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Washington Times

June 14, 2007

Pg. 6

China Arms Talks, Reciprocity Stalled

U.S. awaits Hu's military promises

By Bill Gertz, Washington Times

China continues to put off nuclear weapons talks with the United States that were promised by Beijing's leader and has not matched U.S. openness in recent military exchanges, a senior Pentagon official told Congress yesterday.

"In the bilateral military relationship, we are troubled by what appears to be an unwillingness to reciprocate the openness and transparency we have shown to visiting [Chinese military] representatives," said Richard Lawless, deputy undersecretary of defense for Asia.

Mr. Lawless, appearing before the House Armed Services Committee, said the Pentagon was encouraged by Chinese President Hu Jintao's stated interest in talks on nuclear strategy, policy and doctrine. However, "we are concerned by an apparent reluctance on the part of the [Chinese] government to discuss transparently these important issues."

Mr. Hu told President Bush during an April 2006 summit in Washington that he would arrange the talks with China's military on nuclear issues.

"We have been unable to schedule a date for this dialogue," Mr. Lawless said.

Pentagon officials said China has refused to set a date for a visit to the United States by Gen. Jing Zhiyuan, head of China's nuclear forces, after he was invited by Marine Corps Gen. James E. Cartwright, the commander of U.S. nuclear forces. Chinese officials have said scheduling problems and an upcoming Communist Party conference prevented them from setting a date.

The Chinese general, however, visited several nations in South America in December, an indication that China's military is delaying the visit, defense officials said. They noted that China's military fears that discussions on its growing nuclear weapons arsenal will assist the United States military in targeting the weapons in any conflict.

Mr. Lawless said a dialogue on nuclear issues is needed because "what's really happening here is while the United States' capabilities are remaining essentially constant, we have a significant improvement in China's ability to target the United States or to target us regionally but specifically the continental United States."

Mr. Lawless said China's lack of openness about its annual defense spending is "emblematic of our fundamental concerns over a lack of transparency in China's military and security affairs." Beijing maintains that it is spending about \$45 billion a year on defense, while U.S. estimates put the figure as high as \$125 billion.

Mr. Lawless, who is stepping down from his post this summer, said China's military is engaged in a major buildup of forces that includes longer-range missiles, warships, submarines and other high-technology armaments. China's military also is building up space weapons and cyber-warfare capabilities, he said.

The buildup is aimed at preparing for a war over Taiwan, which Beijing views as part of its territory, as well as to conduct military expansionism in the future over energy resources or territory, Mr. Lawless said.

He said China's military has reached a point where it can confront the U.S. military successfully and is building "asymmetric" warfare weapons.

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20070613-113141-8014r.htm>

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Washington Times

June 14, 2007

Pg. 19

A 'Ballistic Missile Triad'

China, Iran and Russia pose dire global threat

By Fred Stakelbeck

A slew of incendiary statements coming out of Moscow over the past few weeks have many Western observers concerned that a new Cold War between Russia and the United States is rapidly taking shape. Bolstered by an ambitious military modernization program, energy and arms revenues and a growing global distaste for perceived U.S. hegemony, Russian President Vladimir Putin has used his growing influence both at home and abroad to confront what he sees as Washington's growing "imperialist" actions.

Mr. Putin has clearly gone on the offensive. Speaking with a group of reporters recently, he said actions by the United States to place a missile-defense shield in Europe would cause Russia to "acquire new targets in Europe" which could "unleash a nuclear conflict." The successful test two weeks ago of two separate ballistic missiles, coupled with Russia's plan to spend upward of \$200 billion by 2017 on bombers, airdefense systems and tanks, points to the formulation of a revised Russian military doctrine. In addition, Mr. Putin has also threatened to withdraw from a number of important arms treaties, such as the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty and the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

But as alarming as Mr. Putin's statements and related actions have been, they are even more menacing when viewed in the context of ongoing international ballistic-missile development and deployment by two of Moscow's closest allies — China and Iran. Russia, China and Iran, the new Axis of Evil, present a dire "ballistic missile triad" that has become difficult for the West to ignore. Working closely together, all three countries continue to improve their ballistic missile technology demonstrating an increased willingness to replace constructive dialogue with outright confrontation.

The recently released 2007 Defense Department annual report to Congress on China's military power catalogs in great detail the country's continued efforts to establish not only a defensive ballistic missile capability, but an

offensive “first strike” capability as well. The expected deployment of additional mobile, land and seabased ballistic nuclear missiles that can reach the U.S. mainland have raised serious questions in Washington about the country’s regional and global intentions.

Beijing’s communist leaders have reacted to U.S. criticism of its military build-up by strongly denouncing calls for greater transparency, stating Washington is now treating the country as a “ Cold War- style” enemy. But China’s recent moves to expand its ballistic missile force capabilities are undeniable, as its build-up of missiles across the Taiwan Strait confirms. Michael Green, a former Asia adviser to President Bush, has voiced his concerns regarding China’s ballistic missile program. “ The Chinese have maintained that they have no first use policy and that they have a minimal deterrent policy. But other sources suggest that they are possibly developing capabilities for a more flexible use of nuclear weapons that would call into question this declared policy,” he noted recently.

Adding to U. S. concerns, China’s continued development and deployment of asymmetrical cyber warfare and anti-satellite systems designed to cripple sophisticated communication, global positioning and defense networks makes a preemptive ballistic missile attack increasingly plausible. Over the past few years, Chinese Gens. Zhu Chenghu and Xiong Guangkai, both high-ranking military officials, have stated that China would attack U.S. cities if the country intervened in any Taiwan conflict.

Led by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iran continues to pose the greatest short- term threat to world peace and stability. Tehran continues to publicly state that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, but its actual intentions remain a troubling mystery, since International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors have been halted on numerous occasions from conducting thorough examinations. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack noted in March, “We do have outstanding concerns about Iran’s missile program and we are very much concerned about the possible nexus between that program and their nuclear ambitions.” With the direct assistance of Russia, China and North Korea, Iran is already in possession of the medium-range Shahab-3 ballistic missile which is capable of striking Israel. The country has also made improvements to the Shahab-4 ballistic missile which is believed to be capable of hitting Europe. Iran’s Islamic regime is also pursuing a proprietary space program, allocating over \$500 million for 2005 through 2010.

NATO spokesman James Appathurai’s comments this month that Mr. Putin’s continued antagonism is “unhelpful and unwelcome” is an encouraging sign that the United States will not have to stand alone in its fight against global nuclear brinkmanship and proliferation. In the meantime, the United States and its allies should consider increasing funding dedicated to the research, development and testing of a more agile anti-missile defense umbrella. By taking this important step, the combined offensive intercontinental ballistic missile capabilities of China, Russia and Iran, as well as rogue nations such as North Korea, will be made increasingly irrelevant.

