



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
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MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Issue No. 1013, 10 July 2012

Articles & Other Documents:

Featured Article: [Details of Iran's Views Presented at 5+1 Talks Released](#)

1. [Permanent End to Uranium Enrichment Out of Question: Iran MP](#)
2. [Details of Iran's Views Presented at 5+1 Talks Released](#)
3. [Next Expert-Level Talks Between Iran, P5+1 Set for July 24](#)
4. [N. Korea Dismisses Reports of Order to Make Nuclear Bombs](#)
5. [North Korea: Kim Jong-un 'Having an Affair with Married Former Singer'](#)
6. [ASEAN Postpones All Signings on SE Asia Nuke-Free Zone Documents this Week](#)
7. [Russian Army Chief Starts Visit to the United States](#)
8. [Nuclear Submarines Hit by More than 200 Fires in the Past 25 Years](#)
9. [NNSA Announces Elimination of 450 Metric Tons of Russian Weapons Highly Enriched Uranium](#)
10. [Al Qaeda Terror Suspect Arrested after Breaching Olympic Exclusion Zone Ban FIVE TIMES in One Day](#)
11. [Al-Qaida Leader Released from Mauritanian Jail](#)
12. [The Arms Race that Won't Happen](#)
13. [Iran Has No 'Right' To Enrich Uranium](#)
14. [13 Minutes to Doomsday](#)
15. [Tehran Sets Terms for a Nuclear Compromise](#)
16. [Beyond Nuclear Denial](#)
17. [Obama Pursues "Reset" While Putin Pursues "Get Set"](#)
18. [Washington P5 Conference on Implementing the NPT](#)
19. [S.Korea Needs to Consider Acquiring Nuclear Weapons](#)
20. [Failed Defense Pact Worsens Japan Nuke Fears](#)

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Issue No.1013, 10 July 2012

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Press TV – Iran

Permanent End to Uranium Enrichment Out of Question: Iran MP

Saturday, July 7, 2012

An Iranian lawmaker says permanently halting 20-percent uranium enrichment is in no way acceptable for Iran but temporary suspension can be taken under advisement.

“The reality is that the Islamic Republic of Iran has no problem for negotiating this issue [halting uranium enrichment], provided that the P5+1 - the US, Britain, France, China, and Russia, plus Germany - accept to meet Iran's need to 20-percent enriched uranium,” Mohammad Hassan Asferi said on Saturday.

The lawmaker, who is member of Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, emphasized that Iran would never accept permanent suspension of enrichment, Majlis official news agency, ICANA, reported.

“The West should set a specific period for the suspension of enrichment. For example, they should tell Iran to suspend 20-percent enrichment for two years during which time the West will have to meet Iran's [enriched uranium] needs. However, permanent suspension of enrichment is by no means acceptable,” he added.

Asferi stated that even the acceptance of temporary suspension of 20-percent enrichment will depend on the termination of sanctions against Iran and returning the Iranian nuclear dossier from the UN Security Council to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The US and European Union accuse Iran of pursuing military purposes in its nuclear energy program and have imposed international and unilateral sanctions against Tehran under that pretext.

EU sanctions entered into force against Iran's financial and oil sectors on July 1, to prevent all the union's member states from purchasing Iranian oil, extending insurance coverage for tankers carrying Iranian crude, and doing business with the Iranian central bank.

Tehran has frequently refuted West's allegations, saying repeated inspections by IAEA have never found any diversion in its nuclear energy program toward military purposes.

<http://presstv.com/detail/2012/07/07/249804/iran-will-never-stop-enrichment-lawmaker/>

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

Tehran Times – Iran

Details of Iran's Views Presented at 5+1 Talks Released

From the Political Desk

Sunday, 08 July 2012

During nuclear talks with the 5+1 group (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany) in Moscow on June 18 and 19, Iranian negotiators provided a detailed explanation of Tehran's views, including a proposal for holding high-level negotiations every three months.

Iranian negotiators also elaborated on their views during an expert meeting with world powers, which was held in Istanbul on July 3.

Details:

Some facts regarding Iran's nuclear talks with 5+1 3 July 2012

In the Name of ALLAH, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful A framework for comprehensive and targeted dialogue for long term cooperation among 7 countries

A. Guiding Principles

Parties agree and assert on,

Issue No. 1013, 10 July 2012



1. good will,
2. the spirit of cooperation,
3. mutual respect,
4. avoiding measures which violate good will, spirit of cooperation and mutual respect,
5. giving priority to the issues of mutual interest,
6. considering NPT as the cornerstone of talks,
7. commitment to the rights and obligations specified in the NPT, and
8. avoiding preconditions and agree to continue their talks in a new process which is
 1. comprehensive,
 2. long term,
 3. sustainable,
 4. mutually agreed,
 5. constructive,
 6. of tangible measures,
 7. on the basis of step by step approach, and
 8. Based on reciprocity.

B. Objectives

1. To normalize Iran's nuclear file in the UN Security Council and in the Board of Governors by total termination of the UNSC, unilateral, and multilateral sanctions against Iran.
2. To assure and guarantee the Islamic Republic of Iran of practically enjoying all its nuclear rights within the framework of the NPT and regulations of the IAEA, in exchange for implementing its safeguard obligations.
3. To achieve a sustainable nuclear cooperation for transferring advanced technologies.
4. To conclude a comprehensive agreement on collective commitments in the areas of economic, political, security and international cooperation.

C: Issues

Nuclear issues

Non-nuclear issues

D: Structure of the Process

1. Timing:
 - Meeting(s) between Dr. Saeed Jalili and Lady Ashton and the representatives of other 6 countries: every 3 months.
 - Expert Meeting(s) of the 7 countries chaired by deputies of Dr. Jalili and Lady Ashton: prior to each main meeting.
2. Agenda:
 - Combination of a set of nuclear and non-nuclear issues based on priorities suggested by the deputies meetings.
3. Agenda for the Moscow Meeting: the Islamic Republic of Iran's proposals and 5+1 proposal which raised during Baghdad meeting.

E. Reciprocal Steps

To materialize the above mentioned objectives, and in order to:

First, legally and technically pave the way for guaranteeing the success of the talks in a short period of time in a way that it respects the legitimate and legal rights and obligations;

Second, define and agree on reciprocal steps in a way that it clearly sets the ultimate outcome of the process of the talks (namely, normalization of Iran's nuclear file in the UN Security Council and in the Board of Governors along with cancellation of all UNSC and other types of sanctions); and

Third, facilitate and accelerate the definition of "confidence building reciprocal steps" and "desirable options for cooperation" in nuclear and non — nuclear areas;

Parties will commit themselves;

1. to define and implement the confidence building reciprocal steps in a "simultaneous", "equipollent" and "balanced" manner, and



2. to obligate to the rights and obligations envisaged in the NPT.

Therefore, no agreement shall and can undermine NPT's rights and obligation, or interpreted in a way that it either restricts or spoils them.

a. Nuclear Issues

Step One: Guidelines

Commencement of cooperation and reciprocal steps requires an appropriate context and a clear vision of the process. Within such context, attestation of parties to each other side's demand indicates the required commitment to conclude the process of talks.

- The Islamic Republic of Iran emphasizes once again on its commitments under the NPT and its opposition to nuclear weapons based on the Supreme Leader's Fatwa against such weapons.
- 5+1 officially recognizes the nuclear rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran based on Article 4 of the NPT, particularly its enrichment activities, and will openly announce it.

Step Two: Transparency Measures

The Islamic Republic of Iran will continue its broad cooperation with the IAEA within the framework of its legal and Safeguard obligations as before. Since baseless accusations and ambiguities have been raised regarding Iran's past nuclear activities, Iran is asked to answer such allegations beyond its legal obligations;

- The Islamic Republic of Iran will transparently cooperate with the IAEA on the issue of "possible military dimensions" of Iran's nuclear program (PMD).
- 5+1 will terminate all unilateral and multilateral sanctions (out of the UNSC framework) in order to make transparency on their intentions.

Step Three: Confidence building steps

The Islamic republic of Iran's enrichment activities providing enriched fuel needed for TRR are under the supervision of the IAEA's inspectors and cameras continuously. The Islamic Republic of Iran has been asked for taking some additional confidence building measures in this respect, although it has no more obligations in this regard;

- The Islamic Republic of Iran will cooperate with 5+1 to provide enriched fuel needed for TRR.
- In order to build confidence on their intentions, 5+1 will terminate the sanctions and will remove Iran's nuclear file from UNSC agenda.

Step Four: Strengthening cooperation on mutual interests

In order to enhance assurance and confidence and to fulfill parties interests, parties will agree to start and boost their cooperation on the following issues:

- The Islamic Republic of Iran's priorities: Designing and building nuclear power plants, and research reactors.
- 5+1 priorities: light water research reactors, nuclear safety and security, nuclear fusion

Step Five: Strengthening joint cooperation

For the purpose of broadening the dimensions of trust and confidence and working on the common grounds of interest in non-nuclear areas, parties agree to start their cooperation on the following issues;

- The Islamic Republic of Iran's priorities: Regional issues especially Syria and Bahrain
- 5+1 priorities: combating Piracy and counter narcotic activities.

Reviewing and Assessing the Proposal of 5+1

Some of the propositions in the proposal of 5+1 are incorrect, some are ambiguous, some are in contradiction to international documents and some are not in conformity with the realities:

A. "Stopping all activity at Fordow, including both 5% enrichment and 20% enrichment and the installation of additional centrifuges and centrifuge components"

Points:



- 5 percent enrichment activities and installing more centrifuges and their components do not correlate with 20 percent enrichment.
- In Fordo there are other activities which are not related to 20% enrichment.

