



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

**Issue No. 988, 13 March 2012**

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Khabar Online – Iran  
March 10, 2012  
Press TV

## **Iran's Right to Enrichment Is Non-Negotiable: Ahani**

Politics - Iran's ambassador to France says Tehran's right to enrich uranium is not negotiable and the country will never suspend its enrichment activities.

Ali Ahani's remarks came after the P5+1 - comprising of the US, UK, France, Russia and China plus Germany - expressed its readiness on March 8 to resume talks with Iran.

"We call on Iran to enter, without preconditions, into a sustained process of serious dialogue, which will produce concrete results," the group said in a statement.

Referring to the P5+1 offer, Ahani told Reuters that all the parties must be realistic in their approach to the talks and that world powers should not be worried by Iran's nuclear activities.

"We have to try through dialogue to resolve them [remaining issues] and reach a compromise and in my opinion it's better not to prejudge these negotiations in advance," he added.

"Recognizing Iran as responsible and a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty that insists on using these technologies purely for peaceful and civilian means and to continue its enrichment for civilian purposes can help get out of the current situation," Ahani said.

Asked about a possible strike on Iran's nuclear sites by Israel, the Iranian ambassador said he did not think Israel would launch any air strikes against the Islamic Republic due to its unforeseeable regional and global consequences.

"We don't think that the Zionist regime [of Israel] will take this direction because there will be worse consequences not just for that regime, region, but the world. This sort of military action could have unpredictable and catastrophic consequences," he added.

On February 15, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Saeed Jalili sent a letter to EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton, saying Tehran is ready to restart nuclear negotiations.

He added that the success of the talks depends on the constructive approach of world powers towards Iranian initiatives.

On March 9, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu announced that Istanbul would be hosting the multifaceted talks between Iran and the six major world powers in early April.

Iran and the P5+1 held two rounds of multifaceted talks in Geneva in December 2010 and in the Turkish city of Istanbul in January 2011.

While Tehran says it is ready to continue the talks based on common grounds, it has stressed that it will never give up any of its rights.

<http://english.khabaronline.ir/detail/181581/russia-IAEA--/Politics/English>

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Edmonton Journal – Canada

## **Iran May Be 'Cleaning' Nuclear Site: Watchdog**

By Reuters  
March 10, 2012

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The UN nuclear watchdog does not rule out that Iran may be trying to remove evidence from a military site that inspectors want to visit as part of an inquiry into suspected research relevant to atomic bombs, the agency's chief said on Friday.

Yukiya Amano's comments, in an interview with Reuters, came a day after six world powers demanded Iran keep its promise to let inter-national inspectors visit the Parchin military complex. Their joint call demonstrated firmer resolve among the powers on Iran before a planned revival of high-level talks, as well as widening disquiet about the nature of Tehran's nuclear ambitions, with Israel threatening last-ditch military action. Iran refused access to Parchin, southeast of Tehran, during two rounds of talks with a senior team of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN agency dedicated to stopping the spread of nuclear weapons, in Tehran this year.

Western diplomats say Iran may be delaying inspectors' access to the site to give it time to sanitize the facility of any incriminating evidence of explosives tests that would indicate efforts to design nuclear weapons.

"We have information that some activity is ongoing there," Amano, IAEA director general, said at agency headquarters.

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/Iran+cleaning+nuclear+site+watchdog/6282170/story.html>

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Vancouver Sun – Canada

## **Blocked Parchin Visit Raises Suspicions**

*Even if Tehran allows inspection now, it will appear that it cleaned up the site*

By Simon Sturdee, Agence France-Presse (AFP)

March 10, 2012

The UN atomic agency's dogged focus on Iran's Parchin military site in its probe into Iran's nuclear program is putting Tehran in a tight spot ahead of hugely important talks with world powers.

In two high-level visits to Tehran this year, in January and February, the International Atomic Energy Agency asked to go to Parchin, where it believes activity relevant to nuclear weapons development took place.

Iran said no, making instead a last-minute offer to show another site mentioned in a major IAEA report in November - Merivan near the Iraqi border, hundreds of kilometres from Tehran - which the IAEA refused.

Inspectors already visited Parchin near Tehran twice in 2005 and found nothing, Iran points out, but the IAEA says it has since obtained additional information that makes it want to go back for another look.

The IAEA, which has been taking an increasingly harder line with Iran, suspects the site may be in use to develop and test specialized explosives used in setting off a nuclear bomb. Iran denies it is developing weapons.

For Mark Fitzpatrick, nuclear non-proliferation expert at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, Iran's rebuttal of the IAEA was an "own goal," particularly as there is likely nothing "incriminating" at Parchin.

The studies that Iran is alleged to have carried out there, although believed to be aimed at developing nuclear weapons, did not use any radioactive material, making detecting something much harder for the IAEA, Fitzpatrick said.

Refusing access "just raises suspicions. Iran would have been much more clever to have brought them to Parchin ... It would have been a PR victory for Iran and they blew their chance," he said.

Iran is hyper-sensitive about allowing access into military sites, particularly since a November blast at an elite Republican Guard base killed 36, including a key figure in Iran's ballistic missile program.

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It has already accused the IAEA of being dangerously prone to leaks and of endangering the lives of its nuclear scientists - several have been assassinated, the latest in January - by making their names public.

"Considering the fact that it is a military site, granting access is a time-consuming process and cannot be permitted repeatedly," the Iranian embassy in Vienna, where the IAEA has its headquarters, said in a statement this week.

But the IAEA thinks there is more to the refusal than security concerns, while Iran's stance falls into the hands of those - not least Israel - who suspect that Tehran is secretly bent on developing a nuclear arsenal.

Access might be one concession Iran could make in upcoming talks with the United States, China, Russia, Britain, France and Germany, said Oliver Thraenert from the German Institute for International and Security Affairs in Berlin.

"If the Iranians are clever they would give access to Parchin, but try at the same time to organize it in a way that the inspectors can have general access but not access to every single facility," Thraenert said. "It's a huge place."

But if Tehran does suddenly grant access to Parchin, it may be too late because it will find itself accused of having cleaned up the site beforehand.

