



**USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER**  
**CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL**  
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

**Issue No. 985, 02 March 2012**

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Press TV – Iran

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

## Iran's FM Says He Is Optimistic about Further P5+1 Talks

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi says he is optimistic that talks with the world's six major powers (P5+1 group) will continue.

Salehi made the remarks after addressing the UN Disarmament Conference in Geneva, Switzerland on Tuesday, in which he called for global nuclear disarmament.

Iran and the P5+1 group -- Russia, China, France, Britain, the US, and Germany -- held two rounds of multifaceted talks, one in Geneva in December 2010 and another in Istanbul, Turkey in January 2011.

While Tehran says it is ready to continue the talks based on common grounds, it has emphasized that it will not give up any of its rights.

The United States, Israel, and some of their allies accuse Iran of pursuing military objectives in its nuclear program and are using the charge as a pretext to push for the imposition of new sanctions on the country and to beat the drums of war for an attack on the Islamic Republic.

Iran argues that, as a signatory to the nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), it has the right to develop and acquire nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/229182.html>

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Washington Post

## Iran's Underground Nuclear Sites Not Immune to U.S. Bunker-Busters, Experts Say

By Joby Warrick

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Western spy agencies for years have kept watch on a craggy peak in northwest Iran that houses one of the world's most unusual nuclear sites. Known as Fordow, the facility is built into mountain bunkers designed to withstand aerial attack. Iran's civil-defense chief has declared the site "impregnable."

But impregnable it is not, say U.S. military planners who are increasingly confident of their ability to deliver a serious blow against Fordow, should the president ever order an attack.

U.S. officials say they have no imminent plan to bombard the site, and they have cautioned that an American attack — or one by its closest Middle Eastern ally, Israel — risks devastating consequences such as soaring oil prices, Iranian retaliation and dramatically heightened tension in a fragile region.

Yet as a matter of physics, Fordow remains far more vulnerable than generally portrayed, said current and former military and intelligence analysts. Massive new "bunker buster" munitions recently added to the U.S. arsenal would not necessarily have to penetrate the deepest bunkers to cause irreparable damage to infrastructure as well as highly sensitive nuclear equipment, likely setting back Iran's program by years, officials said.

The weapons' capabilities are likely to factor in discussions with a stream of Israeli leaders arriving in Washington over the next week. The Obama administration will seek to assure the visitors, including Defense Minister Ehud Barak and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, of U.S. resolve to stop Iran if it decides to build a nuclear bomb. White House officials are worried that Israel may launch a preemptive strike against Iran with little or no warning,

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a move U.S. officials argue would do little to stop Iran's nuclear ambitions and may in fact deepen Iran's determination to become a nuclear state.

In arguing their case, U.S. officials acknowledged some uncertainty over whether even the Pentagon's newest "bunker-buster" weapon — called the Massive Ordnance Penetrator, or MOP — could pierce in a single blow the subterranean chambers where Iran is making enriched uranium. But they said a sustained U.S. attack over multiple days would probably render the plant unusable by collapsing tunnels and irreparably damaging both its highly sensitive centrifuge equipment and the miles of pipes, tubes and wires required to operate it.

"Hardened facilities require multiple sorties," said a former senior intelligence official who has studied the formerly secret Fordow site and agreed to discuss sensitive details of U.S. strike capabilities on the condition of anonymity. "The question is, how many turns do you get at the apple?"

U.S. confidence has been reinforced by training exercises in which bombers assaulted similar targets in deeply buried bunkers and mountain tunnels, the officials and experts said.

U.S. officials have raised the necessity of multiple strikes as they warn Israel against a unilateral strike against Iran's nuclear installations, the officials said. While Israel is capable of launching its own bunker-buster bombs against Fordow, it lacks both the United States' more advanced munitions and the capability of waging a sustained bombing campaign over days and weeks, U.S. officials and analysts said.

The U.S.-Israeli rift over the urgency of stopping Iran's nuclear progress stems in part from the belief among some Israeli officials that their window for successfully attacking Iran's nuclear installations is rapidly closing as it moves key assets into bunkers. Barak, in a speech this month, spoke of Iran's progress in creating a "zone of immunity" for its nuclear program.

To U.S. military planners, the "zone of immunity," if it exists at all, is still years away. The Obama administration, while not ruling out a future strike, regards military action as a last resort, preferring to allow more time for changing Iran's behavior through economic and political pressure.

U.S. officials also remain unconvinced that Iran has decided to build a nuclear bomb, though they believe it is pursuing the capacity to do so. Iran says its nuclear program is for peaceful energy production.

Fordow is in the barren hills of northwestern Iran just outside Qom, the ancient city that is the spiritual home of the 1979 revolutionary movement. U.S. intelligence officials believe that tunneling began nearly a decade ago for what was intended to be a secret uranium enrichment site that would operate parallel to the country's much larger, declared enrichment plant at Natanz.

The CIA began monitoring the site at least four years ago, and in 2009, President Obama, flanked by other world leaders, publicly exposed the partially built facility and demanded that Iran come clean about its intentions.

Iran acknowledged that it was building a second uranium-enrichment plant and soon allowed the International Atomic Energy Agency in for a visit. The U.N. inspectors saw a series of chambers built into the side of a mountain and connected by tunnels with thick walls and blast-proof doors. Some of the bunkers were protected by as much 200 to 300 feet of mountain.

The underground plant — not yet fully operational — is relatively small, with space for only about 3,000 centrifuges, compared with the tens of thousands planned for Natanz. But analysts say it's big enough to process the enriched uranium necessary for at least one nuclear weapon a year, should Iran decide to build them.

Iran started enriching uranium in the Fordow plant in January. A report by U.N. inspectors last week confirmed that the plant is making a purer form of enriched uranium that can be relatively easily converted to weapons-grade fuel.

Iran has publicly defended Fordow's unusually robust fortification, citing repeated threats by Israel to destroy the country's nuclear program.



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Western analysts believe Fordow has not only the protection afforded by natural rock but also additional hardening that draws on North Korean bunker-building expertise. A report last week by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington think tank, said the facility was believed to include multiple “blast-proof doors, extensive divider walls, hardened ceilings, 20-centimeter-thick concrete walls, and double concrete ceilings with earth filled between layers.”

“Such passive defenses could have a major impact” in blunting the impact of an aerial bombardment, said the report, written by Anthony Cordesman, a former director of intelligence assessment at the Defense Department and now the holder of CSIS’s Arleigh A. Burke Chair in strategy.

Cordesman acknowledged that reports about such fortification “are often premature, exaggerated, or report far higher construction standards than are actually executed.”

Still, current and former U.S. officials acknowledge that Fordow’s fortifications far exceed those of other facilities encountered in other conflicts, including the al-Taji bunkers that shielded Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein’s command posts on the eve of the 2003 Iraq invasion.

Against such a target, the United States has an array of conventional bunker-busting weapons. They include the 5,000-pound BLU-122, capable of penetrating more than 20 feet of concrete or 100 feet of earth before detonating, as well as the far more powerful Massive Ordnance Penetrator, or MOP, a 30,000-pound titan that can be delivered by the country’s largest strategic bombers. Although the weapon’s precise capabilities are classified, the MOP is estimated to be capable of boring through up to 200 feet of dirt and rock before exploding.

The Pentagon is investing tens of millions of dollars to further enhance the MOP’s explosive punch and concrete-piercing capabilities. Some also note that the weapon’s performance is partly dependent on geology, particularly the type and density of the rock through which the bomb passes.

It’s impossible to know precisely what the impact of a bomb would be against such a difficult target. Certainly, U.S. warplanes would set back Iran’s nuclear efforts, said Michael Eisenstadt, a former military adviser to the State Department and Pentagon.

But for how long?

“You never really know until you do it,” said Eisenstadt, director of Military and Security Studies for the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. “We may be so close to the outer performance limits of the current technology that it becomes a roll of the dice.”

Yet, ultimately, the ability to destroy the Fordow does not depend on whether a bomb physically penetrates the cavern where Iran’s centrifuges are operating, several analysts said.

“There are good outcomes short of destroying” the centrifuge hall, Cordesman said in an interview. Strikes against more accessible targets — from tunnel entrances and air shafts to power and water systems — can effectively knock the plant out of action. Repeated strikes will also make Iran fearful of attempting to repair the damage, he added.

Other analysts stressed the particular vulnerability of centrifuges, machines that spin at supersonic speeds to purify uranium gas into the enriched form usable in nuclear applications. Almost anything that upsets delicately balanced machines — from shock waves and debris to power disruptions — can render them useless, said one former Pentagon official who also requested anonymity in discussing potential Iranian targets.

“If you can target the one piece of critical equipment instead of the whole thing, isn’t that just as good?” the official said. “Even by reducing the entrances to rubble, you’ve effectively entombed the site.”

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/experts-irans-underground-nuclear-sites-not-immune-to-us-bunker-busters/2012/02/24/gIQAzWaghR\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/experts-irans-underground-nuclear-sites-not-immune-to-us-bunker-busters/2012/02/24/gIQAzWaghR_story.html)

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Press TV – Iran

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

## **Iran Condemns Proliferation of Nuclear Arms by Israeli Regime**

Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi has lashed out at the Israeli regime for proliferating nuclear weapons, insisting on the need to establish a Middle East that is free of such weapons, Press TV reports.

“We look for a Middle East region free of nuclear weapons. There is, unfortunately, one country that holds nuclear weapons and remains outside the NPT (nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) while its nuclear installations are not under the safeguards of the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency),” Salehi said Tuesday on the sidelines of the UN Disarmament Conference in Geneva, Switzerland.

The Tel Aviv regime, which is widely believed to own over 200 atomic warheads as the only possessor of nukes in the Middle East, refuses to sign the NPT and yet does not face any international scrutiny.

Under its policy of “nuclear ambiguity,” Israel has never denied its possession of atomic arms and does not allow any inspection of its nuclear activities by international regulatory bodies.

“The disarmament points to those that hold nuclear weapons while non-proliferation concerns others that do not have nuclear weapons,” added the top Iranian diplomat.

So, he said, they (nuclear powers) insist on narrowing even the slightest possibilities (of nuclear activity) for those nations that do not possess nuclear arms but wish to gain access to peaceful nuclear technology.

Salehi also reiterated the significance of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons by all countries, saying, “They always issue guidance to others while do not commit themselves to what they recommend to others.”

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei reiterated recently during a Tehran Friday prayer sermon that Iran has never sought and will never seek nuclear weapons and considers the possession of such arms as a great sin, useless and destructive.