The world is an uncertain place, filled with more questions than answers. Recognizing this, the United States must display the technological ingenuity, global leadership and perseverance necessary to confront the enormous geopolitical challenges that lie ahead. Only with such a firm response will the world be able to overcome the diverse and ever-increasing threats from nations that view the future from the tip of a ballistic missile.

Fred Stakelbeck is a senior Asia fellow and director of the Center for Security Policy’s Security and Democracy in Asia Project.

<http://www.washtimes.com/op-ed/20070613-111526-7268r.htm>

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National Defense Magazine

June 2007

Agencies Scramble to Create Vaccine Market

By Breanne Wagner

When anthrax was delivered to Capitol Hill and media outlets in envelopes in 2001, the prospect of a widespread biological attack became real to the U.S. government.

For Jay Cohen, undersecretary of the Department of Homeland Security’s science and technology division, it’s the possibility of a biological attack that keeps him up at night.

While nuclear or radiological weapons require a significant capital and physical investment to develop, “in today’s genomic world, students with microscopes have the potential to develop biological weapons,” he said in an interview with National Defense.

The relative simplicity of deploying a deadly biological agent has prompted the government to seek technological solutions from the private sector. In the aftermath of the anthrax attacks, contractors predicted that a robust biodefense industrial complex would emerge. But so far the market has lagged, experts say.

Eleven government agencies now work on biodefense. Several offices within these agencies award contracts and grants to universities and public health organizations to prepare for biological attack.

“Currently, the U.S. biodefense market consists of a hodge-podge of small niche players blended with very few large biopharmaceuticals and select defense contractors,” said Tim Garnett and Andrew Michaels, previous partners at DFI International, a consulting firm now known as Avascent. They noted that the federal market for biodefense technologies is highly fragmented.

Defense and Homeland Security are pursuing disparate vaccination programs to combat different needs for military and civilian populations.

The Department of Homeland Security was given control of Project Bioshield, a program signed into law by President Bush in 2004. The Bioshield Act allocated \$5.6 billion in funding through 2013 in an attempt to attract large biopharmaceuticals to develop vaccines, a White House document said. DHS was directed to work with the Department of Health and Human Services and “the heads of other agencies as appropriate” to assess current and emerging threats and subsequently award contracts to companies with the proper countermeasures.

VaxGen, a small firm based in San Francisco, was awarded an \$877.5 million contract in November 2004 for 75 million doses of an anthrax vaccine, said Frank Rapoport, a government contracts and public health law partner with McKenna, Long and Aldridge, a Washington D.C.-based law firm. The award was the largest under Bioshield and was a big coup for a small biopharma. But the contract was terminated in December 2006 because the company failed to “meet a milestone imposed by Health and Human Services,” said a VaxGen press release. VaxGen appealed the cancellation and settled with the government in April for \$11 million.

The contract failure was a blow to the Bioshield effort, but also highlighted some of the larger obstacles biopharmas face for such work.

“The current biodefense market is attractive only to small players whose willingness to chase low-margin contracts goes hand-in-hand with their desire to stay afloat in a highly competitive marketplace,” Garnett and Williams wrote. Major pharmaceutical companies have stayed out of the Bioshield program, partially because vaccine profits are low and because there is a high level of uncertainty in biodefense, as demonstrated by the failed VaxGen award.

“Countermeasure development is unattractive to private investors because there are no markets outside of governments for most of these products,” said Tara O’Toole, director and CEO of the Center for Biosecurity of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. “Even in the most profitable scenarios, biodefense countermeasures ... cannot generate profits comparable to successful medicines for chronic disease that are taken for years by large populations,” she told the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Also, drug and vaccine development is expensive and uncertain. Of 5,000 drugs identified by scientists, only five make it to clinical trials and only one of these, on average, will become a product, O’Toole noted.

For small biopharmaceuticals such as VaxGen, the lack of financial stability in biodefense spells trouble for the future. The anthrax vaccine cancellation put a huge strain on the company; its cash flow was expected to drop by half a million dollars in the second financial quarter of 2007, the VaxGen web site said.

A radiological/nuclear treatments program under Bioshield was also canceled in March, nearly two years after the request for proposals was released.

Other vaccine contracts include a botulinum antitoxin (to treat botulism), anthrax therapeutics, a smallpox vaccine and pediatric potassium iodine.

Meanwhile, the Defense Department has procured vaccines for military personnel, but not without its share of controversy. Among required immunizations for deployed troops are an anthrax countermeasure and a smallpox vaccine. The anthrax inoculation program has faced many hurdles, including a court order to stop the mandatory program for soldiers in 2004. A district court judge ruled that the Food and Drug Administration had not found that the vaccine — made by Bioprotect Corp. — was effective against anthrax.

After the mandatory shots were halted, only about half of military members voluntarily received the vaccines. In October, following a second drug administration approval, the immunizations were reinstated for military personnel in high-risk jobs or high-risk areas such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Korea, William Winkenwerder, assistant secretary of defense for health affairs told reporters.

Currently, the Defense Department is developing a vaccine against equine encephalitis. Ichor Medical Systems, a small biotech company in San Diego, secured a \$900,000 contract to help develop a DNA countermeasure for the encephalitis pathogen. The Army Medical Institute of Infectious Diseases in Ft. Detrick, Md., found a need for this capability and came to Ichor for its vaccine delivery system, not for an actual vaccine, said Drew Hannaman, vice president of Ichor research and development, during an interview.

Ichor uses a device that employs electrical fields to deliver the countermeasure directly to a cell, which creates a better immune response, Hannaman explained. This method enhances the effectiveness of the Army developed vaccine because the medicine by itself was “insufficiently potent” for the Defense Department, he added. This is because the conventional delivery technique administers the vaccine to the tissue surrounding the cell, not to the actual cell that can better communicate with the immune system, Hannaman said. So far, the Food and Drug

Administration has not approved an equine encephalitis inoculation, the Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical and Biological Defense web site said.

Hannaman said his company had received grants from the National Institutes of Health prior to this contract. Ichor also conducted preclinical studies of anthrax on animals to initially secure biodefense work, but the company agrees that this type of vaccine work carries with it several challenges.

The problem with biodefense relevant projects is how to work out commercialization, Hannaman said. When the government is the only customer, it makes it difficult and creates a lot of uncertainty, he added. "There is funding available, but also questions about product roll out and having the government committed to purchasing,"

Hannaman said.