The director general of the IAEA, Yukiya Amano, strongly hinted as much this week, saying that "activities" spotted by satellite "makes us believe that going there sooner is better than later."

<http://www.vancouversun.com/news/Blocked+Parchin+visit+raises+suspensions/6282498/story.html>

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Los Angeles Times

## **Skeptics Doubt U.S. Can Be Certain about Iran's Nuclear Progress**

*Iran's record of deceit fuels worry over President Obama's assurances that he'll know if Tehran starts trying to build a nuclear weapon.*

By Ken Dilanian, Los Angeles Times

March 11, 2012

Reporting from Washington— Despite President Obama's assurances that the United States will know if Tehran begins to secretly build a nuclear bomb, some senior officials familiar with U.S. intelligence and spying capabilities in Iran are doubtful.

The issue is a crucial one because the White House has suggested that U.S. satellites, sensors and spies, as well as United Nations inspections, provide a reliable tripwire to decide whether diplomacy has failed and military action is needed to stop Iran from assembling a nuclear device.

The officials' doubts stem, in part, from Iran's record of deceit.

Over the last decade, Western intelligence agencies have twice discovered large-scale clandestine Iranian facilities built to enrich uranium. The question now is whether Iran is hiding other nuclear enrichment sites or weapons research centers.

"You have to assume that, if they went clandestine once, they could well go clandestine in other places," said Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), who chairs the Senate Intelligence Committee.

"As someone who deals with this stuff every day, I'm not sure how [the president] is that confident," said Rep. Mike Rogers of Michigan, the top Republican on the House Intelligence Committee. "I am confident that at some point ... we would know, probably. The problem is, you wouldn't know if that meant they'd have a weapon in three days or in three months."

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Iran must produce weapons-grade uranium if it wants to build a bomb. For now, International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors make regular monitoring visits to the two uranium enrichment complexes, at Natanz and Fordow, and they measure and track every bit of nuclear material.

The U.N. inspectors would quickly detect diversion of uranium or any sudden push to boost enrichment from 20% to 90% to supply fuel for a weapon. If the teams are denied access or expelled from Iran, however, that safety mechanism disappears and Washington and its allies will be left to assume the worst.

"As long as the IAEA is inspecting the enrichment program, you're going to get a heads up" if Iran tries to build a bomb, said Robert Kelley, a former senior IAEA inspector and nuclear expert at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Iran's relations with the IAEA are testy. Tehran has refused to fully answer questions about what the U.N. agency calls "possible military dimensions" to its program. It retreated on another issue last week, however, saying it would permit inspectors to visit a military base that it had previously put off-limits.

Iran announced in February 2010 that it would construct 10 new enrichment facilities. Iran's nuclear chief said last August that the plan had been scrapped, but the IAEA's most recent report points out that Iran has provided few details and cites its "lack of cooperation."

Jeffrey Lewis, a nuclear expert at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, said he was reasonably confident Iran would get caught if it launched a covert enrichment effort. "But reasonably confident is not the same thing as certain," he added.

A former senior U.S. intelligence official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Iran probably would move the clandestine project to multiple sites to lower the risk of discovery. "I think it would be very difficult" to learn if Iran began building a bomb, he said. "Not impossible, but difficult."

Obama, in a recent interview with the Atlantic magazine, said the U.S. assessment is that Iran "does not have a nuclear weapon and is not yet in a position to obtain a nuclear weapon without us having a pretty long lead time in which we will know that they are making that attempt."

Administration officials cite two reasons for his confidence.

"First, IAEA inspectors are on the ground safeguarding Iran's enriched material and would detect any effort to divert it," said a senior U.S. official, who asked for anonymity while discussing intelligence. "Secondly, we have detected covert facilities in the past ... and are confident we would do so again before Iran is in a position to use such facilities to produce enriched uranium."

Mark Fitzpatrick, a nonproliferation expert at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, has a similar view. If the Iranians "tempt fate by a decision to produce weapons," they would probably use covert facilities, he said. "But would they be able to do it out of eyesight of prying intelligence agencies? Probably not."

Olli Heinonen, a former deputy director general of the IAEA, said Iran may lack the precision engineering capabilities needed to build a working bomb. In theory, however, Iran could secretly construct a bomb or warhead, a process likely to take several years, and then produce weapons-grade fuel in a month or so.

"You can build everything else, but you just leave the nuclear material out and do that at the end," said Heinonen, now a senior fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University.

Others warn that spy satellites, surveillance drones and other sources may not be sufficient to spot a secret bomb program given Iran's sprawling geography — one fifth the size of the continental U.S. — and large industrial base.

"Iran is a big country, and the idea that you can have blanket coverage — you can't," said Mark Lowenthal, a former senior CIA and State Department intelligence analyst.

Still, U.S. spy services and their allies have a substantial espionage effort aimed at Iran.



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Analysts study business and procurement orders by Iranian companies, eavesdrop on government communications and monitor large construction and mining projects. Airborne sensors help analyze electromagnetic, chemical and other emissions that can offer telltale clues of what's happening inside factories.

On the other hand, U.S. intelligence agencies were unaware that Syria was secretly constructing a nuclear reactor until shortly before Israeli warplanes destroyed the partially built facility in 2007, Rep. Rogers said.

The Iranians "are learning from their mistakes, and they are getting better about how to keep things more quiet," he said. "This is a cat-and-mouse game for them."

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-iran-nuke-intel-20120311,0,7709197.story>

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International Business Times – U.K.

## **Seven Locations Israel is Worried about Iran's Nuclear Capabilities**

By Geetha Pillai  
March 11, 2012

Iran's nuclear locations are a constant worry to Israel and the Jewish state is trying hard to get the US nod to launch an attack on Iran's nuclear facilities.

Iranians have multiple nuclear installations located across the country each over 1,000 miles away from Israel.

An attack on the Iran's nuclear installations based on the satellite images of the locations would be highly risky, feel the experts on the subject.

A look at the nuclear locations of Iran:

### **1. Nuclear Power Station in Bushehr**

Bushehr is the location where Iran houses two of its operating pressurised water reactors. Iran started its nuclear programme in 1974 with German help to build a nuclear power station in Bushehr, but was later completed with Russian assistance.