The United States and some of its allies have repeatedly accused Tehran of pursuing military objectives in its nuclear energy program, using the false pretext to impose sanctions against Iran.

Iran has rejected the allegations, arguing that as a committed signatory to the NPT and a member of the IAEA, it has the right to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Tehran has also challenged the silence and inaction of the UN and IAEA with respect to Israeli nuclear program and the its implied possession of atomic warheads, repeatedly calling for total abolishment of all nuclear arms.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/229212.html>

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Khaleej Times – U.A.E.

## **IAEA Worried about “Activities” at Iran Site**

(Reuters)

29 February 2012

VIENNA - The UN nuclear watchdog believes unspecified “activities” may be taking place at Iran’s Parchin military facility that make its request to visit the site more urgent, Western diplomats said on Wednesday.

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It was unclear what kind of activities the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) suspected, or whether it thought Iran might be trying to clean the site or conceal something ahead of a possible visit. Diplomats said the agency was monitoring the site via satellite images.

One diplomat present at a closed-door briefing for IAEA member states in Vienna on Wednesday at which the disclosure was made quoted IAEA chief inspector Herman Nackaerts as saying there “may be some ongoing activities at Parchin which add urgency to why we want to go”.

According to another diplomat at the briefing, Nackaerts said the agency had also received information about the issue from a member state, without giving details. Nackaerts was reportedly asked by one of the diplomats present whether Iran might be trying to clean the Parchin site.

“I think some of the reports we have heard about possible sanitation of the site (are) very concerning,” said a third, Western diplomat. “It is very clear that Iran doesn’t want the agency to go to Parchin because it has something to hide.”

The IAEA was not immediately available for comment.

In Iran, a senior official said it was up to Iran’s military to decide if U.N. inspectors would be allowed to visit Parchin.

The official IRNA news agency quoted Fereydoun Abbasi-Davani, head of Iran’s Atomic Energy Organisation, as saying that IAEA inspectors could in theory visit Parchin “whenever they want”.

But it then quoted him as saying: “Whether or not IAEA inspectors can visit Parchin will be a decision for the country’s military officials”.

He said his own organisation was under no obligation “to show them anywhere they ask to visit in the country”.

The IAEA asked to visit Parchin, a military complex southeast of Tehran, after issuing a report in November that suggested Iran was pursuing military nuclear technology, an allegation it denies. The report helped trigger the latest round of U.S. and EU sanctions on Iran.

Despite talks with Nackaerts’s team in January and February, Iran has not agreed to the request.

The report said the IAEA had information that Iran had built a large containment chamber at Parchin to conduct high-explosives tests.

Suspicions about activities at the Parchin complex date back to at least 2004, when a prominent nuclear expert said satellite images showed it might be a site for research and testing relevant to nuclear weapons.

U.N. inspectors did in fact visit Parchin in 2005. But they did not see the place where the IAEA now believes the explosives chamber was built.

[http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/international/2012/February/international\\_February1135.xml&section=international](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle08.asp?xfile=data/international/2012/February/international_February1135.xml&section=international)

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Press TV – Iran

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

## **Iran May Allow UN Inspection of Military Site**

Last week, the International Atomic Energy Agency said that a request to visit Parchin military facility in Northeast Tehran was denied during high-level talks in the Iranian capital earlier this month. Head of Iran’s Atomic Energy Organization Fereydoun Abbasi explained that since there are no nuclear energy activities taking place in Parchin



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and because it's a military site it is not operating under the AEO. Therefore, it is up to military officials to decide whether U.N. nuclear inspectors can visit the site or not.

"The inspectors are free to visit any of the sites that are under our supervision at the atomic energy agency within a two hour notice... as they always have".

Iran's envoy to the International Atomic Energy Agency Ali Asghar Soltaniyeh echoed these words but added that it would be possible under certain conditions.

IAEA experts inspected Parchin in 2005. According to the report by former IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei, there was no military nuclear activity conducted in the site.

When it comes to its rights and obligations Iran has consistently declared that it does not seek confrontation or anything beyond its legitimate and inalienable rights.

Considering that IAEA has never found any evidence indicating a diversion in its energy program Iran is optimistic that negotiations would proceed in the right direction. As a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty it is the country's legitimate right to pursue its nuclear energy program, including uranium enrichment.

The fact that Iran is fully cooperating with the IAEA does not mean that its inspectors can pick simply any point on the map to visit. However, according to Iran's IAEA envoy, last week Tehran offered the visiting delegation to visit a site, which was referred to as a place for testing explosive material in a report by the IAEA chief. But the delegation was ordered to return to Vienna.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/229334.html>

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Journal of Turkish Weekly – Turkey

## **Clinton: Internal Power Struggle in Iran Over Nuclear Weapons**

Wednesday, 29 February 2012

Scott Stearns for VOA News in State Department

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said Tuesday that there is an internal power struggle in Iran over the country's pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Secretary Clinton says the U.S. intelligence community believes Iran has not yet decided to produce a nuclear weapon, in part, because there are deep-seated disagreements among its leaders about whether it is the right thing to do.

"There is a continuing debate going on inside the Iranian regime," said Clinton. "And it's an especially complicated debate for anybody on the outside, and I dare say some people who are on the inside, to understand because there is a lot of power struggle going on. There are personality clashes."

Clinton says that internal debate over the future of Iran's nuclear program includes members of the clergy, the Revolutionary Guard, the parliament and the presidency, leading to what she calls "a lot of static" in intelligence reporting on Tehran's atomic ambitions.

Much of the internal opposition to nuclear weapons comes from a fatwa issued by the late Ayatollah Hossein-Ali Montazeri. A leader of Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution, Montazeri ruled that Islamic law forbids the development and use of nuclear weapons.

Iran says its nuclear program is for peaceful civilian purposes. Clinton says there is no doubt that Iran has the right to develop such a peaceful civilian program. But she told U.S. lawmakers on Tuesday that there is no doubt that much of what has been discovered by United Nations inspectors "points to the direction of a nuclear weapons program."

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The United States, Britain, France, Russia, China and Germany are considering Iran's response to a request to resume talks over its nuclear program. European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton says she is cautious and optimistic that Iran might be ready to begin substantive talks.

There is added pressure to make progress on the issue as Israel reportedly considers preemptive military action to remove what it considers an Iranian threat.

Clinton says the international community is pursuing a dual track of intense pressure and a willingness to engage in talks.

"I want to gather as much information, not only about actions, but [also] about intentions," she said. "We have very deep, ongoing consultations with Israel, with the [Persian] Gulf Arabs, with the Europeans, with others. There isn't anybody of any stature in the world in any government that really is not concerned about what the Iranians are doing."

Clinton says tougher U.S. sanctions against Iran are having an economic effect. As the world's third-largest exporter of crude oil, Iran is a major supplier for China, Japan and India as well as the European Union.

The United States is working with its European and Asian allies to dry up Iran's oil market because, they say, Tehran is using those profits to support its nuclear program.

<http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/131766/clinton-internal-power-struggle-in-iran-over-nuclear-weapons.html>

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Hindustan Times

## **Determined to Stop Iran from Acquiring Nukes: US**

Press Trust of India (PTI)

Washington, February 29, 2012

The United States is determined to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, the White House has said, adding that it hasn't removed any options from its table, even though it believes there is time and space to pursue diplomacy.

"We are determined to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. We take no option off the table when looking at how to deal with Iranian behaviour," White House Press secretary Jay Carney told reporters.

However, the Obama Administration believes that there is time and space to pursue diplomacy, to pressure the Iranian regime, to further press sanctions to get it to change its behaviour, he noted.

"There is a path out of this dead end that Iran has been pursuing, which is to honour its international obligations, forsake its nuclear weapon ambitions, and rejoin the international community by living up to its obligations," he said.

"We believe that the policy that we have pursued with our partners has put unprecedented pressure on Tehran, on the regime, has put great strains on the Iranian economy, great strains on the Iranian political leadership, and that is a course that we will continue to pursue," Carney said.

The US, he said, is keenly aware of the fact that Iran has continued to fail to live up to its obligations, continued to behave in a way that casts doubt on its intentions with its nuclear programme, continued to engage in the kind of rhetoric that makes this process even more difficult for Iran.

"It has also made the world aware of the fact that these sanctions that have been engaged in by the international community have had significant impact," he said, adding, "We work with our allies to step up the pressure every day, every week. We are committed, as Israel is, to preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon."

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"We have pursued a policy that we believe there is time and space at this point to have an effect, to have the result that we desire."

Reiterating that Iran has failed to live up to the international obligations, he said, "Iran clearly is not living up to its international obligations by refusing to take steps to assure the international community that it is not pursuing nuclear weapons."

"That is why we have engaged in the kind of intense effort through sanctions and other means to pressure Tehran, to pressure the Iranian regime, and why our allies in Europe and around the world have joined with us in that effort. And that effort has had demonstrable effect," he claimed.

As a result of President Obama's relentless efforts, Carney said, Iran is under intense economic pressure.

"It is isolated in ways that it never has been before and it is experiencing strains in its political leadership because of the pressure of the international community. That's the action that this President, this administration has taken since day one," he said.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/NorthAmerica/Determined-to-stop-Iran-from-acquiring-nukes-US/Article1-818689.aspx>

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Tehran Times – Iran

## **Decision on IAEA Access to Iran's Military Sites Rests with Relevant Officials: Nuclear Chief**

Political Desk

Thursday, 01 March 2012

TEHRAN – Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Director Fereydoun Abbasi has said that the country's military officials should decide whether to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency to inspect the country's military sites, including Parchin.

Abbasi made the remarks in an interview with reporters in Tehran on Wednesday in reply to a question about the fact that Iran rejected requests by the IAEA delegations to inspect the Parchin military site, which is located southeast of Tehran, during their visits to Iran from January 29 to 31 and February 21 to 22, and that Iran's ambassador to the IAEA said on February 28 that the Islamic Republic does not rule out giving the UN nuclear watchdog access to the country's military research sites.

IAEA inspectors can visit the country's nuclear facilities whenever they wish and inspections are being carried out every day, but the relevant officials should make decisions on access to other sites, Abbasi explained.

He also said that no nuclear activities is being carried out at the Parchin site.

<http://tehrantimes.com/politics/95963-decision-on-iaea-access-to-irans-military-sites-rests-with-relevant-officials-nuclear-chief->

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China Daily – China

## **China Calls for Early Resumption of Iran, G5+1 Dialogue**

March 01, 2012

(Xinhua)

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BEIJING, March 1 (Xinhua) -- China on Thursday called for an early resumption of nuclear talks between Iran and the group of six international mediators.

