



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
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MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Issue No. 975, 27 January 2012

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Trend – Azerbaijan

Russia Backs Turkey's Initiative to Host Next Round of "Iran-Six" Talks

25 January 2012

Russia upholds Ankara's initiative to organise the next meeting between the P5+1 and Iran on the territory of Turkey, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said, Itar-Tass reported.

"Russia and Turkey call for resuming the talks between the Six and Iran as soon as possible," Lavrov said after the talks with Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu on Wednesday.

"Both countries are actively working on creating necessary conditions for this," the minister added.

To this end, Lavrov noted, "Turkey has proposed to host the next round of talks between the six powers and Iran." "We support its idea," he pointed out.

Russia and Turkey take a common position: Iran's nuclear problem should be settled only by political and diplomatic means, Lavrov said.

Iran and the P5+1 have held two rounds of multifaceted talks in Geneva in December 2010 and in the Turkish city of Istanbul last January.

The United States, Israel and some of their allies accuse Tehran of pursuing military objectives in its nuclear program and have used this pretext to impose four rounds of sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

Iran has refuted the allegations, arguing that as a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Tehran has a right to use nuclear technology for peaceful use.

<http://en.trend.az/news/nuclearp/1984138.html>

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Reuters U.S.

Obama: No Options Off Table on Iran Nuclear Program

By Laura MacInnis

Wednesday, January 25, 2012

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Barack Obama warned Iran on Tuesday the United States would keep up pressure on its disputed nuclear program with "no options off the table" but said the door remained open to talks for a peaceful resolution.

In his State of the Union address, Obama said Tehran was isolated and facing "crippling" sanctions that he said would continue so long as the Islamic Republic keeps its back turned to the international community.

"America is determined to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, and I will take no options off the table to achieve that goal. But a peaceful resolution of this issue is still possible, and far better, and if Iran changes course and meets its obligations, it can rejoin the community of nations," he said.

Upon taking office in 2009, Obama broke with his Republican predecessor George W. Bush and offered an olive branch to Iran, saying he wanted a new beginning with the country that Bush had labeled part of the "axis of evil."

But the offer to negotiate has not borne fruit and tensions have continued to escalate over the Iranian nuclear program that Tehran says is for energy purposes and Western nations fear is meant to build a nuclear weapon.

In his speech to Congress, which focused mainly on the U.S. economy, Obama also said he was sure that Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad "will soon discover that the forces of change can't be reversed" and said the United States would stand against violence and intimidation in the Middle East and beyond.

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By contrast, he described the democratic transition in Myanmar, or Burma, as having "lit a new hope" in Asia.

With the address, he also sought to assuage concerns among Jewish voters in the United States about his stance on Israel.

"Our iron-clad commitment - and I mean iron-clad - to Israel's security has meant the closest military cooperation between our two countries in history," Obama said.

Iran's nuclear program is a major concern for Israel, which has not ruled out a unilateral strike on Iran's nuclear sites.

Additional reporting by JoAnne Allen; Editing by Eric Beech

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/01/25/us-usa-obama-speech-iran-idUSTRE80O0B120120125>

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London Guardian – U.K.

Iran Won't Build Nuclear Weapon in 2012, Says Draft ISIS Report

Analysis by Institute for Science and International Security says sanctions and threat of Israeli attack are having effect

By Staff and agencies

Wednesday, 25 January 2012

Iran is unlikely to move towards building a nuclear weapon in 2012 because it cannot yet produce enough weapon-grade uranium and is being deterred by sanctions and the prospect of an Israeli attack, according to a draft report by the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS).

The report by the institute founded by nuclear expert David Albright offers a more temperate view of Iran's nuclear program than some of the heated rhetoric that has surfaced since the United States and its allies stepped up sanctions on Tehran.

The Isis analysis is revealed after a prediction that Israel will attack Iran in 2012 to try and stop any nuclear bomb programme.

"Iran is unlikely to decide to dash toward making nuclear weapons as long as its uranium enrichment capability remains as limited as it is today," the report said.

The US and Iran are engaged in a war of words over sanctions, with Tehran threatening to retaliate by blocking oil shipping traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. The United States has said it will not allow that to happen. There are concerns the situation might spiral into a military confrontation that neither side wants.

The Isis report, financed by a grant from the United States Institute of Peace, says Iran had not made a decision to build a nuclear bomb. USIP is an independent, non-partisan centre created by the US Congress in 1984 that receives federal government funding.

"Iran is unlikely to break out in 2012, in great part because it is deterred from doing so," says the Isis report, which has not yet been publicly released.

The report says sanctions and the fear of a military strike by Israel on Iran's nuclear facilities have worked as a deterrent.

The institute has advised US and foreign governments about Iran's nuclear capabilities and Albright is considered a respected expert on the issue. The report tracks closely with what is known of official US government assessments.

US officials say Iran's leaders have not made the decision to build a nuclear weapon.

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Much of what the Iranians are doing with their nuclear program has civilian uses but they are keeping their options open, which significantly adds to the air of ambiguity, US officials have told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

Some conservative and Israeli analysts in the past have challenged these types of assessments, asserting that Iranian nuclear efforts are sufficiently advanced that they could build a bomb in a year or less.

But according to the Isis report: "Although Iran is engaged in nuclear hedging, no evidence has emerged that the regime has decided to build nuclear weapons."

"Such a decision may be unlikely to occur until Iran is first able to augment its enrichment capability to a point where it would have the ability to make weapon-grade uranium quickly and secretly."

It added that despite a report last November by the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency alleging that Iran had made significant progress on nuclear weaponisation, "Iran's essential challenge remains developing a secure capability to make enough weapon-grade uranium, likely for at least several nuclear weapons".

Some European intelligence officials have disputed a US national intelligence Estimate published in 2003 that said Iran had stopped working on a programme it had launched earlier to design and build a bomb.

The Europeans maintain Iran never stopped research and scientific development efforts that could be bomb-related.

Tensions spiked after Iran announced this month that it had begun to enrich uranium deep inside an underground facility near the holy city of Qom. The secretly built facility was publicly revealed by the United States in 2009.

The Isis report says a military strike to stop Iran building a bomb would be unlikely to succeed.

Limited military options, such as air strikes against nuclear facilities, are "oversold as to their ability to end or even significantly delay Iran's nuclear program," the report says. Limited bombing campaigns would be "unlikely to destroy Iran's main capability" to produce weapons-grade uranium.

Iran has taken precautions by dispersing the centrifuges it uses for enrichment to multiple locations, has mastered the construction of centrifuges, and has probably stockpiled extra centrifuges, the institute says.

A bombing campaign that did not totally eliminate these capabilities would leave Iran "able to quickly rebuild" its nuclear program and even motivate it to set up a Manhattan Project-style crash program to build a bomb, which would only make the region more dangerous and unstable, Isis says.

The report says clandestine intelligence operations aimed at detecting secret Iranian nuclear activities, including the construction of new underground sites, are "vitaly important". Known methods used by spy agencies include the recruitment of secret agents, cyber spying operations, overhead surveillance by satellites and drones, and bugging of equipment that Iran buys from foreign suppliers.

The report says another "well-known tactic" used by western spy agencies against Iran has been to infiltrate Iranian networks that smuggle nuclear-related equipment and supply them with plans or items that are faulty or sabotaged. The report says this tactic has helped the west uncover at least one of Iran's secret nuclear sites and, according to official statements by the Iranians, has caused enrichment centrifuges to break.

Other more violent covert operations strategies, particularly the killing of Iranian nuclear scientists and engineers, have "serious downsides and implications", such as a high risk of Iranian retaliation through militant attacks that could be directed against civilian targets. The US has emphatically denied any involvement in killings such as the car bombing in January of Mostafa Ahmadi Roshan, 32, a chemistry expert and a director of the Natanz uranium enrichment plant in central Iran.

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The report says that since thousands of specialists are involved in the Iranian nuclear program, assassinations are unlikely to be effective in slowing it down. It warns that Iran could construe assassinations as acts of war and use them to justify retaliation.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jan/26/iran-nuclear-weapon-isis-report?newsfeed=true>

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Daily Star – Lebanon

Saudi Royal Warns of Mideast Nuclear Arms Race

January 26, 2012

By Edith M. Lederer, Associated Press (AP)

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DAVOS, Switzerland: An influential member of the Saudi royal family warned Wednesday that unless the Middle East becomes a nuclear weapon-free zone, a nuclear arms race is inevitable and could include his own country, Iraq, Egypt and even Turkey.

Prince Turki al-Faisal said the five permanent U.N. Security Council members should guarantee a nuclear security umbrella for Mideast countries that join a nuclear-free zone – and impose “military sanctions” against countries seen to be developing nuclear weapons.

“I think that’s a better way of going at this issue of nuclear enrichment of uranium, or preventing Iran from acquiring weapons of mass destruction,” the former Saudi intelligence chief and ambassador to the U.S. and Britain said in an interview with the Associated Press. “If it goes that route, I think it’s a much more equitable procedure than what has been happening in the last 10 years or so.”

Turki said establishing a nuclear weapons-free zone “deserves everybody’s attention and energy, more so than other activities which we see unfolding, whether it is redeployment of fleets in the area, whether Iranian or American or British or French, whether it is the sanctions efforts against Iran.”

The Security Council has imposed four rounds of sanctions against Iran, mainly targeting its defense and nuclear establishment, but Tehran has refused to suspend uranium enrichment and enter negotiations on its nuclear activities. It maintains its nuclear program is peaceful, aimed solely at producing nuclear energy, but the U.S. and many European nations believe Iran’s goal is to produce nuclear weapons.

Turki’s proposal could impose sanctions against Iran if there is evidence it is pursuing weapons of mass destruction, which include nuclear as well as chemical and biological weapons. But it could also put Israel under sanctions if it doesn’t come clean on its suspected nuclear arsenal.

Israel is widely believed to have an arsenal of hundreds of nuclear weapons but has avoided confirming or denying their existence.

An Arab proposal for a weapons of mass destruction-free zone was initially endorsed by the 1995 conference reviewing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, but never acted on.

In May 2010, the 189 member nations that are party to the NPT called for convening a conference in 2012. Last October, the U.N., U.S., Russia and Britain announced that Finland will host the conference this year.

Israel is not a party to the NPT and has long said a full Arab-Israeli peace must precede such weapons bans. But at the 2010 NPT review conference, the United States, Israel’s most important ally, said it welcomed “practical measures” leading toward the goal of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East.

