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Seattle Times  
September 5, 2007

## **B-52 Carried 5 Nuclear Warheads**

A B-52 bomber mistakenly loaded with five nuclear warheads flew from Minot Air Force Base, N.D., to Barksdale Air Force Base, La., on Aug. 30, resulting in an Air Force-wide investigation, three officers told the Military Times on condition of anonymity.

The B-52 was loaded with advanced cruise missiles (ACMs), part of a Defense Department effort to decommission 400 ACMs. But the nuclear warheads should have been removed before being transported to Barksdale, the officers said. The missiles were mounted onto the pylons of the bomber's wings.

ACMs carry a warhead with a yield of 5 to 150 kilotons and are designed for delivery by B-52 strategic bombers.

Air Force spokesman Lt. Col. Ed Thomas said the transfer was safely conducted and the weapons were in Air Force custody and control at all times.

Air Force officials wouldn't specify whether nuclear weapons were involved, in accord with policy, Thomas said.  
[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/nationworld/2003869009\\_ndig05.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/nationworld/2003869009_ndig05.html)

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Washington Times

September 5, 2007

Pg. 15

## **Inspectors Dispute Nuclear Claims**

VIENNA, Austria — There is no evidence to support the Iranian president's announcement that Iran has 3,000 centrifuges running, which would allow it to produce significant amounts of nuclear fuel, diplomats familiar with U.N. inspections said.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad defiantly proclaimed the achievement on Sunday after Western powers cast doubt on an Iranian atomic transparency plan and warned of stiffer sanctions against Tehran over its refusal to stop enriching uranium.

Nuclear specialists say 3,000 centrifuges running smoothly in unison at supersonic speed for long periods could refine enough uranium for an atomic bomb in about a year.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070905/FOREIGN/109050073>

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GovExec.com

Associated Press

September 5, 2007

## **Air command mistakenly flies bomber with nuclear warheads**

By Pauline Jelinek,

WASHINGTON (AP) -- A B-52 bomber was mistakenly armed with six nuclear warheads and flown for more than three hours across several states last week, prompting an Air Force investigation and the firing of one commander, Pentagon officials said Wednesday.

The plane was carrying Advanced Cruise Missiles from Minot Air Force Base, N.D, to Barksdale Air Force Base, La., on Aug. 30, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of a Defense Department policy not to confirm information on nuclear weapons.

The Air Combat Command has ordered a command-wide stand down on Sept. 14 to review procedures, officials said. They said there was minimal risk to crews and the public because of safety features designed into the munitions.

The missiles, which are being decommissioned, were mounted onto pylons on the bomber's wings and it is unclear why the warheads had not been removed beforehand.

In addition to the munitions squadron commander who was relieved of his duties, crews involved with the mistaken load -- including ground crew workers -- have been temporarily decertified for handling munitions, one official said. The investigation is expected to take several weeks.

The incident was first reported in *Military Times* newspaper.

[http://govexec.com/story\\_page.cfm?articleid=37939&dcn=todaysnews](http://govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=37939&dcn=todaysnews)

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Washington Post

September 6, 2007

Pg. 10

## **In Error, B-52 Flew Over U.S. With Nuclear-Armed Missiles**

By Josh White, Washington Post Staff Writer

An Air Force B-52 bomber flew across the central United States last week with six cruise missiles armed with nuclear warheads that were mistakenly attached to the airplane's wing, defense officials said yesterday.

The Stratofortress bomber, based at Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota, was transporting a dozen Advanced Cruise Missiles to Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana on Aug. 30. But crews inadvertently loaded half of them with nuclear warheads attached.

Air Force officials said the warheads were not activated and at no time posed a threat to the public. But a timeline of the episode supplied by the Air Force yesterday to House and Senate lawmakers indicated that the missiles in question sat on a runway in Louisiana for nearly 10 hours before workers noticed that the nuclear warheads were inside.

Military officials also said they were concerned that the warheads were unaccounted for several hours while the missiles were in transit. The missiles never left Air Force control, they said.

The cruise missiles -- part of an Air Force fleet of more than 400 of their kind -- are being retired and usually would not carry nuclear warheads while being transported. Defense officials said the B-52's mission last week did not include training runs, so the missiles were never meant to be launched. The cruise missiles have a range of about 2,000 miles and are designed to hit precision targets well behind a potential enemy's lines.

Two defense officials said it is unclear how stringent safeguards for the handling of nuclear weapons were skirted, allowing the missiles with the warheads to be loaded onto a pylon that was then attached to the underside of the B-52's wing. Air Force officials said the mistake was a serious breach of rules and that an investigation began immediately.

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl M. Levin (D-Mich.) and Sen. John McCain (Ariz.), the panel's ranking Republican, yesterday jointly called the episode "a matter of grave concern" and, in a letter to Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, requested an investigation of the incident by the Pentagon's inspector general.

The aircraft's pilots and other crew members were unaware that they were carrying nuclear warheads, officials said. "Essentially, this is an issue of a departure from our very exacting standards," said Lt. Col. Edward Thomas, an Air Force spokesman at the Pentagon, who declined to confirm that nuclear warheads were involved. "The Air Force maintains the highest standards of safety and precision, so any deviation from these well-established munitions procedures is very serious, and we are responding swiftly."

The incident, first reported by the Military Times, prompted senior leaders to relieve a munitions squadron commander of his duties. Other airmen have been temporarily suspended from duties.