China has been closely communicating with other parties concerned on the Iranian nuclear issue, Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said at a daily news briefing in response to a question on a looming new round of talks.

Nuclear talks between Iran and the G5+1, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany, foundered in January 2011. Media reports say that the talks between Iran and G5+1 will be restarted next month.

"We hope that all parties concerned can grasp the current opportunities and relaunch the dialogue process at an early date so as to push the Iranian nuclear issue back onto a track of dialogue and cooperation," said the spokesman.

[http://www1.chinadaily.com.cn/xinhua/2012-03-01/content\\_5290510.html](http://www1.chinadaily.com.cn/xinhua/2012-03-01/content_5290510.html)

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Los Angeles Times

## **Obama on Iran: 'I Don't Bluff'**

By Christi Parsons

March 2, 2012

President Obama's goal in upcoming talks with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is to persuade him that the United States "has Israel's back" so that Israel has no need to rush toward air strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities, the president said in a newly published interview.

In a meeting at the White House on Monday, the president told journalist Jeffrey Goldberg, he will try to persuade the Israeli leader that an attack now would backfire at a time when Iran is under increasing international pressure.

In an interview granted earlier this week and posted on the Atlantic magazine's website Friday morning, Goldberg reported that Obama is dismissive of a strategy of containment as unworkable and called it "unacceptable" for Iran to have a nuclear weapon.

Obama said he plans to tell Netanyahu that he will order military strikes against Iran's nuclear program if the current international sanctions are not successful in deterring its pursuit of nuclear weapons. The possibility of an American strike against Iran is a serious one, Goldberg reported.

"I think that the Israeli government recognizes that, as president of the United States, I don't bluff," Obama said, according to the report. "I also don't, as a matter of sound policy, go around advertising exactly what our intentions are. But I think both the Iranian and the Israeli governments recognize that when the United States says it is unacceptable for Iran to have a nuclear weapon, we mean what we say."

Many of the president's supporters are concerned about that commitment, an uneasiness Obama reportedly hopes to allay in a Sunday speech to a pro-Israel lobby. Obama's agenda the next day in his meeting with Netanyahu is to convince Israeli leadership that they can rely on that assurance enough to delay military action of their own.

Obama said in the interview that all options are on the table in the Iranian situation, the final one being what he referred to as the "military component." He said his concerns are not just about Israel's security but about the proliferation of nuclear weapons more generally.

Still, Obama said he has faith that the sanctions coordinated by his administration have hurt Iran and that they may soon force the regime in Tehran to abandon its nuclear ambitions.

"Without in any way being under an illusion about Iranian intentions, without in any way being naive about the nature of that regime, they are self-interested," Obama said. "It is possible for them to make a strategic calculation

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that, at minimum, pushes much further to the right whatever potential breakout capacity they may have, and that may turn out to be the best decision for Israel's security."

<http://www.latimes.com/news/politics/la-pn-obama-interview-iran-20120302,0,7234351.story>

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Chosun Ilbo – South Korea

March 01, 2012

## **N.Korea to End Nuclear Tests for Food Aid**

North Korea has agreed to temporarily suspend nuclear tests, long-range ballistic missile launches and other nuclear activities, including enrichment of uranium. U.S. and North Korean officials announced the surprise breakthrough after talks in Beijing.

The announcement came just a little more than two months after the death of the secretive communist state's supreme leader Kim Jong-il.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton says that while there still are profound concerns about North Korea's behavior, the announcement reflects progress. "On the occasion of Kim Jong-il's death, I said that it is our hope that the new leadership will choose to guide their nation on to the path to peace by living up to its obligations. Today's announcement represents a modest first step in the right direction," she said.

The White House also welcomed the announcement, calling it a "positive step," but stressed that the U.S. is looking for North Korea to follow through with action.

Washington says it is ready to move forward with plans to provide the North with 240,000 metric tons of food aid over a period of a year. The two sides still need to work out the details before deliveries of the aid can begin.

Floods and a poor harvest last year have caused widespread hunger in North Korea. In the 1990s, the impoverished state suffered a major famine, which is believed to have killed hundreds of thousands of people.

U.S. and North Korean officials say that in addition to a moratorium on missile and nuclear tests, the North has agreed to allow United Nations inspectors with the International Atomic Energy Agency access to nuclear facilities so they can verify and monitor the suspension of uranium enrichment activities. IAEA inspectors were kicked out of North Korea in 2009 when the country withdrew from the so-called six-party talks on ending its atomic weapons program.

According to the new agreement, Pyongyang will allow inspectors access to its main facility at Yongbyon and other nuclear sites. U.S. officials also say inspectors will confirm the disabling of the 5-megawatt reactor at Yongbyon and its related facilities.

A U.S. official speaking on condition of anonymity says the steps North Korea has now agreed to, open the door to serious negotiations and wider talks on ending its nuclear weapons program.

Pyongyang conducted nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009. It raised new concerns when it confirmed that it had a uranium enrichment program, in November of 2010. The uranium program could give the North another way to make nuclear weapons in addition to its longstanding plutonium-based program.

The announcement comes just days after U.S. and North Korean representatives met in China to discuss the resumption of the six-party talks. The meeting was the first since the authoritarian state transferred power to Kim Jong-il's untested young son Kim Jong-un.

[http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html\\_dir/2012/03/01/2012030100573.html](http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2012/03/01/2012030100573.html)

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Chicago Tribune

## U.N. Nuclear Agency "Ready to Return" to North Korea

Reuters

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

VIENNA (Reuters) - The U.N. nuclear watchdog stands ready to return to North Korea, its chief said, after the reclusive state agreed to stop nuclear tests and uranium enrichment and let inspectors visit its Yongbyon site to verify the moratorium.

"The agency has an essential role to play in verifying (North Korea's) nuclear program," Director General Yukiya Amano of the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency said in a statement.

"Pending further details, we stand ready to return to Yongbyon to undertake monitoring activities upon request and with the agreement of the agency's Board of Governors."

The Vienna-based agency's 35-nation governing board is due to meet next week for a regular quarterly meeting. IAEA inspectors were expelled from North Korea in 2009.

Wednesday's announcement, made simultaneously by the U.S. State Department and North Korea's official news agency, paves the way for the possible resumption of six-party disarmament negotiations with Pyongyang and follows talks between U.S. and North Korean diplomats in Beijing last week.

It also appears to mark a significant policy shift by North Korea's leadership following the death in December of veteran leader Kim Jong-il - although analysts cautioned that Pyongyang has backtracked repeatedly on past deals.

The IAEA's Amano, a Japanese diplomat, called the U.S. statement about its recent talks with North Korea "an important step forward."

In an interview last year, Amano told Reuters that his inspectors could return "quite quickly" to North Korea once the parties in the dispute reached an understanding on the issue.

The IAEA is believed to have a team of inspectors who are specialized on North Korea and prepared to go there at short notice. Dozens of its inspectors have past experience of working in the Asian state.

Allowing IAEA staff to travel to North Korea may help address international concerns about Pyongyang's atomic aims, but analysts have in the past voiced doubt the North would grant the U.N. agency full access to nuclear facilities.

The Yongbyon complex is at the heart of North Korea's plutonium weapons program. It includes a reprocessing plant where weapons-grade material is extracted from spent fuel rods.

In late 2010, foreign experts said North Korean officials had shown them what they said was a uranium enrichment facility at Yongbyon, potentially offering a second path to make bombs.

To be sure no material is diverted for military purposes, analysts said inspectors would need unfettered access to all uranium enrichment activities. This would usually mean frequent inspections, video cameras and special seals at such sites.

It was unclear how much access IAEA inspectors would really get if they could return. North Korea has limited their oversight in the past.

The secretive state kicked out international inspectors in 2002 after seals placed on key parts of the Yongbyon plant as a 1994 deal between Pyongyang and Washington unraveled.

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It expelled inspectors again in April 2009 after rejecting the intrusive inspections agreed under a 2005 nuclear-disarmament-for-aid deal with five regional powers that allowed watchdogs to return.

Former IAEA chief inspector Olli Heinonen said by email that although the announcement was a positive step, North Korea "has still to place all nuclear material and facilities under the IAEA safeguards."

*Reporting by Fredrik Dahl and Michael Shields; Editing by Rosalind Russell*

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/sns-rt-us-usa-nkorea-iaeatre81s1jt-20120229,0,7045700.story>

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Yonhap News – South Korea  
March 01, 2012

## **China, Russia, Japan Welcome Nuclear Deal on N. Korea**

BEIJING/TOKYO, March 1 (Yonhap) -- China, Russia and Japan, all members of six-party talks on North Korea's nuclear programs, welcomed the latest nuclear deal between Washington and Pyongyang and called for its implementation.

The agreement, reached in last week's high-level talks and announced Wednesday, commits North Korea to temporarily halt its uranium enrichment program, accept U.N. inspectors and put a moratorium on nuclear and long-range missile tests in exchange for food aid from the United States.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said in a statement posted on the ministry's Web site that Beijing welcomes the United States and North Korea improving their relations so as to contribute to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula.

The spokesman praised Washington and Pyongyang for taking active steps to carry out a 2005 framework agreement in which the North pledged to give up all its nuclear programs in return for economic aid and diplomatic recognition from Washington.

Russia also welcomed the latest deal, with Konstantin Kosachev, the first deputy chairman of the State Duma International Affairs Committee, telling the RIA Novosti news agency it offers a chance for North Korea to break out of international isolation.

Japan's Foreign Minister Koichiro Gamba called the deal an important step toward resolving many pending issues involving North Korea and said he expects it will lay the groundwork for halting all nuclear-related facilities in the North.

"What is important is for North Korea to take specific action toward denuclearization," he said, adding that Tokyo will continue to cooperate closely with South Korea and the U.S., according to local media reports.

The six-party talks, which bring together the two Koreas, China, Japan, Russia and the U.S., have been dormant since the last session in late 2008, amid political and military tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2012/03/01/94/0301000000AEN20120301003800315F.HTML>

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CNTV.com – China

## **DPRK-U.S. Deal Positive Step toward Resumption of Six-Party Talks, but Concerted Efforts Still Indispensable**

March 1, 2012

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BEIJING, March 1 (Xinhua) -- The United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) announced Wednesday that they reached a sweeping deal during their recent direct talks in Beijing, in a positive step toward resumption of the Six-Party Talks.

