



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER  
**CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL**  
Maxwell AFB, Alabama

---

---

Issue No. 587, 20 September 2007

**Articles & Other Documents:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <a href="#">N. Korea, Syria May Be At Work On Nuclear Facility</a>                     | <a href="#">Report: Los Alamos not fully accounting for plutonium</a>                                |
| <a href="#">U.S.: Syria on nuclear watch list</a>                                      | <a href="#">Russian scientist accused of trying to smuggle possible biological weapons materials</a> |
| <a href="#">IAEA Illicit Trafficking Database Releases Latest Aggregate Statistics</a> | <a href="#">Syria-N. Korea Reports Won't Stop Talks</a>  |
| <a href="#">U.S. Nuclear Team Returns To Seoul From North Korea</a>                    | <a href="#">Algeria, China Teamed On Nuke</a>  |
| <a href="#">IAEA Chief Exhorts Iran's Critics To Avoid Threats Of Force</a>            | <a href="#">Israeli Nuclear Suspicions Linked To Raid In Syria</a>                                   |
| <a href="#">Syria, N. Korea Deny Working On Nuclear Program</a>                        | <a href="#">Lethal WMD Blast</a>   |
| <a href="#">Blast at secret Syrian missile site kills dozens</a>                       | <a href="#">Israel To Syria: Use Chem Weapons And We'll Wipe You Off Map</a>                         |
- 

Welcome to the CPC Outreach Journal. As part of USAF Counterproliferation Center's mission to counter weapons of mass destruction through education and research, we're providing our government and civilian community a source for timely counterproliferation information. This information includes articles, papers and other documents addressing issues pertinent to US military response options for dealing with nuclear, biological and chemical threats and attacks. It's our hope this information resource will help enhance your counterproliferation issue awareness. Established in 1998, the USAF/CPC provides education and research to present and future leaders of the Air Force, as well as to members of other branches of the armed services and Department of Defense. Our purpose is to help those agencies better prepare to counter the threat from weapons of mass destruction. Please feel free to visit our web site at <http://cpc.au.af.mil/> for in-depth information and specific points of contact. Please direct any questions or comments on CPC Outreach Journal to Jo Ann Eddy, CPC Outreach Editor, at (334) 953-7538 or DSN 493-7538. To subscribe, change e-mail address, or unsubscribe to this journal or to request inclusion on the mailing list for CPC publications, please contact Mrs. Eddy, [joann.eddy.ctr@maxwell.af.mil](mailto:joann.eddy.ctr@maxwell.af.mil).

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

Washington Post  
September 13, 2007  
Pg. 12

## **N. Korea, Syria May Be At Work On Nuclear Facility**

By Glenn Kessler, Washington Post Staff Writer

North Korea may be cooperating with Syria on some sort of nuclear facility in Syria, according to new intelligence the United States has gathered over the past six months, sources said. The evidence, said to come primarily from Israel, includes dramatic satellite imagery that led some U.S. officials to believe that the facility could be used to produce material for nuclear weapons.

The new information, particularly images received in the past 30 days, has been restricted to a few senior officials under the instructions of national security adviser Stephen J. Hadley, leaving many in the intelligence community unaware of it or uncertain of its significance, said the sources, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. Some

cautioned that initial reports of suspicious activity are frequently reevaluated over time and were skeptical that North Korea and Syria, which have cooperated on missile technology, would have a joint venture in the nuclear arena. A White House spokesman and the Israeli Embassy declined to comment yesterday after several days of inquiries. A Syrian Embassy spokesman said he could not immediately provide a statement.

The new intelligence comes at an awkward moment for the Bush administration, which since the beginning of the year has pursued an agreement with North Korea on ending its nuclear weapons programs. U.S. and North Korean officials held talks last week in Geneva on the steps needed to normalize relations, and this week a delegation of U.S., Russian and Chinese experts visited North Korea's Yongbyon nuclear facility to consider ways to disable it.

The New York Times first reported on the intelligence linking North Korea and Syria yesterday.

At the Geneva talks, North Korea indicated a willingness to satisfy U.S. questions about an alleged uranium-enrichment program that started the crisis over its nuclear ambitions, the sources said. U.S. officials have said that North Korean officials acknowledged the program in 2002, but Pyongyang subsequently denied doing so. In the meantime, it restarted a plutonium facility at Yongbyon and harvested enough weapons-grade material for as many as 10 nuclear weapons. In October, it tested a nuclear device.

In talks in Beijing in March 2003, a North Korean official pulled aside his American counterpart and threatened to "transfer" nuclear material to other countries. President Bush has said that passing North Korean nuclear technology to other parties would cross the line.

Israel conducted a mysterious raid last week against targets in Syria. The Israeli government has refused to divulge any details, but a former Israeli official said he had been told that it was an attack against a facility capable of making unconventional weapons.

Others have speculated that Israel was testing Syria's air defenses in preparation for a raid on Iran or that Israel was targeting weapons destined for Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Bashar Jaafari, the Syrian ambassador to the United Nations, told reporters that the idea of a Hezbollah connection was ridiculous.

Syria has signed the nuclear nonproliferation treaty but has not agreed to an additional protocol that would allow for enhanced inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency. GlobalSecurity.org, which offers information on weapons of mass destruction, said that "although Syria has long been cited as posing a nuclear proliferation risk, the country seems to have been too strapped for cash to get far."