B. "Transferring 20% enriched uranium to a third country under IAEA custody"

Points:

- There is no correlation between transferring 20 percent materials out of the country with 20 percent enrichment. All materials are under the "supervision" and "seal" and "unannounced inspections" of the IAEA.
- There is no correlation between transferring 20 percent materials out of the country with 20 percent enrichment as in the third country materials would be under the supervision of the IAEA, as this the case in Iran.

C. "Shutting down the Fordow facility will address concerns that the facility is intended for military use"

Points:

- This facility is not a military base and there is no reason to consider it so.
- None of the equipments and items used, especially the one used to collect enriched material, neither the design nor the system can be used to collect highly enriched materials.
- IAEA director has explicitly confirmed that all the equipment and activities in Fordo are for peaceful purposes and under the supervision of IAEA.

D. "Fordow facilities ... concerns ... since it is located on a military base"

Points:

- These facilities are not located on a military base.
- There is no limitation to international authorized access (IAEA access) to this facility.

E. "Fordow facilities ... concerns ... since it is heavily fortified"

Points:

- Protection of sensitive nuclear facilities is not only permissible but necessary
- Established international mechanisms for nuclear security highlight the need for strong protection of nuclear facilities.
- The sustained threats against nuclear facilities and enrichment activities, as well as ongoing threats against nuclear scientists, which are in contradiction to the UN charter and resolutions, necessitate more security from such facilities.
- Facing constant threats, we need a back-up facility to safeguard our enrichment activities.

F. "Fordow facilities ... concerns ... since it is too small for commercial purposes"

Points:

- Fordow facility has never been constructed for commercial purposes
- The main purpose of Fordow facility is to protect it against threats, but it is also being used for 20% enrichment, R&D activities, labs, storage places, etc.
- Facing constant threats, we need a back-up facility to safeguard our enrichment activities

G. "Agreement on these interrelated elements (stopping, shutting down, shipping) is necessary"

Points:

- Shutting down Fordo facility has no relation to 20%, as various activities other than producing 20 percent materials are done at Fordow.
- Transferring the materials out of the country is not related with 20 percent enrichment because all materials in Iran are under the supervision of the IAEA, sealed by the IAEA and inspectors of the agency do the unannounced inspections.

H. "5+1 will cooperate with Iran to provide fuel complexes for the Tehran Research Reactor"

Point:

- A few months before, Iran put its home-made fuel complexes inside TRR. Therefore, cooperation of 5+1 to "provide fuel complexes for TRR" is far from the actual needs and real time requirements of Iran.



I. "With provision of fuel for the TRR, there is no rationale for further production of 20% material"

Points:

- Continuation of 20 percent enrichment to supply needed fuel for TRR in the next few years,
- Calculating the amount of 20 percent materials that due to technical issues, including relevant tests, get out of the cycle,
- Supplying fuel needed for at least 4 other research reactors because of the territorial extent of Iran and the short lifetime of medical isotopes,
- Right of the Islamic Republic of Iran to sell fuel complexes to other countries

J."The E3+3 would support IAEA Technical Cooperation to modernize and maintain the safety of the TRR"

"The E3+3 could review the IAEA Technical Cooperation projects ... and make a recommendation to the IAEA Board on restarting some of them"

Points:

- Technical cooperation of the Agency with Iran for its peaceful nuclear activities is an obligation of the IAEA and one of the rights of IR. Iran as a member state of the agency and the NPT.
- IR. Iran voices its readiness to share its software and hardware services in the area of research reactor safety if other countries need and at discretion of the IAEA

K. "The E3+3 would support IAEA Technical cooperation to modernize and maintain the safety of the TRR"

"The E3+3 could review the IAEA Technical cooperation projects ... and make a recommendation to the IAEA Board on restarting some of them"

Points:

- Placing technical cooperation of the Agency in the shadow of political measures is contrary to the dignity and specialized status of the IAEA.
- Under Article 4:2 of the NPT, 5+1 are required for fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and information with Iran.

L. "E3+3 has put together a detailed package ... to provide medical isotopes for cancer patients in Iran"

"E3+3 ... to ensure no gap in treatment for your cancer patient"

"The United States is prepared to ... permit safety- related inspection and repair in Iran for Iranian commercial aircraft"

Point:

- Providing isotopes for patients, treating cancer patients as well as repairing and providing spare parts for commercial aircrafts are among basic human rights, and mixing them with political issues demonstrates non- constructive objectives of the other side.

• M. "The E3+3 would cooperate with Iran to provide Iran fuel elements for the Tehran Research Reactor"

• "The E3+3 would support IAEA Technical Cooperation to modernize and maintain the safety of the TRR"

• "Cooperation on the early stages of acquiring a modern light water isotope producing research reactor"

• "The United States is prepared to adjust its sanctions policy ..."

• "The E3+3 could review the IAEA Technical Cooperation projects ... and make a recommendation to the IAEA Board on restarting some of them"

Points:

- Regardless of the substance of the above propositions as the reciprocal steps of 5+1, it should be said that:
- First, using general terms such as "cooperation", "support", "adjustment", "review" and "recommendation" in these propositions are in contradiction with the basic goal of the very same proposal "which is creating confidence and trust in the first stage."
- Second, the above-mentioned suggestions are not compatible with the requests such as "stopping enrichment", "transferring of materials" and "shutting down the Fordo".
- Third, taking into consideration the record and history of the western countries attitudes regarding Iran's nuclear issue, it would increase and deepen the distrust and uncertainty on the Iranian side.

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/component/content/article/99370>



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

Press TV – Iran

Next Expert-Level Talks Between Iran, P5+1 Set for July 24

Tuesday, July 10, 2012

The next round of the expert-level talks between Iran and the six major world powers of the P5+1 over Tehran's nuclear energy program has been scheduled to be held in the Turkish city of Istanbul on July 24.

The upcoming meeting between senior Iranian and EU officials will be held in Istanbul.

"The objective for the meeting ... is to look further at how existing gaps in positions could be narrowed and how the process could be moved forward," Reuters quoted a spokesman for EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton as saying on Monday.

Ashton's spokesman also said the talks would continue after the July 24 meeting between Deputy Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Ali Baqeri and Helga Schmid, a senior member of Ashton's team.

The spokesman added that SNSC Secretary Saeed Jalili and Ashton would be in contact in the future.

The last expert-level meeting between Iran and the P5+1 representatives was held on July 3 in Istanbul.

Iran and the P5+1 - Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States plus Germany - agreed to hold the expert-level talks during their negotiations in the Russian capital, Moscow, in June.

The Moscow meetings came after three sessions of plenary talks in Baghdad in May and an earlier round of negotiations in the Turkish city of Istanbul in mid-April.

The two sides had, prior to the Istanbul talks, held two rounds of negotiations, one in Geneva, Switzerland, in December 2010, and another in Istanbul in January 2011.

<http://www.presstv.com/detail/2012/07/10/250170/iranp51-technical-talks-due-on-july-24/>

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

Yonhap News Agency – South Korea

July 6, 2012

N. Korea Dismisses Reports of Order to Make Nuclear Bombs

SEOUL, July 6 (Yonhap) -- North Korea on Friday dismissed as "groundless" Japanese media reports that the North's late leader Kim Jong-il had issued an order to mass-produce nuclear bombs by using highly enriched uranium.

"It is a politically-motivated plot to create a fresh atmosphere for ratcheting up international pressure on the (North) as the story is a totally groundless and sheer fabrication," the North's official Korean Central News Agency said in a commentary.

The commentary claims the media reports prove that Japan's hostile policy toward the North has reached an extreme phase.

The North's reaction came four days after the Tokyo Shimbun and the Mainichi Shimbun reported that Kim said a uranium enrichment plant Pyongyang disclosed to a visiting U.S. scientist in 2010 was not designed for civilian industry.

Kim told officials that it is natural for uranium enrichment to be used in making atomic bombs, the newspapers said, citing leaked internal documents from the North's Workers' Party.

Uranium, if highly enriched, can be used to make weapons, providing Pyongyang with a second way of building atomic bombs after its existing plutonium-based program. North Korea conducted two nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009.

Issue No. 1013, 10 July 2012

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The North has insisted that it is producing low enriched uranium to solve its acute electricity problem. Nighttime satellite photos of the Korean Peninsula show a pitch-black North neighboring a brightly illuminated South Korea.

Kim died in December and was succeeded by his youngest son Jong-un.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2012/07/06/45/0401000000AEN20120706006500315F.HTML>

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

London Daily Telegraph – U.K.

North Korea: Kim Jong-un 'Having an Affair with Married Former Singer'

Kim Jong-un is having an affair with a previously married singer who has been pictured with the North Korea leader at several recent events, according to reports.

By Julian Ryall in Tokyo

10 July 2012

South Korean intelligence sources named the attractive, short-haired woman as Hyon Song-wol, who used to front the Bochonbo Electronic Music Band and was hugely popular among the North Korean masses.

Responsible for a string of hits that included Footsteps of Soldiers, I Love Pyongyang, She is a Discharged Soldier and We are Troops of the Party, her popularity reportedly peaked in 2005 with the song Excellent Horse-Like Lady.

Hyon subsequently disappeared from public view at the time that Mr Kim emerged as the heir-apparent to his father, Kim Jong-il.

There are reports that 28-year-old Kim Jong-un was ordered to break off his relationship with Hyon by his father and that she later married an officer in the North Korean army with whom she has a baby.

She made a return to the limelight in early March when, heavily pregnant, she performed at an event in Pyongyang to mark International Women's Day, which was attended by Mr Kim.