The DPRK said it has agreed to suspend nuclear tests, long-range missile launches, and uranium enrichment activities at Nyongbyon. The country will also allow the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to monitor the moratorium on uranium enrichment.

On the U.S. side, it has promised to provide the DPRK with food aid of "240,000 metric tons of nutritional assistance."

This, of course, is a first positive step toward the resumption of the Six-Party Talks, after the process has been stalled for months since 2009.

However, any somber mind would agree that to achieve the ultimate goal of denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula, all parties concerned have to embark on a long path of negotiations given the complexity of the issue.

Since launched in August 2003, the Six-Party Talks have churned out various documents underlining respective obligations of the participating nations so as to finally achieve a peaceful resolution of the thorny issue.

Just as the proof is in the pudding, the true value of these documents can only be realized when the six parties all put earnest efforts into implementing what they have committed. For the United States and the DPRK, whose attitudes bear special significance for the success of the nuclear talks, concrete steps should be taken by both sides to reduce animosity and boost mutual trust.

The first point in hand, the United States could refrain from further flexing its military muscle in war games around the Korean Peninsula so as not to ratchet up tension in the area.

As agreed, the two sides should also simultaneously take actions to fulfill their promises and create a favorable condition for the resumption of the Six-Party Talks.

The United States and the DPRK have conducted three rounds of direct talks in recent months, first in New York in July and the second in Geneva in October, and the most recent in Beijing.

The first two rounds of talks, through failing to produce any concrete deals, have helped ease tensions between Pyongyang and Washington.

The third round, conducted at a time when the DPRK has just finished a leadership change, is also noteworthy in the sense that it's the first diplomatic move by the DPRK under its new leader Kim Jong Un.

It's a common aspiration of the six parties, namely the DPRK, the United States, the Republic of Korea, China, Japan and Russia, to bring a peaceful solution to the Korean nuclear issue.

As the host of the latest round of direct talks between the DPRK and the United States, China has also been playing an active role within the framework of the six-party talks.

China will make joint efforts with the other concerned parties to promote the resumption of the Six-Party Talks and play a constructive role in safeguarding peace and stability on the peninsula and in northeast Asia as a whole.

<http://english.cntv.cn/20120301/120077.shtml>

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Korea Times – South Korea  
March 1, 2012

## **Seoul Says Steps Still Needed for 6-Way Talks**

By Kim Young-jin

**Issue No. 985, 02 March 2012**

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South Korea welcomed North Korea's recent agreement with the United States to suspend its uranium enrichment program (UEP) in exchange for food aid, Thursday, but said concrete steps were needed before the resumption of stalled multilateral party negotiations.

The remarks from a senior Seoul official came after Washington and Pyongyang announced the breakthrough deal Wednesday under which the North also agreed to allow UN inspectors back into the country to monitor the shutdown of the UEP, and a moratorium on nuclear testing.

Speaking on the customary condition of anonymity, the official said the North's moves were like "opening the first door" towards resumption of the talks and a sign that Pyongyang had accepted "pre-steps" demanded by Seoul and Washington.

The official, however, stressed that implementation of the deal, not merely a "promise on paper," would bring about a fresh round of the talks that also involve Japan, Russia and China. Pyongyang walked away from the table in 2009, angry over sanctions for its missile and nuclear tests.

The deal came amid growing concern over the North's nuclear weapons program, especially as Pyongyang undergoes a leadership transition to new leader Kim Jong-un after the death of his father Kim Jong-il in December.

The announcement followed high-level U.S.-North Korea talks in Beijing last week.

During those talks, the sides agreed upon Washington's provision of 240,000 tons of "nutritional assistance" to Pyongyang, though details still need to be hashed out, U.S. officials said.

Regional players have been seeking ways to resume the talks for months, but high inter-Korean tensions and Kim's death significantly muddled the diplomatic waters. The UEP, which Pyongyang unveiled in 2010, has been a central source of concern.

"This is a good sign that the discussions went in a satisfactory way relatively quickly, as we wanted," Yonhap News Agency quoted the official as saying.

Despite positive reactions from Seoul and other regional players, observers said important steps remained ahead of negotiations, including likely consultations between the North and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Under the agreement the nuclear watchdog would monitor the moratorium on uranium enrichment activities at the North's main Yongbyon plant and confirm the disablement of a 5-megawatt reactor there.

Experts said the North will also likely have to work to warm ties with the South, a key demand held by the allies, including a commitment by the North to refrain from further provocation after its two deadly attacks against the South in 2010.

Other areas of concern include the much-speculated possibility that the North may be pursuing uranium enrichment at other facilities.

Still given that Seoul and Washington will hold elections this year, and both Beijing and Pyongyang move forward with leadership transition, analysts said the deal was a step towards short-term stability.

"The primary benefit of the agreement is that it reduces risk that tensions may spin out of control during a period of domestic political uncertainty in both countries," Scott Snyder, a senior fellow with the Council on Foreign Relations said.

For North Korea, the deal projects a sense of leadership stability as Kim Jong-un consolidates power, analysts said. Officials in Washington also pointed to steps Pyongyang must take.

White House press secretary Jay Carney said, "Commitments to do something are one thing; actually doing them are another."

[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/03/113\\_106070.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/03/113_106070.html)



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Korea Herald – South Korea  
March 01, 2012

## **U.S. Republicans Criticize N.K. Deal**

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Republican lawmakers Wednesday criticized President Barack Obama and warned that North Korea was not to be trusted after it promised to suspend its nuclear program in exchange for U.S. food aid.

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, head of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and a staunch critic of communist countries, said that the North Korea agreement “sounds a lot like the failed agreements of the past.”

“North Korea’s promise to suspend certain nuclear activities can’t be taken at face value, given the almost certain existence of several undeclared nuclear facilities,” she said in a statement.

“Pyongyang will likely continue its clandestine nuclear weapons program right under our noses. We have bought this bridge several times before.”

North Korea, which kicked out inspectors from the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency in 2009, said Wednesday that it would allow them to return to monitor a new moratorium on uranium enrichment.

The communist state also said that it would suspend nuclear and missile tests. The U.S. State Department praised the “important, if limited, progress” and said it would move ahead on providing nutritional assistance.

A senior U.S. official said that the United States rejected requests for rice and grains and instead would provide, under tight monitoring, items such as oil and ready-to-eat meals for children and expectant mothers.

Rep. Ed Royce, a Republican who has long sought more pressure on North Korea, said that the death in December of longtime leader Kim Jong-il should have prompted a “rethink” in policy toward the authoritarian state.

“Years of getting duped by North Korea should tell us that verification on their turf is extremely difficult, if not impossible,” said Royce, who heads a House subcommittee on non-proliferation.

“That applies to food aid distribution, where the military has stolen food aid, or nuclear disarmament,” he said.

Royce last year authored a measure to bar any food aid to North Korea, arguing that it would benefit the regime by allowing it to spend money on nuclear weapons. The Republican-led House approved the ban in June.

But a final version reached after consultation with the Senate, which is led by Obama’s Democratic Party, was less rigid and prohibited food aid to countries without adequate monitoring for misuse.

Sen. John Kerry, a Democrat who heads the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said that nutritional assistance “is the right thing to do if we can ensure our aid will reach those in need.”

He said that a freeze of nuclear activities and return of inspectors “would be a very positive development.”

“These may be the green shoots of progress from careful engagement,” Kerry added.

<http://www.koreaherald.com/national/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20120301000215>

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Yonhap News – South Korea  
March 2, 2012

## **NK Nuke Envoy Due in U.S., No Plan for Meeting with U.S. Officials**

By Lee Chi-dong

**Issue No. 985, 02 March 2012**

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WASHINGTON, March 1 (Yonhap) -- The United States confirmed Thursday that a top North Korean nuclear negotiator will visit the United States for an academic forum next week, but it said there is no plan for government-level contact between the two sides.

Vice Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho plans to visit New York from Wednesday until Friday at the invitation of the Maxwell School at Syracuse University, according to the State Department. The school's dean is James Steinberg, a former deputy secretary of state.

Ri's trip is to attend "unofficial track-two discussions being sponsored there," department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said at a press briefing.

"So at the current moment, there are no plans for official U.S. government meetings with the negotiator," she added.

Meanwhile, South Korea's chief nuclear envoy, Lim Sung-nam, is also scheduled to attend the academic forum, according to a diplomatic source, setting the stage for a meeting with Ri.

Other participants include former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and John Kerry, the Democratic leader of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, added the source.

The announcement of Ri's trip to the U.S. came a day after the two sides made public a set of deals reached in their high-level talks in Beijing last week.

Under the agreement, Pyongyang will freeze its uranium-enrichment facilities and temporarily halt its nuclear and long-range missile tests, apparently in exchange for 240,000 tons of food aid. The North will allow the return of monitors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to its main nuclear complex in Yongbyon.

"We are looking to DPRK (North Korea), as a next step, to invite the IAEA in to verify that all the steps that we've agreed upon, all the steps you see reflected in the U.S. statement, are in fact being implemented. So that's the next step on that side," Nuland said.

She emphasized that the U.S. will not move toward the six-way nuclear talks until the North fully implements the Beijing agreement.

"We can't consider going back to (the six-party talks) until we verify this first set of steps," Nuland said.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2012/03/02/52/0301000000AEN20120302000400315F.HTML>

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Chosun Ilbo --South Korea  
March 02, 2012

## **N.Korea Suspected of Having More Uranium Enrichment Plants**

North Korea has at least one more secret uranium enrichment facility, South Korean and U.S. believe. They believe that this is the reason Pyongyang has agreed in recent talks with Washington to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency to inspect its first uranium enrichment plant in Yongbyon in return for the resumption of aid.

"It's clear that the North has other uranium enrichment facilities in several places besides Yongbyon," a South Korean government official said on Thursday. "The regime is probably going to use the Yongbyon plant as a showcase."

The North used plutonium extracted from a now defunct 5-megawatt reactor at Yongbyon as a bargaining chip in negotiations with the U.S. in the late 1990s and is now probably trying to use the same trick with its uranium enrichment program.

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The regime denied the existence of the uranium plant until it suddenly showed the facility to a visiting U.S. nuclear scientist in 2010. In a statement on Wednesday released simultaneously with the U.S., the North said it will allow IAEA inspectors access to the facility at Yongbyon.

