



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
Maxwell AFB, Alabama

Issue No. 544, 12 December 2006

Articles & Other Documents:

[Congress OKs Nuclear Pact With India](#)

[Six-Party Negotiations On N. Korea To Resume](#)

[A Missile Defense System Is Taking Shape In Alaska](#)

[Seeking Iran Intelligence, U.S. Tries Google](#)

[Some of Edgewood's most secret work involves weapons that aren't supposed to kill](#)

[U.S., Russia granted five-year extensions to deadline for destroying chemical weapons arsenal](#)

[Surprise Terrorist Attacks Remain Top Threat](#)

[Why Britain wants new nukes](#)

[Europeans Limit Scope Of Iran Nuclear Resolution](#)

[Centrifuges Advance Iran Nuke Project](#)

[Arab Nations Plan To Start Joint Nuclear Energy Program](#)

[Olmert Acknowledges Israel's Nuclear Arsenal](#)

[US Congress approves bioterrorism preparedness bill](#)

[In A Slip, Israel's Leader Seems To Confirm Its Nuclear Arsenal](#)

[Small Nuclear Conflict Could Affect Globe, Report Says](#)

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Los Angeles Times

December 9, 2006

Pg. 1

Congress OKs Nuclear Pact With India

The deal, a major policy shift, provides access to American technology.

By James Gerstenzang, Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — Reversing three decades of U.S. policies intended to halt the spread of nuclear weapons, Congress early today approved a long-stalled agreement giving India access to American nuclear technology with limited safeguards to discourage possible proliferation.

The House of Representatives passed the measure, 330 to 59, Friday night, and senators voted unanimously in favor of the deal shortly before 3 a.m. President Bush, who finalized the terms of the agreement during a visit to India in March, is expected to sign it quickly.

The pact would lift a U.S. moratorium on nuclear cooperation with a nation that has developed atomic weapons and has not signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty of 1970. But Bush and supporters of the agreement argue that it marks a crucial advance in restricting nuclear weapons because it permits international inspectors to examine most of India's civilian nuclear reactors for the first time.

In addition, they say that opening India's nuclear industry to \$100 billion in potential sales from abroad will help cement a relationship with a developing economic power that may also serve as a hedge against the growing clout of China in Asia.

Critics argued that by allowing India's nuclear arsenal to keep growing and keeping some of its facilities off-limits, the pact establishes a double standard and sets conditions under which treaty violations would be tolerated.

"Such a policy unravels years of successful U.S. diplomatic efforts to convince countries that the benefits of surrendering the right to develop nuclear weapons outweighed the risk of staying outside the treaty and pursuing a nuclear weapons option," said retired Army Lt. Gen. Robert G. Gard Jr., a senior military fellow at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, a Washington think tank.

The deal now faces at least two additional hurdles. A treaty putting the provisions into effect will require Senate ratification, and the Nuclear Suppliers Group, 45 nations that control exports of nuclear materials, also must approve the pact.

The suppliers group was formed in 1974 after India conducted a nuclear test.

Over months of debate, the measure's proponents were able to turn back fears that the accord would fuel a nuclear arms race in South Asia and that the United States was weakening its hand in seeking to restrict nuclear weapons development in Iran and North Korea.

Though India has been a nuclear power since 1974, its rival, Pakistan, first tested nuclear weapons in 1998.

Pakistan's military said in a statement that it had successfully test-fired a new version of its short-range, nuclear-capable missile today, the Associated Press reported.

Supporters said that rather than fueling arms development, the agreement will promote economic growth in the U.S. and India by easing political tensions and encouraging trade.

"India is a state that should be at the very center of our foreign policy and our attention," Rep. Tom Lantos (D-San Mateo) said in House debate Friday.

Sanjay Puri, chairman of the U.S.-India Political Action Committee, said some estimates had placed the potential economic value of the deal at \$30 billion in the United States and India alone, and that it could add 10,000 to 15,000 jobs in the U.S.

Alternatively, the failure of the deal would have "serious repercussions in terms of the political and economic relationship," he said.

The issue of Iran's nuclear ambitions delayed the measure's consideration until the last days of the 109th Congress. Legislators wanted assurances that India would cooperate with U.S. efforts to punish Iran, with sanctions if necessary, for its nuclear program.

But Bush administration officials feared such provisions would alienate India and scuttle the deal.

Ultimately, the two sides agreed on a compromise under which the president would submit reports on India's actions regarding Iran.

Under the agreement passed by Congress, India would be allowed to expand its nuclear weapons arsenal, but for the first time it would allow international inspections of its civilian reactors. However, inspectors would have access only to 14 of 22 reactors. The others, at military installations, would remain off-limits.

At the heart of the debate was the impact the deal would have on the nonproliferation treaty, a cornerstone of U.S. nuclear weapons policy since 1970. The treaty, aimed at preventing nonnuclear nations from acquiring atomic arms, has been signed by more than 180 countries.

Critics of the U.S.-India deal said it would undermine the treaty, encourage violations and lead to the spread of nuclear weapons.

During the debate Friday, Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who had been among the most vocal opponents, said the U.S. was asking the United Nations to pressure Iran, a signatory to the treaty, "not to use civilian nuclear materials in order to create a military nuclear weapon."

At the same time, he said, India was on the verge of gaining U.S. approval of a nuclear fuel agreement although the Indian government had refused to sign the treaty and had engaged in a subcontinent nuclear arms race.

"We are going to provide the nuclear materials for their civilian nuclear program so that it will free up their domestic nuclear materials for their weapons program," he said.

Markey said that the accord would set off a "nuclear weapons domino effect" by encouraging other nations to ignore the nonproliferation treaty, and that Iran and North Korea would be at the top of the list.

Bush, in addition to focusing on the access inspectors would gain to Indian facilities, has argued that with a population of 1.1 billion and a growing economy, India needs to expand its nuclear energy facilities to lessen its need for conventional fuels.

Growing demand for oil and gas, he says, will put price pressure on the world's limited supplies.

Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh set the agreement in motion during a meeting in Washington in July 2005, but negotiators were unable to complete it until March.