"The two have known each other since they were in their teens and rumours about the two having an affair have been circulating among Pyongyang's top elite," a South Korean intelligence official told the JoongAng Daily in Seoul.

North Korean media have so far failed to name the woman accompanying their leader to a series of high-profile entertainment events.

Intelligence agencies believe the two first became romantically involved about 10 years ago, after Mr Kim returned home from studying at an elite private academy in the Swiss city of Berne.

Ordered to end the relationship by his father, Mr Kim has apparently rekindled the friendship since December. There has been speculation that Mr Kim has entrusted Hyon with the task of managing the state-run art troupe in recent months.

There have been no reports on the whereabouts of Hyon's husband, or whether they are even still married, or her young baby.

Previous reports stated that the woman was probably Kim Yeo-jong, the younger sister of Mr Kim, and that she was being paraded in front of the North Korean media as an introduction as a close confidante of the young leader.

Analysts said Mr Kim could be grooming his sister for a more influential role in the highest echelons of the party and the government and that the North Korean media would identify her – as well as her official role and title – in the coming weeks.

But Toshimitsu Shigemura, a professor at Tokyo's Waseda University and author of a number of books on the North Korean leadership, said he believes the woman to be Mr Kim's wife and that she is waiting to be officially introduced to the North Korean people.



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CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
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"It is highly possible that this is his wife and that Kim is trying to show a new style of leadership, of a husband and wife, in North Korea," Professor Shigemura said.

He added that Mr Kim has not been seen in public much in the last couple of weeks – in contrast to his high public profile in the first half of the year as the state media attempted to play up his credentials as leader of the nation.

Professor Shigemura suggested that his absence could be explained by frantic behind-the-scenes discussions on the introduction of his partner to the masses.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/northkorea/9389342/North-Korea-Kim-Jong-un-having-an-affair-with-married-former-singer.html>

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

Xinhua News – China

ASEAN Postpones All Signings on SE Asia Nuke-Free Zone Documents this Week

July 9, 2012

PHNOM PENH, July 9 (Xinhua) -- Three documents on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), which were scheduled to sign this week during ASEAN meetings, were postponed until November because four of the five recognized nuclear-weapon states (P5) have reservations, a Cambodian senior official said Monday.

Kao Kim Hourn, secretary of state at Cambodia's foreign ministry, said that, originally, three documents were expected to be signed this week. They are the ASEAN Statement on the Protocol to the Treaty of Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), which was planned to sign on July 9, the Memorandum of Understanding between ASEAN and China to the treaty on SEANWFZ on July 10 and the protocol to the treaty on the SEANWFZ by the P5 on July 12.

"The SEANWFZ Commission decided to postpone the signings until the member states in ASEAN countries are able to work closely with the members of the P5 to resolve the issues of the reservations by members of the P5," he said in a press briefing after the 45th ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting (AMM) on Monday.

Four members of the P5 have expressed their reservations. They are France, the United Kingdom, Russia, and the United States.

France voiced its reservations on the rights of self-defense, the U.K. on new threat and development, Russia on the rights of foreign ships and aircraft to pass into the nuclear free zone, he said, adding that the U.S. would not introduce the text of reservations before the signings, but only during the rectification process.

"We do hope that the signings should be done--all signs together--in November during the 21st ASEAN Summit," he said. ASEAN leaders signed the SEANWFZ Treaty in Bangkok, Thailand on December 15, 1995 and it took effect two years later. The negotiations between the ASEAN and the P5 on the protocol have been held since May 2001. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) group Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-07/09/c_131703795.htm

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

RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russian Army Chief Starts Visit to the United States

10 July 2012

Issue No. 1013, 10 July 2012

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The chief of Russia's Armed Forces General Staff, Gen. Nikolai Makarov, will arrive on Tuesday to the United States on a three-day working visit focusing on U.S. missile defense plans, the Russian Defense Ministry said.

"Gen. Nikolai Makarov will pay a working visit to the United States on July 10-13," a spokesman for the Defense Ministry said on Monday.

"He will hold talks with U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Martin E. Dempsey," the official said. "The talks will focus on the discussion of the U.S. missile defense plans."

Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov said on July 6 that Gen. Makarov would "make yet another attempt to explain [Russia's] stance on missile defense at least at a chief of staff level."

He warned that Russia would not ignore the deployment of the elements of the U.S. missile defense in Europe and would respond adequately to any threats to its security.

Russia has retained staunch opposition to the planned deployment of U.S. missile defense systems near its borders, claiming they would be a security threat. NATO and the United States insist that the shield would defend NATO members against missiles from North Korea and Iran and would not be directed at Russia.

Moscow insists it should receive legal guarantees from Washington that its European missile defense shield will not target Russia's strategic nuclear forces.

The agenda of the talks between Makarov and his U.S. counterpart will also include the discussion of bilateral military cooperation, and joint assessment of regional and global security.

MOSCOW, July 10 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20120710/174504620.html>

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

London Daily Telegraph – U.K.

Nuclear Submarines Hit by More than 200 Fires in the Past 25 Years

There have been 266 fires on nuclear submarines in the past 25 years, it has emerged.

08 July 2012

The incidents included 74 on ballistic missile submarines.

Three of the fires happened while the vessels were in naval bases, one of them on a ballistic missile submarine.

Peter Luff, Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology, gave the figures in response to a parliamentary question by SNP defence spokesman Angus Robertson.

Mr Robertson said the "apparent vulnerability" to fire events on these vessels raises "grave questions" for UK ministers.

He said: "Any one of these fires could have had catastrophic consequences and the frequency of these incidents raises the most serious safety concerns.

"We are not talking about a one-off incident, but a whole diary of near disasters.

"That so many of these incidents occurred on submarines that may have been nuclear armed is deeply troubling. Reports of a fire on a ballistic missiles submarine, while in port, must be addressed by the MoD - we need to know where this was?

"Beyond the obvious risk to the crew, citizens on shore, and the environment, a significant fire could severely limit the UK's ability to maintain a continuous at-sea deterrent.

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It makes a mockery of any UK claims to having a credible 'independent' nuclear deterrent."

He added "Now, more than ever, the time is right to remove nuclear weapons from our waters."

Of the 266 fires, 243 were classed as "small-scale" and categorised as a localised fire, such as a minor electrical fault creating smoke.

There were 20 medium-scale fires that were generally categorised as a localised fire, such as a failure of mechanical equipment creating smoke and flame, requiring the use of "significant onboard resources".

Mr Luff said that information on whether ballistic missile submarines were armed with nuclear weapons when the fires occurred was not available.

There are nuclear submarines based at Faslane on the Clyde but the location of the incidents was not specified.

An MoD spokesman said: "No fire on board any Royal Navy submarine has ever had an impact on nuclear safety or the ability to operate a continuous at-sea deterrent.

"Due to the nature of submarine operations, meticulous records are kept of all incidents involving fire, however small. Most of those recorded were minor electrical faults that were dealt with quickly, safely and effectively.

"The Royal Navy operates a stringent safety regime on board all its submarines and all personnel receive regular and extensive fire safety training."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/9384766/Nuclear-submarines-hit-by-more-than-200-fires-in-the-past-25-years.html>

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

National Security Nuclear Administration (NNSA)

Press Release

NNSA Announces Elimination of 450 Metric Tons of Russian Weapons Highly Enriched Uranium

July 09, 2012

WASHINGTON, DC - The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) today announced that it has monitored the elimination of more than 450 metric tons (MT) of Russian highly enriched uranium (HEU) under a landmark nuclear nonproliferation program. The 1993 U.S.-Russia HEU Purchase Agreement is now 90 percent complete and by the end of 2013 a total of 500 MT of Russian nuclear weapons HEU will be eliminated by being converted into low enriched uranium (LEU), which is intended for peaceful uses.

The agreement requires Russia to convert weapons-origin HEU into LEU. The resulting LEU is delivered to the U.S., fabricated into nuclear fuel, and used in nuclear power plants to generate roughly 10 percent of all electricity consumed in the U.S. each year. Nearly half of all commercial nuclear energy produced in the U.S. comes from nuclear fuel derived from Russian nuclear weapons.

"Down-blending weapons origin HEU into LEU that is used for commercial energy is a core NNSA nonproliferation mission," said Anne Harrington, Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation. "Supervising the elimination of Russian origin HEU directly supports the president's mission to eliminate vulnerable nuclear material around the globe in order to improve international nuclear security."

NNSA's HEU Transparency Program monitors the Russian HEU-to-LEU conversion process to ensure that all LEU delivered to the U.S. under the agreement is derived from Russian weapons HEU. The HEU Transparency Program implements extensive access and monitoring rights during 24 annual monitoring visits to four Russian HEU processing facilities. At these facilities, U.S. experts measure and observe HEU processing firsthand, analyze Russian HEU-to-LEU



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processing forms, and use U.S. monitoring equipment. This information allows the U.S. to confirm that Russian HEU-to-LEU conversion activities fulfill the agreement's nonproliferation goals.

Since 1995, the NNSA program has conducted 335 monitoring visits to Russian HEU processing facilities and since 2000, U.S. experts have monitored the elimination of 30 metric tons of Russian HEU each year – the yearly equivalent of about 1,200 nuclear weapons. By the end of 2013, NNSA will have monitored the elimination of HEU roughly equivalent to 20,000 nuclear weapons.

The Russian Federation also conducts reciprocal monitoring activities at U.S. facilities to confirm the exclusively peaceful use of all LEU delivered under the agreement. The agreement will be fully completed in the 2014-2015 timeframe when all LEU is manufactured into nuclear fuel and all final accounting and transparency documents are provided to the Russian State Atomic Energy Corporation (Rosatom).