Syria has a Chinese-supplied "miniature" research reactor at Dayr al-Hajar, but has been unable to obtain larger reactors because of international pressure on potential sellers.

John R. Bolton, former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and a critic of the administration's dealings with North Korea, said that given North Korea's trade in missiles with Syria, it is "legitimate to ask questions about whether that cooperation extends on the nuclear side as well."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/12/AR2007091202430.html>

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

GovExec.com

## **Report: Los Alamos not fully accounting for plutonium**

By Jennifer Talhelm, Associated Press

September 12, 2007

WASHINGTON (AP) -- A stockpile of plutonium and other nuclear weapons materials stored at Los Alamos National Laboratory hasn't been fully accounted for in 13 years or more, a government audit has found.

The northern New Mexico lab's workers have done regular, partial inventories of the material, which the government considers to be at high risk of theft, the audit by the Energy Department's inspector general, Gregory Friedman, found.

Yet an inventory of all the material hasn't been done in "perhaps 13 years or more," Friedman wrote. It wasn't even done when the lab's management contract changed last year, investigators noted in the report made public Wednesday.

Friedman said he is concerned because the lack of complete inventories means that lab workers likely haven't physically accounted for all of the material in more than a decade.

"The capability to deter, detect and assist in the prevention of theft or diversion of this material is critical," Friedman wrote. Yet, he added: "We were unable to find anyone with knowledge or documentation of the last time the vault was completely inventoried."

The lab is responsible for maintaining stores of plutonium, enriched uranium and depleted uranium as well as other materials used in the nation's nuclear weapons program.

The report recommends the lab's managers improve the inventory process.

A lab spokesman did not immediately return a call for comment.

Los Alamos has been plagued by security lapses over the years -- from missing data storage devices to the discovery of classified data during a drug bust at a former lab contract worker's trailer.

While auditors said the lab is generally doing a good job at tracking the most sensitive material, the lack of a full inventory was one of several issues they said needed fixing. Among the other problems auditors found:

- None of the six inventories of the highly sensitive material done since December 2005 has been finished on time, a problem that was noted during similar audits in 2003 and 2005.
- Some lab employees don't follow instructions for how to develop identification numbers for the materials so they are easily identified. For example, auditors said one system was based on characters in a movie that a technician had just seen.
- In an area that stores less sensitive nuclear material - containing smaller amounts of plutonium and uranium - a new shipment of nuclear material wasn't documented for eight days. Auditors noted that it was supposed to have been entered into the system within four hours.

"Under the circumstances, the nuclear material could have been diverted without any record showing that it had ever existed," Friedman wrote.

The Energy Department defended its practice of doing weighted sampling in a memo to Friedman from Glenn Podonsky, the chief health, safety and security officer.

The lab's policy is to keep exposure to radiation as low as possible, and the sensitive materials area has a relatively high level of radiation, Podonsky wrote. He said that full inventories aren't always practical and argued that lab officials should be allowed to determine the best inventory techniques.

Friedman noted that Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory does semiannual 100 percent inventories.

[http://govexec.com/story\\_page.cfm?articleid=38005&dcn=todaysnews](http://govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=38005&dcn=todaysnews)

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

YAHOO! News

## **U.S.: Syria on nuclear watch list**

By NICOLE WINFIELD, Associated Press Writer

ROME - A senior U.S. nuclear official said Friday that North Koreans were in Syria and that Damascus may have had contacts with "secret suppliers" to obtain nuclear equipment.

Andrew Semmel, acting deputy assistant secretary of state for nuclear nonproliferation policy, did not identify the suppliers, but said North Koreans were in the country and that he could not exclude that the network run by the disgraced Pakistan nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan may have been involved.

He said it was not known if the contacts had produced any results. "Whether anything transpired remains to be seen," he said.

Syria has never commented publicly on its nuclear program. It has a small research nuclear reactor, as do several other countries in the region, including Egypt. While Israel and the U.S. have expressed concerns in the past, Damascus has not been known to make a serious push to develop a nuclear energy or weapons program.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack declined to comment on Semmel's remarks but noted that the United States had longstanding concerns about North Korea and nuclear proliferation.

"We've also expressed, over time, our concerns about North Korea's activities in terms of dealing with A.Q. Khan and others around the globe," he told reporters.

McCormack said he was not aware of any specific link between North Korea and Syria.

Proliferation experts have said that Syria's weak economy would make it hard-pressed to afford nuclear technology, and that Damascus — which is believed to have some chemical weapons stocks — may have taken the position that it does not also need nuclear weapons.

Semmel was responding to questions about an Israeli airstrike in northern Syria last week. Neither side has explained what exactly happened, but a U.S. government official confirmed that Israeli warplanes were targeting weapons from Iran and destined for Hezbollah militants in Lebanon.

The Washington Post reported Thursday that Israel had gathered satellite imagery showing possible North Korean cooperation with Syria on a nuclear facility.

North Korea, which has a longstanding alliance with Syria, condemned the Israeli air incursion. Israeli experts say North Korea and Iran both have been major suppliers of Syria's missile stock.

Syrian Information Minister Mohsen Bilal told the Saudi newspaper Asharq al-Awsat on Thursday that the accusations of North Korean nuclear help were a "new American spin to cover up" for Israel.

Semmel, who is in Italy for a meeting Saturday on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, said Syria was certainly on the U.S. "watch list."