The Ichor contract also points to a question about why agencies pursue vaccines for some pathogens over others. The Centers for Disease Control has a long list of biological threats, separated into categories. The most dangerous microbes — including anthrax, smallpox and plague, are listed under category A. Yet Bioshield has only awarded contracts for three category A threats. Equine encephalitis is considered to be a category B pathogen, the Centers for Disease Control said.

Experts believe the government has sent vaccine biodefense work down the wrong path.

"We need a rational risk assessment of the likelihood of an attack with certain microbes," said Barbara Billauer, president of the Foundation for Law and Science Centers and a public health expert.

Billauer doubts that terrorists are so predictable that they would target specific pathogens that are difficult and expensive to make.

"If I were a terrorist, why would I use a designer microbe if I could use something like salmonella?" she asked.

Osama Bin Laden's deputy is a pediatrician, Billauer said, and he knows that salmonella can kill babies and elderly people.

Even if a terrorist wanted to spread diseases such as anthrax or smallpox, Billauer explained that anthrax for example, has to float between three and five feet off the ground to be ingested by humans, otherwise it falls to the ground and dies. "You add 'clay' to it [anthrax] to keep it airborne," but it's difficult to get the formula exactly right, she said. Microbes also need to live in specific habitats and must be the right size to infect humans. The Japanese terrorist group, Aum Shinrikyo, known for releasing sarin nerve gas in a Japanese subway, tried seven times to release anthrax from the top of a building and failed because the conditions were wrong, Billauer said.

"We still need to develop sophisticated vaccines, but we need to address the mechanics of a microbe release, not the lethality of it in lab tests," Billauer said.

Right now, the government is focusing on known threats. But to combat new biological diseases, scientists have to wait for them to emerge before they can develop vaccines, she said.

O'Toole agreed that the threat environment is too large to narrowly focus on a few diseases. "There are dozens of naturally occurring pathogens which could serve as bioweapons agents today ... the current approach of developing countermeasures against each potential bioweapon agent will prove futile," she said.

<http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/issues/2007/June/AgenciesScramble.htm>

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U.S. ROLLS OUT NEW MOVES VS.TERROR NUKES

United Press International

Published: June 13, 2007 at 10:57 AM

MIAMI, June 13 (UPI) -- New initiatives aimed at countering the threat of nuclear terrorism were unveiled by U.S. officials at an international law enforcement conference this week.

President Bush will "soon" send to the U.S. Senate both the eagerly awaited Nuclear Terrorism Convention and a set of amendments to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material that he recently signed, Attorney General [Alberto Gonzales](#) told the conference in Miami Monday.

"The Nuclear Terrorism Convention ... requires state parties to criminalize a number of acts related to the misuse of radioactive materials or a nuclear explosive device," said Gonzales, adding the treaty would provide "a legal basis for international cooperation in the investigation, prosecution, and extradition of those who commit terrorist acts involving radioactive material or a nuclear device."

The amendments to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material would "establish new international norms for the physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear facilities, including protection from sabotage."

Gonzales said his own department had just appointed its first National Export Control Coordinator to boost enforcement of export control laws by "coordinating with the many other U.S. law enforcement, licensing and

intelligence agencies that play a role in export enforcement" and by developing a training program on the law for prosecutors.

http://www.upi.com/Security_Terrorism/Briefing/2007/06/13/us_rolls_out_new_moves_vs_terror_nukes/5662/

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New York Times

June 15, 2007

U.S. To Keep Europe As Site For Missile Defense

By Thom Shanker

BRUSSELS, June 14 — Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates made clear Thursday that the United States would not alter plans to deploy parts of a missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic, despite an unexpected proposal by President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia to use a radar base in Azerbaijan instead.

During a session of defense ministers here, Mr. Gates also effectively secured NATO's endorsement for an American plan to build the missile defense bases in Central Europe, overcoming the concerns of some alliance members that the effort could rupture relations with Russia.

The radar in Azerbaijan offered by Mr. Putin at the recent Group of 8 session with President Bush in Germany could complement the sites proposed for Central Europe, Mr. Gates said, but not replace them.

"I was very explicit in the meeting that we saw the Azeri radar as an additional capability, that we intended to proceed with the radar, the X-band radar, in the Czech Republic," Mr. Gates said at an evening news conference after meeting with his Russian counterpart, Anatoly E. Serdyukov. American military officers have said that the X-band radar proposed for the Czech Republic is designed to spot specific objects in space and to assist interceptors in locking on and destroying an adversary's missile in the middle of its flight. The system in Azerbaijan is an early warning radar, with a wider range but also less specific tracking ability.

NATO support, described by its officials as a significant step forward for the American proposals, came in the somewhat coded language typical of the Atlantic alliance.

NATO did not issue a specific endorsement of placing the elements of the system in former Soviet states in Central Europe. But it announced an effort that in essence was an agreement that the system would be deployed: a study of how proposed shorter-range NATO missile defense systems would be incorporated in the long-range American antimissile program. That American system will include 10 missile interceptors in Poland and a network of radar defenses in the Czech Republic.

"There were no criticisms by any of the NATO allies of our missile defense proposals or of our moving forward," Mr. Gates said. "There obviously is interest in trying to encourage the Russians to participate with us, to make the system complementary to NATO shorter-range missile defenses, and for transparency."

These systems would be "bolted on" to the American system, which is designed to counter long-range missiles, in particular a potential threat from Iran, alliance officials said.

"The NATO road map on missile defense is now clear," said Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the NATO secretary general. "It's practical, and it's agreed by all."

A senior American official, who described the closed-door debate under standard diplomatic rules of anonymity, was even more explicit than Mr. Gates in summarizing NATO's support. "What you see here is allies agreeing to adapt NATO's work to the reality that there will be a long-range system, as well," the official said.

NATO was already studying a theaterwide missile defense system, and the decision made Thursday alleviates the alliance of the financial and political costs of creating long-range missile defenses.

The NATO study is to be completed by February. Its military experts will work on blueprints for short- and medium-range missile defense systems to shield allies not under the cover of the system proposed for Central Europe, including Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Turkey.

In an unexpected development sure to be scrutinized by the Kremlin, Mr. Gates indicated an interest in pushing cooperation on missile defenses even further into the former Soviet hemisphere of Eastern Europe by raising the prospect of future discussions with Ukraine.

Ukraine is not a NATO member, but is part of an alliance dialogue, the NATO-Ukraine Commission. Mr. Gates said that on Thursday he "indicated a willingness to share information, data with Ukraine" on the missile defense efforts in Poland and the Czech Republic.

Russian officials have complained that the proposed system is a Trojan horse designed to counter Moscow's strategic rocket forces, although Mr. Putin shifted the debate with a proposal last week to link the American system to a radar in the former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan.