Iran had to abandon the project in 1979 because of the Islamic revolution. The project was revived in late 1990s after Iran's agreement with Russia. Russia has been providing enriched Uranium for the running of the plant since 2007.

The Bushehr plant was connected to the national grid in September 2010, which was confirmed by IAEA in October 2011 suggesting that the reactors are in operation.

Israel is not much worried about this facility, but feels that this site is the symbol of Iran's nuclear programme and the success of this facility is what has fuelled Iran's nuclear ambitions.

### **2. Uranium Mine in Gachin**

Gachin is the uranium mine where Iran has been producing "yellowcake" or uranium ore concentrate, which is used for producing enriched uranium fuel for nuclear reactors. Iran confirmed in December 2010 that it had sent "yellowcake" or uranium ore concentrate from this facility for enrichment.

One of top most officials of Iran's nuclear programme was widely quoted by the media in early 2011 that first batch of yellowcake from Gachin was sent to a facility in Isfahan for enrichment.

It is generally believed that Iran started uranium mining operations at the Gachin facility in 2004 in place of the yellowcake imported from South Africa.

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Israel believes that this facility has given strength to Iran to run its nuclear programme without depending on third parties for the supply of uranium ore. Coupled with an enrichment facility, which can purify uranium above 20 per cent level, this facility will help make Iran a nuclear power.

### **3. Uranium Conversion Facility in Ifsahan**

Very little is known about the facility in Ifsahan except a once-public-admission by Iranian authorities that the facility has been receiving yellowcake for conversion.

The facility is capable of converting yellowcake into three forms such as hexafluoride gas used in gas centrifuges, uranium oxide used in reactors and uranium metal used in the cores of nuclear bombs.

International agencies like the IAEA had expressed concern about the possible use of any metal produced here since Iran's reactors do not run on metal fuel.

Israel feels that if Iran has been converting yellowcake to metal at this facility, it is close to producing nuclear bombs.

### **4. Uranium Enrichment Plant in Natanz**

This is one of the most guarded nuclear facilities of Iran. Not much information is available as to when Iran began working on this facility.

According to available information, after an in-between break, Iran resumed uranium enrichment work at this facility in July 2004.

In September 2007, Iran said 3,000 centrifuges capable of enrichment were installed at this facility. Iran had informed the IAEA in 2010 that it would start construction of enrichment facilities in Natanz in March 2011.

Israel is concerned about this facility since the technology used for producing fuel for nuclear power is not much different from that of producing fuel for a nuclear explosion.

### **5. Enrichment Facility in Fordo**

Iran acknowledged the existence of the Fordo facility, near the holy city of Qom, for the first time in September 2009.

The IAEA was first informed that the facility will produce uranium enriched up to a level of 5 per cent, which is the requirement of power reactors.

In 2011, the IAEA was informed that enrichment up to 20 per cent will be carried out at the Fordo facility, in order to stop fuel production at Natanz.

The IAEA confirmed in January, 2012 that Iran has started production of highly enriched uranium (HEU), which is the fuel enriched up to 20 per cent, at the Fordo facility.

Israel is worried about this facility because HEU with a concentration of 20% or more is used to build nuclear weapons.

### **6. Weapon Development Facility at Parchin**

It is a key centre in Iran's munitions arsenal.

The site has facilities for research, development and production of various weapons, including explosives and rockets.

Though a 2005 IAEA inspection did not point out any evidence for nuclear weapons programme at the facility, a 2011 November report by the agency suggested that Iran has been using this site for testing various high explosives, which could be used in nuclear weapons.



Israel's concerns come from the fact that the facility is being used for testing high explosives, which could also include some miniature nuclear weapons or for using controlled nuclear explosions.

## 7. Heavy Water Plant in Arak

The Arak facility came to the notice of the international community in 2002 after a US agency published satellite imagery of the site, pointing out the possibility of a heavy water plant there.

An IAEA team visited the heavy water reactor site at Arak in August 2010 and reported that it is still being built and some equipment has already been installed. Iran submitted to the IAEA that the reactor is planned to start by 2013-end.

Based on satellite imagery, the IAEA recently suggested that the heavy water production plant is likely to be in operation now.

Israel is worried about the facility because heavy water is required to moderate the nuclear fission chain reaction in a certain type of reactors and is used to produce plutonium for making nuclear bombs.

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/articles/312401/20120311/israel-iran-nuclear-attack-facilities.htm>

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Khaleej Times – U.A.E.

## US Should Assume Iran Seeks Nukes: Kissinger

Agence France-Presse (AFP)  
12 March 2012

WASHINGTON — Former US secretary of state Henry Kissinger said in an interview on Sunday that the United States should assume that Iran is actively preparing to build nuclear weapons.

Kissinger, 88, was asked on the CNN show “GPS” if the threat of an Iranian nuclear weapon was so dire that Israel would need to launch a military strike in the near future.

“I am very uneasy with the so-called intelligence report that say we don’t know whether they are actually working on nuclear weapons,” Kissinger told CNN.

“I think we should start from the premise that they are undergoing all this in order to achieve a military capability. I don’t think that is a disputable point.”

US intelligence analysts believe there is no hard evidence that Iran has decided to build a nuclear bomb — an assessment broadly consistent with a 2007 intelligence finding that concluded that Iran had abandoned its nuclear weapons program, The New York Times reported in February, citing unnamed US officials.

The assessment was largely reaffirmed in a 2010 National Intelligence Estimate, and that it remains the consensus view of America’s 16 intelligence agencies, the Times reported.

The US administration maintains that tough sanctions on Iran and diplomatic efforts need to be given more time before any resort to bombing raids.

Israeli leaders however say time is running out for any pre-emptive strike. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Monday that sanctions against Iran have not worked, and “none of us can afford to wait much longer.”

US President Barack Obama has cautioned against “bluster” in talking about possible war with Iran, saying there still exists a window of diplomacy.

[http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2012/March/middleeast\\_March267.xml&section=middleeast&col=](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2012/March/middleeast_March267.xml&section=middleeast&col=)





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China Daily – China

## **Iran, G5+1 to Resume Nuclear Talks Soon**

March 13, 2012

(Xinhua)

TEHRAN - Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast said Tuesday that the new round of nuclear talks between Iran and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany (G5+1) will start "soon."