"There are indicators that they do have something going on there," he said. "We do know that there are a number of foreign technicians that have been in Syria. We do know that there may have been contact between Syria and some secret suppliers for nuclear equipment. Whether anything transpired remains to be seen."

"So good foreign policy, good national security policy, would suggest that we pay very close attention to that," he said. "We're watching very closely. Obviously, the Israelis were watching very closely."

Asked if the suppliers could have been North Koreans, he said: "There are North Korean people there. There's no question about that. Just as there are a lot of North Koreans in Iraq and Iran."

Asked if the so-called Khan network, which supplied nuclear technology to Iran, Libya and North Korea, could have been involved, he said he "wouldn't exclude" it.

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20070914/ap\\_on\\_re\\_mi\\_ea/syria\\_us:ylt=Ajj54RrLIDEmKD6VpHC.VGFI2ocA](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20070914/ap_on_re_mi_ea/syria_us:ylt=Ajj54RrLIDEmKD6VpHC.VGFI2ocA)

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

International Herald Tribune  
September 14, 2007

## **Russian scientist accused of trying to smuggle possible biological weapons materials**

The Associated Press

**MOSCOW:** Security agents are investigating a Russian scientist for allegedly trying to smuggle out of Russia materials that could be used in building a biological or bacteriological weapon, the scientist and his co-workers said Friday.

Oleg Mediannikov is the latest in a growing number of academics and scientists who have been targeted by Russia's main security agency, the Federal Security Service, for allegedly misusing classified information, revealing state secrets or, in some cases, espionage.

Mediannikov, a biologist at Moscow's Gamaleya Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology, told The Associated Press that he was traveling to France in December to bring vials of a non-dangerous typhoid vaccine to colleagues when he was stopped by customs officials at Sheremetyevo Airport.

The samples were confiscated and sent to a government laboratory for testing, but Mediannikov said he was allowed to come to travel to Marseilles, then returned to Moscow without further incident.

In February, as he tried to travel to Africa on a tourist trip, he said he was denied permission to leave at Moscow's Domodedovo Airport. His passport was confiscated and was returned to him two months later, he said.

In June, he said he was notified he was under investigation for smuggling materials that might be used for preparing weapons of mass destruction — a charge he said could result, if convicted, in a sentence up to seven years in prison.

Mediannikov said he had the necessary documentation and permits for the samples at the time they were confiscated. He also said that the directors of the Gamaleya Institute have asked him to resign, but he has refused.

"Logically, this shouldn't be happening at all, but it is and why it is remains a complete mystery for me," he told AP.

"I really hope that wiser heads will prevail."

Anatoly Osipenko, deputy director of the Gamaleya Institute, accused Mediannikov of violating Russian customs law by not declaring the samples when he was leaving the country.

A duty officer at the Federal Security Service refused to comment on the investigation, saying all questions should be submitted in writing.

Didier Raoult, a French biologist with the University of the Mediterranean, said Mediannikov had been to France three times in the past without incident.

"We've been working with the Gamaleya Institute for 15 years and we've never had any problems. Even when we were working in communist times," Raoult said.

Earlier this year, customs officials banned exports of blood samples and other biological materials from Russia; the Health Ministry, however, said the decision by customs' officials concerned only major shipments of biological materials and would not affect ordinary patients.

The Health Ministry and other Russian officials gave no reason for the decision, but it appeared to reflect official suspicions about Western companies' involvement in the sensitive sphere of health care amid a deepening chill in ties and accusations of European and U.S. meddling in Russia's affairs.

Health Minister Mikhail Zurabov later said that new rules governing the export of human blood and tissue would soon be set.

It was not immediately clear whether the rules had been issued, or whether they would concern the samples Mediannikov was carrying.

The investigation highlighted the chill that has fallen over Russian scientific research under President Vladimir Putin, a former KGB officer.

In 2004, physicist Valentin Danilov was convicted of spying for China and sentenced to 14 years in prison for providing allegedly sensitive information that he said had been published in part in publicly available scientific magazines. The same year, arms control researcher Igor Sutyagin was convicted of treason for selling information on nuclear submarines and missile-warning systems to a British company that Russian investigators claimed was a CIA cover.

Last month, the Federal Security Service said it was dropping its investigation of two physicist-brothers who published a booklet last year that outside experts determined, the service said, contained classified information "related to the development of armaments."

<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/09/14/europe/EU-GEN-Russia-Scientist-Investigation.php>

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

IAEA.org

## **IAEA Illicit Trafficking Database Releases Latest Aggregate Statistics**

### **Staff Report**

**11 September 2007**

From January 1993 to December 2006, a total of 275 incidents involving unauthorized possession and related criminal activities were confirmed to the Agency's Illicit Trafficking Database (ITDB), according to information released by the Office of Nuclear Security. Fourteen such incidents occurred in 2006. Incidents included in this category can be described as "illicit trafficking." They contain common "illicit trafficking" elements such as illegal possession, movement, or attempts to illegally trade in these materials.

A break-down of the 275 incidents of unauthorized possession and related criminal activities shows that 55% of the cases involved nuclear materials and 45% involved radioactive sources. Of the incidents with nuclear materials, 15 involved the seizure of highly enriched uranium and plutonium from individuals or groups who possessed them illegally. Some of these incidents involved attempts to sell these materials and smuggle them across national borders.