"Nothing like this has ever been reported before, and we have been assured for decades that it was impossible," said Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), co-chairman of the House Bipartisan Task Force on Nonproliferation. "The complete breakdown of the Air Force command and control over enough nuclear weapons to destroy several cities has frightening implications not only for the Air Force, but for the security of our entire nuclear weapons stockpile." The Air Force's Air Combat Command has ordered a stand-down for its bases next week to review procedures and prevent a repeat of the mistake. "All evidence seems to point to this being an isolated mistake," Thomas said. Geoff Morrell, a Pentagon spokesman, told reporters at a news conference yesterday that Gates was informed of the incident early last Friday and has been receiving daily progress reports. Morrell said President Bush was also notified.

In a statement yesterday, Rep. Ike Skelton (D-Mo.), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, said he found the reports "deeply disturbing."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/05/AR2007090500762.html>

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USAToday.com

USA Today

## **U.S. plutonium to be transferred to S.C.**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Energy Department plans to send plutonium in Washington state and at research laboratories in New Mexico and California to the Savannah River nuclear complex in South Carolina to improve security and reduce storage costs.

The department said Wednesday that the plutonium shipments, involving 3,000 coffee can-size canisters, could begin as early as next month and last three years.

The consolidation "is a key part of the department's efforts to properly manage surplus plutonium," said James Rispoli, assistant energy secretary for environmental management. He said it will allow for greater security at much less cost.

The consolidation involves plutonium — some mixed with highly enriched uranium — that was produced decades ago for use in nuclear weapons, but is no longer needed, as well as a small amount of plutonium in fuel rods from a closed government reactor.

The transfer does not involve plutonium that is being taken out of dismantled nuclear warheads or plutonium that will continue to be needed for weapons-related research and production of warhead triggers called pits. The department said the amount of plutonium that will be shipped is classified. Rispoli said each canister has a maximum capacity of 9.7 pounds, but that the amount is significantly less than that since the canisters are not full. About 2,300 canisters are kept at the department's Hanford complex in Washington state and another 700 canisters are at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory near San Francisco and at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

Officials didn't provide a breakdown of amounts kept at each of the labs. But the plutonium at Lawrence Livermore has been a focus of controversy for years as local activists have maintained its presence poses a danger to nearby residential communities and represents a potential terrorist target.

Aware that officials in South Carolina have expressed concerns that their state not become a permanent dump for the country's unneeded plutonium, Rispoli emphasized at a news conference that the DOE plans include getting the material out of the state.

"The intent is not only to bring the plutonium there, but dispose of it at the (Savannah) site and then have pathways for all of this material to leave the state," Rispoli said. He said a facility to store the plutonium at Savannah River is being prepared with increased security.

Department officials acknowledged that it will likely take more than a decade — and possibly much longer — before much of the plutonium will be processed and moved elsewhere.

The plan calls for the plutonium to be either converted into a mixed-oxide fuel, or MOX, for use at commercial nuclear power plants or be encased in glass logs for eventual transfer to the Yucca Mountain high-level nuclear waste repository being planned in Nevada.

However, the MOX production facility at Savannah River won't be completed before 2017 at the earliest. And the future of the proposed Yucca Mountain underground repository is in doubt and is not expected to be completed before 2018 if it is built at all.

There already is some plutonium at Savannah River and the MOX facility is being built primarily to process much of the 34 metric tons of plutonium that will come from dismantled warheads.

State officials have agreed to accept plutonium shipments, partly because the construction of the processing facilities — and the processing itself — means hundreds of jobs.

Federal officials view the consolidation — and eventual disposal of much of the excess plutonium — as essential to meet increased security requirements since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Edwin Lyman of the Union of Concerned Scientists, a leading nuclear non-proliferation advocacy group, said the group supports consolidation "as long as it's done as safely and securely as possible."

Lyman said all of the plutonium should be vitrified into glass. The group has opposed using plutonium as a mixed oxide fuel in commercial power plants.

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2007-09-05-plutonium\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2007-09-05-plutonium_N.htm)

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Washington Examiner

September 7, 2007

## **Air Force Persuaded Gates To Stay Mum On B-52 Armed With Nukes**

By Rowan Scarborough, National Security Correspondent

WASHINGTON -- Defense Secretary Robert Gates initially wanted to release more information about a B-52 mission that mistakenly carried nuclear weapons across the U.S. but was talked out of it by uniformed officers, a military source said Thursday.

The source, who is close to the Air Force's ongoing investigation, said that when the Air Force briefed Gates last Friday, the secretary's reaction was to urge release of as much information as possible to allay public concern. But the Air Force balked, citing long-standing policy of not discussing publicly the movement of nuclear weapons. "We don't want terrorists to understand the process of how we deal with these weapons," the military source told The Examiner. The source asked not to be identified because of the topic's sensitivity.

The internal debate shows how security practices for handling nuclear weapons remain basically the same today as they were during the Cold War.

Asked whether Gates had wanted to release more information, Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman told The Examiner: "As you know, it is long-standing policy of the Defense Department not to publicly discuss nuclear

weapons matters. That said, the secretary was informed about this incident, was clearly concerned and is receiving daily updates from the Air Force on their review of this matter.”

Gates has made candor one of the hallmarks of his Pentagon leadership. He has openly opposed, for example, those who advocate bombing Iran to destroy its nuclear program. He also has not hidden his unhappiness with the military’s slow approach to sending heavily armored “MRAP” vehicles to Iraq to protect soldiers and Marines. On the nuclear issue, however, he acceded to Pentagon tradition that representatives should not confirm any information that could aid a rival power or terrorists.