Mehmanparast told reporters in his weekly press briefing that a number of countries have announced to host the talks, but the decisions on the venue and time have not been finalized yet.

Asked about the probable "agreements" in the new round of nuclear talks, he said that "It depends on the subjects to be put forward by the parties."

"All countries can enjoy the privileges of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes within the framework of the Non- Proliferation Treaty (NPT) regulations," he added.

[http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2012-03/13/content\\_14826041.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2012-03/13/content_14826041.htm)

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Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Tuesday, March 13, 2012

## **Iran Rejects Claims of Cleaning Up Nuclear Works**

By NASSER KARIMI, Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran on Tuesday rejected allegations it attempted to clean up radioactive traces possibly left by secret nuclear work at a key military site before granting U.N. inspectors permission to visit the facility.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast told reporters in Tehran that the allegations were misleading and false, and insisted that such traces could not be cleaned up.

Satellite images of Iran's Parchin military facility that circulated last week appeared to show trucks and earth-moving vehicles at the location. That set off assertions by diplomats, all nuclear experts accredited to the U.N. nuclear agency in Vienna, Austria, about a cleanup operation.

The diplomats said the crews at Parchin may be trying to erase evidence of a test of a small nuclear-weapon trigger. The diplomats spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the information on the record.

The assertions added to tensions surrounding Iran's controversial nuclear program, which the West fears is geared toward nuclear weapons-making but Tehran insists is for peaceful purposes.

Mehmanparast dismissed the diplomats' assertions.

"Those who are familiar with nuclear physics know that these comments are not remarkable in any way," he said. "This is mainly public speculation and not based on logic."

"Basically, nuclear military activities are not cleanable, at all," Mehmanparast said. He did not directly address the satellite photos but stressed that Parchin has been continuing its "conventional military" activities and operations.

Inspecting Parchin, southeast of the capital Tehran, was a key request made by senior IAEA teams that visited Tehran in January and February. Iran rebuffed those demands at the time, as well as attempts by the nuclear

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agency's team to question Iranian officials and secure other information linked to the allegations of secret weapons work.

But last week, a statement by Iran's permanent envoy to the IAEA said the visit will now be allowed in a gesture of good will.

The Parchin complex has been often mentioned in the West as a suspected base for secret nuclear experiments — a claim Iran consistently denies. IAEA inspectors visited the site in 2005, but only one of four areas on the grounds and reported no unusual activities.

An IAEA report last year said there were indications Tehran has conducted high-explosives testing to set off a nuclear charge at Parchin. Iran denied the atomic activity and insisted that any decision to open the site rests with the armed forces since it was a military, not nuclear, facility.

*Associated Press Writer George Jahn contributed to this story from Vienna, Austria.*

<http://www.ajc.com/news/nation-world/iran-rejects-claims-of-1383002.html>

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Chicago Tribune

## **Continuity Expected in North Korea: Think Tank**

Reuters

March 10, 2012

NEW YORK (Reuters) - A delegation of North Korean officials in New York have indicated there will be "continuity" in the secretive state following the death in December of long-time leader Kim Jong-il, a former senior State Department official said on Saturday.

A North Korean delegation, led by Vice Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho, met on Saturday for some six hours with the National Committee on American Foreign Policy think tank. In a news conference following the meeting, Evans Revere, a former senior U.S. diplomat in South Korea who participated in the meeting, said he was heartened by the informal talks.

Revere said there appeared to be a "strong strand of continuity" in the unpredictable North Asian country, which is also known as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

"It suggests that the DPRK is not going off into some unpredictable or odd direction," Revere said.

The meeting came 10 days after North Korea - now led by Kim Jung-il's son, Kim Jong-un - agreed with the United States to suspend nuclear and long-range missile tests and uranium enrichment at a nuclear facility, and to allow nuclear inspectors back.

At the same time Washington pledged to resume food aid.

The two sides have held nuclear talks on-and-off for nearly two decades, but relations hit a low in 2009 when the North conducted a second nuclear test and a long-range missile launch. Washington imposed sanctions, and Pyongyang walked out of regional denuclearization talks.

The U.S. think tank has no standing to negotiate with North Korea, and it described the meeting as a non-binding "exchange of views." The North Korean delegation was not present at the news conference.

*Reporting by Edith Honan; editing by Mohammad Zargham*

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/sns-rt-us-korea-north-nuclearbre82a00o-20120310,0,3349215.story>

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Mainichi Daily News – Japan  
March 10, 2012

## **N. Korea Nuclear Program Is Threat to E. Asia: IAEA Chief**

VIENNA (Kyodo) -- The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency said Saturday that the nuclear weapons program in North Korea threatens the safety of East Asia.

North Korea's nuclear program is "a threat to East Asia," IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano said in an interview with Kyodo News and indicated the nuclear agency will make utmost efforts to resolve the issue.

Amano said that North Korea's nuclear program poses a greater risk to the world than Iran, which is currently the focus of heightened global concerns for its own suspected attempts to develop nuclear weapons.

"The problem (with North Korea) is serious and its impact on the world is larger" than Iran, said Amano, citing the fact that Pyongyang has already conducted two nuclear tests.

Amano said he is seeking the return of his agency's nuclear inspectors to monitor North Korea's nuclear complex in Yongbyon, after Pyongyang agreed to accept IAEA monitors in a bilateral agreement reached with the United States in late February.

But Amano declined to clarify when the agency will meet with North Korean officials to discuss the issue, saying the IAEA is "currently assessing the situation."

The IAEA's knowledge of North Korea is "limited" and it has had "absolutely no idea about the current situation in Yongbyon" since April 2009, when North Korea expelled the agency's inspectors from the city, he said.

"It will still take a considerable time" for the return of IAEA inspectors to Yongbyon as the agency needs to talk with North Korea and the United States to determine what activities the IAEA inspectors would be allowed to engage in after their return, Amano said.

<http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/international/news/20120311p2g00m0in015000c.html>

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Arab News – Saudi Arabia

## **UN Expert Says North Korea Leadership Change a Chance for Reform**

By AGENCIES

March 11, 2012

GENEVA: The human rights and humanitarian situation in North Korea has deteriorated in recent months, but the leadership transition following Kim Jong-Il's death is an opportunity for reforms, a UN expert said.