<http://www.nnsa.energy.gov/mediaroom/pressreleases/450tons070912>

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

Daily Mail – U.K.

Al Qaeda Terror Suspect Arrested after Breaching Olympic Exclusion Zone Ban FIVE TIMES in One Day

- *Security breach happened just weeks before the Olympics is due to start*
- *Suspect believed to have tried to reach Afghanistan to fight for the Taliban*
- *Also suspected of fighting for the Al Qaeda group al-Shabaab*
- *MI5 believe he's is a potential suicide bomber who has tried to recruit Britons to his cause*
- *Man arrested at Stratford train station after breaches in April and May*

By Amanda Perthen
07 July 2012

An Al Qaeda terror suspect was able to defy a court order to travel close to the Olympic Park area five times in one day.

The 24-year-old, who is under a control order not to enter the multimillion pound development in Stratford, East London, was arrested leading to fears he could have been carrying out a reconnaissance mission for an attack at the park.

The breach has raised concerns about security just weeks before the biggest sporting event in the world is due to start in London, as dangerous suspects are supposed to be monitored by the police.

The man, who is of Somali origin and known only as CF, appeared in court last month charged with five breaches of the order after he travelled across London on a train line which passes close to the Olympic development.

The terror suspect, who was arrested at Stratford station is believed to have tried to get to Afghanistan to fight for the Taliban against British troops.

He is also suspected of fighting for the Al Qaeda group al-Shabaab, responsible for thousands of deaths, including Western aid workers. Government officials claim CF attended a terrorist camp and fought alongside jihadists from al-Shabaab.

The Home Office says he is linked to a group of six British nationals who received terror training from Saleh Nabhan, the Al Qaeda leader killed in a raid by American Navy Seals in 2009.

According to court documents, the Home Office warned that CF wanted to 're-engage in terrorism-related activities, either in the UK or Somalia' - and is 'determined to continue to adhere to his Islamist extremist agenda'.

Issue No. 1013, 10 July 2012

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The alleged breaches, which took place in April and May this year, are the most serious security alert to hit the Olympic Park.

The disclosure comes after a week in which 14 terror-related arrests were made in Britain, including a white Muslim convert detained over an alleged plan to carry out a major terrorist attack.

A massive security operation has been put in place around the Olympic Park for the Games, which begin on July 27.

CF is one of nine suspected risks to national security who are subject to Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures (T pim) legal orders – which restrict movements, computer use and who they can meet.

He is being prosecuted for breaking conditions of the order after he was arrested last month.

The man has since been bailed and will be challenging the banning order today in the High Court. His lawyers insist he had been travelling to attend meetings at his solicitor's office in Stratford.

He was discovered using the London overground route in the banned area through the electronic tag he had been ordered to wear to comply with the order.

The alleged breaches were disclosed in a court case involving CF and another terror suspect, known as CC.

Theresa May, the Home Secretary, has compiled a case against CF which says he attempted to travel to Afghanistan to fight as a jihadist and take part in suicide operations in 2008. He was prosecuted in Britain but absconded during his trial in June 2009 and fled to Somalia.

In his absence, he was acquitted of any crime. In 2011 CF served two months in prison after absconding from an earlier court case. He was then placed on a control order and required to live in Norwich.

The latest security scare comes after two Muslim converts were arrested last month on suspicion of plotting an attack on the Olympic canoeing venue in Waltham Abbey, Essex. The men, aged 18 and 32, were detained at their homes in East London after being seen acting suspiciously in a dinghy at the sporting location on the River Lea.

Last week, two separate anti-terror operations resulted in 14 arrests. Seven men were being questioned last night after firearms were found in a car impounded by police after it was stopped on the M1 in South Yorkshire during a routine check.

There was another scare three days ago, when a coach travelling on the M6 was surrounded by bomb disposal experts and police vehicles after a passenger rang police on his mobile to report a smoking package. It later turned out to be a false alarm.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2170382/Al-Qaeda-suspects-trips-Olympic-park.html>

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

Houston Chronicle

Al-Qaida Leader Released from Mauritanian Jail

Monday, July 9, 2012

By Associated Press (AP)

NOUAKCHOTT, Mauritania (AP) — Abu Hafs al-Mauritani, who was a senior adviser to al-Qaida, was released from a prison in Mauritania over the weekend, his family confirmed.

Sidi Ould Walid said his brother was released after renouncing his ties to the terror network and condemning the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. Hafs refused to be interviewed or to be filmed as he left the prison on Saturday.

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On militant forums on Monday, jihadists exchanged congratulations over the release. Hafs was an adviser to Osama Bin Laden who helped form the modern al-Qaida by merging bin Laden's operation with Ayman al-Zawahri's Islamic Jihad.

Hafs spent years in custody in Iran before being extradited to Mauritania in April. Walid says his brother was interrogated multiple times and his release indicates he is no longer seen as a threat.

Hafs has been largely out of the game for a decade, but the U.S. is concerned that he could re-emerge as an ideological figure if he fails to follow through on whatever conditions of release he has made with Mauritanian authorities, a U.S. official said, speaking on condition of anonymity to describe sensitive intelligence matters.

AP Intelligence Writer Kimberly Dozier contributed to this report from Washington.

<http://www.chron.com/news/article/Al-Qaida-leader-released-from-Mauritanian-jail-3694374.php>

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

Chicago Tribune
OPINIONS/Columnist

The Arms Race that Won't Happen

Iran and the phony proliferation scare

By Steve Chapman

July 8, 2012

If you want to understand the intensifying showdown between the United States and Iran, consider the headline in The Washington Post on the threat of rapid nuclear proliferation: "Many nations ready to break into nuclear club."

It highlights one of the dangers cited by those who favor military action against Iran. President Barack Obama says that if Iran gets the bomb, "other players in the region would feel it necessary to get their own nuclear weapons. So now you have the prospect of a nuclear arms race in the most volatile region in the world."

A plausible threat? It may sound that way. But it also sounded that way in 1981 — when that Washington Post story ran.

Nuclear proliferation is always said to be on the verge of suddenly accelerating, and somehow it never does. In 1981, there were five declared nuclear powers — the U.S., the Soviet Union, China, Britain and France — as well as Israel, which was (and is) undeclared.

And today? The number of members added since then is not 15 but three: India, Pakistan and North Korea. Most of the other countries on the list of likely proliferators never came close — including Argentina, Chile, Morocco and Tunisia. Iraq tried and failed. Libya made an effort and then chose to give up.

The peril was greatly overblown. It probably is again. But our leaders are not about to let mere history debunk the apocalyptic scenarios. They are committed to a policy based on fear rather than experience.

The United States keeps trying to force Iran to abandon its suspected efforts to build a nuclear arsenal, and so far it has been rebuffed. Both Obama and Mitt Romney have said they would use force rather than let Iran acquire nukes. Chances are good that whoever wins in November, we will be at war with Tehran sometime in the next four years.

But there is no reason to think Iran would ever use such weapons, and there is little reason to think it would spur other countries to get them. If all it takes to unleash regional proliferation is one fearsome state with nukes, the Middle East would have gone through it already — since Israel has had them for decades.

Why would governments in the region respond differently to Iran? Many of them are allied with the U.S. — which means Iran can't attack or threaten them without fear of overwhelming retaliation. Turkey, as a member of NATO,

Issue No. 1013, 10 July 2012

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enjoys a formal defense guarantee from Washington. The U.S. might offer similar assurances to Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other nervous neighbors.

One way or another, they would probably find they can manage fine. Iran is no scarier than Mao's China was in 1964, when it detonated its first atomic device. Writes Francis Gavin, a professor at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, "It was predicted that India, Indonesia and Japan might follow."

At the time, he noted in a 2009 article in *International Security*, "a U.S. government document identified 'at least 11 nations (India, Japan, Israel, Sweden, West Germany, Italy, Canada, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Rumania and Yugoslavia)' with the capacity to go nuclear, a number that would soon 'grow substantially' to include 'South Africa, the United Arab Republic, Spain, Brazil and Mexico.'" Mexico?

In recent decades, some countries have actually given up their nukes — including Ukraine and South Africa. Others, like Brazil and Sweden, have scrapped their weapons programs. After the Cold War, it was assumed the newly reunified Germany would want to assert its new status by joining the nuclear club. It has yet to exhibit a glimmer of interest.

A nuclear Iran would soon learn something previous nuclear powers already know: These weapons are not much use except to deter nuclear attack. What help have they been for the U.S. in Iraq or Afghanistan?

China invaded Vietnam in 1979 to force the enemy's withdrawal from Cambodia. The Vietnamese not only refused but sent the People's Liberation Army home with its tail between its legs. China regards Taiwan as part of its territory, but the island has remained functionally independent despite the threat of nuclear coercion.

If Iran does get nukes, its neighbors that have survived without them will find that nothing much has changed. Nuclear proliferation is the danger that lurks just over the horizon, and that's where it is likely to stay.

Steve Chapman is a columnist and editorial writer for the Chicago Tribune. His twice-a-week column on national and international affairs, distributed by Creators Syndicate, appears in some 50 papers across the country. He has been a member of the Tribune editorial board since 1981.

http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-07-08/news/ct-oped-0708-chapman-20120708_1_nuclear-proliferation-iran-regional-proliferation

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

Wall Street Journal
OPINION/Op-Ed
July 8, 2012

Iran Has No 'Right' To Enrich Uranium

The U.S. and its allies should make clear what the Nonproliferation Treaty says.