The Air Force has announced an investigation into the Aug. 30 B-52 bomber flight, which was first disclosed by the Military Times newspaper. The bomber carried six nuclear-tipped air-launched cruise missiles, instead of the planned inert warheads, from Minot Air Force Base, N.D., to Barksdale Air Force Base, La.

The military source told The Examiner that the investigation must answer why the ground crew mistakenly selected and loaded the six live warheads.

Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell told reporters Wednesday that Gates was initially notified by Gen. T. Michael Moseley, Air Force chief of staff.

“Secretary Gates has been assured by General Moseley that the munitions were part of a routine transfer between the two bases and at all times they were in the custody and control of Air Force personnel, and at no time was the public in danger,” Morrell said.

[http://www.examiner.com/a-](http://www.examiner.com/a-921158~Air_Force_persuaded_Gates_to_stay_mum_on_B_52_armed_with_nukes.html)

[921158~Air\\_Force\\_persuaded\\_Gates\\_to\\_stay\\_mum\\_on\\_B\\_52\\_armed\\_with\\_nukes.html](http://www.examiner.com/a-921158~Air_Force_persuaded_Gates_to_stay_mum_on_B_52_armed_with_nukes.html)

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Washington Post

## **N. Korea Invites Three Nations for Nuclear Survey**

By Michael A. Fletcher

Washington Post Staff Writer

Friday, September 7, 2007; 10:12 AM

SYDNEY, Sept. 7 -- The United States, China and Russia plan to send a team of experts into North Korea next week to survey that nation's nuclear facilities, taking another step toward executing the agreement to disable that nation's nuclear weapons capability, U.S. officials said on Friday.

Christopher R. Hill, assistant secretary of state for East Asian affairs, told reporters that the technical teams would do an inventory of North Korea's nuclear facilities to determine the best way to disable them -- a seeming breakthrough in what have been fitful negotiations with the enigmatic Communist regime.

The status of North Korea's nuclear disarmament dominated earlier talks today between President Bush and South Korean President Roh Moo Hyun and led to an awkward exchange between the two over whether the 1953 truce that halted the Korean War might soon be replaced with a formal peace treaty. After hearing Bush say that North Korean disarmament could produce a new "security arrangement" on the Korean Peninsula, Roh encouraged Bush to be "clearer" about what he meant.

The move toward an onsite nuclear inspection, which was initiated by the North Koreans, marks "another significant step toward the goal of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," Hill told reporters. It would mark the first time that experts from nations involved in long-running negotiations over North Korea's atomic weapons program get to inspect that nation's nuclear facilities.

"There are many different ways you can disable a nuclear facility. You can drill a hole in the side of a reactor. You can fill it with cement. You can do various things," Hill said. "But it helps if you have a site survey and have a look at the reactor first. So that is the concept here."

The planned visit by the nuclear experts follows an agreement last week by North Korean officials to disclose all of its nuclear activities and disable its nuclear programs by the end of the year. That deal followed a February agreement in which the United States and North Korea agreed to restore diplomatic and economic relations as part of the nuclear negotiations.

In July, North Korea closed its main plutonium reactor at Yongbyon after receiving 50,000 tons of heavy fuel oil from South Korea -- the first installment of 1 million tons pledged as part of the February agreement.

Last October, while the so-called six-party talks -- which involve China, Japan, South Korea and Russia, as well as the United States and North Korea -- were stalled, North Korea announced it had conducted its first underground nuclear test. Now, the nation seems to be following through on its latest agreement to disarm.

That North Korea invited the inspectors to begin surveying its nuclear facilities "is a sign of the seriousness of purpose that all sides, including the North Koreans, bring to this," Hill said.

The announcement on North Korea came after Bush and Roh made a joint appearance following their meeting here on the sidelines of the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

In remarks to reporters, the two leaders said the bulk of their one-hour conversation was about efforts to coax North Korea to continue implementing its agreement to give up its nuclear capability.

Normally, the public statements following such meetings are vague, polite and ceremonial. But that was not the case on Friday. Bush spoke first. In his statement, he declared the meeting "frank and friendly" while saying that once North Korea scraps its nuclear weapons program, "we can achieve a new security arrangement in the Korean Peninsula."

Roh was dissatisfied with that and, toward the end of his remarks, seemed to challenge Bush. "I think I did not hear President Bush mention the -- a declaration to end the Korean War just now," said Roh, whose remarks in Korean were translated into English. "Did you say so, President Bush?"

Appearing annoyed, Bush replied, "I said it's up to Kim Jong Il as to whether or not we're able to sign a peace treaty to end the Korean War."

Roh replied by urging Bush to be "clearer" in his message, leaving members of both delegations forcing nervous smiles as they watched the exchange. "I can't make it any more clear, Mr. President," Bush replied, before ending the conversation by saying, "Thank you, sir."

White House aides later said that the two men did not disagree and that the seeming spat probably occurred because something was "lost in translation."

"There was no difference," said James Jeffrey, a deputy national security adviser. "It simply came out that way."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/07/AR2007090700573.html?hpid=topnews>

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Washington Times

September 8, 2007

Pg. 1

## **Korean War Causes Clash Between Bush, Roh**

By Joseph Curl, Washington Times

SYDNEY, Australia — President Bush and South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun had a tense and testy public exchange yesterday, with the South Korean demanding to know when the United States would officially end the war with North Korea.