It remains unclear, however, whether the U.S. or veteran Finnish diplomat Jaakko Laajava, who is serving as “facilitator” of this year’s conference, can persuade Israel to attend.



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Turki said his answer to American and British diplomats who say Israel won't accept a nuclear weapons-free zone is "So what?"

He said the five permanent members should make an announcement on the establishment of a Mideast zone free of weapons of mass destruction, or WMD, at this year's conference in Finland.

Turki cautioned, however, that actually establishing a WMD-free zone will take negotiations in which all the underlying issues in the region, from the establishment of a Palestinian state to the future of the Golan Heights, "will have to be dealt with to make the zone workable."

"So there are incentives there for everybody to be serious about establishing an overall peace so the zone can be put in place," he said.

Turki warned that if there is no WMD-free zone in the Mideast, "inevitably" there is going to be a nuclear arms race "and that's not going to be in the favor of anybody."

The Gulf states are committed not to acquire WMD, he said. "But we're not the only players in town. You have Turkey. You have Iraq which has a track record of wanting to go nuclear. You have Egypt. They had a very vibrant nuclear energy program from the 1960s. You have Syria. You have other players in the area that could open Pandora's box."

Asked whether Saudi Arabia would maintain its commitment against acquiring WMD, Turki said: "What I suggest for Saudi Arabia and for the other Gulf states ... is that we must study carefully all the options, including the option of acquiring weapons of mass destruction. We can't simply leave it for somebody else to decide for us."

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2012/Jan-26/161127-saudi-royal-warns-of-mideast-nuclear-arms-race.ashx#axzz1kaBAtL1y>

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Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Thursday, January 26, 2012

Ahmadinejad Says Iran Ready for Nuclear Talks

The Associated Press (AP)

TEHRAN, Iran — President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says Iran is ready for nuclear talks with the world powers amid toughening sanctions aimed at forcing Tehran to sharply scale back its nuclear program.

Ahmadinejad, however, says sanctions won't force Iran to capitulate to Western demands.

The United States and allies want Iran to halt uranium enrichment, which they worry could lead to weapons-grade material. Iran says it only seeks reactors for energy and research.

Ahmadinejad made the remarks in Kerman, southeastern Iran on Thursday.

Iran had previously indicated that it is ready for a new round of talks with the five permanent Security Council members plus Germany. A senior U.N. nuclear agency team is expected to visit Tehran on Saturday.

<http://www.ajc.com/news/nation-world/ahmadinejad-says-iran-ready-1318091.html>

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Sun Sentinel – Fort Lauderdale, FL

IAEA Talks in Tehran to Test Iran's Nuclear Defiance

Thursday, January 26, 2012

By Fredrik Dahl, Reuters

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VIENNA (Reuters) - A rare visit by senior U.N. nuclear inspectors next week raises pressure on Iran to address suspicions it is trying to develop atomic weapons, though Western powers that are piling on sanctions expect no significant breakthrough.

How Tehran deals with the International Atomic Energy Agency may offer pointers to prospects for resolving a long-running dispute that an oil embargo and threats of war, along with talk of Iran closing in on nuclear weapons capability and the U.S. presidential election calendar, have escalated to crisis level.

The outcome of the inspectors' meetings from Sunday to Tuesday will be closely watched in Washington, European capitals and Israel for signs of whether Iran's leadership may finally be prepared to give ground after a decade of pursuing its nuclear development goals or whether it remains as defiant as ever.

"I hope that, at a minimum, the parties can agree on how to proceed in resolving outstanding issues, and that also includes the military dimension of Iran's nuclear program," said Olli Heinonen, a former chief U.N. safeguards inspector.

Western diplomats, who have often accused Tehran of using offers of meetings as a stalling tactic while pressing ahead with its nuclear program, say they doubt that it will lead to the kind of concrete progress the U.N. agency is looking for.

But some speculate that Iranian officials could show more openness or make limited concessions in the discussions in Tehran with senior IAEA delegates in a bid to keep channels of dialogue open and avert even more punitive steps.

"We are sceptical that anything substantive is going to come out of the meeting," one Vienna-based diplomat said.

But, "it would be a smart move on their part to do something, to provide some sort of...cooperation."

The IAEA team, to be headed by global inspections chief Herman Nackaerts, is expected to call for access to sites, officials and documents that could help clarify mounting concerns that Iran may be trying to develop nuclear arms.

The IAEA issued a detailed report in November that laid bare a trove of intelligence suggesting Iran is seeking nuclear weapons capability, including accusations of work on bomb triggers and computer-simulated detonations.

"SPORADIC COOPERATION"

Washington and its European allies, vowing not to tolerate any Iranian push for nuclear bombs, seized on the IAEA document to ratchet up sharply the sanctions pressure on Iran. Financial measures and bans on buying Iranian oil aim to choke its budget.

Tehran, which some experts say could have the potential to build at least one nuclear device as early as next year, responded by threatening to disrupt global oil trade.

There is speculation that Israel, which says an Iranian atom bomb would threaten the survival of the Jewish state, might launch attacks on the country's nuclear sites. U.S. President Barack Obama also says force is an option. He faces criticism in his re-election campaign this year of being "soft" on Tehran.

Iran, which says its nuclear program is entirely peaceful, angrily dismissed the IAEA findings as fabricated and baseless.

But it has recently sent more conciliatory signals to the agency in Vienna, inviting Nackaerts and his aides to visit and saying it is ready to discuss "any issues" that interest them.

"Iran will have to at least give the appearance of having dealt substantively with the issue," one European diplomat said, but added: "I would be shocked if Iran actually confessed to anything."

Making clear he did not expect quick results, Heinonen said the IAEA mission could be "the first step in a long process where the first real results would emerge in coming months."

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Ali Vaez, an expert at the Washington-based Federation of American Scientists, said Iran's goal was to avoid being referred once again to the U.N. Security Council by the IAEA's 35-nation governing board, which meets in early March.

The IAEA board groups both Western states pushing to isolate Iran, and Russia and China which are critical of unilateral measures. It first reported Iran in 2006 to the Security Council, which has since imposed four rounds of sanctions on the country, a major oil producer.

"Sporadic cooperation with the U.N. nuclear watchdog is a consistent feature of Iran's dual-track strategy of dividing the international community and deflecting additional sanctions," Vaez said.

In line with this, Iran has indicated readiness to address the concerns of the IAEA - tasked with preventing the spread of nuclear arms - about possible military dimensions to its nuclear program in the meeting with the visiting agency officials.

"Iran has in the past continued to question the IAEA mandate on these topics. I hope that we can now put that era behind us," said Heinonen, Nackaerts' predecessor at the IAEA and now a senior fellow at Harvard University.

DEAL POSSIBLE?

Separately, but closely linked to the IAEA's discussions, Iran has also voiced willingness to resume wider nuclear negotiations with world powers that have been frozen for a year.

"Iran is prepared to engage in dialogue ... over the nuclear issue on the basis of mutual respect," chief Iranian nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili was quoted as saying in Iranian media.

But Western officials say Iran has yet to back this up with a specific offer of meaningful talks about its uranium enrichment program, which Tehran is refusing to suspend despite repeated U.N. resolutions calling on it to do so.

Iran has in previous meetings spurned offers from the six powers - the United States, China, Russia, Britain, France and Germany - of economic and other incentives if it curbs such work, which can have both military and civilian purposes.

Tehran says it is enriching uranium to fuel planned nuclear power plants and sees it as a source of prestige in testament to its technical and scientific prowess. But the material can also be used for atomic bombs if it is processed much further.

Last week, diplomats said the six powers were split over what to put on the table should talks resume and on whether to allow Iran to continue enrichment to some degree.

Echoing the views of other Western experts, a former British ambassador to the IAEA advocated a deal under which Iran could keep on refining uranium if it accepted stricter U.N. safeguards inspections to ensure it had intention to build nuclear weapons.

However, Peter Jenkins wrote in the Daily Telegraph, "it may be asking a lot of our leaders that they swallow their words, lower their sights and focus on a realistic target."

Editing by Alastair Macdonald

http://www.sun-sentinel.com/news/nationworld/sns-rt-us-nuclear-iran-iaeatre80p0j9-20120126_0,5827808,full.story

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Daily Star – Lebanon

UN Atomic Agency Urges Iran to Cooperate

January 27, 2012

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Agence France-Presse (AFP)

DAVOS, Switzerland: The head of the UN's atomic watchdog urged Iran Friday to engage constructively with a team of inspectors heading to Tehran, after a damning report on Iran's nuclear program.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Davos forum, International Atomic Energy Agency chief Yukiya Amano told AFP that the organization's previous efforts to verify whether all its activities were for non-military purposes had been hampered by "a lack of cooperation" from Iran which he hoped would change.

"We hope they (Iran) will take a constructive approach. We hope that there will be substantial cooperation."

A report by the IAEA in November highlighted a range of areas which had raised suspicions that Iran was pursuing nuclear weapons, despite its repeated denials.

It detailed 12 suspicious areas such as testing explosives in a steel container at a military base and studies on Shahab-3 ballistic missile warheads.

Amano said it was too early to say definitively that Iran was pursuing a nuclear weapons program.

But he added: "We have information that indicates that Iran has engaged in activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device."

"We are requesting that Iran clarifies the situation. We proposed to make a mission and they agreed to accept the mission.

"The preparations have gone well but we need to see what actually happens when the mission arrives."

Officials at the IAEA headquarters in Vienna said the team, led by chief inspector Herman Nackaerts, would be visiting Iran from Sunday to Tuesday.

Speaking to reporters earlier, UN chief Ban Ki-moon said that the onus was on Iran to prove its good intentions.

"There is no other alternative to addressing this crisis than peaceful resolution through dialogue," Ban said in Davos.

Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has insisted that Tehran is not dodging negotiations and was ready to sit down with world powers -- Britain China, France, Russia, the United States, and Germany for talks.

The six world powers are waiting for Tehran to reply to an October letter sent by EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton that stresses that discussions should focus on the "key question" of the Iranian nuclear issue.

Previous talks held a year ago in Istanbul ended without progress.

"Iran should comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions. They have to prove themselves, that their nuclear development program is genuinely for peaceful purposes which they have not done yet," Ban said.

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2012/Jan-27/161291-un-atomic-agency-urges-iran-to-cooperate.ashx#axzz1kftOXtF1>

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Korea Times – South Korea
January 26, 2012

Obama's Silence on N. Korea Shows Cautious Approach

By Kim Young-jin

Issue No. 975, 27 January 2012

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U.S. President Barack Obama's silence on North Korea during his State of the Union address earlier this week underscored his administration's wait-and-see approach as the communist state consolidates power for its new leader, analysts said.