In a report to be presented tomorrow to the UN Human Rights Council, special rapporteur Marzuki Darusman hoped the "new leadership in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will use the recent succession as an opportunity to engage with the international community and to secure global confidence." "The current transition may be a window of opportunity for the country to adopt a reform process and address all questions and concerns in relation to human rights," said Marzuki.

Kim Jong-Un took over as leader of the North Korean regime after his father Kim Jong-Il's death on December 17 from a heart attack at the age of 69.

Darusman, whose report covers September 2011 to January 2012, said "the human rights and humanitarian situation continued to deteriorate in the country" during the period.

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There is an "alarming deterioration in the availability of food," said the rapporteur, adding that he was "concerned that the current dire food shortage ... will lead to serious health problems, especially in children, women and the elderly." He also chided North Korea's "neighboring countries" for forcibly returning refugees from the country.

While the expert did not name China, the Asian giant shares a large land border with the North.

China and Russia are also the only nearby states other than South Korea and Japan - both of which were praised by the expert for welcoming refugees.

In 2011, border controls were tightened and Pyongyang issued orders to "shoot and kill those fleeing" the North, said the expert.

As a result, more asylum seekers chose to leave by sea. In 2011, 47 people arrived by sea compared to just nine in the previous year.

Darusman based his report on interviews with NGOs and diplomats collected during missions to neighboring Japan and South Korea as Pyongyang denied him access to the North.

Meanwhile, a prominent US senator met Friday with North Korea's nuclear envoy who promised to live up to commitments made in an agreement last week with the United States.

Democrat Sen. John Kerry said that the North Korean also made a "profound statement" about wanting a different relationship and not wanting to fight with the United States.

Kerry met the envoy, Ri Yong Ho, at an informal security conference in New York, a week after Pyongyang agreed to freeze uranium enrichment and allow in UN inspectors. The North also agreed to a moratorium on long-range missile and nuclear tests.

"They said that they will live by the agreement that they made last week, that we can count on that," Kerry, who chairs the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, told reporters.

In return, the US will provide its first food aid to the impoverished communist nation in three years.

That has contributed to an easing in tensions between the long-term adversaries, but is only a first step toward restarting six-nation disarmament negotiations that the North withdrew from in 2009.

"We have been here before. We have come to these points that have been constructive and something breaks down. We need to try and change that dynamic," Kerry said.

<http://arabnews.com/world/article585812.ece>

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Yonhap News – South Korea

March 12, 2012

## **S. Korea Cautious on N. Korea's Recent Nuclear Deal with U.S.**

BERLIN, March 12 (Yonhap) -- North Korea's recent nuclear deal with the United States is a good indicator of Pyongyang's current movement, but it is still too early to "conclusively assess" it, South Korea's point man on North Korea said.

North Korea has agreed to freeze its uranium-enrichment facilities and temporarily halt its nuclear and long-range missile tests in exchange for 240,000 tons of U.S. food aid.

The North has also agreed to allow the return of monitors from the International Atomic Energy Agency to its main nuclear complex in Yongbyon.

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Pyongyang and Washington announced the deal late last month after their first high-level talks in Beijing on Pyongyang's nuclear programs since the December death of North Korea's leader Kim Jong-il.

"It is still too early to conclusively assess that. But it is a good signal that the government in the North is willing to move," Unification Minister Yu Woo-ik said in an interview posted on the Spiegel's Web site.

Yu held the interview with the German weekly magazine during his recent trip to Germany and the European Union.

The nuclear accord raised hope that the six-party talks on ending Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programs could be resumed.

The North quit the disarmament-for-aid talks in April 2009 and conducted a second nuclear test a month later. The talks also involve South Korea, China, Japan and Russia.

Still, Yu sounded a cautious note on whether North Korea will follow through with its latest commitment.

"If the announced steps are indeed implemented, then it will achieve the precondition for new talks -- also with an expanded number of parties, as we have always demanded," Yu said. "Now we will have to see how dependable this announcement really is."

The North has a track record of making commitments in return for economic concessions and then abandoning talks and renegeing on its commitments.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2012/03/12/24/0401000000AEN20120312004800315F.HTML>

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China Daily – China

## **ROK: DPRK Nuclear Issues Can Be Discussed Bilaterally**

March 12, 2012

(Xinhua)

SEOUL - Nuclear issues of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) can be discussed on the sidelines of the upcoming Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, South Korean foreign minister said Monday.

"North Korea (DPRK)'s nuclear issues are not on the agenda for the summit, but it can be discussed bilaterally because all member countries of the six-party talks except for the North will be attending the event," Kim Sung-hwan, Minister for Foreign Affairs, told a group of ethnic Korean journalists working overseas.

He was referring to the stalled talks on Pyongyang's nuclear program. The talks, last held in 2008, involve the two Koreas, China, Japan, the United States and Russia.

"The summit seeks to minimize the use of nuclear materials, so it can deliver a message to the North that it should give up on materials such as highly enriched uranium and plutonium," the foreign minister added.

His remarks came two weeks ahead of the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit that will open here on March 26.

The two-day Summit, which will bring together 58 heads of state and international organizations, is aimed at reducing and protecting radioactive materials and keeping terrorists at bay from nuclear materials and facilities.

South Korea has extended an invitation to the DPRK to attend the global forum on the condition that the country demonstrates its commitment to denuclearization, but no official response has been made.

[http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2012-03/12/content\\_14816011.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2012-03/12/content_14816011.htm)

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Bangkok Post – Thailand

## **UN to Resume Nuclear Monitoring Soon: NKorea Envoy**

By Agence Franc-Presse (AFP)

13 March 2012

North Korea's chief nuclear envoy says UN atomic inspectors will return soon to his country as part of a food aid deal with the United States, according to a news report Tuesday.

"It (the return) will come at an early date," Vice Foreign Minister Ri Yong-Ho told journalists in New York, South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported.

"Concrete measures are being constantly taken to fulfill the February agreement," Ri said in comments made Monday US time.