By MICHAEL MAKOVSKY and BLAISE MISZTAL

As efforts continue to prevent Iran from making nuclear weapons, a central Iranian negotiating demand is acknowledgment of its "right" to enrich uranium under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Although spurious, this assertion has gone without a forceful public challenge. By categorically refuting the claim, the United States and its international partners could fortify and clarify their stance against Iran's nuclear program.

The crux of world concern is Iran's uranium-enrichment program. Enrichment can produce fuel for electricity-generating nuclear reactors and fissile material for a nuclear weapon. Iran currently produces 3.5% and 20% enriched uranium, claiming that it requires the former for electricity generation and the latter for medical isotopes. While 20% is not yet weapons-grade (which is above 90%), the larger and more highly enriched Iran's uranium stockpile grows, the faster it can be turned into a nuclear weapon. Each month Iran produces enough 20%-enriched uranium to meet its medical needs for a year (nearly 20 pounds), yet it continues to expand its infrastructure for enriching uranium to this level.

Issue No. 1013, 10 July 2012

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Iran says it is not breaking any rules and has a right to enrich uranium. Earlier this year, its chief negotiator demanded that "any right which is indicated in the Nonproliferation Treaty should be respected." During the Moscow talks in June with representatives of six world powers, AP quoted an Iranian delegate as saying that, "Our minimum demand . . . is for them to recognize our right to uranium enrichment. If this is not accepted by the other side, then the talks will definitely collapse."

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) grants no such right. Its Article IV merely states: "[N]othing in this Treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all the Parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with articles I and II of this Treaty."

This raises two problems for Iran's assertion. First, enrichment isn't specifically enumerated. As the late nuclear strategist Albert Wohlstetter warned, "the NPT is, after all, a treaty against proliferation, not for nuclear development." Nothing in the NPT implies a right to possess all, especially potentially military, elements of nuclear technology.

Second, the right to peaceful use of nuclear energy is based on compliance with Article II of the treaty, which requires that any country without nuclear weapons "undertakes . . . not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons." Further, the country must, under Article III, accept International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) "verification of the fulfillment of its obligations."

Iran has consistently violated these obligations. It has denied the IAEA unrestricted access to its nuclear facilities and failed to explain mounting evidence, such as suspected explosives testing, of a nuclear-weapons program. In 2005, the IAEA declared that "Iran's many failures and breaches of its obligations to comply with its NPT Safeguards Agreement . . . constitute noncompliance," and referred the matter to the United Nations Security Council. This and subsequent findings formed the legal basis for six Security Council resolutions calling on Iran to "suspend all enrichment-related" activities, and levying sanctions until it does.

Iran considers the Security Council's actions illegitimate. If the NPT grants a right to enrich, Iran reasons, then "the reference of its nuclear dossier to the U.N. Security Council from the IAEA has been illegal," according to one Iranian negotiator. And if U.N. attempts to impinge on Iran's right to enrich are illegal, then so too must be the sanctions imposed for that purpose.

By making this argument, Iran seeks to maintain the rhetorical high ground no matter what happens. If the world accedes to Iran's terms and allows continued enrichment—even as an interim "confidence-building measure" that some experts support—international powers would cede any legal basis for demanding further concessions or continuing to impose sanctions. Alternatively, if talks fail definitively, as appears likely, Iran can keep claiming to be the illegally and unjustifiably aggrieved party.

Iran's legal transgressions may not be its gravest crimes against peace. But they should be exposed for what they are: further evidence of Tehran's unwillingness to stop a nuclear program that violates international law. The Obama administration has rightfully sought to curtail Iran's dangerous enrichment work. Now the administration should work with international partners to prevent Iranian grandstanding from weakening their stance or skewing public opinion. It's time to unequivocally refute Iran's fallacious claim of a right to enrich uranium.

Mr. Makovsky, a former Pentagon official, is director of the Bipartisan Policy Center's Foreign Policy Project, of which Mr. Misztal is associate director.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304141204577508442031058860.html>

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

Washington Post
OPINION/Editorial



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13 Minutes to Doomsday

By Editorial Board
July 8, 2012

THROUGHOUT THE Cold War, the United States kept land-based missiles with nuclear warheads on alert and ready to launch in three to four minutes after the president gave the order. Every president of the missile age was briefed about the procedure: In the event of an impending attack, the decision to launch would have to be made in 13 minutes or less. The theory of deterrence was that the United States had to threaten certain and large-scale retaliation against the Soviet Union, and that meant being prepared to shoot fast.

When new presidents were briefed about how it worked, they found it unthinkable. "And we call ourselves the human race," John F. Kennedy is said to have commented. Not the least of their worries was the prospect of incomplete or faulty warning — a bad signal from a satellite, perhaps, or a missile launched by accident or by rogue actors. There was never a real missile attack during the superpower arms race, but there were serious false alarms.

Today, two decades after the end of the Cold War, one-third of U.S. strategic forces, including almost all land-based missiles and some sea-based, are still on launch-ready alert. Recently, retired Gen. James Cartwright, a former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, called for rethinking this posture. Mr. Cartwright, a former commander of strategic forces, said in a report sponsored by the group Global Zero that the United States could stand down the missiles so that 24 to 72 hours would be needed to launch, what is known as "de-alerting." There are different methods to carry this out, from software modifications to physically separating warheads from the missiles.

President Obama pledged in his 2008 campaign to work with Russia to take missiles off launch-ready alert status, and the idea was examined in the administration's 2010 Nuclear Posture Review. One option was to de-alert the land-based missiles, but that was rejected on grounds that, in a crisis, there could be a destabilizing race to re-alert. Similarly, a proposal to de-alert the submarines, by keeping more at port, was also rejected. The published document said that launch-ready status "should be maintained for the present."

In the coming weeks, the president is expected to sign off on instructions to the military to implement the posture review. No change is anticipated in alert levels. Gen. C. Robert Kehler, the current commander of U.S. Strategic Command, said recently that he is reluctant to de-alert missiles because it would be hard to verify if some adversary posed a risk of surprise attack. We agree that verification is difficult, but that is all the more reason to look for ways to make it work.

The reason the United States maintains a prompt-launch posture today is because Russia does also. China does not keep weapons on launch-ready alert. The United States and Russia are no longer enemies; the chance of nuclear war or surprise attack is nearly zero. A small step toward reducing the danger was taken in 1994, when Russia and the United States agreed to aim nuclear missiles at the open oceans, or at nothing. But this did not resolve the time pressures on a president, nor relax the launch-on-warning posture that still prevails.

Clearly, there won't be any arms control negotiations with Russia this election year. But this is a complex problem that could benefit from careful preparation. Mr. Obama has declared his commitment "to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons." A good start would be to give himself and mankind some breathing room. Today, the United States and Russia have as many as 1,800 warheads on alert at any given time. This is overkill and unnecessary so long after the Cold War has ended. We think that both countries should ease off the alert status for strategic forces.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/13-minutes-to-doomsday/2012/07/08/gJQA14RIWW_story.html

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

The Australian – Australia
OPINION/Analysis

Tehran Sets Terms for a Nuclear Compromise

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By David Ignatius
July 09, 2012

THE text of Iran's negotiation proposal to the "P5+1" group last month makes clear what Iran's "red lines" are in the nuclear talks, and where it might be willing to compromise.

The Iranian PowerPoint presentation, obtained from a source close to the talks, stresses Iran's status as a signatory of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, including the right to enrich uranium. Iranian negotiators devoted the first part of their presentation in Moscow to this topic, under the title: "Why enrichment is an inalienable and chartered right under the NPT."

To buttress their argument on enrichment, the Iranians cite several passages in the treaty, plus references in other international documents. Some US and Israeli experts question this claim, given what they say is the vagueness of the treaty. But it's clear that Iran sees recognition as the cornerstone of any deal.

Enrichment has always been the decisive issue in nuclear talks. The P5+1 demands that Iran stop enrichment until it's in full compliance with all UN resolutions. Iran insists on its NPT rights.

Some Iranian officials have indicated that Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei might accept a deal in which Iran is allowed some modest enrichment activity, but agrees to limit production below the level of roughly 800kg needed to make a bomb - exporting, say, 400kg each time it nears that threshold. But there's no hint of any such "win-win" formula in the negotiating documents.

The Iranian document does signal some flexibility on the P5+1's "confidence-building" demand that Iran stop enriching to 20 per cent and export its existing stockpile of such fuel. The hint comes in a vaguely worded offer to "cooperate with 5+1 to provide enriched fuel needed for TRR," a reference to the Tehran Research Reactor that uses 20 percent fuel. Iranian sources say this opens the door for agreement to "stop and ship" production of the 20 percent fuel.

But even if a formula could be negotiated on the 20 per cent issue, two big problems would remain. First, the Iranians emphatically reject the P5+1 demand that they close the enrichment facility at Fordow, buried deep under a mountain near Qom. Explaining why this facility is so heavily fortified, the document states: "Facing constant threats, we need a back-up facility to safeguard our enrichment activities." This is precisely what worries the United States and Israel.

A deeper problem is that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu views the 20 per cent issue as a diversion. Israeli officials see Iran's estimated 140 kilograms of 20 percent fuel as the "cherry" on top of its stockpile of about 6000 kilograms of 3.5 per cent enriched uranium that could be pumped up within a year to make a half-dozen nuclear bombs. Netanyahu argues it would be a mistake to accept the cherry but leave Iran with the cake.

Much of the Iranian document summarizes their well-known positions. In a section titled "a framework for comprehensive and targeted dialogue for long-term cooperation," Tehran proposes the basic trade-off: Iran "emphasizes ... its opposition to nuclear weapons based on the Supreme Leader's fatwa against such weapons." In return, the United States, Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia would recognize Iran's rights under the NPT, "particularly its enrichment activities."