Yet as the two longtime allies aired their differences, the reclusive Kim Jong-il ended the day by offering a conciliatory gesture to the West by inviting nuclear specialists from the United States, China and Russia to North Korea to inspect its atomic program next week.

Mr. Bush and Mr. Roh, taking a private spat before the cameras, disagreed over the 54-year-old armistice that requires the United States to hold some 60,000 troops on the demilitarized zone between the two nations on the Korean Peninsula.

After a brief meeting on the fringes of an Asian economic summit, the two leaders began what appeared to be run-of-the-mill diplomatic statements, which are usually couched in nuance and subtlety. But the exchange turned suddenly acrimonious, ending with an exasperated Mr. Bush shutting off the unusual dialogue with a terse "Thank you, sir."

"As usual, we had a very friendly and frank discussion about important matters," Mr. Bush said in his opening.

Mr. Roh also began with careful language on the progress being made to negotiate with North Korea over its nuclear ambitions, but he surprised the president when he looked directly at Mr. Bush and asked why he had not mentioned the issue of the war's end.

"I might be wrong. I think I did not hear President Bush mention a declaration to end the Korean War just now," Mr. Roh said through an interpreter. "Did you say so, President Bush?"

Mr. Bush looked puzzled, peering around Mr. Roh as he awaited the translator.

"I said it's up to Kim Jong-il as to whether or not we're able to sign a peace treaty to end the Korean War," Mr. Bush said.

But Mr. Roh pressed on, interrupting to ask: "I believe that they are the same thing, Mr. President. If you could be a little bit clearer in your message." Top Bush aides arrayed nearby laughed nervously and Mr. Bush shot Mr. Roh a look of annoyance.

"I can't make it any more clear, Mister President," Mr. Bush said firmly. "We look forward to the day when we can end the Korean War. That will happen when Kim Jong-il verifiably gets rid of his weapons programs and his weapons. Thank you, sir."

By day's end, Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill announced that North Korea invited the nuclear specialists to visit North Korea next Tuesday to survey nuclear facilities to be shut down. The overture, he said, marks "another significant step toward the goal of denuclearization" of the Korean Peninsula.

"This is an idea the North Koreans came up with," Mr. Hill said of the plan to let outside nuclear specialists in. He said it is hoped that the full dismantling will be complete by Dec. 31.

Mr. Roh leaves office in January, and his tenure has been marked by tension with the United States as he moved to negotiate with his northern neighbor. Although the United States has held a hard line against the communist nation, which claims to have tested a nuclear weapon, Mr. Roh sought to stay true to his 2002 campaign pledge to make South Korea more independent from its U.S. military ally.

Under a deal reached in February after years of on-again, off-again negotiations, North Korea agreed to relinquish its nuclear programs, including one that produced weapons-grade material. In exchange, Washington agreed to open talks on normalizing relations with the North and explore removing a terrorism designation for Pyongyang. While North Korea shut down its main nuclear reactor in July, the Bush administration remains suspicious of Mr. Kim, who received billions in aid from the Clinton administration even as he pursued nuclear weapons.

Mr. Roh and Mr. Kim are scheduled to meet soon and the Bush administration is cautiously optimistic that the discussion will jump-start stalled talks among the Koreans, Japan, China, Russia and the United States.

White House officials yesterday sought to downplay the awkward Korean War exchange. National Security Council spokesman Gordon Johndroe said "there was clearly something lost in translation during the photo op." He said the United States and South Korea continue to promote the steps laid out in the February agreement that Pyongyang must take before there can be a full peace agreement.

The testy exchange made Mr. Bush's later meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin look tame in comparison. The two presidents held private talks on a Europe-based missile defense system, Iran's suspected nuclear weapons program, climate change, Russia's bid to enter the World Trade Organization and other topics.

"We recognize that we can do better solving problems when we work together," Mr. Bush said in a post-meeting session with the Russian that was long on smiles but short on detail.

Moscow has bitterly opposed a U.S. plan to base a missile shield in Poland and the Czech Republic and has reacted forcefully against the idea, saying it would spark a new Cold War and a repositioning of its missiles toward Europe. Mr. Putin proposed instead that Russia and the United States share a Russian-rented radar station in Azerbaijan and that missiles could be deployed at sea or from nations such as Turkey.

At Mr. Bush's side, Mr. Putin asserted that the leaders agreed that specialists from the two sides should meet again and travel to Azerbaijan. Mr. Bush made no comment on this.

Mr. Putin, vying with the United States and China to be a part of the booming Asia-Pacific region, signed a deal yesterday to buy uranium from Australia to power its civilian nuclear power plants.

Australia holds 40 percent of the world's reserves, but only agreed to sell uranium to Moscow after guarantees it will not be resold to Iran or Syria. Russia has close ties with both states.

Mr. Putin, the first Russian or Soviet ever to visit Australia, visited Indonesia on Thursday in a clear sign of his commitment to turn Moscow's face to Asia, signing a \$1 billion deal to sell Russian tanks, helicopters and submarines.

Also yesterday, Mr. Bush had lunch with South East Asian leaders. He delivered a speech to business leaders calling on Asia-Pacific nations to keep up the anti-terror fight, not turn away from the fight in Iraq, lead the way toward a worldwide trade agreement and cooperate on addressing climate change.