He was wrapping up a rare visit to the United States to attend an academic forum.

The North last month agreed to suspend nuclear and long-range missile tests and to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to monitor a moratorium on uranium enrichment.

The enrichment programme, first disclosed in November 2010, could give the communist state a second way to make atomic weapons in addition to its longstanding plutonium programme.

North Korea, which has conducted two nuclear tests, kicked out IAEA inspectors in 2009 and is suspected of supplying equipment, materials and know-how in the past to Syria and Libya.

In return, the United States promised to ship 240,000 tonnes of food. US State Department spokesman Mark Toner said Monday there are plans to start the shipments "as soon as possible".

The surprise February 29 deal raised hopes of eased tensions under the North's new ruler Kim Jong-Un, who succeeded his late father Kim Jong-Il.

Ri said Pyongyang was willing to move along if Washington wants to improve ties, stressing an end to "hostile" relations between the two countries would lead to resolving all pending issues.

But he painted a gloomy picture for inter-Korean relations, accusing South Korea of backtracking on summit agreements reached in 2000 and 2007.

"We are willing to go hand in hand should the South respect the declarations and implement them. But the South does not seem to be willing to do so yet," he was quoted as saying.

The North has taken a consistently hostile tone with the South during the leadership transition period, reviling its President Lee Myung-Bak as a "rat" and a "traitor" and vowing to "wipe out" his administration.

<http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/284158/un-to-resume-nuclear-monitoring-soon-nkorea-envoy>

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The Nation – Pakistan

## **Strategic Bosses to Be Rearranged**

By Sikander Shaheen

March 13, 2012

ISLAMABAD – A reshuffle within military's top hierarchy is on the cards with outgoing spymaster Lieutenant-General Ahmed Shuja Pasha may head the Strategic Planning Division (SPD), the top tactical body that oversees Pakistan's nuclear programme, after his retirement on March 18.

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According to available information, a total of six three-star generals (lieutenant-generals) will retire this year. Apart from the incumbent Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chief, Lt-Gen Tanvir Tahir is the second three-star general scheduled to retire. Tahir is currently performing duties as Inspector General (IG) Communication and Information Technology (COMM and IT).

It is reliably learnt that SPD DG Lt-Gen (r) Khalid Kidwai will most likely be assigned the job of National Engineering and Scientific Commission (Nescom) chairman, in case Lt-Gen Pasha replaces him. The Nescom, being Pakistan's another key strategic body, is largely involved in the country's strategic and defence build-up. The incumbent chairman of Nescom, Irfan Burney, is expected to get another important defence-related assignment under the umbrella of National Command Authority (NCA), the supervisory body for SPD, Nescom and National Defence Complex (NDC). Being a scientific strategic body, the Nescom has the successful accomplishment of some projects to its credit, like Babur (a cruise missile of Hatf series) and Burraq, the laser-guided missile-carrier vehicle.

Another important reorganisation in Army's top hierarchy is expected in November following the retirement of Multan Corps Commander Lt-Gen Shafqaat Ahmed. Reportedly, he would be replaced by Lt-Gen Arshad Waheed, the Chief of General Staff (CGS) or Principal Staff Officer (PSO) at General Headquarters (GHQ). Lt-Gen Arshad, it is further learnt, is likely to get the aforesaid field slot since the elevation of a three-star lieutenant-general to four-star full-scale general rank requires the former to have served as PSO in an addition to have commanded a field post. Lt-Gen Arshad, owing to his professional standing, is deemed as strong candidate within the military circles for further promotion. Following his expected engagement in a field posting, the incumbent Vice Chief of General Staff (DCGS) Lt-Gen Nasir Janjua may be elevated as CGS. Normally, a two-star general (major general) is appointed as VCGS while Lt-Gen Janjua is reportedly performing duties at the aforesaid slot for the time being till he gets an assignment normally handed to a three-star general.

In addition, Deputy Chairman Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) Lt-Gen Sardar Mehmood Ali is retiring next month, while Lt-Gen Ayaz Saleem Rana, the chief of Heavy Industries Taxila (HIT), would reach the age of superannuation in October this year. Another three-star general scheduled to retire is National Defence University (NDU) President Lt-Gen Agha Muhammad Umer Farooq.

In another important reshuffle, Brigadier Abdullah Dogar has recently been appointed as defence attache (DA) in Washington, one of the military's most crucial postings abroad. He has replaced Major-General Nazir Butt who was promoted last year. Major-General Butt reported to have played a major role in highlighting and pursuing the alleged Memogate scandal during his appointment as Pakistan's DA in Washington.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/national/13-Mar-2012/strategic-bosses-to-be-rearranged>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

## **U.S. May Disclose Missile Defense Data to Russia**

12 March 2012

The U.S. has said it is willing to disclose classified information to Russia on the missile defense shield to be deployed in Europe, a move that a military analyst said could solve the impasse over the American program.

The plans to share unspecified "secret data" on the missile defense shield with Russia were first voiced late last week by Bradley Roberts, U.S. Deputy Assistant Defense Secretary. Pentagon spokeswoman April Cunningham confirmed this information for a Kommersant newspaper article published on Monday.

It is not yet clear exactly which data may be disclosed to Russia, which has for years strongly opposed American plans to deploy a missile defense shield in Eastern Europe, including Poland, Romania and the Czech Republic.

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The White House insists the program is aimed against a potential threat from rogue states such as Iran and North Korea but Russia says its own missiles will also fall under the shield, destroying the nuclear balance that existed since the Cold War.

In November, news leaked that the White House was in secret talks with Russia about providing it with information on the velocity burnout of the modified version of the SM-3 rocket, which is to become the staple interceptor rocket of the U.S. missile shield by 2020. However, the U.S. administration denied at the time that it proposed to disclose the data on the rocket's crucial parameter to Moscow.

"If they are really going to disclose data on [rocket] speed, that'll be the decisive argument" for Russia, said Alexander Khramchikhin, a researcher with the Moscow-based Institute for Political and Military Analysis think-tank.

Speed of interceptor rockets is the only thing the Russian military needs to know to determine whether the U.S. missile shield really poses a risk to Russian rockets, Khramchikhin said by phone on Monday.