In addition, 332 reported incidents involved the theft or loss of nuclear or other radioactive materials (85 occurred in 2006) and 398 involved other unauthorized activities, such as the unauthorized disposal of radioactive materials or discovery of "orphan sources" (51 occurred in 2006). Most of these incidents involved radioactive sources, including high-risk "dangerous" sources (as defined in the IAEA Categorization of radioactive sources, RS-G-1.9., for example, caesium-137 and cobalt-60). In about 67% of cases with lost or stolen materials, the materials had not been recovered at the time of reporting. In 75 incidents reported during 1993-2006 the reported information was not sufficient to determine the category of incident.

"Information reported to the ITDB shows a persistent problem with the illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials, thefts, losses, and other unauthorized activities," the latest ITDB report said.

Established in 1995, the ITDB is the IAEA's information system on incidents of illicit trafficking and other unauthorized activities involving nuclear and radioactive materials. The scope of the ITDB information is broad and includes, but is not limited to, incidents involving the illegal trade and movement of materials across borders. The Database tracks events that occurred intentionally or unintentionally, with or without crossing international borders, as well as unsuccessful or thwarted acts.

The ITDB facilitates the exchange of authoritative information on incidents of illicit trafficking and other unauthorized activities involving nuclear and radioactive materials. Currently, 96 States participate in the ITDB Programme. In some cases, non-participating Member States have provided information to the ITDB.

<http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/News/2007/itdb.html>

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

Washington Post  
September 15, 2007  
Pg. 12

## **Syria-N. Korea Reports Won't Stop Talks**

By Glenn Kessler, Washington Post Staff Writer



Reports that North Korea may be assisting Syria with a possible nuclear program will not derail efforts to implement a deal to end North Korea's nuclear programs, the chief U.S. negotiator said yesterday, arguing that the reports emphasized the need to complete the agreement.

U.S. sources reported this week that Israel had recently provided the United States with evidence -- known by the code name "Orchard" -- that North Korea has been cooperating with Syria on a nuclear facility. But many outside nuclear experts have expressed skepticism that Syria, which has mostly focused on chemical and biological weapons, would be conducting nuclear trade with North Korea.

"The reason we have the six-party process, and the reason we have put together a number of pretty serious countries in this process, is to make sure that the North Koreans get out of the nuclear business," Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill told reporters yesterday, in advance of a new round of talks next week in Beijing. "At the end of all this, we would expect to have a pretty clear idea of, you know, whether they have engaged in proliferation in other countries."

To the dismay of conservative critics, the Bush administration has pressed ahead with a deal that calls for North Korea to disclose all of its nuclear activities by the end of the year. Some have argued the administration is being snookered by Pyongyang to give up concessions without learning the full extent of its activities.

The White House and the State Department generally have declined to either confirm or deny reports of the Syria-North Korea link, but one top official yesterday seemed to fan the flames. Andrew Semmel, acting deputy assistant secretary of state for nuclear nonproliferation policy, told the Associated Press yesterday in Rome that North Koreans were in Syria and that Damascus may have had contacts with "secret suppliers" to obtain nuclear equipment. "There are indicators that they do have something going on there," he said.

State Department officials declined to comment on Semmel's remarks.

Meanwhile, a prominent U.S. expert on the Middle East, who has interviewed Israeli participants in a mysterious raid over Syria last week, reported that the attack appears to have been linked to the arrival three days earlier of a ship carrying material from North Korea labeled as cement.

The expert, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to avoid compromising his sources, said the target of the attack appears to have been a northern Syrian facility that was labeled an agricultural research center on the Euphrates River, close to the Turkish border. Israel has kept a close eye on the facility, believing that Syria was using it to extract uranium from phosphates.

The expert said it is not clear what the ship was carrying, but the emerging consensus in Israel was that it delivered nuclear equipment. The ship arrived Sept. 3 in the Syrian port of Tartus; the attack occurred Sept. 6 under such strict operational security that the pilots flying air cover for the attack aircraft did not know details of the mission. The pilots who conducted the attack were briefed only after they were in the air, he said.

Israel has imposed heavy censorship on reporters regarding the raid, so few details have leaked. The expert said that Israel appeared to have learned a lesson from its experience in destroying the Osiraq nuclear reactor in Iraq -- that bragging about an operation only makes it easier for the world to condemn it.

Adding to the mystery, Syria has made only muted protests about the raid, and North Korea, which rarely comments on international matters, swiftly condemned it.

Bruce Reidel, a former intelligence official at the Brookings Institution's Saban Center, said, "It was a substantial Israeli operation, but I can't get a good fix on whether the target was a nuclear thing." He said there was "a great deal of skepticism that there's any nuclear angle here" and instead the facility could have been related to chemical or biological weapons.

But other sources who have been monitoring the Middle East said the attack was likely to be against a transit point for Iranian weapons bound for Hezbollah in Lebanon.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/14/AR2007091402207.html>

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

Los Angeles Times

September 16, 2007

## **U.S. Nuclear Team Returns To Seoul From North Korea**

By Associated Press

SEOUL —A U.S. team of nuclear experts wrapped up a rare trip to North Korea on Saturday, after surveying the communist country's main nuclear complex and holding talks with officials to determine how to disable the facilities.

The delegation returned to Seoul after crossing the tense land border between the two Koreas, an official at the U.S. Embassy in Seoul said.