Iran also proposes "transparency measures" that would include cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency on what the IAEA said in March are "possible military dimensions" of Iran's avowedly peaceful program. In exchange, the US and its allies would halt their unilateral sanctions outside the UN framework.

Complicating matters further, the Iranians also propose cooperation on "regional issues, especially Syria and Bahrain," in exchange for their help "combating piracy and counter-narcotic activities." This linkage of non-nuclear with nuclear issues probably won't fly with Washington.

If the experts' talks break down, the question will be whether negotiations might resume on another track. Some Iranians have signaled that Tehran might be ready for secret bilateral talks with the US, but time is short, and election-



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year pressures will make real bargaining difficult. Meanwhile, sanctions squeeze tighter and the threat of Israeli military action looms.

One final item in the 48-page document caught my eye - a warning that Iran may need even more 20 per cent fuel than anticipated because of plans for "at least four other research reactors" and for exporting enriched fuel "to other countries." Maybe that's a bargaining chip, or maybe it's a sign these negotiations really are headed into the ditch.

Washington Post Writers Group

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/tehran-sets-terms-for-a-nuclear-compromise/story-e6frg6so-1226420433635>

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

Huffington Post
OPINION/Blog

Beyond Nuclear Denial

How a World-Ending Weapon Disappeared From Our Lives, But Not Our World

July 9, 2012

By William Hartung

There was a time when nuclear weapons were a significant part of our national conversation. Addressing the issue of potential atomic annihilation was once described by nuclear theorist Herman Kahn as "thinking about the unthinkable," but that didn't keep us from thinking, talking, fantasizing, worrying about it, or putting images of possible nuclear nightmares (often transmuted to invading aliens or outer space) endlessly on screen.

Now, on a planet still overstocked with city-busting, world-ending weaponry, in which almost 67 years have passed since a nuclear weapon was last used, the only nuke that Americans regularly hear about is one that doesn't exist: Iran's. The nearly 20,000 nuclear weapons on missiles, planes, and submarines possessed by Russia, the United States, France, the United Kingdom, China, Israel, Pakistan, India, and North Korea are barely mentioned in what passes for press coverage of the nuclear issue.

Today, nuclear destruction finds itself at the end of a long queue of anxieties about our planet and its fate. For some reason, we trust ourselves, our allies, and even our former enemies with nuclear arms -- evidently so deeply that we don't seem to think the staggering arsenals filled with weaponry that could put the devastation of Hiroshima to shame are worth covering or dealing with. Even the disaster at Fukushima last year didn't revive an interest in the weaponry that goes with the "peaceful" atom in our world.

Attending to the Bomb in a MAD World

Our views of the nuclear issue haven't always been so shortsighted. In the 1950s, editor and essayist Norman Cousins was typical in frequently tackling nuclear weapons issues for the widely read magazine *Saturday Review*. In the late 1950s and beyond, the Ban the Bomb movement forced the nuclear weapons issue onto the global agenda, gaining international attention when it was revealed that Strontium-90, a byproduct of nuclear testing, was making its way into mothers' breast milk. In those years, the nuclear issue became personal as well as political.

In the early 1960s, President John F. Kennedy responded to public pressure by signing a treaty with Russia that banned atmospheric nuclear testing (and so further Strontium-90 fallout). He also gave a dramatic speech to the United Nations in which he spoke of the nuclear arms race as a "sword of Damocles" hanging over the human race, poised to destroy us at any moment.

Popular films like *Fail-Safe* and *Dr. Strangelove* captured both the dangers and the absurdity of the superpower arms race. And when, on the night of October 22, 1962, Kennedy took to the airwaves to warn the American people that a Cuban missile crisis was underway, that it was nuclear in nature, that a Soviet nuclear attack and a "full retaliatory

Issue No. 1013, 10 July 2012

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strike on the Soviet Union” were possibilities -- arguably the closest we have come to a global nuclear war -- it certainly got everyone’s attention.

All things nuclear receded from public consciousness as the Vietnam War escalated and became the focus of antiwar activism and debate, but the nuclear issue came back with a vengeance in the Reagan years of the early 1980s when superpower confrontations once again were in the headlines. A growing anti-nuclear movement first focused on a near-disaster at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant in Pennsylvania (the Fukushima of its moment) and then on the superpower nuclear stand-off that went by the name of “mutually assured destruction” or, appropriately enough, the acronym MAD.

The Nuclear Freeze Campaign generated scores of anti-nuclear resolutions in cities and towns around the country, and in June 1982, a record-breaking million people gathered in New York City’s Central Park to call for nuclear disarmament. If anyone managed to miss this historic outpouring of anti-nuclear sentiment, ABC news aired a prime-time, made-for-TV movie, *The Day After*, that offered a remarkably graphic depiction of the missiles leaving their silos and the devastating consequences of a nuclear war. It riveted a nation.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of that planetary superpower rivalry less than a decade later took nuclear weapons out of the news. After all, with the Cold War over and no other rivals to the United States, who needed such weaponry or a MAD world either? The only problem was that the global nuclear landscape was left more or less intact, mission-less but largely untouched (with the proliferation of the weapons to other countries ongoing). Unacknowledged as it may be, in some sense MAD still exists, even if we prefer to pretend that it doesn’t.

A MAD World That No One Cares to Notice

More than 20 years later, the only nuclear issue considered worth the bother is stopping the spread of the bomb to a couple of admittedly scary and problematic regimes: Iran and North Korea. Their nuclear efforts make the news regularly and garner attention (to the point of obsession) in media and government circles. But remind me: when was the last time you read about what should be the ultimate (and obvious) goal -- getting rid of nuclear weapons altogether?

This has been our reality, despite President Obama’s pledge in Prague back in 2009 to seek “the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons,” and the passage of a modest but important New START arms reduction treaty between the United States and Russia in 2010. It remains our reality, despite a dawning realization in budget-anxious Washington that we may no longer be able to afford to throw money (as presently planned) at nuclear projects ranging from new ballistic-missile submarines to new facilities for building nuclear warhead components -- all of which are slated to keep the secret global nuclear arms race alive and well decades into the future.

If Iran is worth talking about -- and it is, given the implications of an Iranian bomb for further nuclear proliferation in the Middle East -- what about the arsenals of the actual nuclear states? What about Pakistan, a destabilizing country which has at least 110 nuclear warheads and counting, and continues to view India as its primary adversary despite U.S. efforts to get it to focus on al-Qaeda and the Taliban? What about India’s roughly 100 nuclear warheads, meant to send a message not just to Pakistan but to neighboring China as well? And will China hold pat at 240 or so nuclear weapons in the face of U.S. nuclear modernization efforts and plans to surround it with missile defense systems that could, in theory if not practice, blunt China’s nuclear deterrent force?

Will Israel continue to get a free pass on its officially unacknowledged possession of up to 200 nuclear warheads and its refusal to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty? Who are France and the United Kingdom targeting with their forces of 300 and 225 nuclear warheads, respectively? How long will it take North Korea to develop miniaturized nuclear bombs and deploy them on workable, long-range missiles? And is New START the beginning or the end of mutual U.S. and Russian arms reductions?

Many of these questions are far more important than whether Iran gets the bomb, but they get, at best, only a tiny fraction of the attention that Tehran’s nuclear program is receiving. Concern about Pakistan’s nuclear arsenal and a fear of loose nukes in a destabilizing country is certainly part of the subtext of U.S. policy towards Islamabad. Little

Issue No. 1013, 10 July 2012

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effort has been made of late, however, to encourage Pakistan and India to engage in talks aimed at reconciling their differences and opening the way for discussions on reducing their nuclear arsenals.

The last serious effort -- centered on the contentious issue of Kashmir -- reached its high point in 2007 under the regime of Pakistani autocrat Pervez Musharraf, and it went awry in the wake of political changes within his country and Pakistani-backed terrorist attacks on India. If anything, the tensions now being generated by U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan's tribal borderlands and other affronts, intended or not, to Pakistan's sovereignty have undermined any possibility of Washington brokering a rapprochement between Pakistan and India.

In addition, starting in the Bush years, the U.S. has been selling India nuclear fuel and equipment. This has been part of a controversial agreement that violates prior U.S. commitments to forgo nuclear trade with any nation that has refused to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (a pact India has not signed). Although U.S. assistance is nominally directed towards India's civilian nuclear program, it helps free up resources that India can use to expand its nuclear weapons arsenal.

The "tilt" towards India that began during the Bush administration has continued under Obama. Only recently, for instance, a State Department official bragged about U.S. progress in selling advanced weaponry to New Delhi. Meanwhile, F-16s that Washington supplied to the Pakistani military back in the heyday of the U.S.-Pakistan alliance may have already been adapted to serve as nuclear delivery vehicles in the event of a nuclear confrontation with India.

China has long adhered to a de facto policy of minimum deterrence -- keeping just enough nuclear weapons to dissuade another nation from attacking it with nuclear arms. But this posture has not prevented Beijing from seeking to improve the quality of its long-range ballistic missiles. And if China feels threatened by continued targeting by the United States or by sea-based American interceptors deployed to the region, it could easily increase its arsenal to ensure the "safety" of its deterrent. Beijing will also be keeping a watchful eye on India as its nuclear stockpile continues to grow.