Undersecretary of State R. Nicholas Burns, who is visiting India, said ahead of Congress' approval that the deal would lead to an expansion of joint ventures between the countries and accompany increases in mutual counter-terrorism efforts.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/washingtondc/la-fg-usindia9dec09.1.3834839.story>

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

New York Times

December 9, 2006

Pg. 10

Europeans Limit Scope Of Iran Nuclear Resolution

By Warren Hoge

UNITED NATIONS, Dec. 8 — Europeans produced a revised draft of a Security Council resolution on Iran on Friday, and said they would formally introduce it on Monday in the hope of obtaining a speedy vote on much-delayed action to curb Tehran's nuclear program.

The text was drawn up after weeks of meetings in European capitals among the three nations drafting the measure, Britain, France and Germany, in consultation with the United States. It is aimed at meeting persistent objections from China and Russia.

The revised language narrows the scope of prohibition and punishment to activities that are clearly associated with making a nuclear weapon. Iran has argued that it is pursuing nuclear power for peaceful purposes, while the United States and the Europeans have contended that Iran's real purpose is to build bombs.

It also removes restrictions in earlier drafts on the construction, supplying and operation of an \$800 million light-water reactor that Russia is building at Bushehr in southern Iran.

Iran ignored an Aug. 31 United Nations deadline to suspend uranium enrichment, which can produce fuel for both nuclear plants and weapons. Since then, the United States and the Europeans have been pressing for sanctions, but China and Russia have stalled action, saying broad punishment would be counterproductive.

Iran has said that a sanctions resolution would be a threat to its national security. The proposed sanctions still include travel restrictions, an asset freeze and bans on providing nuclear program goods, but in the new text they are now more focused on people and material linked to suspected weapons-building activities.

"The new text has two goals," said one European diplomat involved in its preparation. "First, to keep it firm — I think it is a strong text — and at the same time to have the Chinese and Russians on board."

A second European diplomat was asked whether the Europeans planned to drive the matter to a vote, even if China and Russia, both veto-bearing permanent members, continued to object or threatened to abstain. "The intention and the wish is to remain unified and get this agreed," he said. "But it is three months since Iran ignored the deadline, and we are not saying unanimity at any price."

Neither diplomat would speak on the record before the text was officially presented to the members of the Council. In Washington, Sean McCormack, the State Department spokesman, said that he sensed that the differences over the resolution "were starting to narrow."

http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/09/world/europe/09nations.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

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

Washington Post

December 9, 2006

Pg. 16

Six-Party Negotiations On N. Korea To Resume

Talks Have Been Stalled for Over a Year

By Glenn Kessler, Washington Post Staff Writer

Six-nation talks on ending North Korea's nuclear program will begin next Saturday morning in Beijing, two months after Pyongyang defied international pressure and conducted its first nuclear test. Such talks have been stalled for more than a year.

"We're going back," Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill said in an interview. Hill, the chief U.S. negotiator, said China, the host of the talks, will make a formal announcement this weekend. The first session is expected to last a few days, then take a break before Christmas.

The talks have been stalled in part because of North Korean pique at a U.S. Treasury Department effort to crack down on North Korean counterfeiting. The United States has agreed to set up a working group at the talks to find ways to finalize a Treasury investigation of a Macau bank, provided North Korea takes steps to end its illicit activities.

U.S. officials said all sides have agreed that the talks will seek to implement the joint "statement of principles" issued on Sept. 19, 2005, which was designed to lay out a negotiating road map. That statement, which said North Korea would "abandon" its nuclear programs, is filled with diplomatic ambiguity, with no clear timeline for when the North would give up its programs, or how, or in what sequence. The statement said the steps would take place under the principle of "commitment for commitment, action for action," but now negotiators must agree on which steps will take place first.

In talks with the North Koreans, Hill has indicated a clear sense of urgency in implementing the agreement. Some Asian diplomats reported that he sought a timeline as short as 18 months, before President Bush completes his term. A U.S. official said Hill and the North Koreans have discussed in general terms how long it would take to implement the 2005 statement.

"There was a discussion about getting the September statement done in a reasonable amount of time," he said.

"Eighteen months would be included in a definition of 'reasonable,' but there were lots of time frames given out."

The six-party talks, which also include Japan, South Korea and Russia, began in 2003, after North Korea restarted a nuclear reactor in Yongbyon that had been frozen under a 1994 deal and began to extract weapons-grade plutonium from spent fuel rods. The Bush administration cut off heavy-fuel deliveries promised under the deal after it accused Pyongyang of building a clandestine uranium-enrichment program. Since then the six-party talks have generally taken place only intermittently and have generally made little progress.

U.S. officials said Hill, in bilateral talks in Beijing with his North Korean counterpart on Oct. 31 and Nov. 28, did not offer any enhanced humanitarian or economic benefits if Pyongyang agreed to give up its programs. Instead, Hill reiterated long-standing U.S. proposals, such as joining in providing energy assistance, offering security assurances, outlining a path to negotiating a peace treaty to end the Korean War and normalizing relations.

U.S. officials do not expect North Korea to take any visible steps at the start of the talks, such as shutting down its nuclear reactor, but they want to seek evidence that North Korea is committed to speedy implementation of the 2005 statement.

"They have indicated they are interested in an end to what they call the U.S. 'hostile policy,'" Hill said. "We made very clear to them that we don't have a hostile policy to them. We have a hostile policy to their policies, including and especially their nuclear policies."

Asian diplomats said China believes that the stage is set for progress at the talks. Beijing was embarrassed when North Korea, a longtime client state, gave it only two hours' warning of its nuclear test, and Chinese officials have been eager to repair the diplomatic damage.

Many Korea experts, however, increasingly think that North Korea will never give up its nuclear weapons programs, or at least that the price for giving them up has increased significantly. A group of experts recently returned from meetings there and said they believe that Pyongyang is returning to the talks simply to placate China and has little interest in giving up its nuclear programs.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/08/AR2006120801388.html>

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

Washington Times

December 10, 2006

Pg. 1

Centrifuges Advance Iran Nuke Project

Tehran sees little resistance to program as well as a chance to help U.S. out of Iraq.

By Ali Akbar Dareini, Associated Press

TEHRAN — Iran has begun installing 3,000 centrifuges in an expansion of its uranium enrichment program that brings the Islamic nation significantly closer to large-scale production of nuclear fuel, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said yesterday.