He will conclude his trip to Sydney today with several more meetings before heading home. There will be a short refueling stop in Honolulu.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/article/20070908/NATION/109080045/1002>

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Washington Times

September 8, 2007

Pg. 1

## **Nuke Watchdog Defends Iran Deal**

By David R. Sands, Washington Times

The United Nations' top nuclear cop yesterday slammed critics of a new inspection deal with Iran as "back-seat drivers" trying to justify a war with Tehran in the same way they cleared a path for the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

Mohamed ElBaradei, director-general of the nuclear watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency, named no names in a briefing for reporters at the IAEA's headquarters in Vienna, Austria. But his harsh words reflected the

depth of suspicion and distrust between the Egyptian diplomat and critics in the United States, both inside and outside the Bush administration.

Pleading for time to allow a new Iranian inspection plan to work, Mr. ElBaradei said, "I hear war drums that are basically saying that the solution is to bomb Iran. It makes me shudder because some of the rhetoric is a reminder" of the run-up to the Iraq war.

"There have been back-seat drivers putting in their five cents saying this is not a good working arrangement," he said, according to an account by the Reuters news agency.

"I tell them: Please, leave the driving to us and we will let you know where we are in November."

The official U.S. response to the IAEA chief's comments was measured, but U.S. officials also made it clear that Iran must do far more than meet the IAEA's goals to put to rest questions about its suspect nuclear programs.

"I would certainly hope that [Mr. ElBaradei's] comments would not refer to the United States, because they certainly wouldn't be true," State Department spokesman Tom Casey said.

Mr. Casey and the U.S. Ambassador to the IAEA, Gregory Schulte, said they back the IAEA's efforts to clear up "historical" questions about Iran's secret nuclear programs. But they added that the United States and its allies still demand that Iran suspend key activities, such as uranium enrichment, or face new international sanctions.

Mr. Schulte said late last month that the IAEA inspection agreement with Tehran has "real limitations" because key military and manufacturing sites inside the Islamic republic would not be covered.

Mr. ElBaradei has U.S. critics outside the Bush administration as well. A Washington Post editorial this week dubbed him a "rogue regulator" who is "undermining" the U.S.-led effort to curb Iran's nuclear programs.

Yesterday, Mr. ElBaradei said the U.S. press was rushing to discredit him.

"If you look at some of the American newspapers today, there is a coordinated, orchestrated campaign to undermine the process, undermine the agency, undermine me," Reuters quoted him as saying.

The Bush administration and Mr. ElBaradei had some tense exchanges before the Iraq war over the extent of dictator Saddam Hussein's nuclear weapons programs. The IAEA could not verify U.S. claims of a major Iraqi nuclear effort, and postwar analyses largely upheld the U.N. agency's work.

The United States briefly tried to block Mr. ElBaradei's reappointment to the IAEA post in 2005, but found no support from the nearly three dozen nations that sit on the Vienna agency's board.

Meeting with a small group of reporters in Vienna yesterday, Mr. ElBaradei said his inspectors have uncovered little so far to back up charges Iran has developed a military nuclear capability. Iranian officials say their program is designed for peaceful energy uses.

"We have not seen any weaponization of their program, nor have we received any information to that effect — no smoking gun or information from intelligence," Mr. ElBaradei said.

Mr. ElBaradei suggested yesterday that critics should give his inspectors until the end of the year to do their work.

"This is a reasonable time in our view to resolve a number of complex issues," he said.

But Jacqueline Shire and David Albright, nuclear specialists at the private Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security, said in an Aug. 30 report that the IAEA inspection deal signed with Iran on Aug. 27 is "limited in scope" in a number of key areas.

"The IAEA has also not been able to determine whether Iran has undeclared nuclear facilities," they wrote. "Iran may be installing centrifuges at a secret, undeclared plant."

*This article is based in part on wire service reports.*

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/article/20070908/FOREIGN/109080042/1003/foreign>

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New York Times  
September 8, 2007

## **Australia Agrees to Sell Uranium to Russia**

By TIM JOHNSTON

SYDNEY, Australia, Sept. 7 — Australia will sell uranium to Russia to fuel President Vladimir V. Putin's ambitious plan to double the size of his country's nuclear power industry, according to a deal signed here today.

Mr. Putin and Prime Minister John Howard of Australia, who signed the deal on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum summit meeting in Sydney, sought to play down fears that the uranium could be used for military purposes or sold to other parties. Russia is helping Iran build its first nuclear plant.

The leaders said concerns that the uranium would be used for military purposes were misplaced.

"Any uranium that is sold to Russia will be sold subject to very strict safeguards," Mr. Howard said.

He added, "Russia already has an enormous amount of military nuclear material which it is selling — principally to the United States — for reprocessing."



Mr. Putin said Russia had about 500 metric tons of military-grade uranium and was selling about 30 tons a year to reprocessors in the United States. He also said that Russia was embarking on a program to build 30 nuclear power stations in the next 15 to 20 years.

Robert Ayson, an Asia-Pacific security specialist at the Australian National University in the capital, Canberra, said he believed that Moscow had a legitimate need for new supplies of uranium.

"Russia has about 5 percent of the world's uranium reserves, and because of the expansion it is going to have a long-term need for uranium," he said.

Australia has about 40 percent of the world's known reserves of uranium, and the Australian mining industry has been profiting from the global hunger for carbon-neutral sources of energy. Nuclear exports were worth about \$685 million last year to the Australian economy.

Australia recently agreed to sell uranium to China, sparking concerns about how the material will be used and monitored after the sales.

Australia is also working on a uranium sales deal with India. The government in New Delhi has not signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty but is believed to be willing to allow the International Atomic Energy Authority to monitor its civilian nuclear power program.