During the five-day visit, the U.S. experts teamed up with Chinese and Russian specialists to survey the North's main nuclear facilities at Yongbyon, 60 miles north of Pyongyang, the capital.

They also held talks with North Korean officials in Pyongyang. The discussions produced a "detailed plan" for disabling the Yongbyon facilities, Chu Xuming, the Chinese member of the three-nation team, was quoted as saying by China's official New China News Agency.

South Korea's No. 2 nuclear negotiator, Lim Sung-nam, said the talks between the delegation and North Korea were "businesslike" and "positive," raising hopes for a firm deal on how to disable the North's nuclear facilities.

Lim's comments strongly suggest that the upcoming six-nation nuclear disarmament talks in Beijing are expected to produce a concrete agreement with North Korea on how to disable its nuclear facilities by year's end so they cannot produce material for bombs.

The nuclear negotiations bring together China, Japan, the two Koreas, Russia and the United States. South Korean and U.S. officials have said the talks will resume this week.

North Korea is to disable Yongbyon in exchange for economic aid and political concessions under a February deal reached through the six-party talks. In July, North Korea closed its sole functioning reactor at the plant.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-koreanukes16sep16,1,3607151.story>

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

Washington Times

September 17, 2007

Pg. 1

## **Algeria, China Teamed On Nuke**

*'91 documents declassified*

By Bill Gertz, Washington Times

Newly declassified U.S. government documents confirm the U.S. government suspected China was helping Algeria build a secret facility in 1991 for developing nuclear weapons.

The 15-megawatt reactor is now a research center about 80 miles south of the Algerian capital of Algiers, and has been brought under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) controls.

However, the once-classified reports show the joint Chinese-Algerian nuclear project was kept secret from the 1980s until its existence was first disclosed by The Washington Times on April 11, 1991.

The disclosure set off international protests and diplomatic pressure involving eight nations, and a major interagency effort within the administration of President George H.W. Bush to learn whether the Algerians were following Pakistan in building nuclear weapons with help from China, or were limited to obtaining a small research reactor.

Additionally, the documents show the nuclear facility — called El Salam, or Peace — near Burin, Algeria, was defended by anti-aircraft missiles and anti-aircraft artillery from mid-January 1991 to mid-March 1991, during the Persian Gulf War, another indication of the military nature of the project.

"Algeria and China had not publicly acknowledged their cooperation on this reactor project prior to the appearance of U.S. press reports in April 1991 alleging that China was assisting Algeria in the construction of a nuclear reactor, which could be employed in a future Algerian nuclear-weapons effort," a National Security Council (NSC) report from September 1991 titled "The Algerian Nuclear Program," stated.

The report noted that at the time there were major "political uncertainties" in Algeria and that some of the major political parties "favor the development of nuclear weapons."

The NSC and State Department documents were made public Sept. 10 by the National Security Archive, a private group at George Washington University.

Defense and intelligence officials at the time thought the secret program was in the early stages of developing nuclear arms, based on the Algerian government's fears of a weapons build-up by the radical regime in neighboring Libya. The anti-aircraft defenses and the facility's proximity to electrical-power infrastructure also raised suspicions.

The documents, however, show how State Department officials, apparently eager to avoid upsetting Beijing, accepted Chinese government promises that the project was intended only for peaceful nuclear research. One State Department memo dismissed the fears as "the great Algerian nuclear-weapons scare."

The State Department documents on the program offer no explanation for why the project was kept secret, or was kept outside IAEA controls despite Algeria's requirement for such controls with its first reactor near Algiers. Algeria also had not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty at the time. It did so later.

Skeptics in the Pentagon and CIA, however, argued during interagency meetings at the time that the facility appeared to be part of a large-scale reactor, perhaps capable of producing 60 megawatts of power, and included a reprocessing facility with military applications because of the six cooling towers at the complex, the documents show.

China and Algeria insisted the reactor would produce 15 megawatts of power and have a limited capacity to produce fissile material for a bomb, according to the documents.

One diplomatic note prepared for presentation to the Swiss government urging it to cancel the sale of nuclear equipment with weapons applications stated in August 1991 that "the original secrecy of the Algerian-Chinese nuclear cooperation and the apparent size of the cooling capacity continue to raise questions in our minds with regard to its nuclear program."

The documents also stated that the first information about the Chinese reactor sale to Algeria was uncovered in mid-January 1989, but documents on the secret program were "misplaced" until March 1991, when the issue was first investigated.

China's government has been linked to nuclear weapons programs in Pakistan and Libya. Beijing supplied Pakistan with nuclear-weapons technology and bomb-design information, U.S. intelligence officials said. Chinese language documents showing how to design a small nuclear warhead for a missile were discovered by U.S. officials in Libya in 2003 as part of Tripoli's nuclear-dismantlement effort. China's government never explained how the documents got there.

The current Bush administration had suspicions about Algeria's nuclear program as recently as 2004, officials said. Algeria is a U.S. ally in the global war against terror.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/article/20070917/NATION/109170066/1002>

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

Washington Post  
September 18, 2007  
Pg. 16

## **IAEA Chief Exhorts Iran's Critics To Avoid Threats Of Force**

By George Jahn, Associated Press

VIENNA, Sept. 17 -- The chief U.N. nuclear inspector urged Iran's harshest critics Monday to learn from the Iraq invasion and refrain from "hype" about a possible military attack, calling force an option of last resort.