He also said the international community was yielding to Tehran's demands to continue its nuclear program. "Resistance of the Iranian nation in the past year forced them to retreat tens of steps over Iran's nuclear issue," the semi-official Fars agency quoted Mr. Ahmadinejad as saying. Fars is considered to be close to Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards.

In contrast to Mr. Ahmadinejad's defiance of the United States, which demands it halt its nuclear efforts, Iran's foreign minister yesterday offered to help the United States withdraw its forces from Iraq.

Speaking at the International Institute of Strategic Studies security conference in Bahrain, Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said, "If the United States changes its attitude, the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to help with the withdrawal from Iraq. Fifty percent of the problem of insecurity in Iraq is the presence of foreign troops." Mr. Mottaki echoed calls made last week by Iran's top national security official, Ali Larijani, for Gulf Arab countries to eject American bases in their countries and establish a regional security pact with Iran. He went further and offered deeper cooperation with Gulf Arab states on energy, tourism, business and counternarcotics.

Iran's offers do not seem to have tempted Gulf neighbors, which apparently are more worried about the dangers of living near Iran's nuclear facilities, especially because of threats by Washington and Israel to use military force to destroy them. The U.S. military operates from bases in Bahrain and Qatar.

At one point, Mr. Mottaki addressed an international audience that included U.S. Vice Adm. David Nichols, the deputy chief of U.S. Central Command, and said the regional chaos sparked by the Bush administration's twin wars demonstrated that U.S. military force was no longer a realistic policy option in the Middle East.

Bahraini Foreign Minister Sheik Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa said security of the energy-rich region depends on the United States, the European Union and other major oil importers.

Much of the discussion at this security conference centered on the U.S. Iraq Study Group report and its recommendation that Washington seek Iran's help in steering Iraq away from civil war.

William S. Cohen, defense secretary under President Clinton, urged Iran to push for talks with Washington.

"If you forgo aspirations for nuclear weapons and cut off funding for radical elements and support the Mideast peace process, then yes, you'd be welcomed into the international community. We'd have billions of dollars going into your economy," Mr. Cohen told the Iranians, among 250 delegates from 22 countries.

"If Iran is simply interested in pursuing a nuclear energy program and not weapons, that's something the U. S. wouldn't object to and would support."

The Bush administration has expressed skepticism of the Iraq Study Group's recommendation that it open talks with Iran, insisting that the Islamic republic first stop producing nuclear fuel. Iran has said it would never agree, even under the threat of a military attack or invasion by the United States.

"We have started installing 3,000 centrifuges" at a plant in central Iran, Mr. Ahmadinejad told a group of students in Tehran yesterday, according to Fars. He said the installation, at a plant in central Iran, marks the "first step toward industrial production."

"We will be able to produce our nuclear fuel once we install 60,000 centrifuges," he said. Scientists say 3,000 centrifuges could produce enough nuclear fuel each year for one atomic bomb.

The United States and its European allies have been seeking a U.N. Security Council resolution to impose sanctions on Tehran for refusing to suspend enrichment, but Russia and China have opposed tough action advocated by the United States, Britain, Germany and France, and the Security Council appears to have reached a standstill on the issue.

Iran announced for the first time in February that it had enriched uranium using 164 centrifuges, and it confirmed last month that it had stepped up uranium enrichment by injecting gas into a second network of centrifuges.

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20061210-120854-1898r.htm>

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

New York Times
December 10, 2006
Pg. 36

A Missile Defense System Is Taking Shape In Alaska

By William Yardley

FORT GREELY, Alaska, Dec. 4 — Snow fences help keep drifts from piling up on the missile silos. Heat-sensing security devices that monitor the edges of this 800-acre installation are sometimes set off by wayward moose.

And the soldiers here, members of the 3-year-old 49th Missile Defense Battalion of the Alaska National Guard, were just selected to help field test for the Army the third generation of the Extended Cold Weather Clothing System, seven layers of synthetic meant to resist the brutal winds that rip past the snow-clad peaks of the Alaska Range.

Four years after President Bush ordered a limited missile defense system to be built and nearly a quarter century after Ronald Reagan first proposed the Strategic Defense Initiative, this sub-Arctic outpost, once a cold war training site and still a cold-weather training site, is where progress on the long-embattled missile system is perhaps most evident, military officials say.

Eleven interceptor missiles are installed in underground silos here, buried beneath the snow and a former forest of black spruce. This summer, when North Korea signaled that it planned to fire an intercontinental ballistic missile, Fort Greely, which has never fired a test missile, was put on alert status, ostensibly ready to respond if necessary. After the test either failed or was aborted, “there was a little bit of a letdown” at the base, said Lt. Col Edward E. Hildreth III, commander of the 49th, “because we were prepared.”

That assertion, echoed by other commanders at Fort Greely during a limited tour of the base this week, comes a little more than three months after Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld visited Fort Greely and expressed caution about the program’s readiness. Critics have noted that tests on some parts of the system have failed and a recent successful missile test — in California, shortly after Mr. Rumsfeld’s visit to Fort Greely — lacked decoys and was unrealistic.

Even as questions persist about capability, the missile defense program is pushing forward at a cost of at least \$9 billion a year. About a third of that goes to the kind of operation that is based at Fort Greely, called Ground-Based Midcourse Defense, which is intended to shoot down enemy missiles while they travel through space. Vandenberg Air Force Base in California also houses two interceptors, but military experts say Fort Greely is better situated to interrupt the likely flight path of a missile from Asia or the Middle East.

Just a few years after being shut down, Fort Greely, about 100 miles southeast of Fairbanks, is now the destination of about 1,700 people, including some 200 soldiers, and the rest defense contractors and family members. The base’s Brownie troop is at 16 girls and growing — Monday night they made root beer floats — just as the number of interceptors installed at the base is expected to expand to as many as 38.

Now, in a region with barely four hours of daylight in December, there is a new espresso shop on base and an expanded PX that sells flat-screen televisions.

Sgt. Jack W. Carlson III, an intelligence analyst, said he was assigned to Fort Greely before the Pentagon officials created the 49th Missile Defense Battalion. “We didn’t have a name,” Sergeant Carlson said. “We didn’t have patches. We just called ourselves G.M.D.,” for Ground-Based Midcourse Defense.

Sergeant Carlson married another soldier and has bought a house in nearby Delta Junction, population 840. He said he heated his house mostly with wood salvaged from the spruce left after a wildfire.