At the session of the NATO-Russia Council on Thursday, Mr. Serdyukov, the Russian defense minister, "made no threats" about the American plans, said senior American officials who had attended, speaking anonymously under diplomatic rules.

While the United States, Poland and the Czech Republic are all alliance members, the negotiations on missile defense bases are being carried out in bilateral talks outside the NATO framework.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/15/world/europe/15gates.html>

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Philadelphia Inquirer

June 15, 2007

Gates: Missile Plan Is On Despite Objections

By Lolita C. Baldor, Associated Press

BRUSSELS, Belgium - The United States will proceed with its plans for a missile-defense system in Eastern Europe whether or not agreement is reached on an alternative Russian proposal, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said yesterday.

Gates dismissed any suggestion that Russia's push for joint use of a radar station in Azerbaijan could replace the U.S. plan for radar and interceptors in Poland and the Czech Republic. And he expressed doubt that there could be any agreement with the Russians by next month, when President Bush is scheduled to meet with Russian President Vladimir V. Putin.

"I was very explicit in the [NATO] meeting that we saw the Azeri radar as an additional capability, that we intended to proceed with the X-Band radar in the Czech Republic," Gates said at a news briefing.

Gates' comments came as Russian officials called for a freeze on the U.S. plan and reportedly issued threats against the planned sites in Poland and the Czech Republic. Gates said Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov, who was at the NATO meeting, did not comment on his remarks.

Meanwhile, NATO ordered its military experts to draw up plans for a possible short-range missile-defense system to protect nations on the alliance's southern flank that would be left exposed by proposed U.S. antimissile units in central Europe.

A final decision on building the NATO system is expected at an April 2008 alliance summit meeting in Romania, but the agreement to launch the study factors the U.S. proposal for Europe-based antimissile interceptors and radar units into NATO planning for the first time.

Asked if the NATO proposal constituted a broad endorsement of the U.S. plan, Gates said that no formal vote of approval had been taken but that none of the ministers spoke against the plan.

Russia has threatened to retaliate against the U.S. plans by pulling out of a key arms-control treaty and pointing warheads at Europe for the first time since the Cold War. At last week's G8 meeting, Putin seemed to take a more open approach, suggesting Russia could cooperate with the West on an antimissile radar base in Azerbaijan.

http://www.philly.com/philly/news/nation_world/20070615_Gates_Missile_plan_is_on_despite_objections.html

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Washington Times

June 15, 2007

Pg. 5

Inside the Ring

By Bill Gertz

North Korea watch

U.S. intelligence agencies think North Korea is continuing development of nuclear weapons, as well as working on "miniaturization" of weapons for missile warheads, according to a senior Bush administration official.

Since the February nuclear accord reached in Beijing, North Korea has continued work on weapons, said a senior Bush administration official involved in North Korean affairs.

"There are no indications that they are not pursuing a nuclear weapons capability, to include the weaponization and miniaturization," the official said.

U.S. intelligence officials think North Korea, which received equipment through the covert Pakistani nuclear-supplier network headed by Abdul Qadeer Khan, obtained Chinese documents on designing a small warhead, the key to developing a nuclear weapon small enough for missile warheads.

The Chinese-language warhead design documents were first uncovered in Libya, which gave up its nuclear program in 2003.

Three recent missile tests in North Korea over the past several weeks were anti-ship cruise missiles fired during exercises that were not unusual for North Korean military forces at this time of year, the official said.

"Those who are looking at the six-party process and where we are today with [the Banco Delta Asia funds transfer] are very disappointed," the senior official said. "This doesn't build confidence. This is a time that is very tense and we want to go to implementing the 13 February agreement. So even though this is a normal exercises, I think there is an element of disappointment that North Korea would move in that direction."

North Korea has shown no signs of preparing of another underground nuclear test but "they could have a nuclear test at any time with minimal or no warning," the official said.

The October test was a "nuclear event" but the blast caused by the test was smaller than North Korea had hoped, the official said.

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/inring.htm>

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Boston Globe

June 15, 2007

Agency Warns Against Attack On Iran

Views such a move on nuclear issue as 'madness'

By George Jahn, Associated Press

VIENNA -- The head of the UN nuclear watchdog agency said yesterday an attack on Iran over its refusal to freeze programs that could make nuclear weapons would be "an act of madness," an indirect warning to the United States and Israel.

International Atomic Energy Agency chief Mohamed ElBaradei also said Iran could be running close to 3,000 uranium-enriching centrifuges by the end of next month -- a number that IAEA officials have described as the point of no return in the start of a large-scale program.

ElBaradei spoke at the end of a meeting of his agency's 35-nation board, a gathering that focused on Iran's refusal to heed UN Security Council demands that it halt activities that could serve to make nuclear arms and provide answers on suspicious aspects of its program. He also urged Iran to offer a "self-imposed moratorium" on enrichment, describing it as a "good confidence-building measure" that could launch negotiations on the standoff.

But the chief Iranian envoy to the meeting asserted his country would never suspend enrichment -- the key issue of Security Council concern. Iran has said its nuclear program is peaceful and aims to generate energy, not bombs.

Although they've called for a negotiated solution, both the US and Israel have refused to outright dismiss the possibility that they might target Iran militarily if it refuses to comply.

ElBaradei described use of force as an "act of madness" that wouldn't bring a solution.

The coming months will be critical as Iran is building a capacity and knowledge of enrichment that is irreversible, while not providing the IAEA with evidence that the program is a peaceful one, ElBaradei said. "Even if Iran wants to have a weapon they are three to eight years away," ElBaradei said, citing unidentified intelligence sources for his estimate. But "the longer we delay, the less option we have to reach a peaceful solution."

Iran's defiance of UN Security Council demands that it stop enrichment and construction of a plutonium-producing reactor as well as increase cooperation with IAEA inspectors has led to two sets of sanctions.

A recent IAEA report confirmed that Iran was expanding its activities and continuing to stonewall the IAEA in its attempts to gain more information on past activities of concern. That has set the stage for a new round of Security Council-imposed penalties.

Declaring that Tehran had become the "master of uranium enrichment," Ali Ashgar Soltanieh, Iran's chief IAEA envoy, said his country will never suspend its program. Like enriched uranium, plutonium can be used for the fissile core of nuclear warheads.

Iran, however, says it wants to develop enrichment to generate nuclear power and asserts it is building the plutonium-producing reactor for research and medical purposes.

Soltanieh evaded a question on whether his country had solved all technical problems in the intensely complicated enrichment process of spinning uranium gas through centrifuges at high speed.