The omission stood in contrast to last year, when Obama insisted the North abandon its nuclear weapons program. But the landscape has changed after the death of late ruler Kim Jong-il and as Pyongyang installs his youngest son, Kim Jong-un as leader.

Instead, Obama saved his strongest foreign policy words for Iran, saying he would "take no options off the table" to prevent Tehran from crossing the nuclear weapons threshold, while adhering mainly to domestic talking points as he readies for presidential elections later this year.

"The U.S. is waiting to see stability in North Korea," Yoo Ho-yeol, an international relations expert at Korea University, said. "The transition to Kim Jong-un makes significant progress on the nuclear issue difficult at the moment."

The cautious approach comes after Washington pushed for a diplomatic breakthrough on the nuclear issue prior to Kim's death last month.

Reports widely said that Washington last month offered massive food aid in exchange for Pyongyang halting its uranium enrichment program (UEP). While the deal has been thrown unto uncertainty as the world waits to see what policies the new regime will take, neither side has closed the door on further talks.

Bahng Tae-seop of the Samsung Economic Research Institute said there was no strategic benefit for adding Pyongyang to the speech.

"If he did mention it, he could have been attacked by his opponents for failing to make progress on the matter. So it was a bit of benign neglect," he said.

The analyst added the showdown over Tehran's nuclear program has taken precedence given its time constraints. Obama, as part of his push to sanction Iran, will have to decide in June whether to take action against other countries if they continue to buy Iranian oil through its central bank.

Still, Washington is likely to keep a keen watch over the North as some analysts have raised the possibility that Kim Jong-un could attempt a fresh provocation, such as a third nuclear test, in order to burnish his military credentials.

Perhaps with such a prospect in mind, the administration has engaged in brisk diplomacy with regional players over how to approach the North, and expressed its willingness to start a new chapter to deal with the nuclear and other issues if Pyongyang is prepared to take denuclearization steps.

Others played down Obama's skipping of the North Korea issue, noting that he also said nothing of China's growing military assertiveness or ongoing challenges in Afghanistan.

James M. Lindsay, senior vice president at the Council on Foreign Relations, said the speech should be seen as Obama taking a strong stand against Republican challengers for the White House.

"This State of the Union address was never intended to be a policy speech," Lindsay wrote on a blog. "It was instead the opening salvo in his 2012 presidential campaign."

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/01/116_103532.html

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Chicago Tribune

North Korea's New Nuclear Plant a Safety Worry: Expert

By Jeremy Laurence, Reuters

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January 26, 2012

SEOUL (Reuters) - Secretive North Korea is making rapid progress in building a uranium-fuelled reactor that poses an alarming safety risk, a nuclear expert said on Thursday.

Siegfried Hecker, who has visited the North's main Yongbyon nuclear facility four times since 2004 and was the last foreign expert to visit the site in late 2010, said he was very concerned the reactor could be technically flawed.

"In spite of their industrial difficulties they have continued to build it at a good pace," he told Reuters in a telephone interview from Stanford University in the United States.

"What alarms me is that I have never had the sense they had the sufficient regulatory oversight in order to be able to build this thing safely, and operate it safely," he said, adding the lightwater reactor could be operational in two years.

"From a technical standpoint, they should not proceed with the completion of the reactor and operate it on the basis of lack of connection with the international safety community. That is just too high of a risk."

A series of satellite images taken over the past year were proof that the impoverished state was serious about finishing the reactor, Hecker said, even as it struggled to feed millions of its undernourished population.

Analysts say the North's new young leader, Kim Jong-un, will continue with his father's militaristic policy, conscious that the support of the powerful army is vital to a third generation of Kim-family rule.

The United States and South Korea say the uranium enrichment facility and reactor are in breach of agreements reached with North Korea, and demand that it halt all nuclear activities before they will consider a resumption of aid.

DILEMMA

The reactor appeared to be designed for generating electricity, Hecker said, but coupled with a nearby uranium enrichment facility, the complex could be converted for use in making an atomic bomb along with its plutonium program.

North Korea has tested nuclear devices twice and experts say it has enough fissile material to make six to eight nuclear bombs.

Pyongyang expelled international nuclear inspectors in 2009, a few months after aid-for-denuclearization talks broke down.

Hecker said the United States and South Korea found themselves in the dilemma of do they try force the North to stop construction of the experimental reactor, or do they allow North Korea to proceed and offer to help to avert a nuclear disaster?

"The international and political community has another couple of years to come to a resolution," said Hecker, who previously directed the Los Alamos National Laboratory where the atomic bomb was developed.

He said one solution, although difficult to swallow for the United States and South Korea, was to allow experts from China, the North's main ally and benefactor, to assess the facility's safety.

Hecker said the biggest concern was that a seismic event could trigger a power cut at Yongbyon, drawing a comparison to the meltdown at the Fukushima plant in Japan last year.

Although the Korean peninsula is not prone to major earthquakes, minor tremors are frequent. There is also concern about volcanic activity in the North.

The Yongbyon nuclear complex is little more than 100 km (60 miles) from China and about 200 km (120 miles) from South Korea.



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Editing by Robert Birsell

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/sns-rt-us-korea-north-nucleartre80p0h2-20120126,0,4051738.story>

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Economic Times – India

Republic Day: Agni-IV Nuclear Capable Missile Showcased

Indo-Asian News Service

26 January 2012

NEW DELHI: Agni-IV, India's latest nuclear-capable strategic missile, was showcased publicly for the first time Thursday at the Republic Day parade.

The missile formed part of a tableau from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), its developer.

The DRDO contingent, led by Lt. Col. V.S. Thapa, also showed new tactical battlefield support high-speed missile Prahara and the medium altitude long endurance unmanned aerial vehicle Rustom-I.

Agni-IV, the most potent and technologically advanced in India's arsenal, adds a new dimension to country's capabilities in terms of strategic deterrence.

The missile was successfully tested for the first time in November 2011, after its initial failure in the earlier avatar as Agni-II Prime in 2010.

Capable of being sent aloft from a self-contained road mobile launcher from anywhere, the two-stage surface-to-surface missile with solid-propulsion can reach targets 3,500 km away.

A quantum leap in indigenous technology, Agni-IV incorporates a composite rocket motor casing, a highly accurate guidance and navigation system, modern and compact avionics, digital control system and many contemporary and advanced technologies making it comparable to the best in the world.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics/nation/republic-day-agni-iv-nuclear-capable-missile-showcased/articleshow/11639580.cms>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

NASA Says No to Probe Crash Theory Test - Roscosmos

26 January 2012

NASA has refused to participate in an experiment designed to show if U.S. radars could have had an impact on Russia's troubled Phobos-Grunt Mars probe, the deputy head of the country's space agency, Roscosmos, Anatoly Shylov said on Thursday.

"Roscosmos filed an official request to the U.S. side to participate in the investigation, but they refused," Shylov said.

The official also said that the government commission inquiry into the cause of the probe's crash had issued a final report with the results of the investigation. It is expected to be published next week.

Among the possible causes of the Phobos-Grunt probe's crash, investigators said interference from the U.S. radar installed on the Marshall Islands in the Pacific Ocean could have had an impact. Scientists however dismissed the idea, saying that the U.S. radar theory is cover up to hide some people's mistakes.

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Phobos-Grunt, Russia's most ambitious planetary mission in decades was launched on November 9 but it was lost due to propulsion failure and fell back to Earth mid-January. Soon after the failed launch, the Russian space agency Roscosmos said a rocket motor should have started to push the probe into higher orbit but it failed to fire for unknown reasons.

According to NASA, Russia failed in all 17 of its attempts to study the Red Planet close-up since 1960. The most recent failure before November 2011 was in 1996, when Russia lost its Mars-96 orbiter during launch.

MOSCOW, January 26 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.ria.ru/russia/20120126/170960852.html>

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France 24.com

January 25, 2012

Russia 'to Deploy Missiles on EU Border this Year'

By Agence France-Presse (AFP)

AFP - Russia plans to deploy Iskander missiles on the European Union's border later this year, a source in its western Baltic Fleet told the Interfax news agency on Wednesday.

A source told the news agency that senior naval staff had confirmed plans to assign personnel for a naval unit set to service the missile complexes in the Kaliningrad exclave that borders EU members Poland and Lithuania.

"Recently in Moscow the senior command confirmed the staffing of a naval unit that is being created to put the Iskander missile complexes into service," the source said.

In November President Dmitry Medvedev said Russia was prepared to deploy Iskander missiles, which officials said have a range of up to 500 kilometres (310 miles), to strike against a planned US defence system in eastern Europe.

The first unit equipped with Iskander missiles is set to appear in the Kaliningrad region in the second half of the year, the source said, adding that S-400 missile systems would be deployed there in spring.

<http://www.france24.com/en/20120125-russia-deploy-missiles-eu-border-year>

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Voice of Russia – Russia

No European Missile Shield Means No Missiles in Kaliningrad

26 January 2012

Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Lukashevich said that Russia's plans to deploy anti-ballistic missiles in Kaliningrad was a sheer retaliatory step that wouldn't be necessary if NATO agreed to scrap its missile defense shield in Europe, which could strip Russia of its strategic potential. This came in a response to NATO chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen's calling the deployment of Iskander missile launchers in Russia's westernmost region "a waste of money".

Russia and the US remain at loggerheads over the American plan to set up an anti-missile defense shield in Europe that would protect America from ballistic missiles.

The US currently has two position areas of strategic missile defense system that are deployed on its territory – in Alaska and California, while Russia has only one area for its missile defense deployed near Moscow.

Now the US is planning on building a third position area in Europe, which could lead to creation of a global missile shield, virtually tipping the world balance.

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No new missiles in Kaliningrad as yet - Russian military

The Russian military has denied media reports that the closing half of this year will see the deployment on new medium-range Iskander missiles in the westernmost Russian region of Kaliningrad on the Baltic Sea.

A Defence Ministry spokesman said on Wednesday that any plans of this kind are yet to be approved.

Russian missile plan on Baltic Sea is "waste of money" - NATO Chief

During his visit to the Baltic States, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen criticized Russian plans to roll out Iskander missiles in Kaliningrad, saying that Moscow's response to the NATO-led European missile defense initiative was "a waste of money." Such steps would only undermine the mutual trust between the US and Russia, NATO Chief warned.