Before Fort Greely, he had been stationed in the Virgin Islands. He learned of openings in the missile defense program through an online posting, he said. “I’d been on the beach all my life, and it was time to see the snow.”

Alaska has been crucial to American military interests since long before it became a state in 1959. Now, Adak, in the Aleutian Islands, is scheduled to become the home port of the Sea-Based X-band Radar, a long-delayed system built on a converted oil rig that is critical to the ground-based system’s ability to track enemy missiles.

While the 49th is an Alaska National Guard unit, Colonel Hildreth reports to Col. Michael L. Yowell, commander of the 100th Missile Defense Brigade, based in Colorado.

Colonel Hildreth said he was well aware of criticism that missile defense was far from a perfected program. He said Fort Greely operated in a balance between operational mode and construction.

“We build a little, test a little,” he said. “It’s fluid.”

A 12th interceptor will be installed this month. Last summer, however, when American intelligence learned that North Korea might be preparing to launch an intercontinental missile, much of the bustle of contractors on the site stopped. Fort Greely went on alert. The system that had struggled through tests faced the possibility of firing a live missile.

“It got quiet,” said Col. Thomas M. Besch, director of Ground-Based Midcourse Defense for the Missile Defense Agency. “And all of a sudden no developmental activity occurred. You could feel in the atmosphere that people were on edge and ready. You were kind of waiting for something to happen, and it didn’t.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/10/us/10greely.html>

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

New York Times
December 11, 2006
Pg. 10

Arab Nations Plan To Start Joint Nuclear Energy Program

By Hassan M. Fattah

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Dec. 10 — Arab leaders, meeting in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, on Sunday, said they intended to start a joint nuclear energy development program, a move certain to heighten concerns over a possible race for nuclear power in the oil-rich Persian Gulf.

Leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council concluded a two-day summit meeting in Riyadh on Sunday, agreeing to study how to proceed with development of such capacity.

At the same time, they called for a peaceful settlement of the crisis over Iran's nuclear program, which the United States and some other Western nations say is for nuclear arms.

"The states of the region have a right to possess nuclear energy technology for peaceful purposes," the summit meeting's closing communiqué said, echoing Iran's insistence that it, too, had the right to peaceful nuclear technology.

Publicly, officials of the gulf council said the development of a nuclear energy program would help meet their rising demand for electricity, despite the huge oil reserves.

"Nuclear technology is an important technology to have for generating power, and the gulf states will need it equally," said Prince Saud al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia's foreign minister, speaking to reporters. "It is not a threat," he said. "It is an announcement so that there will be no misinterpretation for what we are doing."

But analysts and officials said the announcement had a different purpose — to warn the United States not to acquiesce to Iran's nuclear ambitions as pressure grows on the Bush administration to reach out to Iran for help in stabilizing Iraq.

A report released by the bipartisan Iraq Study Group last week recommended that the United States open negotiations with Iran.

The predominantly Sunni Arab states fear that the United States may abandon Arab concerns to gain assistance from Iran, which could confirm Iran as the regional hegemon.

"The message is that the gulf countries will develop their own nuclear program if Iran is rewarded with the terms of the Baker-Hamilton report," said Abdelaziz O. Sager, chairman of the Gulf Research Center in Dubai, who is familiar with the nuclear initiative. "They are trying to say that if the Iranian program continues, you will force us to become nuclear capable too."

At a Persian Gulf security conference in Bahrain on Saturday, Iran's foreign minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, insisted that Iran was seeking only peaceful nuclear capacity.

"The time of nuclear weapons is over," Mr. Mottaki said. He added that if nuclear weapons served as an effective deterrent, they should have stopped the fall of the Soviet Union and Israel would not have had to go to war in Lebanon against Hezbollah this past summer.

Saudi officials have warned that a nuclear Iran could cause a regional arms race, suggesting that Saudi Arabia would be forced to acquire nuclear technology, too.

King Abdullah said Saturday that the region was increasingly becoming "a powder keg ready to explode," citing conflict in Iraq, Lebanon and the Palestinian territories, as well as the continuing Iranian nuclear crisis.

At least six Arab countries have reportedly sought to develop nuclear power programs, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco and Algeria.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/11/world/middleeast/11nuke.html>

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

Washington Post
December 11, 2006
Pg. 1

Seeking Iran Intelligence, U.S. Tries Google

Internet Search Yields Names Cited in U.N. Draft Resolution

By Dafna Linzer, Washington Post Staff Writer

When the State Department recently asked the CIA for names of Iranians who could be sanctioned for their involvement in a clandestine nuclear weapons program, the agency refused, citing a large workload and a desire to protect its sources and tradecraft.

Frustrated, the State Department assigned a junior Foreign Service officer to find the names another way -- by using Google. Those with the most hits under search terms such as "Iran and nuclear," three officials said, became targets for international rebuke Friday when a sanctions resolution circulated at the United Nations.

Policymakers and intelligence officials have always struggled when it comes to deciding how and when to disclose secret information, such as names of Iranians with suspected ties to nuclear weapons. In some internal debates, policymakers win out and intelligence is made public to further political or diplomatic goals. In other cases, such as

this one, the intelligence community successfully argues that protecting information outweighs the desires of some to share it with the world.

But that argument can also put the U.S. government in the awkward position of relying, in part, on an Internet search to select targets for international sanctions.

None of the 12 Iranians that the State Department eventually singled out for potential bans on international travel and business dealings is believed by the CIA to be directly connected to Iran's most suspicious nuclear activities.

"There is nothing that proves involvement in a clandestine weapons program, and there is very little out there at all that even connects people to a clandestine weapons program," said one official familiar with the intelligence on Iran.

Like others interviewed for this story, the official insisted on anonymity when discussing the use of intelligence.

What little information there is has been guarded at CIA headquarters. The agency declined to discuss the case in detail, but a senior intelligence official said: "There were several factors that made it a complicated and time-consuming request, not the least of which were well-founded concerns" about revealing the way the CIA gathers intelligence on Iran.

That may be why the junior State Department officer, who has been with the nonproliferation bureau for only a few months, was put in front of a computer.