Mohamed ElBaradei also said nations critical of his last-ditch effort to entice Iran into revealing past nuclear activities that could be linked to a weapons program should wait until the end of the year, when the deadline for Iran to provide answers runs out.

"By November or December, we will be able to know if Iran is acting in good faith or not," he said.

ElBaradei, speaking outside a 144-nation meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which he heads, invoked the example of Iraq in urging an end to threats of force against Iran, including one by France over the weekend.

"I would not talk about any use of force," ElBaradei said, noting that only the U.N. Security Council can authorize such action. "There are rules on how to use force, and I would hope that everybody would have gotten the lesson after the Iraq situation, where 700,000 innocent civilians have lost their lives on the suspicion that a country has nuclear weapons." [Other estimates based on news reports put the number of civilians killed in Iraq since the U.S.-led invasion at fewer than 80,000.]

On Sunday, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner warned that the world should prepare for war if Iran obtains nuclear weapons and said European leaders were considering their own economic sanctions against the Islamic country.

Kouchner, speaking on RTL radio, said that if Iran produced such a weapon, "we must prepare ourselves for the worst."

On Monday, French Prime Minister François Fillon sought to play down Kouchner's comments, saying, "Everything must be done to avoid war."

Alluding implicitly to the United States and its Western allies, Iranian Vice President Gholamreza Aghazadeh accused unnamed countries of forcing the international community onto the "unjustified, illegal, deceptive and misleading path . . . by imposing restrictions and sanctions."

He also again ruled out scrapping Iran's uranium enrichment program, telling delegates that Iran would "never give up its inalienable and legal right in benefiting from peaceful nuclear technology."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/17/AR2007091700416.html>

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

New York Times  
September 18, 2007



# Israeli Nuclear Suspicions Linked To Raid In Syria

By Mark Mazzetti and Helene Cooper

WASHINGTON, Sept. 17 — The Sept. 6 attack by Israeli warplanes inside Syria struck what Israeli intelligence believes was a nuclear-related facility that North Korea was helping to equip, according to current and former American and Israeli officials.

Details about the Israeli assessment emerged as China abruptly canceled planned diplomatic talks in Beijing that were to set a schedule to disband nuclear facilities in North Korea. The Bush administration has declined to comment on the Israeli raid, but American officials were expected to confront the North Koreans about their suspected nuclear support for Syria during those talks.

The American and Israeli officials said the Israeli government notified the Bush administration about the planned attack just before the raid. It is not clear whether administration officials expressed support for the action or counseled against it.

The raid has aroused intense speculation in Washington and Jerusalem, but details remain extraordinarily murky. Officials said access to new intelligence about suspected North Korean support to Syria has been confined to a very small group of officials in Washington and Jerusalem.

The details of the Israeli intelligence remain highly classified, and the accounts about Israel's thinking were provided by current and former officials who are generally sympathetic to Israel's point of view. It is not clear whether American intelligence agencies agree with the Israeli assessment about the facility targeted in the raid, and some officials expressed doubt that Syria has either the money or the scientific talent to initiate a serious nuclear program.

But current and former American and Israeli officials who have received briefings from Israeli sources said Monday that the raid was an attempt by Israel to destroy a site that Israel believed to be associated with a rudimentary Syrian nuclear program.

The allegations come at a particularly delicate time, with the United States and several Asian countries testing whether North Korea is serious about dismantling its nuclear production facilities and providing a full accounting of all its nuclear facilities, fuel and weapons.

Israel is also wary of complicating continuing peace talks involving other countries in the Middle East about the future of a Palestinian state. In particular, the Bush administration has not decided yet whether Syria will be invited to a Middle East peace conference that is to be held in Washington in November. A tense Israel-Syria standoff would further complicate that decision, Israeli and American officials said.

The Sept. 6 strike was carried out several days after a ship with North Korean cargo tracked by Israeli intelligence docked in a Syrian port, according to the current and former officials. The cargo was transferred to the site that Israel later attacked, the officials said. It is unclear exactly what the shipment contained. A former top American official said the Israelis had monitored the site for some time before the ship arrived. The ship's arrival in Syria before the raid was first reported Saturday by The Washington Post.

It is also unclear why China decided at the 11th hour to postpone the planned talks, but Beijing's decision seemed to put off a possible confrontation between the United States and North Korea that could have scuttled the diplomatic talks with North Korea.

Christopher R. Hill, the top American negotiator for the talks, had already packed his bags and was preparing to depart for Beijing when he was notified of China's decision to delay the negotiations, American officials said.

North Korea has a long relationship with Syria, mostly involving the sale of weapons, particularly technology for relatively primitive missiles. But it has never been caught exporting nuclear-related material to either Syria or Iran, another of its customers for missile technology.

On Sunday on Fox News, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates declined to confirm either whether Israel had attacked targets in Syria or whether North Korea was providing nuclear-related assistance to that Arab country. But he warned, "If such an activity were taking place, it would be a matter of great concern because the president has put down a very strong marker with the North Koreans about further proliferation efforts, and obviously any effort by the Syrians to pursue weapons of mass destruction would be a concern."

A senior North Korean diplomat dismissed the accusations, the South Korean news agency Yonhap said Sunday. "They often say things that are groundless," Kim Myong-gil, North Korea's deputy United Nations mission chief, told Yonhap.