"I would encourage the Russians to face the new reality," Rasmussen said. "We're not enemies, we're not adversaries, we should be partners. It would be of mutual benefit if we developed peaceful cooperation."

Rasmussen said the Alliance was able to protect Lithuania without deploying elements of its anti-ballistic missile defense shield on the nation's territory. He went on to say state-of-the-art technologies allowed for more flexibility of defense systems.

(RIAN, TASS, Bloomberg)

<http://english.ruvr.ru/2012/01/26/64687544.html>

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London Telegraph – U.K.

Nuclear Subs Will Stay in Scotland, Royal Navy Chiefs Decide

Britain's nuclear deterrent would have to remain in Scotland even if the country voted for independence, Royal Navy chiefs have concluded.

By James Kirkup, Deputy Political Editor
26 January 2012

The Scottish naval base currently used to arm submarines with Trident nuclear missiles is the only site suitable for the task and building another could take up to a decade, ministers have been told.

Alex Salmond, the Scottish First Minister, has set out a timetable that could see Scotland vote on independence by 2014. David Cameron wants the referendum held sooner and may challenge Mr Salmond's proposed referendum question.

The recent moves have caused alarm among defence chiefs, who are worried about the consequences for the Armed Forces.

The Daily Telegraph understands that recent internal discussions at the Ministry of Defence have concluded that a Scottish declaration of independence would effectively leave the UK's nuclear weapons based in a foreign country for several years.

The prospect was described by a senior military source as "the nightmare scenario" for commanders overseeing the nuclear deterrent and for UK ministers negotiating with a new Scottish government.

Britain's deterrent, Trident missiles on Vanguard-class submarines, is based on the Clyde. The subs are based at Faslane on the Gare Loch, while their missiles and warheads are stored and loaded at a nearby base, Coulport, on Loch Long.

The MoD believes Faslane's facilities could be replicated at an existing English naval base. But the Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport is unique in the UK.



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It is equipped with highly specialised and sensitive equipment for safely moving missiles and warheads and incorporates hardened concrete bunkers to store them.

A source said: "Berths would not be a problem – there are docks on the south coast that could be used without too much fuss. But there simply isn't anywhere else where we can do what we do at Coulport, and without that, there is no deterrent."

The SNP has promised an independent Scotland will be free of nuclear weapons and insisted Scots should not bear any of the cost of relocating Trident.

MoD insiders believe that, after an independence vote, ministers in London would have no choice but to strike a deal with Scottish leaders allowing the Navy to go on using Coulport and Faslane until an alternative was ready.

That would give Scotland's new government bargaining power over other issues like their share of the UK national debt and other financial liabilities.

"Maintaining the deterrent is the first priority for any UK government, so ministers in London would have to pay Salmond any price to ensure we kept access to [the Clyde bases]," said a source. "It would be an unbelievable nightmare."

Prof William Walker of St Andrews University, who has studied the nuclear deterrent, said it would be "very, very difficult and very, very costly" to move the entire system out of Scotland.

The most likely legal model would be the Irish "treaty ports". After Irish independence in 1922, Britain continued to use several Irish ports as naval bases, only handing them back shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War.

The MoD declined to discuss details of the nuclear deterrent. A spokesman said: "The UK government position is clear and we are arguing the case for Scotland to remain within the Union. However, any decisions on Scotland's future are for people in Scotland to decide."

Thousands more Ministry of Defence civilian staff are to be sacked. To balance the books for the next financial year, the MoD will be forced to let go another 3,000 civilian workers in addition to the 25,000 civilians and 30,000 service personnel already cut.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/defence/9043092/Nuclear-subs-will-stay-in-Scotland-Royal-Navy-chiefs-decide.html>

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NDTV (New Delhi Television) – India

US, Russia to Dispose of Tonnes of Weapon-Grade Plutonium

Indo-Asian News Service

January 25, 2012

Washington: The US and Russia will dispose 34 tonnes of excess weapon-grade plutonium each that is enough material for approximately 17,000 nuclear weapons, RIA Novosti quoted a US official as saying.

According to a US State Department official, the US and Russia are successfully implementing their nuclear disarmament agreements and are continuing to work on the next steps in this direction.

Addressing the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, Rose Gottemoeller, the assistant secretary of the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, said that last year "the US-Russian Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement (PMDA) and its protocols came into force."

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"The PMDA commits the United States and the Russian Federation each to dispose of no less than 34 metric tonnes of excess weapon-grade plutonium -- enough material in total for approximately 17,000 nuclear weapons," she added.

The New START document, signed by the Russian and US presidents in 2010, cuts both countries' strategic nuclear arsenals to a maximum of 1,550 warheads, down from the previous ceiling of 2,200.

"The New START treaty entered into force on February 5, 2011. Implementation is going well and continues to contribute positively to the US-Russian relationship," she said.

"The treaty represents a strong foundation for further bilateral reductions and an important step on the path towards a world without nuclear weapons. Discussions between our two governments on the next steps are underway," Gottemoeller said.

Last November, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev warned that Russia would deploy missiles and may opt out of the New START nuclear reductions agreement if Russia, the United States and NATO failed to find a way to work together on European missile defences.

<http://www.ndtv.com/article/world/us-russia-to-dispose-off-tonnes-of-weapon-grade-plutonium-170402>

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Wall Street Journal
January 25, 2012

U.S. Shifts Policy on Nuclear Pacts

Administration Drops Demand on Countries' Fuel Production

By JAY SOLOMON

WASHINGTON—The Obama administration, in advanced negotiations on nuclear-cooperation agreements with Jordan and Vietnam, has withdrawn a demand that these countries forgo their rights to produce nuclear fuel, senior U.S. officials said.

The policy shift, adopted after an extensive interagency review, drew criticism from some U.S. lawmakers, who charged that it could ease the spread of sensitive nuclear technologies.

The Obama administration in 2009 signed a nuclear-cooperation agreement with the United Arab Emirates that bound the Arab country not to enrich uranium domestically or reprocess spent plutonium fuel, the two technologies that can be used to produce atomic weapons.

President Barack Obama cited the U.A.E. agreement as the "gold standard" for future nuclear-cooperation pacts. Washington has used the deal to press Iran over its nuclear program, arguing that Tehran should follow the Emirates and rely on the international market for nuclear fuel.

U.S. officials involved in the policy review said the Obama administration concluded that most countries wouldn't be willing to follow the U.A.E. model, and that insisting on it would hurt American interests.

They said Washington risked losing business for American companies seeking to build nuclear reactors overseas, and could greatly diminish its ability to influence the nonproliferation policies of developing countries.

"Nuclear trade carries with it a critical nonproliferation advantage in the form of consent rights, along with other opportunities to influence the nuclear policies of our partners," the State Department's and Energy Department's top nonproliferation officials, Ellen Tauscher and Daniel Poneman, wrote Congress this month.

U.S. companies once controlled at least 50% of the world market for building nuclear reactors. This share has dwindled to around 20%, U.S. officials say, with Russian, French and South Korean companies gaining dominance.

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"To the extent we lose market share, we lose nonproliferation controls and hurt national security," said a senior U.S. official involved in the policy review.

U.S. officials said the Obama administration is pursuing a range of other tools to ensure that developing countries seek to purchase nuclear fuel from foreign suppliers rather than developing the technologies needed to produce the fuel themselves.

These tools include supporting a United Nations-backed nuclear-fuel bank; cooperating with Russia to increase the international supply of the low-enriched uranium that is useful for energy but not weapons production; and tightening the rules governing the nuclear trade at the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the informal body that regulates the industry.

In addition to negotiations with Jordan and Vietnam, the departments of State and Energy are beginning to renegotiate pacts signed in the 1970s with South Korea and Taiwan that will lapse in the coming years.

The agreements, which are legally designated as treaties, require congressional approval.

U.S. lawmakers are focused on the Jordan negotiation, fearing an agreement that allows domestic nuclear-fuel production could have a cascading effect across the Middle East, according to congressional staffers.

The U.A.E.'s pact allows it to renegotiate if another Mideast country gains more favorable terms. A senior Emirati official said the U.A.E. is waiting to see the terms of the Jordan deal before deciding on a future action.

Saudi Arabia has also signed a memorandum of understanding with the U.S. and has echoed Jordan's reservations about giving up its right to enrich uranium, senior Arab diplomats said.

"Such a policy could cause the United Arab Emirates to reconsider its enrichment and reprocessing commitments if Jordan or any other country in the Middle East does not agree to similar terms and conditions," Sen. Richard Lugar of Indiana, the ranking Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, wrote Ms. Tauscher and Mr. Poneman this month.

Sen. Lugar opposes nuclear-cooperation agreements that don't follow the U.A.E. model, and is planning to hold hearings on the Obama administration's policy shift, aides to the senator said on Tuesday.

U.S. officials said they couldn't discuss the status of negotiations with Jordan or any other country.

The discussions with Vietnam are also seen having an impact on the issue of nonproliferation in Asia, said congressional officials.

South Korea is beginning to renegotiate its 1974 nuclear-cooperation agreement with the U.S., but is seeking Washington's approval to engage in the reprocessing of spent fuel through a technology called pyroprocessing. South Korean officials argue Seoul needs to use this method to safely dispose of the spent fuel coming from the country's growing nuclear-power industry.

U.S. officials fear such a move would undercut efforts to get North Korea to give up its nuclear-weapons program. An agreement with Vietnam that doesn't follow the U.A.E. model could make it harder for the U.S. to get Seoul to accept stringent terms.

"It would have been useful to have an Asian precedent to cite with the South Koreans," said a congressional staffer involved in the debate. "We won't have this anymore."

Lawmakers and nonproliferation experts also said they fear more lenient nuclear-cooperation agreements with Jordan and Vietnam could undercut the campaign to contain Iran's nuclear program.

Both the Obama and George W. Bush administration have stressed to Tehran that it doesn't need to enrich uranium domestically because it can buy nuclear fuel on international markets.

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"If the U.S. lets Jordan, Vietnam or South Korea make nuclear fuel, you can kiss any attempt to persuade Iran or any other state to forgo fuel making goodbye," said Henry Sokolski, executive director of the Nuclear Policy Education Center.

Senior administration officials argued Tuesday that their strategy will increase the number of countries relying on the international market for nuclear fuel, and ultimately isolate Iran.

"I think that to the extent that we can show a number of nations relying on commercial services...the better off we will all be," said the senior U.S. official. "I'd like to encircle Iran with the types of countries and agreements we've talked about."