An initial Internet search yielded over 100 names, including dozens of Iranian diplomats who have publicly defended their country's efforts as intended to produce energy, not bombs, the sources said. The list also included names of Iranians who have spoken with U.N. inspectors or have traveled to Vienna to attend International Atomic Energy Agency meetings about Iran.

It was submitted to the CIA for approval but the agency refused to look up such a large number of people, according to three government sources. Too time-consuming, the intelligence community said, for the CIA's Iran desk staff of 140 people. The list would need to be pared down. So the State Department cut the list in half and resubmitted the names.

In the end, the CIA approved a handful of individuals, though none is believed connected to Project 1-11 -- Iran's secret military effort to design a weapons system capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. The names of Project 1-11 staff members have never been released by any government and doing so may have raised questions that the CIA was not willing or fully able to answer. But the agency had no qualms about approving names already publicly available on the Internet.

"Using a piece of intel on project 1-11, which we couldn't justify in open-source reporting, or with whatever the Russians had, would have put us in a difficult position," an intelligence official said. "Inevitably, someone would have asked, 'Why this guy?' and then we would have been back to the old problem of justifying intelligence."

A senior administration official acknowledged that the back-and-forth with the CIA had been difficult, especially given the administration's desire to isolate Iran and avoid a repeat of flawed intelligence that preceded the Iraq war.

"In this instance, we were the requesters and the CIA was the clearer," the official said. "It's the process we go through on a lot of these things. Both sides don't know a lot of reasons for why either side is requesting or denying things. Sources and methods became their stated rationale and that is what they do. But for policymaking, it can be quite frustrating."

Washington's credibility in the U.N. Security Council on weapons intelligence was sharply eroded by the collapse of prewar claims about Iraq. A senior intelligence official said the intelligence community is determined to avoid mistakes of the past when dealing with Iran and other issues. "Once you push intelligence out there, you can't take it back," the official said.

U.S., French and British officials came to agree that it was better to stay away from names that would have to be justified with sensitive information from intelligence programs, and instead put forward names of Iranians whose jobs were publicly connected to the country's nuclear energy and missile programs. European officials said their governments did not rely on Google searches but came up with nearly identical lists to the one U.S. officials offered. "We do have concerns about Iranian activities that are overt, and uranium enrichment is a case in point," said a senior administration official who agreed to discuss the process on the condition of anonymity. "We are concerned about what it means for the program, but also because enrichment is in violation of a U.N. Security Council resolution."

The U.S.-backed draft resolution, formally offered by Britain and France, would impose a travel ban and freeze the assets of 11 institutions and 12 individuals, including the commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, the directors of Iran's chief nuclear energy facilities, and several people involved in the missile program. It would prohibit the sale of nuclear technologies to Iran and urges states to "prevent specialised teaching or training" of Iranian nationals in disciplines that could further Tehran's understanding of banned nuclear activities.

The text says the council will be prepared to lift the sanctions if Mohamed ElBaradei, the IAEA's director general, concludes within 60 days that Iran has suspended its enrichment and reprocessing of uranium and has halted efforts to produce a heavy-water nuclear energy reactor.

Many Security Council members are uneasy about the sanctions. The Russians and the Chinese -- whose support is essential for the resolution to be approved -- have told the United States, Britain and France they will not support the travel-ban element of the resolution, according to three officials involved in the negotiations. Russia is building a light-water nuclear reactor in Iran and some people on the sanctions list are connected to the project.

"The Russians have already told us it would be demeaning for people to ask the Security Council for permission to travel to Russia to discuss an ongoing project," a European diplomat said yesterday.

U.S. and European officials said there is room for negotiation with Russia on the names and organizations, but they also said it is possible that by the time the Security Council approves the resolution, the entire list could be removed.

"The real scope of debate will be on the number of sanctions," one diplomat said. "Companies and individuals could go off the list or go on."

Staff writer Colum Lynch at the United Nations contributed to this report.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/10/AR2006121000959.html>

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

IsraelNationalNews.com

Olmert Acknowledges Israel's Nuclear Arsenal

21:07 Dec 11, '06 / 20 Kislev 5767

(IsraelNN.com) In an unprecedented move on Monday, PM Ehud Olmert admitted that Israel possesses nuclear weapons.

In an interview with the German TV network SAT 1, Olmert was asked about the statement by US defense minister Robert Gates regarding Israel's nuclear ability. The prime minister became enraged when he was asked if the fact that Israel possessed nuclear power weakened the West's position against Iran.

"Israel is a democracy and does not threaten anyone," he exclaimed. "The only thing we have tried to do is to live without (threats of) terror, but we have never threatened to destroy another nation. Iran explicitly, openly and publicly threatens to wipe Israel off the map."

Olmert then went on to admit Israel's nuclear capability. "You can say that it is the same level as America, France, Israel and Russia," he said, adding that those countries had nuclear weapons but did not threaten any one with them. Israel has constrained itself for decades by insisting on a policy of "amimut", nuclear ambiguity or opacity, never admitting to our real capabilities, necessitating local journalists to add the line "according to foreign sources" every time they report on Israel's alleged nuclear stockpile.

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/news.php3?id=117225>

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

Baltimore Sun

www.baltimoresun.com

Some of Edgewood's most secret work involves weapons that aren't supposed to kill

BY DOUGLAS BIRCH

SUN REPORTER

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED DECEMBER 10, 2006

Some of the most secret work at Edgewood Chemical Biological Center involves so-called non-lethal weapons, which are permitted under an exemption in the international Chemical Weapons Convention for riot-control agents used domestically by police agencies.

Critics call the exemption a loophole in the law that threatens ultimately to destroy it, by permitting the development of chemicals that could prove useful on the battlefield.

"You can hurt the enemy by killing him," said Amy E. Smithson of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "Or you can create both harm and a burden by making his soldiers and civilians sick for months and months, or by making them so happy to see tanks rolling down their street. And later, giving them something that would make them so happy to work 23 or 24 hours a day."

Edgewood officials talk openly about their work on malodorants, or "stink bombs," and super-slippery liquids intended to induce pratfalls among hostage-takers or rioters. But work at Edgewood and elsewhere on less humorous weapons is classified.

In the early 1990s, Edgewood scientists did research into the use of fentanyl, a powerful synthetic narcotic, and related compounds in riot control or hostage situations. One of the compounds studied, carfentanyl, is the most

potent opiate-like drug known, 10,000 times more potent than morphine. These compounds took at least seven critical seconds to take effect, scientists say, and could easily kill by suppressing breathing.