Gregory L. Schulte, the US envoy to the IAEA, scoffed at Soltanieh's claim of enrichment mastery, telling AP Television News: "The Iranian ambassador spins faster than any centrifuge."

IAEA officials have informally identified an Iranian enrichment operation running 3,000 centrifuges as the start of a large-scale program, while experts say that number could produce enough material for several warheads a year.

http://www.boston.com/news/world/europe/articles/2007/06/15/agency_warns_against_attack_on_iran/

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Washington Times
June 16, 2007

Warning Hints At New Delay In Pact

By Jae-soon Chang, Associated Press

SEOUL -- North Korea warned yesterday it might increase its "self-defense deterrent," a term the communist nation usually uses to describe its nuclear program, even as its key condition for nuclear disarmament was being met. North Korea's warning, in a statement criticizing U.S. missile defense plans, raised concerns the recalcitrant regime might be trying to find another reason to postpone disarming. As the statement was released, millions of dollars in frozen funds were headed to North Korean accounts, apparently resolving a banking dispute the country had used as a reason to delay.

"The U.S. is claiming that it is building a global missile defense system to protect against missile attacks from our nation and Iran. This is a childish pretext," the North's Foreign Ministry said in a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency. "We cannot but further strengthen our self-defense deterrent if the arms race intensifies because of the U.S. maneuvers."

North Korea has refused to act on its February pledge to shut down its nuclear reactor until it gets access to \$25 million once frozen in a U.S.-blacklisted Macao bank.

Claiming the money freeze was a sign of Washington's hostility, North Korea boycotted international nuclear talks for more than a year, during which time the communist regime conducted its first atomic bomb test in October.

On Thursday, Macao's chief finance official said the money had been transferred from the bank, but it was not clear if the entire amount has moved or whether it reached its destination. Officials knowledgeable about the transfer have said more than \$23 million was involved but that the transaction was not complete.

A South Korean government official said the money has "reached Moscow at its central bank" and was awaiting deposit in North Korean accounts in Russia. He spoke on the condition of anonymity, citing the issue's sensitivity. If the money goes into North Korea's accounts, it means the financial dispute is fully resolved, the official said. But he did not say when the deposit could take place.

In Washington, the State Department said it was looking into North Korea's latest warning.

"At this point, not having seen the statement, I wouldn't attribute any particular significance to it. But we'll take a look at it," said Sean McCormack, a department spokesman.

The North Korean funds had been frozen at Macao's Banco Delta Asia since 2005.

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20070615-105738-4230r.htm>

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Miami Herald
June 16, 2007

Keeping Nuclear Arms Out Of Wrong Hands

By John C. Rood

We live in dangerous times and perhaps the greatest threat we face is the potential for nuclear terrorism. The specter of a mushroom cloud over a city or the casualties and chaos from explosion of a radioactive dispersal device is what has led more than 50 countries over the past year to join the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, which recently held its third meeting.

The technology, expertise and material needed to produce a nuclear weapon have become more widespread. The break-up of the A.Q. Khan network was critical in stemming the spread of the know-how and equipment needed to produce fissile material and nuclear weapons. But regrettably, proliferation of these sensitive technologies occurred before Khan and his associates were stopped.

Terrorists and their supporters continue to try to acquire nuclear material on the black market. This requires us to remain vigilant. Fortunately, most of the hundreds of cases over the past decade involved hoaxes or material unsuitable for a radioactive device. But there have also been troubling cases like the recent seizure in Georgia of highly enriched uranium (HEU) usable in a nuclear weapon.

Against this backdrop, the desire of al Qaeda and other terrorist groups to gain nuclear weapons or improvised nuclear devices is a grave threat that we must urgently address.

Since 9/11, the Bush administration has actively responded to these threats.

For example:

*In 2005, President Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed to accelerate security upgrades for Russian nuclear sites to be completed by the end of 2008. They also stepped up conversion of research reactors worldwide to no longer use HEU, thereby reducing vulnerability of this bomb-grade material to theft by terrorists;

*We have worked closely with Russia in securing and eliminating nuclear materials as part of the Cooperative Threat Reduction programs and expanded the program to countries beyond the former Soviet Union.

*Under the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, the Department of Energy has secured more than 540 vulnerable radiological sites overseas, containing more than 7.7 million curies -- enough for approximately 7,700 dirty bombs.

*Nuclear material detection programs -- including the Container Security Initiative, Megaports, the Second Line of Defense and the Secure Freight Initiative -- strengthen the capacity of nations to screen cargoes for radiological material, and the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office was created to put detectors around the United States.

*The International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1540 create additional legal authorities and obligations for nations to bring to justice those facilitating nuclear trade.

*More than 80 countries are now participating in the Proliferation Security Initiative to interdict trade in WMD and missile technologies.

Yet more was needed, which is why Bush and Putin launched the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism one year ago. With this initiative, we have brought together a diverse group of nations committed to countering nuclear terrorism.

On June 11-12, I co-chaired with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak the third meeting of the Global Initiative hosted by the government of Kazakhstan, which set the course for the next year of activities. At the same time, FBI Director Robert Mueller has hosted an important conference in Miami under the Global Initiative that brought together more than 500 law enforcement officers from 20 countries. The FBI conference in Miami is one of almost 20 activities that participating states have agreed to host over the next two years to build capabilities and cooperation.

To be sure, the challenge of nuclear terrorism will not be met alone by these meetings. But by bringing together the international community around a common goal, improving the ability of states to take concerted action and creating synergies, we will take important strides toward effectively addressing perhaps the greatest threat of the 21st century.

John C. Rood is assistant secretary of state, Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/851/story/141745.html>

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Washington Post

June 17, 2007

Pg. 14

N. Korea Summons Inspectors To Reactor

By Edward Cody, Washington Post Foreign Service

BEIJING, June 16 -- North Korea announced Saturday that it has invited U.N. inspectors to return for discussions on closing down its main nuclear reactor, suggesting the end of a long stalemate.

The announcement, on the official Korean Central News Agency, indicated that the tangle over \$25 million in frozen North Korean funds is nearing an end and held out promise that international efforts to dismantle North Korea's nuclear weapons program may be revived in the weeks ahead.

The chief U.S. nuclear negotiator, Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill, expressed hope that the Chinese-sponsored denuclearization talks could start again in July. He told reporters in Ulan Bator, Mongolia's capital, where he attended a conference, that he will visit Beijing and other Asian capitals next week to discuss a new round of the six-nation talks.