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203806504577181213674309478.html>

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Foreign Policy
Blogs/The Cable

Tauscher Stepping Down as Undersecretary of State for Arms Control

Posted By Josh Rogin

Wednesday, January 25, 2012

Following her successful battle with esophageal cancer, Ellen Tauscher is taking a step back and handing over several of her responsibilities as the State Department's top arms control official, State Department officials told *The Cable* today.

In early February, Tauscher will formally resign as undersecretary of State for arms control and international security and be appointed to a newly created position called the "special envoy for strategic stability and missile defense." She will be working part-time, using her new flexibility to work on cancer patient advocacy and pursuing projects outside of government. Officials told *The Cable* that after 13 years in Congress and 3 years in the administration, she decided that the time had come for her to take a breather and focus on other interests.

"Ellen has been campaigning, legislating, and working at a breakneck pace for nearly 16 years and, now with a new lease on life, she wants to focus on some new opportunities while still working on critically important national security issues," a State Department official told *The Cable* today.

Rose Gottemoeller, the assistant secretary of State for arms control, verification, and compliance, is expected to be named as Tauscher's replacement. She will lead the "T" office, as it is known, at least for the duration of the year, multiple State Departments officials said. There's no expectation that the Senate will be able to confirm any arms control officials before the November presidential election, so the administration won't try.

In her new special envoy role, Tauscher will report directly up to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and will maintain control of several specific projects she has been working on. She will remain the lead official on the president's bilateral commission on strategic stability with Russia, and will keep her role as lead negotiator for a missile defense cooperation agreement with Russia.

Tauscher will also maintain her role overseeing the implementation of the administration's missile defense scheme in Europe, known as the Phased Adaptive Approach, which was one of her key issues when she led the House Armed Services Strategic Forces subcommittee. Tauscher will also maintain her role as the lead U.S. government official on civilian nuclear cooperation around the world, in anticipation of the Nuclear Security Summit this year in Seoul.

Officials told *The Cable* that Tauscher's work on cancer issues with Duke University, where she was treated, will focus on the standardization of care for cancer patients. She wants to work to ensure everybody has access to the elite level of care she received in her time of need. Her last day as undersecretary will be Feb. 6.

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http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/01/25/tauscher_stepping_down_as_undersecretary_of_state_for_arms_control

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Willamette Week – Portland, Oregon

January 25th, 2012

By COREY PEIN

Oregon Scientist Finds New Way to Track Underground Nuke Tests

Oregon State University geophysicist Paul Vincent recently published a research paper detailing a new way to measure underground nuclear weapons tests with satellite imagery.

Vincent's study, published in the journal *Geophysical Research Letters*, focused on an underground Chinese nuclear testing site. Satellite radar images revealed a two-inch surface "uplift," caused by heated groundwater from the nuke tests.

Interestingly, the earth didn't move until a full four years after the detonations. That limits the usefulness of Vincent's technique for spotting illicit nuke tests within a meaningful time frame, but it does give intelligence agencies and nuclear monitoring groups a new way to gauge past nuclear tests.

More details are available at OSU's website. If you're feeling especially ambitious, browse a PDF of the study, "Anomalous transient uplift observed at the Lop Nor, China nuclear test site using satellite radar interferometry time-series analysis".

http://www.wweek.com/portland/blog-28138-oregon_scientist_finds_new_way_to_track_underground_nuke_tests.html

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CNET News

Cloak's on You: Scientists Create 'Invisible' Object

By Martin LaMonica

January 26, 2012

It's not quite the Invisible Man, but researchers say they have gotten a step closer to creating a "three-dimensional cloak" that would render objects invisible.

Scientists at the University of Texas in Austin today said they have hidden a cylinder from microwaves, demonstrating cloaking of an object in free space, rather than a two-dimensional image. The group has not been able to scatter visible light, but it expects that cloaking small objects is possible.

"Cloaking small objects may be exciting for a variety of applications. For instance, we are currently investigating the application of these concepts to cloak a microscope tip at optical frequencies. This may greatly benefit biomedical and optical near-field measurements," said University of Texas professor Andrea Alu in a statement. She is co-author of a paper published today in the Institute of Physics and German Physical Society's *New Journal of Physics*.

Researchers for years have been designing synthetic materials to coat an object and make it appear transparent. In its experiment, the University of Texas group covered a cylinder with a shell coated with a nanometer-sized plasmonic material that scatters light and other electromagnetic waves.

When we see an object, our eyes receive the reflection of light rays off that object and our brain processes that visual information. At certain frequencies, plasmonic materials can excite electron oscillations that make the light

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waves scatter in a way that counteracts the normal reflection, according to the University of Texas. The effect is to make it appear transparent.

The paper says that the plasmonic materials work regardless of the shape of the object and, in principle, could work on a broader range of frequencies, including visible light. But there appear to be some limitations on what sorts of materials it will work on. The experiment worked on a dielectric object but not on metals, according to a description from the University of Texas.

In the future, though, portions of aircraft could be covered or optical instruments could use the material to correct effects. "We believe that our results pave the way to realistic, practical applications of 3D stand-alone cloaks for radar evasion and non-invasive radio frequency probing," according to the paper.

http://news.cnet.com/8301-11386_3-57366622-76/cloaks-on-you-scientists-create-invisible-object/

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AOL Defense.com

Sub-Based Global Strike Weapon Reborn; Questions Remain

By Carlo Munoz

January 26, 2012

The Navy will finance work on an "undersea conventional prompt global strike option" as part of its share of DoD's \$525 billion budget request for Fiscal 2013, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said during today's press conference at the Pentagon. He did not go into detail on whether the weapon would be carried by the older Ohio-class submarines or the Virginia-class boats currently being built by the Navy. A PGS is a non-nuclear weapon designed to hit any target around the world within an hour. The only current weapons able to strike global targets that quickly are intercontinental nuclear missiles. Their numbers, range and warheads are strictly limited by various treaties, including the START treaties.

In mid-2000, the Navy tried to modify the D-5 Trident missile into a Prompt Global Strike weapon. However, Congress put an end to that. The strongest single opponent of the Trident modification plan at the time was Madelyn Creedon, former senior Senate Armed Services Committee staffer and now Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Strategic Affairs. Creedon presumably will now defend sub-based PGS now that it is official Pentagon policy.

Lawmakers were concerned that a non-nuclear D-5 launch could be misinterpreted as a nuclear strike by U.S. allies, particularly Russia, and spark a nuclear counterstrike. But advances in missile technology development by DoD would ensure that no sub-launched PGS could ever be confused with a nuclear strike, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey said yesterday. Navy engineers could change the trajectory and speed of a PGS weapon to make it clear it was not a nuclear missile.

But the Pentagon's sudden return to a sub-based PGS weapon was not prompted by any advanced in missile technology, according to a source with close ties to the defense and intelligence communities. "It [is] not a technical thing, but a political development," the source said referring to the Russian counterstrike threat. That threat, the source added, was not as big a concern that many opponents of a sub-based conventional weapon had made it out to be.

Moscow and Washington have been at odds in recent months over nuclear weapon issues, particularly the White House's plan for a missile defense shield in Eastern Europe. But something must have changed in that dynamic to give Pentagon leaders enough confidence to restart work on a sub-based PGS weapon, according to the source, who could not comment on what that change could have been. Whatever it was, the department is back on track to fill a much-needed combat capability, the source said.

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A sub-based PGS is a "very sensible weapon" that would fill a particular niche in the Pentagon's missile defense strategy, the source said. "It is a boutique weapon" the source added, noting U.S. forces would only need a handful to take out high-value targets at hypersonic speeds. "I wish to hell we had one when [Osama] Bin Laden was in Tora Bora," he said, referring to the time when U.S. forces had Bin Laden pinned down in the mountain ranges along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border in 2001 and he escaped.

<http://defense.aol.com/2012/01/26/sub-based-global-strike-weapon-reborn-questions-remain/>

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New York Times

January 27, 2012

Spy Drone and Missile Sub Are on Military's Budget-Cutting List

By CHRISTOPHER DREW

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As the Pentagon Thursday announced changes in its programs, military contractors were bracing for cancellations or cutbacks of several programs.

In its latest round of budget tightening, the agency has said that it would stretch out purchases, cancel a high-flying spy drone and delay work on a new missile submarine.

The defense secretary, Leon E. Panetta, disclosed the cuts as part of a broader reorganization of the military meant to save \$487 billion over a decade.

One of the biggest decisions will stretch out the purchase of 179 of the F-35 fighters that the Pentagon had planned to buy from Lockheed Martin over the next five years.

Mr. Panetta said the Pentagon remained committed to the plane, a stealth fighter that can attack ground targets. Different versions are being built for the Air Force, the Navy and the Marines. The services plan to spend up to \$380 billion for 2,440 of the planes, making it by far the Pentagon's largest program.

The other cuts were spread out among the major military contractors, though some reductions would be offset by spending increases on computer security, other unmanned planes and equipment for the special forces.

The plan to cut the size of the ground forces by 92,000 and eliminate older ships and planes came in response to political pressure to lower the federal budget deficit. It will eliminate most of spending increases that were above inflation, thereby limiting the Pentagon's budget increases to approximately the rate of inflation after a big surge during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

Pentagon officials said that they had tried to limit the reductions to weapons programs and would focus on continuing efforts to modernize the armed forces. Many of the most costly and contentious programs — like the radar-evading F-22 fighter and a high-tech destroyer — had already been canceled or trimmed over the last three years, leaving few big-ticket items.

Mr. Panetta said he had decided to slow the purchases of the F-35 fighters "to complete more testing and allow for developmental changes before buying significant quantities."

"We wanted to make sure before we go into full production that we are ready," he said.

The plane was originally described as an affordable and dependable design. But changes in the requirements, faulty parts and software difficulties caused several years of delay and turned the program into the Pentagon's biggest budget-buster.



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Last year, Mr. Panetta's predecessor, Robert M. Gates, threatened to cancel the Marine version of the plane, which can take off and land almost vertically, if Lockheed could not solve some of the problems. Mr. Panetta recently lifted that probation, saying the company had made substantial progress.

Pentagon officials also announced that the Air Force was canceling one version of Northrop Grumman's Global Hawk surveillance drone. It flies at 60,000 feet and was intended to replace the piloted U-2 spy plane, which gained fame for flying over the Soviet Union during the cold war.