Edgewood's researchers tried to combine these compounds, sometimes called "calmatives" or "immobilizers," with drugs to stimulate breathing, according to former scientists there. But researchers abandoned the work, said William E. White, a retired Edgewood chemist, because it was still too easy to trigger an overdose. "We felt the safety margin was too narrow," he said.

Then in October 2002 Chechen guerrillas seized the Dubrovka theater just a few miles from the Kremlin. Russian special forces flooded the theater with what foreign police sources say was an aerosol containing a fentanyl-related compound, rendering almost everyone inside unconscious. About 800 of the hostages were freed, although 127 died of the effects of the aerosol.

The incident, arms control experts say, revived global interest in "immobilizers." A 2003 National Academy of Sciences study reported that research on calmatives had resumed at the Edgewood center after "a lull of 10 years." William C. Dee, another former Edgewood weapons scientist, praised the decision to pursue these agents. "The only way we can solve these situations now is by going in with guns blazing, and people are going to get hurt when that happens," he said.

Critics, though, point to Dubrovka's scores of dead, and question whether negotiations would have allowed more people to walk away. "How on earth is something that kills 15 to 20 percent of people exposed considered non-lethal?" asks Edward Hammond of the Sunshine Project, a Texas-based watchdog group that follows chemical arms issues. "It's just a chemical weapon under a different name."

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/custom/attack/bal-id.nonlethal10.0.6773512.story?coll=bal-attack-headlines>

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

Reuters

www.alertnet.org

US Congress approves bioterrorism preparedness bill

09 Dec 2006 20:30:58 GMT

Source: Reuters

By Will Dunham

WASHINGTON, Dec 9 (Reuters) - The U.S. Congress on Saturday passed a bill to improve U.S. preparedness for bioterrorism or other health crises, in part by accelerating development of new vaccines and drugs.

The bill, sponsored by Massachusetts Democrat Sen. Edward Kennedy and North Carolina Republican Sen. Richard Burr, was one of a number of bills passed by Congress before adjourning Saturday morning and sent to President George W. Bush.

"With this bill, we take many important steps to increase our preparedness and response capabilities for public health emergencies by increasing our medical surge capacity, strengthening our public health infrastructure, and clarifying the responsibilities of federal officials," Kennedy said.

Many experts have warned that the United States is poorly prepared to respond to a terrorism attack involving germ warfare agents, like anthrax or small pox, or to potential pandemics like bird flu. The measure would provide \$1 billion over three years to develop vaccines and drugs to counter such threats.

It also would build on Project BioShield, a \$5.6 billion program created in 2004 that was spurred by the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and subsequent anthrax scares, and would aim to develop more and better drugs and vaccines in a national stockpile.

The Department of Health and Human Services would be designated as the lead federal agency to respond to public health emergencies under the legislation, which also would create a central authority within the department to handle the mission.

One intent of the measure is to unify the command and control for all of the public health and medical preparedness and response programs under an assistant HHS secretary, in an effort to avoid the chaotic response federal officials gave to Hurricane Katrina last year after it battered New Orleans.

The measure also would reauthorize a law that established grants to state and local public health authorities to improve their readiness.

The bill would establish within the Health and Human Services Department the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority to oversee the initiative and establish a National Biodefense Science Board to advise the government on emerging threats as well as promising breakthroughs in life sciences.

Industry was disappointed with Project BioShield in part because it did not help pay the cost of research and development of drugs and vaccines that have little commercial appeal.

With that in mind, this legislation would permit companies to get up to half the amount of their procurement contract in increments of 5 percent through the drug development process if they meet certain goals.

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N08403801.htm>

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

International Herald Tribune
www.iht.com

U.S., Russia granted five-year extensions to deadline for destroying chemical weapons arsenal

The Associated Press

Published: December 11, 2006

THE HAGUE, Netherlands: The United States and Russia have been granted a five-year extension to a deadline for destroying their chemical weapon stockpiles, the international organization overseeing the process announced Monday.

U.S. authorities requested the extension earlier this year, saying they would not be able to meet the original 2007 deadline set by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Russia, which is in the process of destroying its chemical arsenal, also has until the end of April 2012 to complete the job.

The United States is one of 178 countries that belong to the Chemicals Weapons Convention, which went into effect in April 1997, obliging member countries to stop developing chemical weapons and to destroy their stockpiles within 10 years.

However, the process of destruction has been more time-consuming than initially anticipated. It also is expensive — the destruction of the U.S. weapons will cost some US\$35 billion (€26.5 billion).

The extensions to the Russian and U.S. deadlines were formally approved last week in The Hague at a meeting of states that have signed up to the convention, the OPCW said in a press release.

Also granted extensions were India, which now has until the end of April 2009; Libya, which has until the end of 2010; and a country that requested anonymity that was given until the end of 2008.

Between them, the countries granted extensions are destroying a total of 71,000 metric tons of chemical agents.

In July, the U.S. ambassador to the OPCW, Eric Javits, told the AP that Russia had destroyed about 5 percent of its chemical weapons, while Washington had destroyed "37 percent and climbing."

http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2006/12/11/europe/EU_GEN_Netherlands_US_Chemical_Weapons.php

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

New York Times
December 12, 2006
Pg. 5

In A Slip, Israel's Leader Seems To Confirm Its Nuclear Arsenal

By Greg Myre

JERUSALEM, Dec. 11 — Israel's prime minister, Ehud Olmert, appeared to acknowledge inadvertently during a TV interview shown Monday that Israel has nuclear weapons, an issue on which the Jewish state has sought to maintain ambiguity for decades.

However, Mr. Olmert's aides said later that there was no change in Israel's policy of refusing to confirm or deny whether it has nuclear weapons.

In an interview with the N24 cable news channel in Germany, Mr. Olmert was asked about Iran's nuclear program. He gave a lengthy response, saying that the United States, France, Britain and Russia had nuclear weapons, and were "civilized countries that do not threaten the foundations of the world."

Mr. Olmert then added: "Iran openly, explicitly and publicly threatens to wipe Israel off the map. Can you say that this is the same level, when they are aspiring to have nuclear weapons as America, France, Israel, Russia?"