The United States has agreed in principle to sell nuclear material to India, although the deal still requires ratification by Congress.

Mr. Ayson said he did not believe that selling uranium to Russia would encourage weapons proliferation but that the uranium sales had provided a focus for less specific worries.

"There is the concern that Putin is the sort of person who is pushing the envelope a bit," he said today. "This is a historical thing: it is all the Chernobyl stuff, all the comments about targeting missiles at Europe. It's inchoate, it's not focused on a specific risk."

Mr. Putin is the first Russian leader to visit Australia, and although trade between the two countries is expanding, a Russian sale of submarines to Indonesia, a neighbor of Australia, has created tension.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/08/world/08uranium.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/08/world/08uranium.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

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GovExec.com

## Investigation into TB incident reveals security gaps

By Eileen Sullivan, Associated Press

September 10, 2007

WASHINGTON (AP) -- A congressional investigation into officials' inability to stop a tuberculosis patient from leaving the country found significant security gaps, heightening concern about vulnerability to potential cases of pandemic flu or smallpox.

A report on the May incident involving an Atlanta lawyer who caused an international health scare found that the Centers for Disease Control lacks a sound way to prevent someone infected with a biological agent from entering or leaving the United States.

The review by the House Homeland Security Committee's Democratic staff was to be released Monday, one day before the sixth anniversary of the 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States.

Since the Sept. 11 strikes, the government has focused on all types of possible threats and sought to find ways to best detect and counter biological agents.

"How we address these gaps now will serve as a direct predictor of how well we will handle future events, especially those involving emerging, re-emerging, and pandemic infectious diseases," according to the report obtained by The Associated Press.

The committee chairman, Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., added: "If we can't counter TB, how can we counter terrorism."

The case involving Andrew Speaker involved a series of notification delays and a lack of streamlined reporting systems, according to the congressional report.

Speaker was able to fly out from Atlanta to Europe for his wedding and honeymoon despite warnings from public health officials.

Once he was in Europe, the CDC determined Speaker could not be transported back to the U.S. because the agency did not have the equipment to safely do so for a flight longer than eight hours.

The CDC asked the Transportation Security Administration to place Speaker on its "no-fly" list so he could not re-enter the country. But there was a four-hour delay between the request and the listing.

Speaker got back into the U.S. through Canada, despite instructions to Customs and Border Protection officers not to allow him in. The 18-year veteran inspector who ignored the warning has retired.

"This was a real world incident and there was a breakdown at the intersection of homeland security and public health," Thompson said. "The government has numerous plans and policies in place to secure our communities, but they just didn't follow the playbook."

CDC spokesman Tom Skinner said the agency continues to learn lessons from the incident and is completing its own review.

"Preparedness is a process and not an event, and people need to realize that we are light years ahead of where we were six years ago," Skinner said. Each instance, such as the one last May, is a way to test and exercise the government's systems, he said.

A House Homeland Security subcommittee plans a hearing this month to address these concerns.

[http://govexec.com/story\\_page.cfm?articleid=37973&dcn=todaysnews](http://govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=37973&dcn=todaysnews)

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Financial Times

September 11, 2007

## US Team In N Korea For Nuclear Survey

By Reuters

A team of U.S. officials and nuclear experts crossed the heavily armed border into North Korea on Tuesday on a rare visit to survey the communist state's nuclear facilities.

They will be joined by experts from two other nuclear powers – Russia and China – at the invitation of Pyongyang in what Washington has called another key step towards finally ridding the Korean peninsula of atomic weapons.

Speaking to South Korean officials late on Monday, the head of the U.S. delegation, Sung Kim of the State Department, said the inspections "should set the stage for the next phase of disabling".

North Korea has agreed to fully account for and disable its nuclear weapons programme by the end of this year under a February deal with South Korea, the United States, Japan, Russia and China.

It has let in international nuclear inspectors and shut down its main Yongbyon nuclear complex, which had produced bomb-grade plutonium, in return for 50,000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil.

North Korea tested its first atomic device a year ago and is thought to have enough fissile material to make several nuclear warheads.

By completing full disarmament, the impoverished North will receive an additional 950,000 tonnes of oil or other aid of same value.

U.S. President George W. Bush has also offered a peace treaty with the North if it gave up its nuclear weapons programme.

The U.S. delegation crossed the border from the South through the Panmunjom truce village that straddles the Demilitarised Zone border drawn at the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

It will be joined by Russian and Chinese officials in the North Korean capital Pyongyang and travel to Yongbyon, about 100 km (60 miles) north of the capital. Their visit is expected to end on Saturday.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/0e66ac7a-6017-11dc-b0fe-0000779fd2ac.html>

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GovExec.com

## Lawmakers concerned over slow pace of anthrax vaccine acquisition

By Zack Phillips [zphillips@govexec.com](mailto:zphillips@govexec.com)

September 11, 2007

More than three months have passed since the Health and Human Services Department closed an early solicitation for anthrax vaccine, and a bipartisan group of lawmakers wants to know the results.

Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, and six other panel members wrote HHS Secretary Michael Leavitt on Monday to express concern that the department is not moving aggressively enough to acquire the anthrax vaccine.

In May, HHS released a notice seeking to identify potential manufacturers of a next-generation vaccine based on recombinant protective antigen (rPA) technology that does not use the anthrax germ itself. That solicitation closed in June. The notice said the department anticipated that a formal solicitation would be released in July with proposals due in November, but HHS has yet to release such a request.

