way back to the days of the Shah. So this is a national aspiration and, while I don't think that the United States is going to be able to handle this

alone, I do think that bilaterally we need to put the cards on the table with the Iranians and talk directly to them. . . . It's extremely important, because if Iran, for instance, goes forward with its nuclear program, and other countries in the region believe that they're going to end up with nuclear weapons, you'll have five or six other countries within the next several years that will embark on their own enrichment program and, eventually I think, their nuclear weapon program.

Q. Nuclear terrorism. Given the sheer number of nuclear weapons now sitting in various countries around the world, how hard is it for a terrorist group to get its hands on one of these weapons, and what might that mean for the United States and its allies?

A. It's harder than it was five years ago and it's harder than it was 10 years ago. It's not nearly as hard as I hope it will be in another five years. We've got a lot more to do. There's no question that we've tightened up and the Russians have tightened up. . . . We've got a long way to go. But I think we've already avoided several catastrophes.

Q. Are you weighing in with any of the presidential candidates, advising any of them on this, and are you considering throwing your own hat in the ring?

A. I've made it clear to any presidential candidate I'm available for advising them on this — whether they're Democrats or Republicans. [Nunn said he has discussed the issue with Fred Thompson, Hillary Clinton, Barak Obama, Joseph Biden and Chris Dodd, and he is scheduled to meet on the subject with John Edwards.] As far as throwing my own hat in the ring, as I've said, it's possible but not probable. At this stage I am completely consumed with my present activities and not making presidential moves.

<http://www.ajc.com/search/content/opinion/stories/2007/09/02/nuke09021.html>

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New York Times
September 4, 2007
Pg. 11

North Korea Says U.S. Will Lift Sanctions

By Choe Sang-Hun

SEOUL, South Korea, Sept. 3 — North Korea announced Monday that the United States had agreed to lift economic sanctions and remove it from a list of countries accused of sponsoring terrorism, a move that would satisfy one of the North Korean government's principal conditions for giving up nuclear weapons.

But a State Department spokeswoman in Washington said she did not have confirmation of the North Korean announcement, and Christopher R. Hill, the chief American envoy, made it clear in comments on Sunday that the North Koreans still had work to do before the United States would take the country off the terrorism-sponsor list. Mr. Hill said Sunday that North Korea would detail and disable its nuclear programs by the end of the year, an action that would be a diplomatic victory for the Bush administration.

"The U.S. agreed to take political and economic compensation measures such as deleting the D.P.R.K. from the list of terror-supporting nations and fully lifting sanctions imposed under the Trading with the Enemy Act," a spokesman for the North Korean Foreign Ministry told the country's official Korean Central News Agency on Monday. The spokesman was using the initials for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the North's formal name.

North Korea, in turn, discussed "taking practical measures to neutralize the existing nuclear facilities in the D.P.R.K. within this year and agreed on them," the spokesman said. "This has laid a groundwork for making progress at the plenary session of the six-party talks to be held in the future."

The developments followed a weekend meeting between Mr. Hill and his North Korean counterpart, Kim Kye-gwan, in Geneva.

In talking to reporters on Sunday, Mr. Hill said, "One thing that we agreed on is that the D.P.R.K. will provide a full declaration of all of their nuclear programs and will disable their nuclear programs by the end of this year, 2007."

Whether to offer the North rewards — including oil and, eventually, removal from the list of state sponsors of terrorism and diplomatic recognition — has been the subject of a six-year-long struggle within the Bush administration.

But most of the administration hawks who have opposed such offers, such as the former American ambassador to the United Nations, John R. Bolton, are now gone. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has given Mr. Hill more latitude to negotiate with the North Koreans outside of six-party talks that have been held on and off for years.

Those talks also include China, Japan, South Korea and Russia, and are expected to resume in mid-September. The weekend meeting in Geneva was cast as a prelude to any agreement reached at the six-party talks.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/04/world/asia/04korea.html?ref=world>

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