Ever since Ronald Reagan -- egged on by mad scientists like Edward Teller and right-wing zealots like Lt. Gen. Daniel O. Graham -- pledged to build a perfect anti-nuclear shield that would render nuclear weapons "impotent and obsolete," missile defense has had a powerful domestic constituency in the United States. This has been the case despite the huge cost and high-profile failures of various iterations of the missile defense concept.

The only concrete achievement of three decades of missile defense research and development so far has been to make Russia suspicious of U.S. intentions. Even now, rightly or not, Russia is extremely concerned about the planned installation of U.S. missile defenses in Europe that Washington insists will be focused on future Iranian nuclear weapons. Moscow feels that they could just as easily be turned on Russia. If President Obama wins a second term, he will undoubtedly hope to finesse this issue and open the door to further joint reductions in nuclear forces, or possibly even consider reducing this country's nuclear arsenal significantly, whether or not Russia initially goes along.

Recent bellicose rhetoric from Moscow underscores its sensitivity to the missile defense issue, which may yet scuttle any plans for serious nuclear negotiations. Given that the U.S. and Russia together possess more than 90% of the world's nuclear weapons, an impasse between the two nuclear superpowers (even if they are not "super" in other respects) will undercut any leverage they might have to encourage other nations to embark on a path leading to global nuclear reductions.

In his 1960s ode to nuclear proliferation, "Who's Next," Tom Lehrer included the line "Israel's getting tense, wants one in self-defense." In fact, Israel was the first -- and for now the only -- Middle Eastern nation to get the bomb, with reports that it can deliver a nuclear warhead not only from land-based missiles but also via cruise missiles launched from nuclear submarines. Whatever it may say about Israel's technical capabilities in the military field, Israel's nuclear arsenal may also be undermining its defense, particularly if it helps spur Iran to build its own nukes. And irresponsible talk by some Israeli officials about attacking Iran only increases the chance that Tehran will decide to go nuclear.

It is hard to handicap the grim, "unthinkable" but hardly inconceivable prospect that August 9, 1945, will not prove to be the last time that nuclear weapons are used on this planet. Perhaps some of the loose nuclear materials or



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inadequately guarded nuclear weapons littering the globe -- particularly, but not solely, in the states of the former Soviet Union -- might fall into the hands of a terrorist group. Perhaps an Islamic fundamentalist government will seize power in Pakistan and go a step too far in nuclear brinkmanship with India over Kashmir. Maybe the Israeli leadership will strike out at Iran with nuclear weapons in an effort to keep Tehran from going nuclear. Maybe there will be a miscommunication or false alarm that will result in the United States or Russia launching one of their nuclear weapons that are still in Cold War-style, hair-trigger mode.

Although none of these scenarios, including a terrorist nuclear attack, may be as likely as nuclear alarmists sometimes suggest, as long as the world remains massively stocked with nuclear weapons, one of them -- or some other scenario yet to be imagined -- is always possible. The notion that Iran can't be trusted with such a weapon obscures a larger point: given their power to destroy life on a monumental scale, no individual and no government can ultimately be trusted with the bomb.

The only way to be safe from nuclear weapons is to get rid of them -- not just the Iranian one that doesn't yet exist, but *all* of them. It's a daunting task. It's also a subject that's out of the news and off anyone's agenda at the moment, but if it is ever to be achieved, we at least need to start talking about it. Soon.

William D. Hartung is the director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy, a TomDispatch regular, and the author of Prophets of War: Lockheed Martin and the Making of the Military-Industrial Complex.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/william-hartung/beyond-nuclear-denial_b_1658746.html

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

Heritage Foundation
OPINION/The Foundry

Obama Pursues “Reset” While Putin Pursues “Get Set”

By Rebecca Heinrichs
July 9, 2012

As reported by Bill Gertz, on the day Americans were celebrating our independence, Moscow dispatched bombers capable of carrying nuclear weapons into the U.S. air defense zone on the Pacific Coast.

This was not a fluke. It was the second incident in two weeks, and it has actually been going on for a while.

In 2007, Russia began flying nuclear-capable bombers into air zones identified by the U.S., NATO, and Japanese as air defense zones. Indeed, according to October 2011 testimony by Mark Schneider before the House Armed Services Committee, since February 2007, Russian high-level political and military leaders have made an unprecedented number of nuclear threats, including, remarkably, about 15 nuclear-targeting and preemptive nuclear attack threats.

The Russian media routinely report that Moscow is conducting regional military exercises involving simulated nuclear weapons strikes against the U.S., NATO, and China.

Nuclear deterrence depends on a foe's belief that its enemy is willing and able to employ nuclear weapons. Russian President Vladimir Putin understands this and has made nuclear weapons the centerpiece of Russian foreign policy. Nuclear weapons embolden Russia to push back and undermine U.S. foreign policy objectives throughout the world.

The Obama Administration, however, continues to take “the world” down the path to zero nuclear weapons by eliminating or failing to modernize the U.S. nuclear arsenal and to pursue “reset” with Russia while Moscow undermines, insults, embarrasses, and threatens to *nuke* the U.S. and our allies.

Indeed, if the U.S. continues along the current path of disarmament, the best the U.S. can hope for is strategic nuclear parity with Russia. If the U.S. continues to disarm while Russia is permitted to retain its overwhelming 10-to-1 advantage over the U.S. in short-range nuclear weapons, Russia will certainly attain overall nuclear superiority over the U.S.

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Clearly, the Russians don't believe that the U.S. is willing to do whatever is needed to protect and defend itself and its allies, and it's possible our allies are beginning to doubt this as well. It is past time for an about-face in U.S. relations toward Russia and in U.S. nuclear deterrence strategy.

The U.S. commander in chief should make perfectly clear that he is in fact willing and able to do whatever is required of him to protect and defend the U.S. and its allies and has at his disposal a credible nuclear force capable of conveying this message.

Rebecca Heinrichs studies national defense issues, concentrating on nuclear deterrence and missile defense, as a visiting fellow in The Heritage Foundation's Allison Center for Foreign Policy Studies.

<http://blog.heritage.org/2012/07/09/obama-pursues-reset-while-putin-pursues-get-set/>

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

Huffington Post
OPINION/Blog

Washington P5 Conference on Implementing the NPT

By Rose Gottemoeller
July 9, 2012

On June 27-29, the State Department welcomed the other members of the P5 -- China, France, Russia, and the United Kingdom -- to discuss the implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Senior policy and defense officials and technical staff from these four countries and the United States continued the dialogue that the permanent members of the UN Security Council -- the P5 -- are having to advance their nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament commitments under the 2010 NPT Review Conference's Action Plan.

The Action Plan reflects the understanding that efforts to strengthen the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty must be balanced among the three pillars of the NPT: countries with nuclear weapons will move toward nuclear disarmament, countries without nuclear weapons will not acquire them, and all members in compliance with their nonproliferation obligations can have access to peaceful nuclear energy. All NPT Parties, nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon states alike, have rights and responsibilities under the Treaty.

Under the Obama Administration, the United States has worked with our P5 partners to advance a regular dialogue on nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation, confidence-building measures, and verification and monitoring. The Washington meeting was the third conference held by the P5 and follows similar meetings in London in 2009 and in Paris in 2011.

The unique dynamic that is being developed among the five nuclear-weapon states under the NPT is important for establishing a firm foundation to build a broader multilateral approach. It complements the long-standing U.S.-Russia nuclear disarmament interaction and may one day pave the way for further disarmament efforts.

At the Washington Conference, the P5 reaffirmed their unconditional support for the NPT and the NPT Review Conference's Action Plan, reaffirmed the commitments to promote and ensure the swift entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and its universalization, discouraged abuse of the NPT withdrawal provision (Article X), stressed the need to strengthen International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards and promote universalization of the Additional Protocol, and worked to pursue their shared goal of nuclear disarmament under Article VI of the NPT. The P5 continued their discussion of how to report on their relevant activities, and considered proposals for a standard reporting form. The P5 also discussed ways to kick start negotiations on a verified treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons that has stalled in the Conference on Disarmament.

Issue No. 1013, 10 July 2012

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China will lead a P5 working group to develop a glossary of definitions for key nuclear terms, which will increase P5 mutual understanding and facilitate further P5 discussions on nuclear matters. Developing more mutual cooperation of this kind is a positive step that can lead to deeper engagement on nuclear weapons issues and greater mutual confidence.

The United States has an excellent record in transparency across-the-board-- publicly declaring our nuclear stockpile numbers; participating in voluntary and treaty-based inspections measures; working with other nations on military-to-military, scientific, and lab exchanges, sponsoring site visits; and frequently briefing others on our nuclear programs and disarmament efforts.

In this spirit, the United States briefed participants at the P5 conference on U.S. activities at the Nevada National Security Site to encourage discussion on additional approaches to transparency. And in a tour of the U.S. Nuclear Risk Reduction Center, which is located at the State Department, P5 representatives observed how the United States maintains a communications center capable of simultaneously implementing notification regimes under a number of arms control treaties and agreements.

As a further measure of U.S. leadership on transparency the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) announced at the conference that it had released an updated report, titled *The United States Plutonium Balance*, which details the U.S. plutonium inventory through September 2009.

This year's conference was a success, as were its predecessors. China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States agreed to continue to meet at all appropriate levels on nuclear issues to further promote dialogue, predictability, and mutual confidence. We plan to hold a fourth P5 conference in the context of the next NPT Preparatory Committee in 2013.