A senior Cheong Wa Dae official said, "The issue of the other uranium enrichment facilities the North hasn't disclosed also needs to be resolved." He added Seoul still supports the "grand bargain" proposed by President Lee Myung-bak whereby the North can expect massive economic aid if it completely abandons its nuclear program.

Seoul and Washington reportedly know where some of the other uranium enrichment plants are and will bring this issue once six-party nuclear disarmament talks resume.

The IAEA said it is ready to inspect the North's nuclear facilities in accordance with the Washington-Pyongyang agreement. Pyongyang threw IAEA inspectors out in April 2009. They will return late this month or early next month.

[http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html\\_dir/2012/03/02/2012030200643.html](http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2012/03/02/2012030200643.html)

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Russia & India REPORT – India

## **Russian Nerpa Will Help in Building Two more Subs for Indian Navy**

*The Government has given a go-ahead for construction of two more nuclear-powered Arihant-class submarines in India.*

February 28, 2012

Combined reports

The move will not only enhance the strategic reach of the Navy, but also propel India into the top league of five nations including US, Russia, France, Germany and UK which have such sophisticated platforms, The Pioneer reports.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has already indigenously designed and developed the first nuclear-powered submarine Arihant, which is scheduled to go for sea trials next year.

As things stand, it was just last month that India inducted the Russian-made nuclear-powered submarine Nerpa - rechristened now as INS Chakra - into the Indian Navy. It will go a long way in helping India to build, operate and maintain the two new submarines without delays and cost overruns normally associated with such projects, sources said.

A nuclear-powered submarine can remain submerged under water for more than three months without surfacing and is very difficult to detect as its engines emit minimal signature sound and enemy aircraft and anti-submarines detection ships cannot pick up signals.

Explaining the significance of building two more submarines in the context of global security architecture, sources said here on Monday reports indicated that China is also developing its first nuclear-powered submarine.

As regards the new project, they said India has already acquired the expertise in developing such complex machines while designing Arihant. In fact, Arihant, which was unveiled three years back by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, took more than 15 years of planning, design and construction thereby highlighting the complexities involved in such a project.

[http://indrus.in/articles/2012/02/28/russian\\_nerpa\\_will\\_help\\_in\\_building\\_two\\_more\\_subs\\_for\\_indian\\_navy\\_14989.html](http://indrus.in/articles/2012/02/28/russian_nerpa_will_help_in_building_two_more_subs_for_indian_navy_14989.html)

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

## Russia Sees No Progress at Missile Defense Talks

29 February 2012

Russia has seen no progress in missile defense talks with NATO, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said on Wednesday.

“We have no grounds to speak of progress, no grounds to say that we may agree on a [joint] document by May [when Chicago hosts a NATO summit],” Ryabkov told journalists.

He also said the Russian leadership has not yet decided whether it will attend the summit.

“This decision is to be made by the next president. I think it is premature to raise this issue now,” the deputy foreign minister said, adding that the decision may also depend on whether the sides are able to find a compromise on missile defense.

NATO members agreed to create a missile shield over Europe to protect it against ballistic missiles launched by so-called rogue states, for example Iran and North Korea, at a summit in Lisbon, Portugal, in 2010.

Russia has strongly criticized NATO’s reluctance to provide written, legally binding guarantees that its European missile shield will not be directed against Moscow.

President Dmitry Medvedev ordered in November a series of measures designed to strengthen the country’s missile defense capabilities in response to NATO’s shield, including the deployment of Iskander missiles in Russia’s exclave of Kaliningrad on the border with Poland.

KALININGRAD, February 29 (RIA Novosti)

[http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20120229/171617966.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20120229/171617966.html)

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The Nation – Pakistan

## Putin Blames US for Failed Missile Defense Talks

By Agencies

March 02, 2012

Washington’s talks with Moscow on European missile defense failed because U.S. negotiators were unwilling to put their oral proposals to Moscow on paper, Russian prime minister and presidential candidate Vladimir Putin has said.

“They made some proposals to us which we virtually agreed to and asked them to get them down on paper,” Putin said during an interview with editors-in-chief of six foreign newspapers in his Novo-Ogaryovo residence outside Moscow.

“They made a proposal to us just during the talks, they told us: we would offer you this, this and that. We did not expect this, but I said: we agree. Please put it down on paper,” Putin said.

“We were waiting for their answer for two months. We did not get it, and then our American partners withdrew their own proposals, saying: no, it’s impossible,” he added.

He explained that those “proposals” included guarantees that the U.S.-NATO European missile shield would not be directed against Russia. For example, Russian specialists would be allowed to carry out round-the-clock monitoring of the anti-missile components, and their radars systems would be cemented so that they were directed exactly at Iran and “were technically unable to turn towards Russia.”

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"This would not change the situation dramatically, but we said: ok, it's already something, we agree. Put it down on paper. But they refused," Putin said.

NATO members agreed to create a missile shield over Europe to protect it against ballistic missiles launched by so-called rogue states such as Iran and North Korea at a summit in Lisbon, Portugal, in 2010.

Russia has demanded that NATO provide written, legally binding guarantees that its missile shield will not be directed against Moscow, but the alliance has been reluctant to meet the demand.

President Dmitry Medvedev ordered in November a series of measures designed to strengthen the country's missile defense capabilities in response to NATO's shield, including the deployment of Iskander missiles in Russia's exclave of Kaliningrad on the border with Poland.

The editors-in-chief of France's Le Monde, Britain's The Times, Italy's La Repubblica, Germany's Handelsblatt, Canada's The Globe and Mail and Japan's Asahi Shimbun newspaper participated in the interview with Putin.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/international/02-Mar-2012/putin-blames-us-for-failed-missile-defense-talks>

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Air Force Times

## Schwartz Defends Cost of Next-Gen Bomber

By Jeff Schogol, Staff writer

Wednesday February 29, 2012

The Air Force's next-generation bomber comes with a hefty price tag: \$550 million per aircraft — and that assumes no cost overruns similar to those plaguing the F-22 and F-35 fighter programs.

At a breakfast with reporters Wednesday, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz explained why he expects the bomber's sticker price to stay at \$550 million a pop.

"If it doesn't, we don't get a program," Schwartz said. "I mean, that was the guidance of the secretary of defense — so either deliver or, you know, you're out of there — essentially was [former Defense Secretary] Bob Gates' guidance. I get it, loud and clear."

The bomber isn't expected to enter service until the mid 2020s, but the Air Force believes it is critical for future missions, so much so that the program was left untouched by recent proposed budget cuts, which include getting rid of 9,900 airmen and hundreds of aircraft.

These cuts come as the military looks to change its focus from the Middle East to Asia.

"There's a recognition in the strategy that as you make the shift from the focus on the [Persian] Gulf area and Iraq and Afghanistan to a more maritime focus, to the Asia-Pacific requirement, that long-range strike in particular, and legs, become increasingly important," Schwartz said at a Feb. 3 news conference.

One lawmaker sounded skeptical about just how important the bomber is when quizzing top Air Force officials at a budget hearing Tuesday before the House Armed Services Committee.

"We've got a penetrating bomber capability from the B-2s for several more decades, and we've got cruise missiles, we've got unmanned stealth strike aircraft," said Rep. Hank Johnson, D-Ga. "Why in the world do we need a next-generation bomber?"

While the 20 B-2s in service are capable aircraft, their stealth technology is " '80s vintage," Schwartz replied.

"The reality is that the B-2 over time will become less survivable in contested airspace," he said.

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On Wednesday, Schwartz went even further, saying the Air Force needs to improve its technology to meet potential threats from China and Iran.

“Do you think that the Chinese have established one of the world’s best air defense environments in their eastern provinces just to invest their national treasure — or, for that matter, that the Iranians have established integrated air defenses around certain locations in their country?” he said.

“I would say they are not doing this for the fun of it; they’re doing it because they have a sense of vulnerability. And I ask you: What is it that conveys that sense of vulnerability to others? One of those things is long-range strike and that is an asset that the United States of America should not concede, and that’s why [the] long-range strike bomber is relevant and will continue to be relevant.”

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/news/2012/02/airforce-schwartz-defends-cost-of-next-gen-bomber-022912w/>

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Global Security Newswire

## **Conventional Arms No Substitute for Nuclear: Strategic Command Official**

February 29, 2012

By Elaine M. Grossman, *Global Security Newswire*

WASHINGTON -- A U.S. Strategic Command official said recently that conventional weapons cannot substitute in any “meaningful” way for nuclear weapons, a view that appears to diverge somewhat from an Obama administration focus on reducing the role of atomic arms in ensuring national security (see *GSN*, Feb. 16).

“You can’t replace nuclear weapons today with conventional capability,” Greg Weaver, the combatant command’s deputy director for plans and policy, said on Feb. 16 at a symposium just outside of Washington. “They don’t have the same effects on targets, but as a result they don’t have the same effects on people’s decision calculus.”

President Obama in April 2009 called for the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons worldwide and pledged “concrete steps” toward that end, even while promising to keep remaining U.S. atomic arms “safe, secure and effective.” Achieving the goal of zero nuclear arms might not be possible within his lifetime, he acknowledged.

The Defense Department’s 2010 Nuclear Posture Review reflected the dual approach, to include robust modernization of atomic forces and infrastructure.

The underlying current, though, has been an assumption that to at least some degree, conventional weapons might assume an increased share of the security role accorded nuclear weapons over the past several decades.

“Fundamental changes in the international security environment in recent years -- including the growth of unrivaled U.S. conventional military capabilities, major improvements in missile defenses, and the easing of Cold War rivalries -- enable us” to deter potential adversaries and reassure friends and partners “at significantly lower nuclear force levels and with reduced reliance on nuclear weapons,” the 2010 review document states.

Recent news reports suggested that the Obama administration is contemplating a variety of options for fresh nuclear-warhead reductions in coming years, perhaps a small dip to 1,100 warheads or dropping even as low as 300 (see *GSN*, Feb. 15). Any significant cuts would likely be negotiated with Russia rather than taken unilaterally.

Administration officials have acknowledged that they are studying future arms control options but would not confirm the numerical caps under consideration. The U.S.-Russian New START agreement, which entered into force last year, by 2018 limits each side to 1,550 deployed strategic warheads and 700 fielded delivery systems.

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Speaking at the same three-day conference this month, the Pentagon's top policy official said new nuclear arsenal reductions would be possible, thanks to modern conventional bomb and missile technologies that offer the precision and firepower to attack a larger set of targets than ever before.