Transfer of the blocked funds to North Korea "has reached its final phase," the North Korean agency said, and this opens the way for arrival of International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors to supervise "suspension of the operation of nuclear facilities" at Yongbyon. In a letter to its director, Mohamed ElBaradei, the IAEA was invited to send in a working-level team to make the arrangements, the agency added. It did not specify when they would be expected to travel to North Korea.

Closing and sealing the Yongbyon reactor, in return for an initial delivery of fuel oil, was the first step in a carefully phased denuclearization program agreed to Feb. 13 in the talks in Beijing among North and South Korea, Japan, Russia, China and the United States. It was to be followed by other steps, including more oil deliveries and dismantling of the reactor. But North Korea refused to move until it received the \$25 million, frozen by Macau's

banking authority after accusations from the U.S. Treasury in 2005 that some of it was tainted by money laundering and counterfeiting.

According to U.S. officials, at least \$23 million of the disputed funds was moved this week from Macau's monetary authority to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and then to Russia's central bank. On Monday, the money is expected to be transferred to a Russian commercial bank near the border with North Korea.

Despite a last-minute delay in getting the funds from the Russian bank's headquarters to the North Korean branch accounts, the announcement Saturday suggested North Korea is ready to start closing the Yongbyon reactor as agreed.

"I think what we need to do, what the DPRK will need to do, is to get moving on their own obligations, because, believe me, we have been working on our own obligations," Hill told the Reuters news agency, using initials for North Korea's formal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

But it was unclear whether the announcement means North Korea would proceed with other denuclearization steps agreed to in February.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/06/16/AR2007061600183.html>

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Christian Science Monitor

July 18, 2007

Long path ahead on N. Korea's nukes

The north's invitation to nuclear inspectors is welcomed, but the US and S. Korea say more steps are needed to comply with February's six-party accord.

By Donald Kirk | Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

SEOUL, South Korea

An invitation by North Korea to the International Atomic Energy Agency to talk about shutting down its lone nuclear reactor marks the first hopeful step in what may be an arduous process of getting the North to give up its entire program.

Even if IAEA inspectors verify the shutdown of the aging five-megawatt reactor at the nuclear complex at Yongbyon, North Korea may be far from ready to come clean on all it's doing, analysts say.

The North Koreans "will be more cooperative," says Kim Kyu-ryoon, director of North-South Korean cooperation at the Korea Institute of National Unification, "but expectations have been lowered."

Mr. Kim says that a two-month delay in beginning to fulfill the first step of the six-nation agreement reached in Beijing on North Korea's nukes has blunted momentum while building "mistrust between the parties."

North Korea was to have shut down the reactor by April 14, 60 days after the signing on Feb. 13 of a six-nation agreement under which the North stands eventually to get billions of dollars in aid.

North Korea held back, however, demanding first the transfer of \$25 million held in accounts in an obscure Asian bank. The bank had been blacklisted by the US for serving as a conduit for \$100 "supernotes" counterfeited in Pyongyang.

Over the weekend, two days after Macao authorities reported the funds as having moved from Banco Delta Asia in Macao, Pyongyang's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) announced North Korea's openness to receiving IAEA inspectors for the first time since expelling them at the end of 2002.

Ri Je-son, director-general in North Korea's General Department of Atomic Energy, had written the IAEA regarding "discussion of the procedures," said the KCNA report, for "suspension of the operation of nuclear facilities at Yongbyon under the Feb. 13 agreement."

KCNA said the letter had gone because the transfer was under way. The funds, under a deal engineered by the US State and Treasury departments, have moved from "BDA," as the bank is known, to the Federal Reserve Bank in New York. From there they went to the Russian central bank, which has agreed to turn them over to North Korea.

Tough negotiations expected

Although North Korea may well shut down the reactor, analysts expect the negotiating process to get tougher as the US presses for details on its nuclear program, as called for in the deal. The US will also demand that North Korea get rid of its entire nuclear inventory, including six to 12 nuclear warheads believed to have been made at Yongbyon. "It will take more time to get data about the facilities," says Kim. "How specific the report will be is a question."

Both US and South Korean officials welcomed word of the invitation to the IAEA, though the US chief envoy, Christopher Hill, who touches down this week in Japan, China, and South Korea, says the North must reveal details of its program for building nuclear warheads with highly enriched uranium.

"It's a welcome step," Mr. Hill said during a stop in Ulan Bator, Mongolia. "It's got to be followed by a number of other steps. But it is certainly a step without which we would not be able to make progress." Hill added that South Korean officials had told him that Seoul was getting ready to send fuel oil to the North as part of the agreement.

N. Korea's 2002 revelation

It was the revelation of the North's program in 2002 that ultimately blew apart the 1994 Geneva agreement, under which North Korea had suspended its program for building nuclear warheads from plutonium at Yongbyon, 60 miles north of Pyongyang. North Korea boasted of having resumed the program after the IAEA inspectors had left, but has repeatedly denied having anything to do with highly enriched uranium.

Mr. Hill, however, said recently that North Korea purchased the centrifuges needed to enrich uranium from Pakistan, and "they've got to abandon the program."

With settlement of "the BDA issue" and shutdown of the reactor, says Lee Kee-hong, Washington bureau chief of the newspaper Dong A Ilbo, "many people think the uranium program will be 10 times more difficult to resolve."

After North Korea shuts down the reactor, under IAEA supervision, Mr. Lee suggests that "nothing will happen in the Bush administration" – that is, until after January 2009, when a successor to President Bush is inaugurated.

Until then, analysts say that North Korea will bargain for rice and fertilizer shipments from South Korea and acceptance in the international finance system. South Korea suspended rice shipments pending shutdown of the reactor but has already promised to send 20,000 tons in emergency aid.

Paik Hak-soon, director of North Korean studies at the Sejong Institute, says North Korea is now likely to "demand financial talks with the US" – a step toward full diplomatic relations that North Korea would like.

Mr. Paik says that talks would "enhance North Korea's transparency" while the North fights for legitimacy in an international financial system that has shunned it ever since the US blacklisted Banco Delta Asia.

Kim Tae-woo, senior fellow at the Institute of Defense Analyses, affiliated with the South's defense ministry, sees the reactor shutdown as "not such a big deal." Rather, he says, "The big deal is the second stage, the disablement of the nuclear problem." North Korea, he posits, "will try to negotiate without giving up their nuclear weapons while demanding dialogue with the US."

Michael Breen, author of a biography of Kim Jong Il, says that a familiar stop-and-go pattern with no real ending in sight is possible. "We'll get some progress," he says, "and then there'll be another obstacle."

North Korea "is obligated to make some steps and then something will happen," he says. "There'll be an appearance of progress, and there'll be another obstacle."

In the end, says Mr. Breen, "I can't imagine they'll ever completely give up the nuclear option."