The move would be unprecedented but not impossible, though the upcoming U.S. presidential campaign is likely to hurt these plans, said Khramchikhin. Republican opponents of incumbent President Barack Obama, who is planning to seek reelection, have repeatedly accused him of being too soft in his dealings with Russia.

Russian officials have not commented on the proposal as of Monday.

Russian-American talks on the missile defense shield failed to progress last year, with both sides refusing to make any significant concessions. However, the matter is to be taken up again in May at an international conference in Moscow organized by the Russian Defense Ministry and a NATO summit in Chicago later the same month.

MOSCOW, March 12 (RIA Novosti, Alexey Eremenko)

<http://en.ria.ru/world/20120312/172111230.html>

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Denver Post

## **Russian Official: No Missile Deal at NATO Summit**

March 13, 2012

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV, Associated Press

MOSCOW—Russia and the United States have failed to narrow their differences over a planned U.S. missile shield and stand practically no chance of reaching a compromise at the NATO summit in Chicago in May, a top Russian official said Tuesday.

Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov said Washington is going ahead with its plans for a missile shield in Europe without considering Russian concerns.

The U.S. says the NATO missile shield is aimed at deflecting potential missile threats from Iran, but Moscow fears that it will eventually grow powerful enough to undermine Russia's nuclear deterrent.

"I think it would be very difficult to achieve any success at the summit," Antonov said. "As of today, there is no document for the leaders to approve."

NATO has offered Moscow to cooperate on the missile shield. Russia has said the missile shield should be run jointly, a proposal which has been rejected by NATO.

Without a NATO-Russia cooperation deal, President Dmitry Medvedev has sought guarantees from the U.S. that any future shield is not aimed at Russia. He has threatened to deploy missiles aimed at the U.S. shield if no agreement is reached.

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Antonov said any moves "will depend entirely on how the U.S. implements its plans."

"If it conducts the policy of presenting us with a *fait accompli*, that doesn't show trust and respect for us as partners," Antonov said.

He wouldn't say whether president-elect Vladimir Putin would participate at the NATO summit beginning May 20 after attending the Group of Eight leading industrialized nations summit at Camp David.

"We still need to do a lot with our American friends and NATO colleagues to reach common ground and put it on paper," he said. "I think it will require more time than there is ahead of the summit."

[http://www.denverpost.com/world/ci\\_20161858/russian-official-no-missile-deal-at-nato-summit](http://www.denverpost.com/world/ci_20161858/russian-official-no-missile-deal-at-nato-summit)

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Kilmarnock Standard – (Scotland) U.K.

## Scotland 'Could End Trident Policy'

March 10, 2012

An independent Scotland could force the UK to abandon its nuclear weapons, an SNP MSP claimed.

Highlands and Islands MSP John Finnie said relocating Trident bases at Faslane and Coulport was "not a serious option".

Under those circumstances, he argued that if an independent Scotland "remained firm" to the SNP policy of not having nuclear weapons, it could force the abandonment of the Trident programme.

Mr Finnie spoke out on the issue at the SNP spring conference in Glasgow, where he told party activists: "Relocation is not a serious option."

And while he said that "London would pay any price to keep Trident at Faslane and Coulport" he also stressed that "there is nowhere for Trident to go" if Scotland was no longer part of the UK.

He stated: "If Scotland remained firm on this issue, and I am certain that we will, the UK will have to abandon its nuclear programme."

SNP members at the conference unanimously backed a motion for Trident missiles, submarines and warheads to be removed from an independent Scotland within the "soonest possible timescale".

Glasgow Anniesland MSP Bill Kidd said that a "key advantage" of leaving the UK would be it would give "Scotland the powers to have Trident removed from Scottish waters".

In those circumstances, he said he believed Westminster would "act on this and withdraw Trident as quickly as possible".

<http://www.kilmarnockstandard.co.uk/ayrshire-news/scottish-news/2012/03/10/scotland-could-end-trident-policy-81430-30504339/>

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Global Security Newswire

## Legislative Quagmire Grips Nuclear Security Pacts in U.S.

March 12, 2012

By Diane Barnes, *Global Security Newswire*

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WASHINGTON -- Just weeks before the second Global Nuclear Security Summit convenes in South Korea, the United States still has not enacted a law critical to ratifying what the Obama administration at the first summit called “the two key international treaties governing nuclear security” (see *GSN*, Oct. 6, 2011).

The Senate endorsed both pacts four years ago without opposition. However, Congress has yet to sign off on legislation that would force the United States to come into line with the mandates.

The administration is still wrangling with Congress over legal specifics for implementing the international agreements, according to representatives of the State Department and involved congressional committees.

Officials from the Justice and State departments are meeting routinely with Capitol Hill staffers in an effort to resolve disputes, but neither side has promised formal action on the proposals prior to the March 26-27 event in Seoul or before the current congressional term ends next January.

Some issue specialists called for senior-level White House involvement in finalizing U.S. adoption of the agreements, a step they said is crucial to improve atomic material protections around the world and to bolster global collaboration in apprehending and punishing potential nuclear terrorism suspects.

“The White House needs to call Democrats who are on the Hill and tell them to make it happen,” said Miles Pomper, a senior research associate at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies in Washington.

One of the two arrangements requires member nations to criminalize the possession or use of sensitive materials in a nuclear or radiological weapon with the intent of causing death and destruction. It also establishes guidelines for cooperating in the extradition and prosecution of individuals linked to a nuclear plot or threat. The 2005 pact -- called the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism -- took effect in 2007 and now has 77 member states; the United States, however, remains outside the regime.

The second agreement, also completed in 2005, would revise the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material to demand a number of requirements aimed at protecting nonmilitary nuclear material in domestic use, storage or transport. The accord presently only requires such measures for material in transit between countries. To take effect, the amendment must be ratified by 97 of the original 145 signatories to the 1980 pact; 54 had done so as of late February, according to a U.N. document.

At the 2010 nuclear summit in Washington, the Obama administration said the United States had “accelerated efforts to complete ratification procedures” for the convention and amendment. One month earlier, it had provided Congress with a draft bill to implement the agreements, describing the legislation as “nearly identical” to a proposal put forward by the Bush administration in July 2008.