A "long-term trend" in U.S. national security strategy has been to enhance conventional capabilities so much that Washington now relies less on nuclear weapons' massive blast potential than in previous decades, said James Miller, acting Defense undersecretary for policy. The White House has nominated him to serve permanently in the position.

Under the current administration, the gradual shift from nuclear toward conventional deterrence is "a matter of policy and I think has very broad support in the Department of Defense," he said, speaking on Feb. 15.

Miller cited the Pentagon's effort to develop conventionally armed "prompt global strike" technologies as a step toward strengthening non-nuclear forces for "a key part of deterrence," along with missile defenses.

Pentagon leaders see the prompt-strike mission as allowing for conventional weapons that could reach distant targets in less than an hour, "a capability that's only been available previously with nuclear-armed strategic missiles," Miller noted.

"DOD has no plans at this time to replace nuclear warheads on ICBMs or SLBMs with conventional warheads, but we continue to look at the full range of options," he said.

Options do appear to include a new effort to design a conventionally armed ballistic missile for possible fielding aboard Virginia-class attack submarines (see *GSN*, Jan. 27). Other ongoing prompt global strike efforts comprise Army, Air Force and Navy projects to develop ballistic or boost-glide technologies, some of which could potentially maneuver at hypersonic speeds into targets half a world away.

Air Force Gen. Robert Kehler, who heads Strategic Command, is "very interested in having increased conventional strike capability," Weaver said at the recent event, a "Nuclear Deterrence Summit" sponsored by the Exchange Monitor publications. "There are scenarios where promptness matters. .... But again, not as an alternative to nuclear arms."

The Pentagon has considered fielding a relatively small number of conventional global-strike weapons at any one time, once they are developed and built.

Before his military retirement last year, the previous top strategic commander, Gen. Kevin Chilton, directed the Air Force to plan for a single Conventional Strike Missile to be put on alert at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, with two spares held in reserve (see *GSN*, June 24, 2011; and Sept. 3, 2008).

His predecessor in the job, the since-retired Gen. James Cartwright, imagined perhaps as many as two dozen submarine-based conventional prompt-strike weapons kept on alert (see *GSN*, Nov. 7, 2008).

That plan, however, ran into serious congressional opposition based on concerns that a conventional ballistic missile launch from a nuclear-armed submarine could trigger a hasty and potentially disastrous response from a future Russia or China (see *GSN*, June 16, 2011).

The global-strike weapons would ostensibly be used only against pressing targets that no other U.S. conventional forces, like Air Force bombers or Navy carrier-based aircraft, could reach in rapid fashion. The notion that these conventional weapons are more plausibly usable could make them a more effective deterrent than nuclear arms, advocates argue.

Scenarios in which a conventional prompt global strike weapon might be launched include the detection of a key terrorist leader at a safe house or an imminent enemy ballistic missile threat to the United States or its allies, according to Defense officials.



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"I think [Gen. Kehler] would agree fully with what Gen. Cartwright said" about developing a conventional ballistic missile capability for a small number of such urgent contingencies, Weaver said. "What I don't think he agreed with Gen. Cartwright on is that there's a significant portion of what we currently use nuclear weapons to do -- both in a deterrence role and in a response role -- that can be replaced with conventional weapons, in any kind of a cost-effective or meaningful way."

Cartwright, now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, this week declined comment on the matter.

As the first Marine to head Strategic Command -- serving there from 2004 to 2007 -- Cartwright challenged the long-held taboo against discussing publicly the political and ethical problems associated with actually detonating nuclear weapons in combat. Though he never called for nuclear abolition, the four-star general actively sought conventional alternatives that he saw as more practical and effective tools for a U.S. president (see *GSN*, May 28, 2008).

"There is a nuclear deterrent that's going to be necessary out there for as long as I can see into the future," Cartwright said in 2008. "But it is for those things that are the last ditch in the defense of this nation."

The Obama administration has acknowledged that the U.S. nuclear arsenal continues to play a unique role in reassuring friends and deterring would-be adversaries against the most serious threats.

"The fundamental role of U.S. nuclear weapons, which will continue as long as nuclear weapons exist, is to deter nuclear attack on the United States, our allies, and partners," the 2010 posture review stated. "The United States will continue to strengthen conventional capabilities and reduce the role of nuclear weapons in deterring non-nuclear attacks, with the objective of making deterrence of nuclear attack on the United States or our allies and partners the sole purpose of U.S. nuclear weapons."

The Omaha, Neb.-based Strategic Command takes the Defense Department lead for strategic deterrence planning, which Weaver said includes not only nuclear but also non-nuclear attacks against the nation or its allies.

"Nuclear deterrence is included in strategic deterrence," he said. "We see strategic deterrence as the deterrence of strategic attack on the United States and its allies ... defined by the effects the attack has on us or our interests, not just on the means employed in the attack."

One example of a strategic threat against which Washington relies on deterrence to help prevent might be "an attack that has catastrophic effects on U.S. or allied civilian infrastructure or population," Weaver said.

<http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/conventional-arms-no-substitute-nuclear-strategic-command-official/>

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Government Security News

## **Nuclear Security Would See Funding Increase under Obama's Budget**

Thursday, March 1, 2012

By Mark Rockwell

The agency in charge of securing the U.S. nuclear arsenal and guarding against loose nuclear material would see an increase of half a billion dollars under President Obama's budget proposal, said the agency's administrator.

In testimony before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development on Feb. 29, National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Administrator Thomas D'Agostino outlined the president's FY 2013 budget request.

President Obama's budget request submitted to Congress in early February, includes \$11.5 billion for NNSA, said D'Agostino, marking an increase of \$536 million over the FY12 appropriation. The budget includes \$7.58 billion for

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NNSA's defense programs, \$2.46 billion for its nuclear nonproliferation program and \$1.1 billion for NNSA's naval reactors program.

The increase, said D'Agostino, "reaffirms our commitment to building a 21st century nuclear security enterprise through innovative approaches to some of our greatest nuclear security challenges and key investments in our infrastructure."

He assured lawmakers that with tight economic times, his agency is being "thoughtful, pragmatic, and efficient in how we achieve the President's nuclear security objectives and shape the future of nuclear security. We've continuously improved the way we operate, and we're committed to doing our part in this constrained budget environment."

He noted that NNSA has been developing new tools and capabilities to look after the nation's nuclear stockpile for over 10 years and is now beginning to use all those analytical tools and capabilities. "These capabilities also provide the critical base for nonproliferation and counter-terrorism work, allowing us to apply our investments to the full scope of our mission," he said.

The budget also includes \$2.4 billion to maintain infrastructure and begin new construction projects to modernize Cold War-era facilities and maintain the agency's expertise in uranium processing and plutonium research.

[http://www.gsnmagazine.com/node/25739?c=federal\\_agencies\\_legislative](http://www.gsnmagazine.com/node/25739?c=federal_agencies_legislative)

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BBC News  
OPINION/Analysis  
29 February 2012

## North Korea: The Denuclearisation Dance Resumes

By Aidan Foster-Carter, Korea analyst, Leeds University

**North Korea loves to spring surprises. More unusual is for its US foe to play along.**

Just a few days ago, both sides were blandly non-committal about the outcome of bilateral talks - their third in recent months - held in Beijing on 23-24 February.

This calculated coyness, it now seems, concealed quite a breakthrough. Presumably both sides needed a few more days to fine-tune the small print.

So Wednesday's simultaneous announcement from Washington and Pyongyang was both unexpected, and glad tidings.

The North Korean nuclear issue, stalemated for the past three years, is now back in play again - not before time.

### Giving ground

On the face of it, North Korea has conceded quite a lot. First up, it has agreed to moratoriums on testing both nuclear weapons and long-range missiles.

This is welcome news. Many feared that "great successor" Kim Jong-un might mark the mid-April centenary of his late grandfather Kim Il-sung, North Korea's founder, by testing a very large firework - to show his mettle and keep the world on its toes. That will not now happen.

Secondly, Pyongyang has apparently agreed to suspend not just tests but all nuclear activities - and to allow the UN International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) inspectors, whom it kicked out in April 2009, back in to verify compliance at its Yongbyon nuclear site.

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There are two parts to this, one of which breaks new ground. In November 2010 a US team of scientists visited Yongbyon and found a mixed picture.

“This leap year surprise from Pyongyang has to be good news.”

Facilities related to the old plutonium-based programme appeared disused. On the other hand, they were shown a brand-new facility for enriching uranium (HEU). This second path to the bomb had long been suspected, but no one imagined it would be so far advanced already.

If this plant too is really to be subject to a moratorium and IAEA inspection, then this is real progress. By contrast, most of the rest simply takes us back to where we have been before.

North Korea's nuclear issue, a concern now for over 20 years, has long been a game of cat and mouse - or snakes and ladders. This latest ladder gives hope that the six party talks - both Koreas, the US, China, Japan and Russia - on the nuclear issue might resume before long.

Two cheers for that, at best. The original six party talks ran, or rather crawled, from 2003 to 2008. It remains unclear if North Korea was ever serious - or just playing for time while working on HEU.

### **Timing**

Although the return six party talks may not be much to cheer about, it does appear that North Korea has conceded a lot for not very much in return. 240,000 tons of US food aid is not a huge deal. And if US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is correct in saying that the North has agreed to "aggressive" monitoring of that aid's distribution, then that is progress too.

Such monitoring has often been a sticking point in the past, amid fears that food aid might be diverted to the Northern elite - or its military - rather than the needy.

The timing is intriguing too. Before this news North Korea was all bellicosity and bluster.

As recently as 25 February, in response to routine ongoing US - South Korea war games, it warned that "we have war means more powerful than the US nukes" and threatened a "sacred war" to "make a clean sweep of the Lee group" - meaning the current South Korean government of President Lee Myung-bak, which Pyongyang insults daily.

South Korea holds parliamentary elections on 11 April. Lee's conservative party is expected to lose ground to the centre-left opposition, but a small hint of peace from the North will do him no harm at all. Lee can hardly have expected such a gift.

Perhaps Kim Jong-un also wants to remind China - North Korea's main trade partner and by far the most influential power in Pyongyang - that he does have other options.

On 28 February, for example, a US Navy ship docked in Nampo, the port for Pyongyang, with equipment for joint searches for remains of US soldiers missing from the 1950-1953 Korean War. China may look askance at the US and North Korean militaries working together like this.