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/0618/p06s01-woap.html>

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Report on Activities and Programs for Countering Proliferation and NBC Terrorism

Volume I

Executive Summary

May 2007

Counterproliferation Program Review Committee

2007 CPRC Report to Congress

INTRODUCTION

Our greatest and gravest concern ... is WMD in the hands of terrorists. Preventing their acquisition and the dire consequences of their use is a key priority of this strategy.

National Strategy for Combating Terrorism

September 2006

This *Report on Activities and Programs for Countering Proliferation and NBC Terrorism* is submitted to the United States Congress as required by the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1994 (as amended)*. The report provides the findings of the interagency Counterproliferation Program Review Committee (CPRC). The CPRC was chartered by Congress in 1994 to report on the activities and programs of the Department of Defense (DoD), Department of Energy (DOE), and the intelligence community (IC) that address improvements in the U.S.

Government's efforts to combat weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery. In 1997, Congress broadened the CPRC's responsibilities to review those research and development (R&D) activities and programs related to countering terrorist nuclear, biological, and chemical threats.

This report is the principal executive branch report on research, development, and acquisition (RDA) programs to combat WMD. Other interagency committees or department-specific groups also publish related but separate reports on nonproliferation, arms control, and combating terrorism programs. The findings and recommendations of the CPRC's annual review for 2007 are presented in this, its 14th annual report to Congress.

The report comprises two volumes. Volume I is the unclassified executive summary. It provides an overview of the offices and principals that make up the CPRC and its Standing Committee; the linkage of national strategy and guidance to CPRC efforts; Areas for Capability Enhancement (ACEs); an assessment of progress in meeting combating WMD requirements; a presentation of the main efforts of DoD, DOE, and the IC in combating WMD; an overview of the fiscal year 2008 (FY08) funding for CPRC-monitored programs; recommendations; and the principal conclusion. A list of the abbreviations and acronyms that appear in the text is included at the end of the volume. The executive summary is available on line at www.acq.osd.mil/cp.

Volume II contains the classified main report and appendices. It provides an introduction on the purpose of this report, including a summary of the national strategy context to combat WMD; an overview of the threat from WMD; progress achieved vis-à-vis the CPRC recommendations presented in last year's report; assessment highlights of CPRC programs and activities; recommendations; and appendices. The appendices provide information on the genesis of the CPRC; the current participants in the process; data on DoD, DOE, and IC programs and activities for combating WMD, as well as Advanced Concept Technology Demonstrations (ACTDs) and Joint Capability Technology Demonstrations (JCTDs); WMD counterterrorism efforts; 2007 combating WMD capability shortfalls; and a list of abbreviations and acronyms that appear in the report. . . (For complete report, please click on link below.)

<http://www.acq.osd.mil/cp/cpreports/cprc07xsm.pdf>

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New York Times

June 19, 2007

Pg. 11

U.S. Says North Korea May Begin Shutting Reactor In Weeks

By David Lague

BEIJING, June 18 — North Korea could be ready to begin shutting down its plutonium-producing reactor within weeks as the first step toward disabling it by the end of this year, the top United States negotiator on North Korea's nuclear weapons program said here on Monday.

The negotiator, Christopher R. Hill, assistant secretary of state for East Asian affairs, said stalled efforts to dismantle North Korea's nuclear weapons program could move ahead after a visit by nuclear inspectors. North Korea has invited inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations' nuclear monitoring program, to visit for talks about verifying and monitoring a shutdown.

"This is an event we have been looking forward to for some time," Mr. Hill said after talks with his Chinese counterpart, Wu Dawei.

The atomic energy agency said it would send a team to Pyongyang, the North Korean capital, next week to discuss how its inspectors would verify the shutdown, The Associated Press reported from Vienna.

North Korea had refused to proceed with a February agreement to begin decommissioning its reactor in Yongbyon until \$25 million in accounts linked to North Korea held in a Macao bank was transferred to North Korea.

The money was frozen when the United States accused the bank, Banco Delta Asia, of complicity in financial crimes on behalf of North Korea.

After months of wrangling over the method of returning the money, it was wired Thursday to the Federal Reserve Bank in New York. It was then to be sent to Russia's central bank before a further transfer to an account controlled by North Korea in a Russian commercial bank.

Mr. Hill said he would hold further talks this week with disarmament negotiators from Russia, South Korea and Japan on steps to make up for some of the time lost while the transfer was being organized. These discussions would also involve setting a timetable for resumption of six-nation arms control talks.

Under the agreement reached at a session of those talks in February, North Korea pledged to shut the Yongbyon reactor and to allow inspectors to verify and monitor the shutdown in return for a 50,000-ton shipment of fuel oil.

Mr. Hill said the atomic energy agency's inspectors would hold talks with North Korea on verifying the Yongbyon shutdown and sealing the reactor, which would include the installation of television monitors at the site and other technical matters.

"Our sense is we will be down to a matter of weeks," he said. "We are not talking about months."

In the next phase, North Korea would disclose all its nuclear programs and disable all facilities in return for a further 950,000 tons of fuel oil.

Mr. Hill said that from a "technical point of view" it would be possible to conclude that part of the agreement by the end of the year.

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/19/world/asia/19korea.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

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International Herald Tribune

UN weapons inspection team for Iraq, Unmovic, nears its end

By Nicholas Kulish

Published: June 18, 2007

UNITED NATIONS, New York: The search for Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction appears close to an official conclusion, several years after their absence became a foregone one.

The United States and Britain have circulated a new proposal to the members of the UN Security Council to "terminate immediately the mandates" of the weapons inspectors. Staff meetings on the latest proposal have already taken place, and officials say that the permanent council members, each of whom has veto power, seem ready to let the inspection group - the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission - meet its end.

In the heat of the debate leading to the Iraq invasion, the commission's acronym, Unmovic, rang out almost nonstop through the halls of the United Nations. Its inspection teams, at the very center of the worldwide debate over the war, supervised the destruction of rocket engines and fuel tanks.

But the inspectors left Iraq in March 2003, shortly before the invasion, and have not been allowed to return. October will be the third anniversary of the U.S.-led Iraq Survey Group's finding that Saddam's government had destroyed its stockpiles of illicit weapons just months after the Gulf War in 1991.

"Suddenly they got in a hurry," the acting executive chairman of the group, Demetrius Perricos, said of the push to disband. His contract is up at the end of the month, and he says he plans to move back to Vienna, Austria. The other staff members' contracts run until July 10.

Of course, nothing is certain. Kofi Annan, then the secretary general, asked Perricos to take the job for six months in June 2003. Perricos has outlasted Annan at the United Nations.