The lawmakers asked Leavitt how many responses the department received to the notice, and what the timeline is for issuing a formal request for information or proposals.

Spokesman Marc Wolfson said the department was expecting to release a request for proposals before the end of the year.

Delays have beset Project BioShield, a \$5.6 billion program meant to lure pharmaceutical companies to the traditionally less lucrative biodefense market. The anthrax program has been a particular problem. Last December, the department terminated a contract with Brisbane, Calif.-based VaxGen Inc., the highest profile BioShield contractor, for 75 million doses of a next-generation anthrax vaccine based on the rPA technology.

VaxGen had pushed back its delivery date several times and was unable to begin its Phase 2 trial by the HHS-imposed deadline of Dec. 18. The department subsequently released the May sources-sought notice for 25 million doses of a new rPA-based anthrax vaccine, but it has not said how many responses it received.

"We remain concerned that this cancellation impedes development work and sends the wrong signal to private sector companies who would seek contracts under BioShield," the letter said.

VaxGen and San Diego-based Hollis Eden Pharmaceuticals, which formerly was developing a countermeasure to radiation sickness, have said they will no longer pursue biodefense products out of frustration with HHS. And Thompson's letter said that British vaccine manufacturer Acambis, the government's main supplier of smallpox vaccine, also has decided to leave the biodefense market.

The letter also expressed concern about an implementation plan HHS released in April, because the plan scheduled the next round of acquisition of anthrax antitoxins -- which would counter multidrug-resistant anthrax -- until at least fiscal 2009, and possibly as late as fiscal 2013.

Acquisition delays are significant because many private sector firms say that for investors to fund the costly drug development process, they need unambiguous commitments on how much of a countermeasure the government plans to buy. Delays and uncertainties make investors less interested in funding such projects, they say.

As of September, the government's Strategic National Stockpile had 10 million doses of the current generation anthrax vaccine, made by Lansing, Mich.-based Emergent BioSolutions. That vaccine also has had problems, with concerns about side effects and safety leading some soldiers to sue to stop a mandatory vaccination program in the military. HHS posted a notice in April of its intent to buy another 10.4 million doses from Emergent, with an option for another 8.35 million doses, around July 24. The department and company are still in negotiations.

Emergent and the British firm Avecia Biotechnology are developing rPA vaccines, which would require fewer doses than the current generation vaccine. VaxGen is trying to sell its rPA vaccine program to another entity, although HHS' sources-sought notice precluded responses from companies with an Investigational New Drug application on hold with the Food and Drug Administration -- a condition that applies to VaxGen's vaccine.

[http://govexec.com/story\\_page.cfm?articleid=37994&dcn=todaysnews](http://govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=37994&dcn=todaysnews)

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Washington Post

## **Proposed Disaster-Response Plan Faulted**

Details Insufficient, Chain of Command Unclear, State and Local Officials Say

By Spencer S. Hsu

Washington Post Staff Writer

Wednesday, September 12, 2007; Page A04

The Bush administration's new federal disaster-response plan drew harsh criticism yesterday from state and local officials only a day after it was unveiled, prompting fresh calls by House Democrats to make the Federal Emergency Management Agency a stand-alone Cabinet-level agency.

In one of only three House hearings held yesterday, all scheduled to mark the anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, state and local emergency managers said the new plan offers insufficient detail for guiding the actions of officials in charge of handling specific incidents and leaves unclear the chain of command, from the president to workers on the scene.

Congress passed legislation after Hurricane Katrina struck in August 2005 to beef up FEMA and make its director the president's principal disaster-management adviser.

But yesterday, Robert C. Bohlmann, emergency manager for York County in Maine and spokesman for the International Association of Emergency Managers, warned at the hearing about a "major disconnect" between that legislation and the new National Response Framework (NRF), which states that the secretary of homeland security is in charge of managing domestic incidents.

Testifying before a House Transportation and Infrastructure subcommittee, Bohlmann said the framework -- streamlined to about 78 pages from its predecessor, the 427-page National Response Plan -- lacks substance.

"The draft NRF that we have reviewed appears to be more like a public relations document rather than a response plan or framework," Bohlmann said. Earlier this summer, state and local officials had complained that the Department of Homeland Security ignored the input they gave to FEMA and commandeered the drafting process. Yesterday, FEMA Administrator R. David Paulison told the subcommittee that the new framework is a draft open for comment for 30 days. About 600 pages outlining specific emergency operations are included in about 30 annexes that will be open for comment for 60 days, he said.

"This is going to be a collaborative effort. This is a draft document. . . . If there are specifics in here that people don't feel we have, we welcome hearing them," Paulison said.

Tim Manning, director of homeland security and emergency management for New Mexico and spokesman for the National Emergency Management Association, whose members include his counterparts in the 49 other states, said he "could not object more vociferously" to the framework's concept that separate operational and strategic plans will be developed for 15 federally designated disaster scenarios.

"When you scale up to the level we're talking about, to have very duplicative plans with 30 variations will be disastrous," Manning said.

Transportation Committee Chairman Rep. James L. Oberstar (D-Minn.) said it may be time for Congress to revisit the issue of separating FEMA from the DHS. Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.), who chaired the hearing, asked congressional investigators to review state and local officials' criticism.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/11/AR2007091102080.html>

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YAHOO! News

Reuters

## **EU and U.S.: Iran's IAEA deal may be recipe for delay**

By Mark Heinrich and Karin Strohecker

VIENNA (Reuters) - Iran's nuclear transparency deal with U.N. inspectors could be a recipe for delay and the lack of any provision for Tehran to suspend uranium enrichment is unacceptable, the United States and EU powers said on Wednesday.