So we are all left guessing and the proof of the pudding, as always, will be in the eating. But this leap year surprise from Pyongyang has to be good news. How good, only time will tell.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-17213948>

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Los Angeles Times  
OPINION/Analysis

## **North Korea Nuclear Deal: Five Ideas about What It Means**



February 29, 2012

North Korea has offered to suspend nuclear tests and enrichment as part of a deal under which it will receive 240,000 metric tons of food aid, U.S. officials have announced. What does this mean? The Times turned to four experts for their insights. Here are five key points they made about this important deal.

**1. It's a good sign about new leader Kim Jong Un.**

The U.S. and North Korea were reportedly close to a food-for-cooperation deal in December when former leader Kim Jong Il died of a heart attack. When his baby-faced son Kim Jong Un took over, no one was sure what to expect and what it meant for nuclear talks.

"My assumption was the military would press for further tests and Kim Jong Un, being young and inexperienced, wouldn't be in a position to say no to them," said Mark Fitzpatrick, director of the non-proliferation and disarmament program at the International Institute for Strategic Studies. "Instead, he's striking a deal with the United States. It bodes well for his foreign policy smarts."

**2. This deal only goes so far, but it could start the ball rolling on bigger changes.**

Halting nuclear weapons testing and enrichment means that North Korea would stop heading down the path to weapons that could threaten Japan and South Korea, at least temporarily. It will also put its main nuclear reactor at Yongbyon under foreign monitoring.

The deal doesn't wipe away the nuclear stockpiles or devices that North Korea already has. There are also suspicions that North Korea has other, unrevealed nuclear facilities, though there is no evidence that it has another plant that could enrich uranium on the same scale as its main reactor.

"The problem is not knowing what elements of the gas centrifuge program [used to enrich uranium] exist outside of Yongbyon," its main reactor, said Paul Brannan, a senior analyst at the Institute for Science and International Security based in Washington.

But these steps could help bring North Korea back into multilateral talks, which could someday lead to getting rid of its nuclear weapons, said Peter Crail, a research analyst with the Arms Control Assn.

**3. Smoothing relations with South Korea and Japan are an important, more difficult next step.**

Before taking more aggressive steps to dismantle its nuclear program, North Korea will want a serious peace process on the Korean peninsula, said Leon Sigal, director of the Northeast Asia Cooperative Security Project at the Social Science Research Council. It also will want more serious political and economic engagement from the U.S., South Korea and Japan.

**4. North Korea is trying to make good on its "strong and prosperous" slogan.**

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of its founder Kim Il Sung, with North Korea gearing up to show it's a "strong and prosperous nation." That slogan upped the ante for getting food aid, Crail said. North Korea wanted to show it was healthier and happier on the big anniversary.

**5. The linchpin of this agreement is a pledge of American goodwill.**

The U.S. doesn't have to give much for this agreement, Sigal said. The food aid is "a trivial amount in dollar terms." In his view, the heart of the agreement is reiterating a statement the two countries made 12 years ago — that they wouldn't have "hostile intent" toward each other.

That may seem surprising for Americans used to alarming North Korean rhetoric, but strengthening relations has long been a goal.

[http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world\\_now/2012/02/north-korea-nuclear-deal-five-ideas-about-what-it-means.html](http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world_now/2012/02/north-korea-nuclear-deal-five-ideas-about-what-it-means.html)



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London Telegraph – U.K.  
OPINION/Analysis

## **Analysis: North Korea Starts the Cat-and-Mouse Nuclear Game Again**

*While it might be tempting to read North Korea's offer of a moratorium on nuclear enrichment as policy turnaround in Pyongyang following the death of the dictator Kim Jong-il, the reality is likely to be far more mundane.*

By Peter Foster in Washington  
29 February 2012

North Korea watchers are wearily familiar with the game of diplomatic cat-and-mouse, which played out in 2002 and 2009, where the leadership in Pyongyang offers concessions in return for short-term economic gains, and then reneges on its side of the deal.

Those who oppose this latest engagement argue that it will serve only to bolster the regime which has pledged to make their near-destitute country "prosperous" by 2012, the 100th anniversary of the birth of their 'Great Leader', Kim Il-sung.

It is for this reason that Hillary Clinton was adamant yesterday that North Korea's leaders would be judged 'by their actions', in an attempt to reassure the sceptics that the Obama administration will not be lead on the same merry dance as George W Bush was in 2009.

Then, in a leap of faith that turned out to be woefully misplaced, President Bush – having declared the North part of the 'Axis of Evil' in 2002 – agreed to remove Pyongyang from its list of state sponsors of terrorism in 2007, only for negotiations to founder when the North refused to meet its commitments to disarm.

President Obama initially pledged that he would not repeat that mistakes, promising "strategic patience" with Pyongyang, a vision that has now been modified in the hope that talks, while not necessarily leading to disarmament, might yet slow the process of nuclear weaponisation down.

But there are, as yet, few concrete reasons to believe that negotiations will be any different this time round, since North Korea has no obvious motivation for giving up the nuclear weapon that represents its sole bargaining chip in its negotiations with the US.

The danger is that when talks resume, Pyongyang negotiators will seek to manipulate them into a creeping, de facto acceptance of North Korea as a nuclear state, a position the US has promised to avoid.

In Beijing there are hopes that Kim Jong-un, the babyfaced son of Kim Jong-il might yet embrace Chinese-style economic opening up and reforms, but in Washington analysts saw yesterday's announcement not as a departure from the old leadership, but in continuity with it.

In essence, this is the same deal that was struck in Geneva in October last year, but was stalled by the death of Kim Jong-il in December: the fact that it has now happened suggests that the regime's fundamental approach is probably not much changed.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/northkorea/9114321/Analysis-North-Korea-starts-the-cat-and-mouse-nuclear-game-again.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency  
OPINION/Analysis

## **The Tedious U.S.-North Korean Nuclear Wrangle**

01 March 2012

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By Ivan Zakharchenko, *RIA Novosti*

North Korea has agreed to a nuclear and missile moratorium and to allow IAEA inspectors back into the country, the U.S. State Department triumphantly announced following talks with North Korea. But this is just the latest episode in this endless and tedious soap opera.

Washington traditionally resumes its dance with Pyongyang in the run-up to presidential elections, swapping humanitarian aid for North Korea's pledge to suspend its nuclear program. As before, Pyongyang has not agreed to destroy its nuclear arsenal.

The talks held in Beijing, China, on February 23-24 culminated in an agreement to provide 240,000 metric tons of food to North Korea in return for a moratorium on nuclear tests and missile launches.

North Korea, which held underground nuclear explosions in 2006 and 2009, has not performed any nuclear testing or launched a long-range missile for the past three years. Why debate the issue then?

The answer lies in the history of the U.S.-North Korea relationship. Pyongyang makes the same move every four years, knowing that the United States will agree to rapprochement and even provide humanitarian aid ahead of the latest presidential election.

Since Americans can't remember what happened in relations with North Korea before the previous election, they see Pyongyang's agreement to curtail its nuclear and missile programs as the U.S. government's victory over one of the remaining members of the "axis of evil" and a personal win for President Barack Obama. After North Korea consumes the U.S.-supplied food and Americans elect their next president, they will likely stop talking and will instead look for a new pretext to trade fresh accusations. But for now everything looks fine, with friends and allies hailing the positive efforts of Pyongyang and Washington.

### **Deaf talking to the blind**

However, as the Americans love to say, the devil is in the details. A comparison of the U.S. State Department statement published February 29 and Pyongyang's official statement released by the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reveals quite a few discrepancies, proving that the sides only hear what they want to and tune out the elements that clash with their narrative.

Under the agreement, the United States is to deliver monthly shipments of 20,000 metric tons of nutritional assistance, such as baby formula and vegetable oil, over the next year and to "take steps to improve... the bilateral relationship." For its part, North Korea is to halt nuclear tests and long-range missile launches and suspend its nuclear program, in particular uranium enrichment at Yongbyon, a research facility located 100 km (62 miles) north of the North Korean capital. Inspectors from the UN International Atomic Energy Agency will monitor compliance with the moratorium.

At first glance everything looks fine, but there's a catch. North Korea has pointed out that the compliance will depend on the progress of talks with the United States. The U.S. State Department has downplayed that provision, perhaps so as not to undermine its achievement.

During the background briefing in the State Department, journalists were made to understand that North Korea agreed to resume talks after the United States and the UN had slammed sanctions on it and indicated that it should take action to prove its intentions to denuclearize. It does not matter that Pyongyang has never refused to talk, or that the other side only talks with it when it needs something.

The goal is to resume the six-party talks that have been held on and off by Russia, the United States, China, North Korea, South Korea and Japan since August 2003. The talks have not halted North Korea's nuclear program but actually resulted in the Communist state obtaining nuclear weapons.

For its part, North Korea implemented all of its step-by-step obligations, whereas its counterparts only searched for non-nuclear pretexts to further complicate the talks.

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The latest U.S.-North Korean agreements stipulate the resumption of six-party talks, but the sides differ on their agenda.

Pyongyang said the talks should focus on lifting U.S. sanctions, which are strangling the country's ailing foreign trade, and allowing North Korea to build a light-water nuclear reactor that cannot produce nuclear weapons-grade fissile materials.

In 1994, the Clinton administration agreed with North Korea to set up an international consortium for the construction of a nuclear power plant with two light-water reactors. But President George W. Bush terminated the project in 2003, when the plant was supposed to go on line. Pyongyang has been trying to convince the United States to resume the project, but its pleas have been drowned out by accusations that it was secretly building nuclear weapons, fearing the fate of Iraq and former Yugoslavia.

### **What North Korea gains**

North Korean leader Kim Jong-il unexpectedly died of a heart attack in late December 2011 and he was succeeded by his youngest son, Kim Jong-un. An obscure political figure, he said he would carry on the policy of his father, who took over from his father, Kim Il-sung, years ago.

Considering the new developments, North Koreans must believe that the new leader will carry on the policy of his father and grandfather to make them prosperous and to make their country economically viable.

Achieving this goal will be all but impossible without developing normal relations with the United States, Japan and other countries. This is why rapprochement with Washington, even if temporary, would reaffirm Pyongyang's declared intention to normalize relations with the United States, and would also show the people that the new leader is respected on the international stage.

Besides, the 240,000 metric tons of food aid should ease the country's food problem.

### **What the United States gains**

Americans maintained friendly relations with North Korea under the Clinton administration in the latter half of the 1990s, including after his reelection. Bilateral relations rapidly deteriorated under President Bush, but nuclear talks resumed by the end of his second term. Pyongyang pinned its hopes on the Democratic administration of Barack Obama, but he was too busy with the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

The U.S. administration took up the Korean issue only in this election year. As the North Korean Foreign Ministry said, the nuclear and missile moratorium was announced "at the request of the U.S. side." This is yet another "food for nuclear moratorium" deal.