Whether North Korean actions could ultimately cause a breakdown in disarmament talks may well depend on what, if anything, the United States concludes about the nature of any illicit relationship between Syria and the North.

The most benign of the theories is that the cargo had no use in a nuclear program. Another theory is that any equipment shipped from North Korea to Syria was designed to help Syria mine uranium and transform it into enriched uranium. That could mean that Syria is involved in only the early stages of any nuclear activity, and it could argue that the mining operation is for something other than weapons.

But any shipment of nuclear fuel to Syria by North Korea would be much more significant, though that is considered less likely and very risky for North Korea at this time.

"It would almost defy credibility that the North Koreans would be willing to risk so much to engage in a nuclear weapons-related proliferation," said Evans Revere, the president of the Korea Society in New York and a former senior American diplomat in Seoul.

*David E. Sanger contributed reporting.*

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/18/world/asia/18korea.html?\\_r=1&adxnml=1&oref=slogin&adxnmlx=1190236263-GzKLGJmAkBE3tY3HQ8kiw](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/18/world/asia/18korea.html?_r=1&adxnml=1&oref=slogin&adxnmlx=1190236263-GzKLGJmAkBE3tY3HQ8kiw)

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

Philadelphia Inquirer

September 19, 2007

## **Syria, N. Korea Deny Working On Nuclear Program**

By Albert Aji, Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria - Syria and North Korea denied yesterday they were cooperating on a Syrian nuclear program, and they accused U.S. officials of spreading the allegations for political reasons - either to back Israel or to block progress on a deal between Washington and Pyongyang.

A front-page editorial in the government newspaper Tishrin also criticized the United States for failing to condemn a Sept. 6 Israeli air incursion, which it called a violation of international law.

Details of the incursion remain unclear. Israel clamped a news blackout on the raid, while Syria said only that warplanes entered its airspace, came under fire from antiaircraft defenses, and dropped munitions and fuel tanks to lighten their loads while they fled.

U.S. officials have said Israeli warplanes struck a target. A military officer said Israel targeted weapons being shipped to Hezbollah extremists in Lebanon. Another official's comments raised speculation the Israelis targeted a nuclear installation.

Andrew Semmel, acting U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for nuclear nonproliferation policy, said Syria may have had contacts with "secret suppliers" to obtain nuclear equipment. He did not identify the suppliers but said that North Koreans were in Syria and that he could not exclude involvement by the network run by the disgraced Pakistan nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan.

North Korea strongly denied it secretly helped Syria develop a nuclear program. It said the allegation was fabricated by U.S. hard-liners to block progress in the North's relations with the United States.

A Syrian cabinet minister ridiculed the speculation about any cooperation with North Korea.

"All this rubbish is not true," Bouthaina Shaaban said. "I don't know how their imagination has reached such creativity."

In Vienna, Austria, officials for the International Atomic Energy Agency declined comment. A diplomat associated with the agency said the IAEA "didn't know anything about any nuclear facility in Syria, and if there is something there, we should know."

Syria was the subject of an IAEA investigation in 2004 on suspicions it could have been a customer of the nuclear black market run by the Khan network - the same operation that supplied Iran and Libya for their clandestine atomic projects. The diplomat in Vienna, who insisted on anonymity, said the IAEA found no concrete evidence of such activity.

Syria's nuclear program has long been considered minimal, and the country is known to have only a small research reactor. Israel is widely believed to have nuclear weapons but has never acknowledged it.

Israeli incursions into Syrian airspace are uncommon, unlike in neighboring Lebanon, where Israeli warplanes have regularly made reconnaissance flights since last year's war with Hezbollah.

[http://www.philly.com/inquirer/world\\_us/20070919\\_Syria\\_N\\_Korea\\_deny\\_working\\_on\\_nuclear\\_program.html](http://www.philly.com/inquirer/world_us/20070919_Syria_N_Korea_deny_working_on_nuclear_program.html)

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

New York Post

September 19, 2007

## **Lethal WMD Blast**

*Proof Iran and Syria are in cahoots*

By Clemente Lisi

Dozens of Iranian engineers and 15 Syrian soldiers were killed in an explosion while conducting a top-secret experiment - providing new evidence that the two countries are working together to develop weapons of mass destruction, it was reported yesterday.

The blast occurred while the joint Syrian-Iranian team was trying to mount a chemical warhead on a Scud missile, spreading lethal agents - including deadly Sarin and mustard gas - into the air.

The July 23 accident occurred at a factory in northern Syria, 50 miles from the Turkish border, created for the purpose of adapting ballistic missiles to carry chemical weapons, Jane's Magazine reported.

A fire that started in the missile's engine led to an explosion near a storage facility for chemical substances, the British-based magazine reported on its Web site.

This summer's accident confirms that Iran, which has been trying to develop its own nuclear weapons, is working with its Mideast ally to secure warheads capable of inflicting widespread destruction.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has come under fire from the United States and other nations for going ahead with his country's nuclear-energy program.

The incident was reported at the time by Syria's official news agency.

But the report included only information on the Syrian casualties and did not mention Iranian casualties.

The Syrian report claimed the explosion was caused by a "heat wave," although the blast took place at around 4:30 a.m.

The Syrian government rejected the possibility of sabotage.

Syria has a long history of developing chemical weapons.

Since 1985 it has manufactured a variety of missiles capable of carrying Sarin. Russian intelligence has claimed that Syria has a stockpile of hundreds of chemical aerial bombs.