Rose Gottemoeller is the Acting Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rose-gottemoeller/washington-p5-conference- b_1659998.html

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

Chosun Ilbo – South Korea

OPINION/Columnist

July 10, 2012

S.Korea Needs to Consider Acquiring Nuclear Weapons

By Chosun Ilbo columnist Kim Dae-joong

Any map of Northeast Asia shows that three countries surrounding South Korea -- North Korea, China and Russia -- have nuclear weapons, and now there are signs that even Japan is inching toward arming itself with the bomb. A look at the countries involved in the six-party talks on North Korea's nuclear program shows that five of them, except South Korea, are either nuclear armed or potentially armed. The nuclear map of Northeast Asia is changing now that Japan has revised laws in late June that suggest it wants to develop nuclear weapons too. South Korea alone in the region has no prospect of acquiring them.

Why does Seoul continue to adhere to what looks like an increasingly outdated peace and denuclearization policy? The goal of denuclearization in Northeast Asia has become unattainable. North Korea is not going to abandon its nuclear weapons even at the cost of its own collapse, since the regime saw clearly what happened to Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi when he gave them up.

Japan has turned the nuclear crisis into an opportunity. China's military might is increasing every day, and the re-election of the hawkish Vladimir Putin as Russia's new president has apparently prompted Japan to gear itself up for potential increases in military conflicts and diplomatic friction in Northeast Asia. This has resulted in Tokyo taking necessary steps so it could arm itself with nuclear weapons if the need arises. North Korea will undoubtedly use that development as an excuse to spur its own nuclear arms program.

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The U.S. seems either to implicitly side with or even support Japan. When it was revealed that Japan had revised its nuclear law, South Korea and China expressed serious concern, but Washington did not appear too concerned.

Major U.S. dailies such as the New York Times and Washington Post did not cover the decision, while prominent American columnists, who had been quick to sound the alarm upon any signs of a threat to world peace or the slightest rise in the nuclear threat, were silent. Perhaps in their eyes, Japan's moves were insignificant compared to the North Korean nuclear threat or the rising military might of China.

The U.S. is busy trying to appease South Korea by slightly boosting the range of its missiles and stressing the usefulness of the U.S.-led nuclear umbrella. The House Armed Services Committee voted in support of redeploying tactical nuclear weapons in the Western Pacific, but the State Department and Defense Department are vehemently against it and the White House appears set to veto it. Their opposition may be due to fears of provoking China, but the whole thing looks like a well-planned strategy.

In the long term, the U.S. will place more importance on keeping Beijing in check and maintaining the status quo rather than promoting understanding and mutual interests among Northeast Asian countries. The denuclearization of North Korea and the nuclear security of South Korea will become secondary. Right now, Washington is in favor of bolstering Japan's military power so it can serve as a proxy in restraining China. Paradoxically, the U.S. may even be seeking to arm Northeast Asian countries with nuclear weapons to create a state of mutually assured destruction so that no country would be foolish enough to pull the trigger.

But why is Japan being allowed to possess nuclear weapons but not South Korea? We cannot trust any country, including the U.S., when it comes to nuclear weapons. Remarkably, pro-North Korean activists in South Korea are silent about Washington's opposition to Seoul developing its own nuclear arms, which means they are in effect being pro-American.

South Korea is about to become extremely vulnerable as its Northeast Asian neighbors bolster their nuclear arsenals. Every time there is a call for South Korea to have nuclear weapons, opponents cite as reasons international laws, relations with Washington, or the danger of provoking China and North Korea. But those fears are becoming less and less convincing as North Korea shows no signs of abandoning its nuclear program and Japan moves to arm itself with nukes.

Japan's moves should be leading to the exact same consequences that South Korean opponents fear, yet there has been little resistance. Why can South Korea not do the same?

What clout could South Korea possibly wield in future denuclearization talks when the other five members are nuclear-armed states. What would North Korea gain by talking to us? This does not mean that we should immediately acquire our own nuclear weapons. But we should at least start serious discussion about whether we need them and free ourselves from the self-imposed shackles. We should at least have a nuclear option.

How can we possibly consider ourselves an independent and sovereign state if we cannot acquire our own weapons within reasonable limits due to fears of foreign opposition? The nuclear map of Northeast Asia is being re-drawn, yet there is no place on that map for South Korea.

http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2012/07/10/2012071001459.html

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

Asian Sentinel – Hong Kong SAR China

Failed Defense Pact Worsens Japan Nuke Fears

Clandestine negotiations blow up

By Lee Myung-bak

Tuesday, July 10, 2012

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Over the past two weeks, South Korea-Japan relations have declined more than at any time since South Korea's Lee Myung-bak government took office in 2008 over a fiasco in which the two countries sought to enter a clandestine pact for collective security.

The Blue House has not publicly acknowledged the existence of the General Security of Military Information Agreement, as Japan calls it, although government officials have spoken in general terms about plans to work closely with Japan as a cornerstone of its regional cooperation strategy against North Korea and China. If it had been signed, it would have been the first military agreement ever signed with Japan, which colonized the entire Korean Peninsula from 1910 to 1945, creating emotions that remain raw to this day.

President Lee's key foreign policy aide, Kim Tae-hyo, was forced to resign following a government investigation into the decision-making process leading up to the aborted signing. In a major embarrassment for the Lee government, the signing had to be postponed just an hour before the planned ceremony on June 29. The investigation concluded that officials had not been transparent and had failed to get the backing of the South Korean people. Cho Sei-Young, director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Northeast Asian affairs bureau, has also been replaced.

The architect was Kim Tae-hyo, a recipient of the fifth Nakasone Yasuhiro award in 2009, named after the former Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro, an advocate of Japan's nuclear option. A hard-core conservative, Kim miscalculated the weight of history that overshadows the animosities between the two countries.

Added to the controversy over the failed pact is a decision in June in which Japan sought to pave the way for moving closer to nuclear weaponization by altering its basic law on atomic energy to include "national security" among its goals for nuclear power, a red flag to the surrounding countries.

Koreans feel strongly that Japan has many sins to answer for. It is impossible to understand Japan's future without looking at its past. Animosity between Japan and Korea – on both sides of the DMZ – goes back centuries and includes not just brutality and torture but humiliation. Japanese thugs murdered the Korean Empress Myeong-seong and turned the imperial palace into a zoo. Tens of thousands of Koreans were massacred during the colonial period, with the pace picking up as it went on. As World War II intensified, the Japanese drafted hundreds of thousands of Korean men for hard labor as Japan's own men went to war. Anywhere between 20,000 to 200,000 were killed or injured in inhuman labor conditions. These scars remain to this day despite Japan's recent decades of apparent rejection of war.

The legacy of Japan's military adventurism is not in the proposed pact but rather in the transformation of the collective consciousness of Japanese political elites. In particular, the renewed sense of a right to nuclear empowerment plays a bigger role in this transformation than its advanced technology.

To many South Koreans who still vividly remember Japan's brutal 36-year rule of Korea, Japan's expanding military ambitions, especially its nuclear ones, evoke ominous signs.

Japan's hint that it might become a nuclear-armed country provoked widespread commentary as to what a samurai state with a nuclear allergy would look like, and if it did, whether it could actually get anything done. It probably could. Japan has taken many steps on nuclear capability that once seemed unlikely or even impossible. By the same token, Tokyo enjoys the full benefits of a nuclear-ready status.

Could Japan go nuclear peacefully? The question is of great importance to the international community and is a key premise of global nuclear policies toward Japan and the discussion of a nuclear free zone in Northeast Asia. While I don't think the question per se could actually be the beginning of the end of a nuclear weapon-free Japan, it is certainly true that an atmosphere of pessimism about the prospects of a reasonable transition to a transparent and eventually trustworthy nuclear-powered Japan is being created over time.

In particular, given that Japan has a tilting-at-windmills quality that includes its attempt to reinterpret the Constitution related to 'collective self-defense exercise,' I am not optimistic about Japan's nuclear security in the long term. Japan is increasingly moving toward the path of becoming a militarily dangerous country.



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It is of course important not to exaggerate the impact of nuclear weapons program but it is true that there are no technological barriers to Japanese construction of nuclear weapons. While the presence of nuclear weapons in Japan has been accepted generally as unthinkable because of the horror generated by atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, we all have known for a long time that Japan would have a far shorter timetable aimed at nuclear weapons development program given its advanced civil nuclear facilities.

Other conventional wisdom awaits us. Japan is far ahead in the development of delivery systems through her space research and satellite programs. If the decision were made to produce nuclear weapons, a ready-made system for its delivery would be at hand. Japan is by no means overpriced militarily, so to speak. If South Koreans were asked to make a list of things to worry about, Japan would be on a par with the rogue regime in Pyongyang, which has gone ahead with nuclear weaponization in defiance of its regional neighbors, with the exception of China. Japan appears unlikely to take a single step back from its self-defense rights---a clear reference to fast-forwarding the nuclear program.

The response to Japan's rising nuclear appetites shows that going nuclear is a dance that requires no partners. Any crisis might unexpectedly shove the Japanese and the Koreans into taking the nuclear path. Radically speaking, Koreans believe Japan cannot be trusted to change its culture and norms. Japan could go nuclear at any time even if it does not make sense. When it's actually sandwiched between Tokyo and Pyongyang, a traditionally nationalistic South Korea is going to be under enormous pressure to follow the path of Japan and North Korea and China. South Korea would be only the example of the spillover from Northeast Asia's nuclear zone.

A leading journalist of Chosun Ilbo claimed in a recent column that "With regard to nuclear issues, we should no longer trust any country entirely, including the United States." Reading the controversial column, I thought to myself that how many mini crises will be needed before Japan's long game becomes a big crisis?

Lee Byong-chul is a senior Fellow at the Institute for Peace and Cooperation in Seoul.

http://asiasentinel.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4677&Itemid=164

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

Issue No. 1013, 10 July 2012

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