The interview was held Friday in Israel but shown Monday, timed to coincide with Mr. Olmert's visit to Germany. Mr. Olmert's spokeswoman, Miri Eisin, said by telephone, "Israel's policy has not changed." The prime minister and other officials have consistently said that Israel would not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

For decades, Israel has refused to say whether or not it has nuclear weapons despite the seemingly universal belief that it possesses them.

While Israel prefers not to discuss the nuclear issue at all, the policy of intentional ambiguity is seen as a way of creating a deterrent, without making it explicit, a position that could invite sanctions or encourage an arms race in the Middle East.

Avner Cohen, an Israeli who has written about Israel's nuclear program, said that "Israel's ambiguity policy has become so anachronistic."

"The world has taken Israel as a nuclear weapons state for about 40 years," said Mr. Cohen, a senior research fellow at the University of Maryland.

He said that in the 1970s, an Israeli president, Ephraim Katzir, caused a stir when he accidentally acknowledged that Israel had nuclear capability. "An older generation of leaders had a real taboo about talking about this," Mr. Cohen said. But Mr. Olmert, he added, is of a younger generation that "treats the issue much more normally."

Last week, Robert M. Gates also seemed to acknowledge an Israeli nuclear arsenal, at his Senate confirmation hearing to become secretary of defense. Of Iran, he said, "They are surrounded by powers with nuclear weapons: Pakistan to their east, the Russians to the north, the Israelis to the west and us in the Persian Gulf."

http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/12/world/middleeast/12olmert.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

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

Washington Times

December 12, 2006

Pg. 6

Surprise Terrorist Attacks Remain Top Threat

Nuclear blast not likely in U.S.

By Bill Gertz, Washington Times

A surprise attack on the United States by terrorists is the most worrying threat facing the country, while a nuclear detonation by al Qaeda here remains a low probability, the admiral in charge of the U.S. Northern Command says.

"We're trying to think through the unknown unknowns," Adm. Timothy J. Keating, the Northcom leader, said in a telephone interview with reporters.

Adm. Keating made the remarks in commenting on a nationwide, multiple-incident exercise that yesterday included a simulated nuclear terrorist attack that destroyed the Pentagon.

The exercise was designed to test continuity of government and emergency response after a one-kiloton nuclear blast was set off, and Adm. Keating said preliminary indications showed that despite the attack, government continued "unabated."

Casualties from the simulated blast were in the "thousands" and a radioactive plume traveled south through Crystal City and Alexandria based on weather computer models.

Asked about government concerns that al Qaeda could strike the United States in the future with some type of nuclear device, Adm. Keating said on Friday it is something to think about but not a worry.

"On a scale of one to 10, this is around one or two for the likelihood of terrorists to a) get the material, b) assemble the weapon, c) learn how to operate it, d) transport it, and e) use it," Adm. Keating said yesterday in a second telephone press conference with reporters from Northern Command headquarters in Colorado Springs.

"We still have no more reason today than we did last week to think that it is more likely but that does not stop us from being required to work through the 'what ifs,'" he said.

Adm. Keating said the United States was not expecting the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon because the suicide airline hijackings were "not in our kit bag of threats."

What worries U.S. military planners in charge of protecting the United States are unconventional weapons strikes or unexpected forms of attack.

"Things like biological attacks, things like maritime attacks by small boats in some numbers," Adm. Keating said.

"We're working closely with intelligence agencies to try and red team all these."

Adm. Keating said there is no intelligence indicating that terrorists may be planning an attack on the United States during the holiday season.

"I'm not aware of any operations in train," he said, noting that discussions with the Homeland Security Department and FBI have shown no information warranted an increased concern of attack.

The joint military and civilian exercise began Dec. 4 and is testing responses to simultaneous events, in addition to the nuclear blast:

- Two long-range missile strikes from Asia on Hawaii and Washington state, one that failed and the second that was intercepted by a U.S. missile defense interceptor.
- A series of foreign suicide car-bomb attacks on a U.S. missile defense base at Fort Greely, Alaska, that were countered with a rapid deployment military force.

- The crash of a military transport carrying nuclear weapons at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz.
 - A series of threatening small-boat incursions that required searches and boardings at sea.
 - Hijacked civilian aircraft that were used in terrorist attacks against Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia.
- Army Col. Hugh Bell, a Northcom missile defense officer, said the command is in charge of ordering the use of missile interceptors based in Alaska and California, if an enemy missile is launched.

"The situation is that there are folks who want to influence other countries and want to get their way and one of their methods is to threaten the use of ballistic missiles," Col. Bell said.

Col. Bell said the dangers from missiles include a rogue nation such as North Korea or a terrorist group that manages to obtain missiles for use against the United States.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/national/20061211-111044-5748r.htm>

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

Los Angeles Times

December 12, 2006

Small Nuclear Conflict Could Affect Globe, Report Says

By John Johnson Jr., Times Staff Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Even a small nuclear conflict could have catastrophic environmental and societal consequences, extending the death toll far beyond the number of people killed directly by bombs, according to the first comprehensive climatic analysis of a regional nuclear war.

A few dozen modest Hiroshima-sized nuclear weapons exchanged between India and Pakistan, for example, could produce a globe-encircling pall of smoke, causing temperatures to fall worldwide and disrupting food production for millions, according to the analysis presented Monday at a meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco.

While a small nuclear exchange might not trigger a life-ending "nuclear winter," it could cause as much death as was once predicted for a nuclear war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, said Owen B. Toon, an atmospheric researcher at the University of Colorado.

"These results are quite surprising," Toon said at a media briefing. Regional nuclear conflicts "can endanger entire populations" the way it was once thought only worldwide conflict could.

Toon and coauthor Richard Turco, a professor of atmospheric sciences at UCLA, were part of the team of scientists that developed the original concept of nuclear winter in the 1980s.

The analysis was presented in two papers that dealt with the climatic, atmospheric and social consequences of a regional exchange. The studies were published in the online journal *Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics Discussions*.

Since the 1980s, when the U.S. and Soviet Union began drawing down their nuclear stockpiles, the number of weapons around the world has declined by a factor of three, Toon said. There are now about 10,000 nuclear weapons, and that is expected to drop to 4,000 by 2012.