The U.S. security services will use this situation to update its information on Pyongyang, in particular its government elite and nuclear program.

But overall, the deal will not help resolve the North Korean nuclear issue or strengthen security. North Korea has nuclear technology and nuclear weapons. Western experts say that apart from the experimental facility at Yongbyon, which IAEA inspectors will visit, there are several other facilities that can be used to produce nuclear weapons.

Instead of negotiating endless food aid packages and useless moratoriums, the United States should recognize North Korea as a sovereign state and sign a peace treaty with it to replace the 1953 armistice. In other words, it should normalize relations with the "rogue" country.

But Washington is unlikely to do this, not for ideological reasons but because there are about 28,000 U.S. troops permanently deployed in the south of the Korean Peninsula. South Korean taxpayers pay \$700 million annually for the U.S. protection against the threat from the North. The end of that threat would make U.S. troops unnecessary. So ultimately it boils down to money.

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*The views expressed in this article are the author's and do not necessarily represent those of RIA Novosti.*

<http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20120301/171673998.html>

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Chosun Ilbo – South Korea

OPINION/Editorial

March 02, 2012

## **This Is No Time to Go Soft on N.Korea**

North Korea has decided to temporarily halt its uranium enrichment program, nuclear testing and long-range missile development and allow International Atomic Energy Agency officials to inspect its nuclear facilities. In exchange, the U.S. has agreed to send 240,000 tons of nutritional assistance in the form of biscuits and baby formula and work for additional food aid.

U.S. and North Korean officials agreed on those terms in a third round of high-level talks in Beijing last Thursday and Friday and made a joint announcement in Washington and Pyongyang. Seoul and Washington had been calling on North Korea to meet those terms as a prerequisite to resuming the stalled six-party nuclear talks. If North Korea abides by them, the six-party talks, halted in December 2008, can resume.

The U.S. and North Korea hammered out the broad outline of the agreement in two rounds of talks in July and December last year, before the death of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il. The agreement is significant because it shows that the new leader Kim Jong-un is willing to continue his father's policy.

Seoul and Washington will monitor whether North Korea abides by the agreed terms and assess Kim Jong-un's authority. The reason why the regime is trying harder to improve ties with the U.S. is that it needs international aid for handouts so it can consolidate its hold on power, since this year marks the centenary of nation founder Kim Il-sung.

U.S. President Barack Obama, who is seeking a second term in office this year, needs to focus on containing the Iranian nuclear crisis and cannot afford to let the North Korean nuclear problem worsen.

In November 2010, North Korea showed its uranium enrichment facilities to a U.S. nuclear scientist to gain another bargaining card in talks with the U.S. Pyongyang wanted to get more food aid from Washington by offering to halt its uranium enrichment program, while continuing with plutonium extraction to develop nuclear weapons. A more complicated issue is whether or not the North will include uranium enrichment facilities other than those at the Yongbyong nuclear complex. North Korea said in its announcement it will "temporarily halt" nuclear activities "while meaningful talks continue," while demanding an end to sanctions and the resumption of an abortive project to build a safer light-water reactor in the North with foreign money.

In other words, North Korea will make demands at each level of negotiations and renege on its promises if its demands are not met.

During the latest round of U.S.-North Korea meetings, the North only spoke to South Korean officials twice but stuck to its tactics to exclude the South from talks with U.S. by refusing to deal with the Lee Myung-bak administration. If it wishes to gain any concessions from the six-party talks, be they the light-water reactor or food aid, it must realize that South Korean money is crucial. The government and political parties here must close rank to make North Korea realize this and return to the negotiating table with a genuine willingness to make progress.

If the ruling and opposition parties try to appease North Korea to win more votes in the upcoming general and presidential elections, Seoul will end up footing the bill while failing to realize any of its goals. The political parties here and the North Korean regime should remember that South Koreans have not forgotten about the sinking of the Navy corvette Cheonan.

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[http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html\\_dir/2012/03/02/2012030201269.html](http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2012/03/02/2012030201269.html)

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The Hill

OPINION/Congress Blog

## Cuts to SM-3 Missile Funding Send Wrong Message to Iran

By Jeff Stier, senior fellow, National Center for Public Policy Research

March 02, 2012

President Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu are set to meet at the White House on Monday to discuss the Iranian crisis.

There are rapidly increasing signs that Israel may launch a pre-emptive defensive strike on Iran's nuclear facilities as soon as this spring. The Islamic regime is thought to be approaching a "zone of immunity," in which the nuclear program will be defended beyond Israel's military might. The president, on Monday, is expected to continue to ask Israel to face this existential threat with restraint, hoping that tighter economic sanctions, coupled with diplomacy, will yield fruit.

Central to the U.S. diplomatic approach is the notion that if Israel does find it necessary to strike, Iran's threat to counter-attack American interests will not deter us; we have the capability to defend against such threats.

But President Obama's FY 2013 budget sends a conflicting and dangerous message about our commitment to this approach.

Released to Congress last month, the new Obama budget reduces by half the funds needed to procure the next generation of SM-3 missiles, significantly cutting, rather than increasing the number of missiles available (from 62 to 29). The SM-3 is the centerpiece of the United States' strategic missile defense capabilities and is currently deployed globally aboard the U.S. Navy's AEGIS class warships.

Congress will have its first chance to quiz Missile Defense Agency (MDA) director, Patrick O'Reilly, about SM-3 IB funding at a House Strategic Forces Subcommittee hearing on Tuesday. Members of the Subcommittee should use the hearing as an opportunity ensure the MDA has its budget priorities aligned with addressing the most urgent threats facing America.

Importantly, military experts believe that this next generation SM-3 will not only protect our allies in Europe and the Middle East, but will be the first missile that could intercept a long-range missile aimed at the continental United States. This concept may not be as futuristic as it seems. An SM-3 has already been used to successfully shoot down a rouge U.S. satellite orbiting many miles above the Earth – the equivalent of hitting a bullet with a bullet, as defense planners sometimes call it.

But just as the Navy is expressing the need to increase its inventory of SM-3 missiles in light of the looming Iranian threat, the White House is turning its back on this request. There are several problems with failing to deploy additional SM-3s, not the least of which is demonstrating to our allies (Israel) and our opponents (Iran) that America possesses the readiness to respond to any escalation of the Iranian threat.

Israel's position is more tenuous than that of any other Mideast nation should Iran achieve its nuclear ambitions, so its interest in pre-empting those ambitions is easy to understand. But if the Obama administration is serious about deterring Israel from launching such a strike against Iran, one of the best means of doing so is to demonstrate that the United States has the necessary missile defense system in place.

Cutting SM-3 missile acquisition at the very moment that Israel is contemplating action against Iran, while Iran is promising retaliation against any pre-emptive strike, does not instill a sense of confidence among our allies in the

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region. It actually signals to Iran, at the worst possible time, that we don't take their threat seriously. This undermines the diplomatic strategy, as well as military needs.

This cutback also fails to demonstrate to Iran our sense of resolve in confronting their attempts to obtain and field nuclear weapons. Any perception of strategic or tactical weakness on our part will only embolden Iran to take provocative action; action which could be devastating to our interests in the Middle East, and globally.

Tensions with Iran are as high as they have been in a generation and now is not the time to scale back on acquisition of the military's first and best defense against an Iranian missile threat. Congress must give the Navy the authority it needs to make sure its inventory of SM-3 missiles is sufficient to assure Israel of our ability to respond to any attack while showing Iran that we mean business in the Gulf.

*Stier is a Senior Fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research and directs its Risk Analysis Division.*

<http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/213813-cuts-to-sm-3-missile-funding-send-wrong-message-to-iran>

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Wall Street Journal  
OPINION/Korea Real Time Blog  
March 2, 2012

## **NK, US Sell Their Deal Differently**

By Evan Ramstad

In the annals of U.S.-North Korea relations, Wednesday's announcement of a kind of deal in which the North promises to behave nicely and the U.S. promises to provide nutritional goods for a year appears to be one of the sunnier moments.

But U.S. officials were cautious about not over-hyping it and pointed out that North Korea promised nothing it couldn't reverse or walk away from. North Korea said nothing more about the deal after its initial statement.

Not surprisingly, the two countries emphasized different issues when they announced the arrangement.

The U.S. began by noting that North Korea agreed to implement a moratorium on long-range missile launches, nuclear tests and activities at its Yongbyon research facilities, including uranium enrichment.

North Korea's statement mentioned those actions last and added a condition not seen in the U.S. statement – "while productive dialogue continues – suggesting that if it feels the U.S. isn't talking to it enough, it will abandon the promises.

The second paragraph of the U.S. statement began by saying that Washington still "has profound concerns about North Korean behavior across a wide range of areas" but went on to announce the decision to supply it with 240,000 metric tons of nutritional assistance.

North Korea's statement began with all the details of when the two countries met (last week in Beijing) and noted that they had agreed to "simultaneous moves aimed at building confidence." The first move noted in the North Korean announcement was that the "U.S. reaffirmed it no longer has hostile intent toward" North Korea and would move forward based on "mutual respect for sovereignty and equality."

That statement has become a trope in most North Korean missives dealing with the U.S., reflecting the desire of the authoritarian regime to be seen as an equal. The country's internal propaganda frequently sends just the opposite message, that the U.S. doesn't respect North Korea.

The next point in the North Korean statement was that the U.S. agreed to increase "people-to-people exchanges, including in the areas of culture, education and sports." The high position of this point of agreement is striking

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since the North has typically been the obstacle to such interchange in the past. In recent years, though, North Korea has enjoyed fruitful cultural exchanges with countries like Italy, France, Norway and the United Kingdom, perhaps raising its confidence about dealing with foreigners outside the political realm.

In a glaring difference between the two statements, North Korea mentioned the six-party talks while the U.S. did not. North Korea said that when those talks resume, "Priority will be given to the discussion of issues concerning the lifting of sanctions on the DPRK and provision of light water reactors." (DPRK is the acronym for North Korea's full name.

North Korea in January pressed the U.S. to lift of sanctions imposed after it tested nuclear weapons in 2006 and 2009. But that didn't wind up being part of Wednesday's deal.

Only at the end of its statement did North Korea mention that it would halt its nuclear tests, missile launches and uranium enrichment.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/korearealtime/2012/03/02/nk-us-sell-their-deal-differently/>

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