Any decision about the commission's future will have to deal with the disposition of its significant and unusual archive. While the offices for the most part look like standard drab, gray-carpeted cubicle farms, closer inspection reveals electronic combination locks and padlocks on the file cabinets, not to mention a guard at the door.

"If you want the formula for VX, we have it here," said Ewen Buchanan, an Unmovic spokesman, referring to a deadly nerve agent.

"We have, quite literally, the cookbooks for all the biological weapons, chemical weapons, the missile blueprints and designs, supplier information." The archive even includes an engine from a Scud missile - which shares space with a desk in a spare office - as well as a smaller one from an SA-2 missile.

"The archives must be handled prudently for risk of being utilized by proliferators," Hans Blix, the former chief weapons inspector, said.

Dealing with those archives will be no small task. In addition to the rocket engines, Unmovic has about 1,500 feet, or 460 meters, of paper files and a terabyte of electronic records (that is one million megabytes). The archive runs the gamut from floppy disks and VHS cassettes to digital video files and satellite images, reflecting the history of a body that stretches back through its predecessor inspection group, known as the UN Special Commission, all the way to 1991.

That Unmovic still exists says as much about the decision-making procedures at the United Nations as it does about the hunt for VX and anthrax. The uncertainty now, diplomats here say, is Russia. The Russian delegation has said that it is the United Nations' responsibility, not the U.S.-led coalition's, to certify that Iraq is in compliance with UN resolutions prohibiting the country from possessing unconventional weapons. A Russian official said that the delegation was not against ending Unmovic's mandate, but that procedures needed to be followed.

The Belgian ambassador, who holds the rotating presidency of the Security Council, has scheduled more debate for the end of the month.

At the same time the commission has said it will release a 1,200-page compendium on Iraq's illicit weapons program that could be the group's final word.

Perricos said that, at a minimum, the new Iraqi government should have to sign on to the latest international agreements on arms control and weapons proliferation before Unmovic's mandate was terminated. For the time being, Unmovic remains on a form of life support, not searching on the ground for weapons in Iraq but not going away either.

A skeleton crew still analyzes satellite photographs and issues regular quarterly reports to the Security Council. The entire presence in Iraq consists of just two local staff members who, according to the most recent report, released at the end of May, "continued to perform routine maintenance on the office support equipment" left behind there. If it is not ended, Unmovic will continue to spend \$10 million a year of Iraqi oil money to keep a reduced version of its weapons monitoring team in place and in limbo.

<http://www.iht.com/articles/2007/06/18/business/arms.php>

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Washington Post

June 20, 2007

Pg. 20

House Vote Stops Appropriation For New Generation Of Nuclear Weapons

By Walter Pincus, Washington Post Staff Writer

The House yesterday approved plans to halt funding for the development of a new generation of nuclear warheads as House leaders called on the Bush administration to provide a post-Cold War nuclear strategy that would detail the future size of the U.S. nuclear stockpile.

While approving most portions of the \$32 billion fiscal 2008 appropriations bill for energy and water development, the House put off final passage until later this summer while it works out details of funding for local Army Corps of Engineers flood-control projects.

The House action, which eliminated about \$82 million for continuing development of the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) program, also reduced spending for the upgrade and modernization of facilities in the nuclear weapons complex that are involved in refurbishing deployed bombs and warheads, storing older ones and dismantling those no longer needed.

Overall, the House bill reduced President Bush's budget request for nuclear weapons programs by \$632 million, to \$5.9 billion. At the same time, it raised by \$491 million, or 75 percent, the amount available for nonproliferation activities. In giving his support to the measure, House Appropriations Committee Chairman David R. Obey (D-Wis.) emphasized that the weapons program cuts were made "because there's been no strategy for post-Cold War nuclear weapons."

Meanwhile, two advocates of the RRW program, Rep. Heather A. Wilson (R-N.M.) and Sen. Pete V. Domenici (R-N.M.), spoke out against the House action. Two of the nation's three nuclear weapons laboratories, Los Alamos and Sandia, are in their state.

Wilson, during the House floor debate, described the action as "the most radical shift in U.S. policy on nuclear weapons that I've seen at least since the mid-1990s." At that time, during the Clinton administration, the decision was made to create a stockpile stewardship program that, with the aid of billions of dollars in new scientific equipment, could keep nuclear weapons reliable without testing them by refurbishing their nonnuclear parts.

Wilson added: "The decisions imbedded in this legislation will lead us either to return to nuclear testing or to abandon nuclear deterrence because we will stop maintaining the stockpile."

Domenici, in a Senate floor speech, said the House bill would "send American nuclear deterrence strategy in a new and absolutely unknown direction." He agreed that the RRW program deserved study but said it "must involve far greater resources than those involved in the House report language." He also said the House reductions do "irreparable harm" to the stockpile stewardship program by cutting funds for some needed facilities.

As the ranking minority member of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee that funds the nuclear complex, Domenici will be in position to restore some of the funds the House cut, including some money to keep the RRW going. The Senate Appropriations panel is scheduled to mark up the energy measure next week.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/06/19/AR2007061901924.html>

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Los Angeles Times

June 20, 2007

Frozen Funds Released To N. Korea

U.S. calls on Pyongyang to fulfill its pledge to shut its nuclear reactor now that the disputed money has been transferred.

By Associated Press

TOKYO — North Korea has received millions of dollars in frozen funds that had stalled nuclear disarmament talks and must quickly shut down its only reactor, the U.S. envoy to the negotiations said Tuesday.

More than \$20 million in North Korean funds had been frozen in a Macao bank blacklisted by the United States over allegations of money-laundering and other financial crimes. The dispute halted negotiations with the communist nation for more than a year, and the U.S. approved the release of the money this year to help end the standoff.

"My understanding is that today it was deposited in a North Korean account in Russia," U.S. envoy Christopher Hill told reporters in Tokyo.

"I think this is the time when everyone needs to kind of quicken the pace and work very hard" toward disarmament, he said. Hill, on a tour to Beijing, Seoul and Tokyo, had said he hoped to see a shutdown "within weeks, not months."

Hill said that the sum transferred was about \$23 million and that it was the total amount. It was unclear why the figure differed from the previously reported sum of about \$25 million.

Russia's Interfax China news agency cited an unidentified North Korean official on Monday as saying the government in Pyongyang plans to shut down the reactor in the second half of July.

Meanwhile, North Korea fired a short-range missile Tuesday toward waters between the Korean peninsula and Japan, but South Korean officials said the launch appeared to be part of routine drills and would not affect arms control talks.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-norkor20jun20,1,1205245.story?coll=la-headlines-world>

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