But the number of nations with the potential to possess nuclear arms has gone up dramatically. Toon said 40 countries now have the fissile material to build nuclear weapons. Japan, with its large nuclear power industry, could make 20,000 weapons.

Many of the countries that could build nuclear weapons are also unstable, or at some stage of discontent with their neighbors.

In conducting their research, the scientists looked at other global cataclysms, such as the 1815 eruption of the Tambora volcano in Indonesia. The eruption triggered what has come to be known as the Year Without a Summer, which caused killing frosts and crop losses in New England as well as crop failures and famine in Europe.

The authors said even a limited nuclear conflict would be much worse, killing as many as 17 million in China alone. The most significant atmospheric impact from a nuclear exchange would be the accumulation of smoke and soot in the atmosphere, said team member Georgiy Stenchikov, a professor of environmental science at Rutgers University. Stenchikov estimated that 5 million tons of soot could be thrown into the air by the explosion of about 100 15-kiloton nuclear weapons.

The smoke and soot would ascend into the stratosphere and stay there for up to 10 years, causing temperatures to fall several degrees, the researchers said.

In areas far removed from the site of the explosions, growing seasons could be reduced by 10 days to a month, said Alan Robock, an environmental sciences professor at Rutgers who worked on the analysis.

One factor increasing the danger in densely populated areas is the proliferation of plastics, which in a firestorm would increase the soot released into the atmosphere. The production of plastics in the developed world has doubled in just the last two decades, Turco said.

Instead of feeling content that the U.S. and Russia are drawing down their nuclear arsenal, people should realize that they "are at a perilous crossroads," Toon said.

"Nuclear proliferation and political instability form the greatest danger to human society since the dawn of mankind."

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-sci-nuke12dec12.0.4390089.story?coll=la-headlines-nation>

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

Christian Science Monitor

www.csmonitor.com

December 12, 2006

Why Britain wants new nukes

It has announced a \$39 billion overhaul, spurring calls to bolster global nuclear weapons regulation.

BY **Mark Rice-Oxley** / *Correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor*

LONDON – When Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev first put their nuclear weapons on the negotiating table 20 years ago, it heralded a new era of disarmament and the hope - however faint - of a nuclear-free world.

That hope, already overshadowed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons to four new countries, dimmed further last week after Britain unveiled plans to spend around £20 billion (\$39 billion) to replace its submarine-based missile deterrent known as Trident. The system, British Prime Minister Tony Blair said, would provide crucial "insurance" against threats in a changing world.

The move has divided opinion, but experts on both sides agree that the decision highlights the urgent need to revive some form of global nuclear weapons framework. The alternative is to risk a new arms race with many more powers than before and a heightened risk that a warhead might actually be used.

"When the cold war was over there was a hope, even an assumption, that the main reason for having nuclear weapons would disappear and they would be negotiated away," recalls Frank Barnaby, a nuclear physicist who witnessed a test more than 50 years ago, and opposes nuclear weapons. "That hasn't happened."

For a few years, it seemed that all five recognized nuclear powers - Russia, the US, France, China, and Britain - would embrace the new spirit of disarmament. The US and Russia negotiated down their stockpiles. Hollywood stopped making nuclear holocaust movies. The brinkmanship of mutually assured destruction (MAD) appeared more incongruous than ever. Nuclear was to defense what the sting is to the bee: pyrrhic.

But now, major nuclear deals like the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) appear to be coming apart at the seams: On Friday, the US Congress passed a bill that reversed a 30-year policy that opposed nuclear cooperation with India because it is not an NPT signatory. Besides India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea also have atomic capabilities - not to mention Iran's nuclear pretension - and the "big five" are updating their systems, setting a poor example to powers who have thus far desisted.

"You can't have it both ways," says Dr. Barnaby. "It won't work [rearming and] telling others to disarm. You either get rid of nuclear weapons, or nuclear power will increase and with it the danger that nuclear weapons will one day be used."

In its defense, Britain points out that it is cutting its number of warheads from 200 to 160, leaving it with less than 1 percent of the world's warheads. Proponents argue that Britain's updated program will enable it to be a "force for good." And it will keep recalcitrant enemies at bay, whoever they may be in 10, 20, or 40 years.

"Given the uncertainties around the world it would be a strange time to get out of the business," says Michael Quinlan, a former top official at Britain's Defence Ministry.

Opponents - which include nearly two-thirds of Britons, according to a recent survey - counter that nuclear weapons do not address current threats like climate change or terrorism.

"Quite apart from the morality of being willing to kill hundreds of thousands of people, security is not being enhanced, it's being reduced," says Bruce Kent, vice president of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. "We are sending the message to anyone who feels like it that they should have the same security."

That much has been made clear by big nonnuclear powers in recent weeks. A top official from South Africa, the first power to voluntarily give up its nuclear missile capability, said there were double standards at play akin to smokers telling the rest of the world not to smoke because it was bad for them.

Germany's foreign minister, Frank Walter Steinmeier, recently warned that disarmament and proliferation were two sides of the same coin, the inference being that without nuclear powers disarming, others would be reluctant to forswear atomic programs.

The grand bargain of the 1968 NPT treaty, sharpened by a 1996 International Court of Justice ruling, was that the nuclear five were obliged to advance nuclear disarmament. That hasn't happened. A review is due in 2010 and experts are calling for intensified global cooperation.

"The NPT review in 2010 needs to be a world summit," says Dan Plesch, an antinuclear defense analyst. He adds that the 2009 expiration date on the original Moscow-Washington arms reduction treaty START is "going to concentrate US minds."

Lee Willett, head of the maritime studies program at London's Royal United Services Institute, says that with nine nuclear powers and another five or six looking to go nuclear, "the nuclear genie is out of the bottle. The only way to put it back is through a multilateral framework."

Failure to do so, he adds, will mean that "with nine nuclear powers out there the chances of someone using one of these things becomes less unlikely."

Not everyone, however, believes that a nuclear world is a bad thing. Mr. Quinlan, who was the Defence Ministry policy director in the late 1970s when the first Trident decision was taken, says atomic weapons have "kept us free from certain forms of war for 61 years, in which time they haven't killed anyone."

"With every year that goes by without them being used the taboo [of using them] becomes more and more powerful," he adds. "I hope we can get to a world where we can manage without these things, but that will need a lot of political change."

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/1212/p07s02-woeu.html>

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