According to Jane's, the facility where the accident took place was built as part of a cooperation agreement signed between Syria and Iran in 2005.

*With Post Wire Services*

[http://www.nypost.com/seven/09192007/news/worldnews/lethal\\_wmd\\_blast.htm](http://www.nypost.com/seven/09192007/news/worldnews/lethal_wmd_blast.htm)

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

The Times

TIMESONLINE

September 20, 2007

## **Blast at secret Syrian missile site kills dozens**

James Hider in Jerusalem and Michael Evans, Defence Editor

An accidental explosion in a secret weapons facility in Syria killed dozens of Syrian and Iranian military engineers as they were attempting to mount a chemical warhead on a Scud missile, according to an authoritative military journal.

Fifteen military personnel and "dozens" of Iranian advisers died when the fuel for the missile caught fire and the weapon exploded, according to unnamed Syrian sources quoted by *Jane's Defence Weekly*.

The report said that the explosion sent out a cloud of chemical and nerve gases, including the deadly VX and Sarin agents as well as mustard gas, across the facility in the northern city of Aleppo. The claims could not be verified independently by sources in London and the United States.

The official Syrian news agency, Sana, reported that 15 Syrian military personnel were killed and 50 others injured in an accident involving "very explosive products" on July 26. It made no mention of Iranian officers also being killed in the blast, which it said was not an act of sabotage.

*Jane's* claimed that the engineers were trying to weaponise a Syrian-made Scud missile with a range of about 300 miles (480km) when the explosion occurred. The Syrians and Iranians are thought to have been working closely together on developing a more effective chemical warhead for the Scud ballistic missile system.

Both Syria and Iran have benefited from an advanced version of the Scud, which was designed by the North Koreans. Duncan Lennox, editor of *Jane's Strategic Weapon Systems*, said that North Korea had managed to reduce the weight of the missile and increase the strength of the outer casing, as well as change some of the components inside. The technology was passed on to Syria and Iran, and "they put their heads together", Mr Lennox said.

Reports of the accident coincided with widespread speculation that an audacious Israeli airstrike against another Syrian facility two weeks ago may have destroyed a nuclear shipment from North Korea.

Although Israel has maintained an uncharacteristic silence, US officials led by John Bolton, the hawkish former Ambassador to the United Nations, have hinted that North Korea might have been trying to hide nuclear materials in Syria to avoid inspection. No proof has so far been offered to support the claims, which Syria and North Korea deny

and which critics say recall the whispering campaign about weapons of mass destruction that preceded the US invasion of Iraq in 2003.

If the claims are true, the Israeli strike would be the most daring long-range mission launched since it destroyed the Iraqi nuclear plant being built by Saddam Hussein at Osiraq, near Baghdad, in June 1981.

Moshe Maoz, an Israeli expert on Syria, said it was possible the strike involved some kind of nuclear material. He said it would most likely have been an imported warhead, because Damascus lacks the infrastructure to develop its own nuclear programme. "Israel wouldn't go for such a bold, daring and dangerous action without a very good reason," he said. "My guess is that it is something to do with nuclear materials."

General Mohammad Alavi, the deputy commander of the Iranian Air Force, said yesterday that Tehran would strike back if Israel launched any raids on its territory. "We have drawn up a plan to strike back at Israel with our bombers if this regime makes a silly mistake," he said.

[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle\\_east/article2489930.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle_east/article2489930.ece)

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

New York Daily News  
September 20, 2007

## **Israel To Syria: Use Chem Weapons And We'll Wipe You Off Map**

By Matthew Kalman and Bill Hutchinson, Daily News Writers

Israeli officials vowed to wipe Syria off the map if it is attacked with chemical weapons like one that reportedly exploded in July at a secret Syrian base staffed with Iranian engineers.

Politicians in Israel said yesterday they were not picking a fight with their neighbor, but pledged to forcefully retaliate if chemical warheads come screaming across its shared border.

"We will not attack them first. But if they ever use these weapons against Israel, then we must be clear — it will be the end of this evil and brutal dictatorship," Yuval Steinitz, a right-wing member of the Israeli parliament, told the Daily News yesterday.

Sparking shock waves across the Middle East was a report in Jane's Defence Weekly about an accidental explosion at a top secret Syrian base in July.

Citing Syrian intelligence sources, the report claimed a team of Iranian and Syrian engineers were killed July 26 while trying to arm a Scud-C missile with a mustard gas warhead.

Syrian official news agency, SANA, reported that at least 15 Syrian military personnel had been "martyred" and 50 others injured in the blast near the northern city of Aleppo on the Turkish border. It claimed the early morning explosion was caused by the high temperatures.

The SANA report mentioned nothing of Iranian personnel killed in the mishap.

Jane's said dozens of Iranian workers were among those who died when a fire in the missile's engine triggered the explosion and release of a toxic cloud of lethal chemical agents banned under international law.

U.S. intelligence sources played down the report saying they've seen no credible evidence chemical weapons were involved in the Syrian accident.

*With James Gordon Meek in Washington*

[http://www.nydailynews.com/news/wn\\_report/2007/09/19/2007-09-19\\_israel\\_to\\_syria\\_use\\_chem\\_weapons\\_well\\_w.html](http://www.nydailynews.com/news/wn_report/2007/09/19/2007-09-19_israel_to_syria_use_chem_weapons_well_w.html)

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