They spoke at a meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency's governing board where tensions flared between Western powers on one side, and IAEA officials and developing nations on the other over the value of Iran's cooperation pledge.

Washington is concerned the Tehran-IAEA deal might stymie its attempt to intensify United Nations sanctions if Iran did not rein in uranium enrichment work. The U.S. envoy said support from the IAEA board was "critical."

"This means that the U.N. Security Council needs the active support of the IAEA board of governors for ... a new sanctions resolution due to Iran's failure to suspend enrichment," U.S. Ambassador Gregory Schulte said.

Iran's chief delegate Ali Asghar Soltanieh repeated a warning by Non-Aligned Movement nations on Tuesday that any "interference" could wreck the cooperation pact.

"Interference in the agency's technical...management or engagement of other politically and security-oriented organs shall impede seriously the new constructive process and might even destroy the trend," he told the U.N. watchdog's governors.

After a statement on Tuesday by the 27-nation European Union that declined to endorse the IAEA plan, IAEA Director Mohamed ElBaradei walked out of the session, diplomats said.

ElBaradei denied on Wednesday being unhappy with the EU line. But he appealed for unstinting international support and stressed Iran would still have to shelve enrichment and grant wider inspections even after resolving old questions.

**"CANNOT AFFORD TO FAIL," ELBARADEI SAYS**

"This issue is very complex and linked to security in the Middle East region which is more than messy right now ... I call on (all) to try to help us find a credible..., peaceful solution through verification. I don't think we can afford to fail."

The August 21 "work plan" commits Iran to answer five-year-old IAEA questions one by one over a rough timeline of a few months, while leaving untouched Tehran's expanding enrichment activity.

The West fears Iran wants to make nuclear bombs while Tehran insists its program is aimed solely at generating electricity.

Germany, France and Britain, among six world powers who have sponsored two sets of limited U.N. sanctions against Iran, cast serious doubt on the transparency arrangements.

"We are ... concerned by the sequential nature of the work plan as it may possibly be used to delay the clarification of the outstanding questions," said German Ambassador Klaus Peter Gottwald, speaking on behalf of the trio.

He said an August 30 report by ElBaradei left no doubt Iran was trying to crank up enrichment in its underground Natanz plant. "This is not acceptable and needs to be considered in the (U.N.) Security Council...", he said. Western leaders believe the plan buys time for Iran to achieve "industrial" enrichment capacity without facing biting economic penalties, which Russia and China are blocking as long as the cooperation pact moves forward. Gottwald said the EU remained open to negotiations on trade benefits for Iran if it shelved enrichment activity first. Iran has rejected that precondition as undermining its sovereignty.

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20070912/wl\\_nm/nuclear\\_iaea\\_dc;\\_ylt=AvMk4bY9HQtlQm8qoBS3I6CyFz4D](http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20070912/wl_nm/nuclear_iaea_dc;_ylt=AvMk4bY9HQtlQm8qoBS3I6CyFz4D)

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YAHOO! News

AFP

## **North Korea gives experts full access to nuclear facilities: US**

WASHINGTON (AFP) - North Korea has given full access to experts from the United States, Russia and China on a rare visit to the reclusive nation to examine ways to disable its nuclear weapons program, the State Department said Wednesday.

"They saw everything they had asked to see," said department spokesman Sean McCormack after the experts began surveying key nuclear facilities on Wednesday.

The US team led by Sung Kim, State Department director for Korean affairs, reported they had visited a five megawatt reactor at the Yongbyon nuclear complex and would inspect other facilities on Thursday before talks with North Korean officials, McCormack said.

The main task of the experts from the three top nuclear powers is to check on the Yongbyon complex, which Pyongyang closed down in July as part of a February multilateral agreement, and decide the most effective way of shutting down the plants permanently.

After the visit, the experts would discuss with the North Koreans "about some of their initial impressions, about what they saw, about how you might go about actually disabling the reactors," McCormack told reporters.

They would then report back to the next session of six-party talks on North Korea's nuclear ambitions expected next week, which involve the two Koreas, the United States, China, Japan and Russia.

McCormack stressed that any agreement on disablement of North Korea's nuclear facilities would be decided within the six-party process.

After over four years of stalemate, the North agreed on February 13 under the six-party framework to declare and disable its nuclear program in return for aid, security guarantees and major diplomatic benefits.

In July it shut down its only operating reactor at Yongbyon in return for 50,000 tonnes of fuel oil.

The International Atomic Energy Agency in August confirmed the shutdown, along with the closure of a nuclear fuel fabrication plant, a reprocessing plant and a separate 50-megawatt reactor, only partly built, at Yongbyon.

In addition, a 200-megawatt reactor under construction at Taechon was shut.

The next step is to disable the facilities by encasing them in concrete or some other method -- something the experts will advise on.

The United States said North Korea agreed at a recent bilateral meeting in Geneva to declare and disable its nuclear facilities by the end of the year.

The February agreement does not specifically mention any existing nuclear weapons or plutonium stockpiles held by the North, which conducted its first atomic bomb test last October.

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20070912/wl\\_asia\\_afp/nkoreanuclearweapons;\\_ylt=Aj3URZv8Uyp.ogqBJxvzg7xvaA8E](http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20070912/wl_asia_afp/nkoreanuclearweapons;_ylt=Aj3URZv8Uyp.ogqBJxvzg7xvaA8E)

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