After an extensive review, the Air Force had decided last July to go ahead with the switch even though the Global Hawk's costs had soared and Pentagon testing officials had questioned whether it was reliable.

The Air Force had said then that the unmanned plane, which took photographs and was also supposed to intercept communications, would be cheaper to operate than the U-2. But Pentagon officials said Thursday that it now looked as if the costs would be higher over the next five years for the Global Hawk than the U-2.

They said they still planned to build other versions of the drone that could survey large areas, though those costs could rise if fewer total planes are built.

Mr. Panetta said the Navy would delay its long-range plans to build a new nuclear-powered missile submarine by two years to ease the current budget pressures and help start the program on a more solid footing.

Pentagon officials have said that the new missile submarines would eventually replace the aging Ohio-class subs, which carry nuclear missiles and could cost \$5 billion each. Pentagon officials said they also would delay construction of one Virginia-class attack submarine, two coastal combat ships and a large amphibious ship to reduce short-term costs.

Most of the ship construction is done by General Dynamics and Huntington Ingalls Industries, which was spun off by Northrop Grumman last year. Lockheed and a unit of an Australian company build the coastal ships.

Still, the Pentagon said it also planned to redesign the Virginia-class subs, which are smaller than the Ohio-class subs and protect other warships, to carry more cruise missiles and upgrade radars on both airplanes and ships. It will also design a new long-range bomber to replace the B-2.

Military contractors have laid off workers and consolidated plants in recognition that the boom times were ending. But Mr. Panetta said some of the cuts would be offset by increased spending on special forces, other surveillance planes and protections against attacks by computer hackers.

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/27/business/military-contractors-brace-for-cutbacks.html?_r=1

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South Asian News Agency – Pakistan

UN's Nuclear Disarmament Conference may Sink over Pakistan's Reluctance: Ban-ki Moon

South Asian News Agency (SANA)

January 25, 2012

GENEVA (SANA) UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon warned on Tuesday that the UN Conference on Disarmament could fail because of a three-year stalemate over Pakistan's reluctance to discuss nuclear power.

"Today, this distinguished body is no longer living up to expectations," Ban said at the first of three public sessions scheduled this year, in a speech read out by the top UN official in Geneva, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

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“The tide of disarmament is rising, yet the Conference on Disarmament is in danger of sinking,” Ban warned the delegates from 65 countries. “Let us restore the conference to the central role it can and must play in strengthening the rule of law in the field of disarmament.”

The UN chief lamented that the practice of deciding by consensus “is currently used as a de facto veto power to stall every attempt to break the impasse.”

“The future of the conference is in the hands of member states,” Ban said, urging the immediate start of nuclear negotiations.

Citing national security, Pakistan has since May 2009 balked at implementing a work programme established by the UN conference, blocking the resumption of nuclear talks.

Taking advantage of a new climate established by US President Barack Obama, the conference emerged in May 2009 from 12 years of obscurity, adopting for the first time since 1996 a programme of negotiations on fissile materials and weapons.

Since then the reluctance of Pakistan to accept a possible treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons has prevented the conference moving forward.

In recent years authorities in Islamabad said they did not wish to enter into negotiations on a treaty which they say endorses an “asymmetry” of nuclear power between Pakistan and its arch-rival India.

The council ends its first session of this year on March 30.

<http://www.sananews.net/english/2012/01/uns-nuclear-disarmament-conference-may-sink-over-pakistans-reluctance-ban-ki-moon/>

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The Diplomat
OPINION/Flashpoints

Pakistan Needs Nuclear Rethink

By Manpreet Sethi
January 24, 2012

With the Conference on Disarmament (CD) scheduled to start its first session of 2012 in Geneva from January 24, the Islamabad-based Institute of Policy Studies held a seminar on “Challenges to Pakistan’s Nuclear Program and Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.” The participants, as has been highlighted by reports in the *Pakistan Observer* and the *Nation*, supported the position that the country has taken on blocking any progress on the FMCT negotiations.

It may be recalled that Pakistan has held this position over the last few years, demanding that the treaty must include existing stockpiles of fissile material within its scope. The rest of the states armed with nuclear weapons, in contrast to the Pakistani position, conceive the FMCT as a prospective treaty that’s meant to prohibit the future production of fissile material from the time it enters into force. Therefore, in their formulation, it isn’t meant to have a retrospective effect.

Why is Pakistan maintaining such a position on the FMCT? Judging comments by the Pakistani ambassador to CD, Zamir Akram, it’s because Pakistan feels threatened by the *asymmetry that exists in the fissile material stockpiles of India and Pakistan*. This, he fears, provides an undue advantage to India and would allow it to build a larger number of nuclear warheads. Second, he believes the problem has been compounded for his country by the *grant of the waiver to India by the Nuclear Suppliers Group* that has opened the opportunity for India to acquire uranium from abroad, thereby enabling the country to use its own uranium reserves for the strategic build up. A visibly disadvantaged Pakistan, therefore, is left with no option but to obstruct the FMCT.

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Both these issues raised by Pakistan are worthy of a closer examination from the point of view of the contrasting nuclear doctrines of the two countries. Pakistan perceives its nuclear weapons as the essential foil against a possible threat from a conventionally more capable Indian military. Its threat perceptions are completely India-centric, and while India has never expressed designs on Pakistan, these perceived threats don't seem to go away, largely because the Pakistan Army needs to maintain *a threat* in order to retain its position in the national power polity. India, in this scheme of things, becomes a useful tool for the military.

Another related question is why would India find it necessary to bring its conventional might to bear against Pakistan? After all, New Delhi has repeatedly identified "lifting its masses from poverty" as its foremost priority. Why, then, would it want to deviate from this goal to wage a draining war against Pakistan? Obviously, Pakistan knows the answer to this lies in its own policy of using terrorism as a foreign policy tool. This is now a proven fact after the revelations made by David Coleman Headley. Well aware of the fact that India's threshold of tolerance to Pakistan fomented terrorism could well be breached at some point, Pakistan finds it prudent to project a low nuclear threshold to deter an Indian conventional response.

In order to maintain credible nuclear deterrence, Pakistan therefore feels the need to build a large and variegated nuclear arsenal. This is perfectly logical in the game of nuclear deterrence. But the one important factor that tends to go missing in this calculation is the uselessness of the nuclear weapon for actual military use. While it can serve as a powerful political weapon, and Pakistan has used it effectively for many things ranging from deterring India to acquiring huge sums of military assistance from the United States, if Pakistan is actually serious about militarily using the weapon in any contingency, it will be dismayed to discover how little it would contribute to national security. In fact, operations research conducted by organizations like the Rand Corporation has clearly established that the military use of the nuclear weapon can never redeem the situation for a smaller and weaker conventional state.

At the same time, it's equally true that the political use of the nuclear weapon doesn't require a large nuclear arsenal. In fact, nuclear parity or superiority is immaterial. All that Pakistan requires to deter India is a nuclear capability that's just enough to cause damage that New Delhi can never brook as acceptable. By the same logic, India doesn't need more than would be necessary to cause unacceptable damage to Pakistan. Therefore, more than the asymmetry in fissile material stockpiles, it's the asymmetry in nuclear doctrines or the understanding of the actual *use* potential of the weapon that keeps Pakistan from participating in the FMCT negotiations.

India's nuclear doctrine is based on deterrence by punishment – the message conveyed in the threat that any first use of the nuclear weapon would result in retaliatory damage that will be far in excess of any gain that the adversary hopes to make. Such a formulation of deterrence doesn't require too big an arsenal – it only has to be enough to cause "unacceptable" damage, and for rational actors, this state can't be too far on the damage threshold. For irrational actors, deterrence can't work anyway.

In case Pakistan can rationally assess the requirement for its nuclear deterrence, it will find it unnecessary to keep the option of building fissile material stockpiles beyond a finite limit. Rather, an unnecessarily large stockpile of fissile material and warheads would add to security requirements and concomitant concerns. Therefore, without actually compromising its nuclear capability in any way, it's perfectly plausible for Pakistan to participate constructively in the CD. And, in the process, earn some international goodwill too.

Manpreet Sethi heads the project on Nuclear Security at the Centre for Air Power Studies (CAPS), New Delhi. Sethi lectures regularly at all training establishments of the Indian Armed Forces, including the National Defence College. She is author of Nuclear Strategy: India's March Towards Credible Deterrence (2009).

<http://the-diplomat.com/flashpoints-blog/2012/01/24/pakistan-needs-nuclear-rethink/>

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U.S. News & World Report



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OPINION/Washington Whispers Blog

By Paul Bedard

Senator Puts U.S. Nuclear Arsenal in Doubt

January 26, 2012

The Democratic chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee today questioned the value of the nation's nuclear arsenal, putting in motion efforts to cut the numbers and costs of missiles and bombs that are part of the Pentagon's "nuclear triad."

Previewing today's Pentagon announcement on what weapon systems will be cut, delayed or eliminated in the upcoming budget, Sen. Carl Levin said the nation needs to rethink its nuclear force created during the Cold War.

"The Cold War is over. I just think there's a way over-reliance and cost that goes into our nuclear weapon system," he said at a media breakfast hosted by the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Later, he went further, suggesting that the arsenal is useless. When talking about an arcane Senate procedure, he raised nuclear weapons again. "It's like the nuclear weapon, it's totally useless. It can't be used except to accomplish some other goal, then it's used, used to deter."

Levin has questioned the number of nuclear weapons in land-based missile silos, long-range bombers, and submarines before. But his comments are more meaningful now as the Pentagon prepares to cut costs and as it faces even more budget reductions if Congress and the White House can't come to an agreement on a pending budget deal.

"I've always believed that nuclear weapons are way overdone, we have way more than are needed to carry out their mission. Their mission can't be to use them. They can only be to deter, or to achieve some form of deterrence," he said. [Special Ops Forces Study to Be Part Spy, Part Gumshoe]

The recent leadership change in North Korea, however, has renewed the military's focus on nuclear weapons, especially as that country has increased military operations.

But Levin said that is silly. "People point to North Korea. North Korea would be deterred by the prospect that if they used the nuclear weapon, they would be immediately wiped out," he said. And he questioned any use by North Korea against South Korea because the regime's "sole purpose in life is to stay in power."

Plus, he added, it wouldn't take many nuclear weapons to eliminate North Korea. "I don't know if would take one or two to deter them from threatening to use a nuclear weapon," said Levin.

However, he won't be pushing for killing one of the legs of the triad. "I'd much rather focus on overall numbers, say there are way more than we need and try to find ways that are achievable to reduce the numbers and reliance on nuclear weapons," he said.

<http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/washington-whispers/2012/01/26/senator-puts-us-nuclear-arsenal-in-doubt>

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The Hindu – India

OPINION/Lead

January 26, 2012

A Precarious Indo-Pak Nuclear Balance

By Happymon Jacob

Pakistan has dismissed the credibility of India's declared no-first-use doctrine and has not elucidated the conditions under which it would be prompted to use its nuclear weapons.

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The recently held 'India-Pakistan Expert Level Talks on Nuclear CBMs' have once again failed to move the two countries away from their precarious nuclear balance. The Islamabad meeting 'achieved' two things: one, Indian and Pakistani officials agreed to recommend to their Foreign Secretaries the extension of the validity of the "Agreement on Reducing the Risk from Accidents Relating to Nuclear Weapons" (signed in 2007) for another five years; and two, "both sides reviewed the implementation and strengthening of existing CBMs in the framework of [the] Lahore MoU, and agreed to explore possibilities for mutually acceptable additional CBMs."

Indeed, the substantive aspects of the India-Pakistan nuclear dimension remain consistently untouched by the negotiators in the two countries — both after their declared nuclear status in 1998 and earlier during their undeclared status. The 1999 Lahore Declaration was a progressive step that recognised the need to understand the role played by nuclear weapons. It was crafted with a view to "reducing the risk of [their] accidental or unauthorised use" as well as "elaborating measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields." India and Pakistan have also dutifully followed their 1988 agreement to annually exchange lists of their nuclear installations and facilities, in order to avoid attacks against them.

However, since 1999, all that the two countries have done at successive meetings is to reiterate the spirit of the Lahore Declaration, and review the existing nuclear and missile-related confidence-building measures except, of course, the 2007 agreement. In 12 years, nothing substantial has been achieved by them to bring about nuclear stability in the subcontinent. This despite the fact that a nuclear war between India and Pakistan is arguably more likely than it was between the U.S. and the USSR during the Cold War. One of the reasons is an alarming obscurity to India and Pakistan's nuclear relations, apart from their geographical proximity.

Doctrinal dilemmas

Doctrinal and conceptual clarity on nuclear strategy is fundamental to the existence of stable deterrence in a nuclearised geopolitical context. This is recognised by the Lahore Declaration, which states "[t]he two sides shall engage in bilateral consultations on security concepts, and nuclear doctrines". The agreement has, unfortunately, remained a mere promise. Although the strategic elites in both countries have pondered over their nuclear doctrines ad nauseam, they seem to have overlooked the ways in which credible cooperation may occur in order to achieve feasible nuclear risk reduction measures and nuclear stability. Such deficient thinking has led to a unilateral offensive strategising and the formulation of military doctrines such as India's 'Cold Start', and the adoption of an asymmetric escalation posture by Pakistan.

Problems of ambiguity

The introduction of nuclear weapons in the Indo-Pak balance of power has not been to India's advantage. It has given the country diminishing returns from its conventional superiority and created a troublingly unpredictable nuclear escalation ladder. Moreover, Pakistan's ambiguous nuclear doctrine has plunged India into a deep dilemma on how to respond to the proxy wars that it believes Pakistan has unleashed upon it. India was forced to redeploy its forces after massing them on the border during the 2001-2002 military standoff in the wake of the attack on Indian Parliament, precisely due to this uncertainty.

Pakistan has apparently kept its nuclear doctrine ambiguous to continue to perplex Indian strategists. It has dismissed the credibility of India's declared no-first-use (NFU) doctrine and but has not elucidated the conditions under which it would be prompted to use its nuclear weapons. Apart from outlining some painfully general conditions of potential nuclear use, Pakistan has deliberately kept its 'threshold levels' or the 'red lines' unclear, contending that this is its only possible option to prevent an Indian attack. It is an argument that stems straight from the classical deterrence theory.

This ambiguity in the India-Pakistan conflict dyad has led to deterrence instability in the region, rather than deterrence stability. In a conflict dyad, theoretically speaking, when both parties clarify their nuclear postures, there will be relative stability. However, when both maintain doctrinal ambiguity there is likely to be increased stability; paradoxically, under such conditions deterrence has the maximum advantage. On the other hand, when



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one party maintains doctrinal clarity and the other maintains doctrinal ambiguity, there is likely to be instability rather than stability. This happens because the party that chooses to keep its doctrine ambiguous is also assumed to keep its various options open — ‘flexible responses’— including the tactical use of nuclear weapons. This generates a dilemma for its opponent, which is denied the option of similar flexible responses due to its pre-declared postures and resultant concerns about public opinion.

Cold Start

Cold Start, the Indian military's ‘undeclared’ doctrine, is assumed to be a response to this dilemma India faces from Pakistan's doctrinal ambiguity. Indian strategists believe that if India were to use its Cold Start doctrine, it would have a flexible response option that may counter the open-ended Pakistani nuclear strategy. Cold Start imagines enabling the Indian military to carry out quick, offensive operations against Pakistan without crossing the latter's nuclear red lines in order to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure on the Pakistani side. Critics have argued that the doctrine is nothing but ‘hot air’ as it has neither New Delhi's political backing nor is it considered a serious war-fighting strategy by the Indian army. While such scepticism may or may not be well-founded, the fact is even if some sections of the Pakistani war planners believe India is somewhat serious about Cold Start, it could lead to counter-strategising.

The existence of such doctrinal ambiguities, security dilemma and deep mistrust of each other — combined with the lack of a clear civilian control of nuclear weapons in Pakistan — means nothing short of a recipe for disaster for the people of both countries. There is, therefore, need to start talking about nuclear issues with far more seriousness and urgency along the lines enshrined in the Lahore Declaration.

This is all the more important because of the perceived implications of the India-U.S. nuclear deal as well as the China-Pakistan nuclear deal, and due to the potential impact of technology on the military strategies of India and Pakistan.

Ottawa Dialogue

There is also an urgent need to encourage non-official bilateral discussions on the issue in order to sensitise the strategic communities on both sides of the border. The Ottawa Dialogue, one of the very few track-two initiatives on nuclear issues, held most recently in Copenhagen in December 2011, recommended that India and Pakistan sign a CBM to the effect that their land-based nuclear arsenals will remain “de-mated” and “de-alerted” in peacetime; initiate a high-level official dialogue on how new and emerging technologies such as future sea-based systems and nuclear-armed cruise missiles will impact strategic stability; and add cruise missiles to the Agreement on Pre-Notification of Flight Testing of Ballistic Missiles.

The bilateral meeting also recommended that the existing hotlines and communication channels be hardened, manned 24x7 and supplemented with secure video links; a dedicated communications channel be established between the Indian National Security Advisor and the Pakistani equivalent and that each side establish a “strategic risk management unit”, which could serve some of the same communications functions as the Nuclear Risk Reduction Centres in other contexts.

Happymon Jacob teaches Disarmament at Jawaharlal Nehru University and is a member of the Ottawa Track-two Dialogue on India-Pakistan Nuclear Issues.

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/article2832290.ece>

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The Hindu – India
OPINION/Business Line

Bio-Security, an Emerging Challenge

By BHASKAR BALAKRISHNAN

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January 26, 2012

Advancements in biotechnology can be used to alarmingly destructive effect.

Recently, in September 2011, researchers in Rotterdam succeeded in modifying the avian flu virus in ferrets (the best animal model for influenza in humans) to make it capable of airborne transmission, and therefore, making it far more contagious.

The implications are that the highly-dangerous A(H5N1) avian flu virus, which so far spreads only from birds to humans, could get modified fairly easily, to enable it to spread by airborne transmission from human to human, making it far more dangerous. The A(H5N1) avian flu has caused around 350 deaths from 600 reported cases so far, giving it a mortality rate of around 60 per cent.

ADVANCES IN BIOTECH

Recent research indicates that developments in biotechnology have now made it quite feasible to modify a wide range of pathogens to give them new features, including those that can make them far more dangerous to humans. A number of new diseases have emerged in recent years, adding to the list of existing pathogens and toxins that are dangerous to humans.

In the recent case, the research journals concerned were asked by US agencies to not publish key details of their work on the precise nature of changes to the A(H5N1) virus, due to the apprehension that such information may be misused by unscrupulous elements. While the request has been acceded to, it has kicked off a debate in the scientific community on the general question of disclosure of certain research details in biosciences, which could be used by terrorists and some others against human populations, and the possible role of WHO in this regard.

The Biological Weapons Convention, 1972, which has 165 countries party to it, embodies the determination of the international community to ban biological and toxin weapons. Such weapons have, for long, been regarded as being relatively less effective for military use.

However, the convention is wanting in the area of verification. The US, which is the global leader in biotechnology, has stalled progress in this area, due to concerns regarding leakage of scientific information. This may now change. However, while the convention applies to governments, it leaves open the possibility of non-state actors attempting to use bio-weapons.

Unlike nuclear weapons technology, biotechnology is relatively accessible and far less costly to use. For example, the cost of gene sequencing has dropped dramatically with technology advances. Biotech research can be done at a relatively low cost compared to nuclear technology. Harmful pathogens can be easily transported and released to cause disease and panic.

So, this technology offers non-state actors a potential low-cost, high-impact instrument to cause damage to human populations, or to the agricultural sector of target countries. The accidental release of dangerous pathogens from research facilities is another possibility.

Indeed, reports have already surfaced of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) seeking to produce a deadly toxin, Ricin, from the waste left after extracting castor oil. What if pathogens like avian flu A(H5N1), plague, SARS, etc. are deliberately modified to enable airborne transmission from humans to humans? This possibility can no longer be dismissed as science fiction.

Action is needed at the national and international levels to deal with this threat. Biotech research is conducted in a wide range of institutions, in government laboratories, universities, and by the private sector. Freedom to do research in biotechnology shouldn't be hampered, and intellectual property rights must be protected. However, the risks to society and the general population must be dealt with, as in the case of nuclear research.



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This presents a formidable challenge to national regulatory agencies and governments in devising suitable frameworks to enhance bio-security and bio-safety, while allowing research to go ahead. Developing countries shouldn't face additional hurdles in access to biotechnology and its useful applications.

India should be actively engaged in international efforts and adopt national measures to strengthen bio-safety and bio-security. Otherwise, institutions and researchers in India are likely to face problems in entering into technology collaborations and research activities in biotechnology.

REGULATORY AGENCY

India is still to set up a National Biotechnology Regulatory Agency, as a single professional entity to deal with all aspects of biotech research and applications.

A Bill on this subject, prepared in 2008, was finally tabled in Parliament in December 2011. This Bill needs to be revisited, to take into account the issue of bio-security and regulation of research activities, to prevent potentially dangerous information going into the wrong hands. This is a delicate issue, and needs to be dealt with in consultation with all stakeholders — research community, academics, and the private sector.

Research institutions should devote more attention to security aspects, such as personnel security, security of materials and equipment, and security of information and data. Suppliers of biotech equipment and consumables may need to take more care and verify end-user details while responding to requests for equipment and materials that could be used for harmful ends.

In the area of response to bio-threats, the actions needed are similar to those for combating disease outbreaks. Rapid response should include national and international coordination to instantly identify and determine the genetic makeup of the responsible pathogen, and evolve counter measures. The WHO's Global Outbreak and Response Network (GOARN) has functioned well and could be further strengthened.

On the international level, more teeth have to be given to the BWC. Verification provisions should be strengthened, and the role of national entities more precisely defined. A model code of conduct and rules for biotech institutions and national agencies could be useful. The Chemical Weapons Convention could provide a useful model in this regard. The threat from bioterrorism just got more likely than nuclear terrorism, and needs an effective response.

The author is a former Ambassador to Cuba and Greece.

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/article2834528.ece?homepage=true>

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The Nation – Pakistan

OPINION/Editorial

India's New War Toy

January 26, 2012

India on Monday acquired a nuclear submarine from Russia and became the sixth country in the world to have such capability. The new war toy has been taken on lease for a period of 10 years which will cost India \$1 billion. What is still more alarming is that according to reports India is in talk with Russia for getting another nuclear submarine on lease.

The repercussions of this step are a foregone conclusion. It will kick off a nuclear-submarine arms race in the region, raising fears of a nuclear war. The pity is that the billions of dollars that would be diverted to the armament programme would be at the cost of better living conditions of the India's poor numbering hundreds of millions. Given the history of Indo-Pak hostility it is obvious that we cannot afford to play possum in the face of New Delhi's craving for such lethal weapons. The memory of its detonations of nuclear bombs in 1998 and

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subsequent overt threats of invasion still leap to mind. Under the circumstances we too would have to maintain a minimum credible deterrence but extreme caution must be exercised against falling into the arms race. And given this weapons buying spree, who will disagree that India is not a war crazed nation, infatuated with the dream of decimating its eastern neighbour. It must also be mentioned that the nuclear submarine is not armed with long range missiles which indicates that the countries in the region specifically Pakistan is most vulnerable to its attack.

These subs would give India an edge in stealth warfare since a nuclear submarine unlike ordinary ones can remain submerged for a long period of time. However, at the same time this shows the native cunning of the Indians in that they have been able to manage successful military ties with both US and Russia without compromising on the loyalty accorded to any one of these countries. From the US the Indians managed to ink a civil nuclear deal, but without antagonising the Russians. India's weapons programme however in the days to come would become a crippling disadvantage for its economy. The country must also be held responsible for vitiating the atmosphere of South Asia by resorting to such blatant armament rather than resolution of outstanding conflicts.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/editorials/26-Jan-2012/india-s-new-war-toy>

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Eurasia Review – Spain

OPINION/Analysis

Nuclear Terrorism: A Rationale Choice for Terrorists? – Analysis

January 26, 2012

By Muhammad Jawad Hashmi

Nuclear terrorism is defined as the use of a nuclear device by a terrorist organization to cause massive devastation or the use (or threat of use) of fissionable radioactive materials; "assaults on nuclear power plants is one form of nuclear terrorism." The term nuclear terrorism is understood to be a terrorist act using a nuclear or radiological weapon intended to kill or capable of killing hundreds or thousands of people with one attack. Nuclear terrorism at times has also been defined as the world's most dangerous terrorists acquiring the world's most dangerous weapons.

The term "nuclear terrorism" encompasses a broad range of possible criminal acts. It includes actions against nuclear facilities, military or civilian, including vehicles transporting nuclear weapons, components, or materials; and those in which nuclear weapons, explosive devices, or materials are used to threaten or actually destroy people and property. The first type of action might serve as a precursor to the second; terrorists might assault or infiltrate a facility to steal a weapon or material for use in a future nuclear threat.

Global Concerns over Likelihood of Nuclear Terrorism

The discussion regarding nuclear terrorism first came in sight during 1970s; later on it took on a larger public character in the 1980s after NBC aired Special Bulletin, a television dramatization of a nuclear terrorist attack on the United States. In 1986 a private panel of experts known as the ITFPT (International Task Force on the Prevention of Terrorism) released a report urging all nuclear armed states to beware the dangers of terrorism and work on equipping their nuclear arsenals with permissive action Links. The experts warned that the probability of nuclear terrorism "is increasing and the consequences for urban and industrial societies could be catastrophic." Since the creation of the atomic bomb, government officials, scientists, and concerned citizens have been aware that weapons of mass destruction could fall into the hands of dangerous terrorist groups or rogue regimes. Bruce Hoffman mentions that there were least fifty two incidents of terrorist's threats to use WMD during 1968-1994.

The alarmists such as Scott D. Sagan threatens the world that the proliferation of nuclear weapons will lead to the spread of nuclear weapons into terrorist hands, or to such countries where there is a risk of terrorist access to such weapons. Before 9/11 many international security specialists claimed that terrorists were not interested in

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creating mass fatalities. These attacks, which have resulted in thousands of deaths and injuries, have raised concerns that the constraints on terrorists against committing mass murder have been breached, and that next time terrorists may use nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction. Since 1995, there have been three significant episodes that bear out the danger that terrorists can have access to — and no scruples about using — devices, substances or weapons with the potential for mass killings. These episodes also manifest that preparation for acts of terrorism with such weapons of mass destruction or devices may be difficult and at times impossible to detect. The Aum Shinrikyo attacks on the Tokyo Subway in 1995 resulted in the death of 12 people and some 6000 were injured, the unsolved anthrax attacks in the United States (Florida, Washington and New York) in October 2001 are the first two. The third is the poisoning of Alexander Litvinenko in London in 2006 with Polonium- 210.

According to the Los Alamos National Laboratory in the United States, Polonium-210 is 250 billion times more toxic than hydrocyanic acid, the chemical used in Nazi gas chambers. Polonium-210 has been used as part of the trigger process in many nuclear weapons and the main grounds for suspicion that Iran wants to develop nuclear weapons is based on Iran's reported experimentation with this substance. Though this case is still being investigated by Britain's anti-terrorist police, most scenarios suggest that it can be read in one of only two ways. First, though the event may not have been an act of nuclear terrorism, it has to be taken as a warning of how undetectable the preparations for nuclear terrorism might be. Second, the death may have been the result of an active plan to conduct nuclear terrorism.

In contrast to the nuclear weapon case, Christoph Wirz and Emmanuel Egger conclude from their study that there are in principle no impossible obstacles to the acquisition and use of radiological weapons by a well-organized terrorist group, even though such an action remains high-tech and thus very difficult. During the 2008, the President Barack Obama said that nuclear terrorism is "the gravest danger we face." Former US President George W. Bush views this alarming threat in such remarks;

"The gravest danger to freedom lies at the crossroads of radicalism and technology. When the spread of chemical and biological and nuclear weapons...occurs, even weak states and small groups could attain a catastrophic power to strike great nations..."

It would be a milestone; timely for ongoing efforts to consolidate the non-proliferation regime, combat nuclear terrorism and strengthen nuclear safety says Mohammad ElBaradei.

Why Terrorists Potentially Want to go Nuclear?

Nuclear weapon is the most dangerous weapon that mankind has ever made. These weapons are ultimate weapons for ultimate destruction. Terrorists have been struggling for the publicity throughout the time and WMD may sever as an attention-getter stunt. Nuclear terrorism becomes a lucrative option for the terrorist organizations only because of lethality of nuclear weapons. Historically speaking, it has been observed that terrorists have been pursuing weapons which are increasingly lethal. Indeed, the acquisition of any type of nuclear weapon would boost their confidence as well as degree of terrorist-actions. This inclination towards nuclear weapons or material could be well observed in the case of biological and chemical agents which are being used by terrorist groups/individuals in USA and elsewhere. So, based on this premise it can be proposed that the tendency towards the acquisition of WMDs and their usage would increase in near future.

It is acknowledged that terrorist organizations are relatively weak in terms of power, prestige, and security, when compared with large states. So, these factors become a key to understand the dynamics of acquisition of nuclear technology by terrorist organizations. Terrorists have been constantly struggling to gain more and more power against their adversaries to boost their striking potential and this could be understood by Morgenthau's definition that the possession of power is really the possession of coercive potential. Prestige is also related to power and also an integral component of international relations. Prestige could play a motivating role and is subject to constant change. Coercive potential is directly related to the perceived power and prestige in one way or other. For terrorists to be perceived as credible source of threat, they must be perceived as powerful and prestigious.



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This may lead to the acquisition of ultimate weapons by terrorist organizations to raise a high and prestigious voice to fulfil their objectives or blackmail the adversaries.

Security is also connected to power and actors feel more secure once they are powerful. The power and security dynamics may unleash terrorists to exercise the phenomenon of “might is right”. The alarming episode is that terrorists might be observing that the sole solution to their problems is the acquisition of WMDs, which could ensure their power, prestige, security and enhance the credibility of their threats.

To conclude one must understand that, terrorists are rational actors prevailing in the world. So, it can be assumed that the acquisition of nuclear weapons become more rational for terrorists as it may enhance the vulnerability of states. Similarly, it can be assumed that a terrorist group with nuclear weapon may pose a serious challenge of blackmail. At the same time terrorist organizations might consider that nuclear weapon may create environment of deterrence against their adversaries. Furthermore, it can be assumed that terrorists may use nuclear or radiological weapon to create precedence, so that states may not try to underestimate their capabilities. It may enhance the credibility of threats posed by the non state actors in the up-coming era.

Mr. MJ Hashmi is M.Phil in Defence and Strategic Studies. He is an Author of a book entitled as “Nuclear Terrorism in Pakistan: Myth of Reality?” His Area of interest is Nuclear Terrorism, Nuclear Safety and Security issues in Pakistan, Arms Control and Disarmament, Nuclear Non-Proliferation.

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/26012012-nuclear-terrorism-a-rationale-choice-for-terrorists-analysis/>

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