No lawmaker has sponsored a bill in Congress for complying with the treaties, however. Last year, the Justice Department provided the new 112th Congress with a slightly revised proposal for meeting the terms of the pacts. Also included in the submission was the department’s fourth draft bill since 2007 for implementing two separate agreements on legal procedures for terrorism cases involving ships or fixed platforms, as well as overseas transfers of terrorist fugitives or of WMD materials or delivery systems.

The Senate in September 2008 provided constitutionally mandated “advice and consent” for all four deals, but the two bills for complying with the agreements would also require approval from the House of Representatives.

The Obama administration in 2010 launched discussions with Congress aimed at hammering out consensus language for implementing the two nuclear security agreements, and the State Department as of late January was holding talks on all four pacts “at least once a month or so” with staffers from the judiciary and foreign affairs committees in the House or Senate, one department official said. The Justice Department has also participated in the discussions, said the source, who was authorized to speak only on condition of anonymity.

A second State Department official on Thursday suggested the talks have intensified in the last month.



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"Things have started moving with Congress, and we are now working with them to enact legislation that will allow us to implement the treaties," the official -- also not authorized to comment on the record -- stated by e-mail.

Staffers from both houses have been working on their own proposals for implementing the four international agreements, the first official said, adding that all negotiations on legislative measures have used the Justice Department's proposal as a starting point.

"There have been some discussions regarding draft legislation from the House side, draft legislation from the Senate side, so we're working with both sides to try to realize legislation that could get through both houses expeditiously," the source said.

The administration's 2011 draft bill for the two nuclear agreements nearly matches the first, with the exception of brief additions that the State Department official said were intended to match the international and U.S. definitions of a "nuclear weapons state."

Spokespeople for every participating committee turned down requests to discuss the latest roadblocks. The State Department insider, though, said lawmakers remained deeply concerned about two provisions in the Justice Department's latest bill that take steps not required by the international nuclear security agreements: language to make an "act of nuclear terrorism" as defined under the law an executable offense if it results in death, and a measure to extend federal wiretapping authorities to specifically include investigations related to a nuclear incident.

House Judiciary Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security Subcommittee Ranking Member Robert Scott (D-Va.) took issue with both aspects of the legislation at a hearing convened last October.

"The administration has clearly asked for more than is necessary to implement these treaties," he said, noting the pacts themselves still enjoyed broad, bipartisan support.

In a separate criticism, Scott said the administration's proposals would result in legal redundancies. The nuclear security compliance text would create a new section of the federal criminal code, but the lawmaker said "existing statutes already cover most of our obligations" under the pacts. Any mandates in the four international accords not covered by existing U.S. law should be addressed "in a manner that simplifies the criminal code rather than complicates it," Scott said.

Deputy Assistant Attorney General Brad Wiegmann at the hearing acknowledged "some overlap" with existing statutes.

It is uncertain to what extent GOP lawmakers on the panel share the concerns of their Democratic counterparts. The State Department insider admitted that "the death penalty has been an issue for some folks but not an issue for other folks," but subcommittee Chairman James Sensenbrenner (R-Wis.) railed with Scott at a December hearing against what both lawmakers described as a proliferation of unnecessary federal criminal statutes.

The State Department official said he was "confident we're going to have consensus" on the legislation. "Everyone supports the aims of the treaty and what we're trying to do and everyone's trying to work with us and find ways to do it."

It was still unclear how soon a deal could be reached, the official said, adding the administration has consistently sought in talks with congressional staff to "impart a sense of urgency" for completing ratification of all four security deals.

Pomper, though, said implementing the two nuclear agreements "is not a high priority item for Congress."

"There's not a lot of political benefit to doing this, and ... even though they're important, they're sort of obscure to your average congressman, and they're not going to win or lose an election on it," the expert said.

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The security benefits of the two agreements could outweigh their domestic political significance, statements by U.S. and international experts suggest. Both measures are “essential elements of the global nuclear security architecture,” according to the 2010 summit communique and a statement by current and former top officials assembled to advise South Korean President Lee Myung-bak on the upcoming forum in Seoul.

“These treaties already won broad bipartisan support from the Senate in 2008 so passing simple legislation to implement them should be possible,” Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry (D-Mass.) told *Global Security Newswire* in an e-mail statement.

In advance of the October hearing, Sensenbrenner received letters from several top Bush-era nuclear officials urging action to advance the 2005 amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear material.

“Approving the implementing legislation ... is important because it would strengthen the international regime to counter nuclear terrorism and because it would, among others, criminalize specified offenses such as the possession of radioactive materials other than nuclear material that are not now permitted by [U.S.] law,” former National Nuclear Security Administration head Linton Brooks said in one of the statements.

The move could also help the United States to “steer the outcome” of this month’s summit, Brooks wrote.

Pomper said the amendment would not impose specific physical security requirements for nuclear material in member nations, but it could provide “a foothold” for pressuring signatory states to accept voluntary audits and to agree to international recommendations, such as calls by the International Atomic Energy Agency last year for security assessments, physical barriers, human sentries and other measures at member nations’ nuclear sites.

The amendment remains “well short” of the number of ratifications required to take effect, he noted.

“A lot of countries look at us and say, ‘If the U.S. isn’t going to ratify this, why should we bother?’” Pomper said. “We were the ones who pushed the negotiation of this amendment, so this is doubly embarrassing.”

A one-time senior State Department nuclear security official under President Bush aired the same concern.

“I can assure you that other countries look to the United States action or inaction on this amendment ... as a guide to their own behavior,” Andrew Semmel, who served from 2003 to 2007 as deputy assistant secretary of State for nuclear nonproliferation policy and negotiations, said in his own letter to Sensenbrenner.

The International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism has already entered into force. Ratification by the United States could serve to further broaden its membership, Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation Thomas Countryman said told the House subcommittee in October.

“While 77 states are party to [the agreement], it still lags far behind other similar counterterrorism conventions, most of which have over 150 states parties,” Countryman said. “The U.S. has ratified the 12 [earlier] counterterrorism conventions ... and U.S. leadership in promoting those treaties has been instrumental in getting other countries to also ratify those treaties.”

This month’s summit in Seoul could provide crucial leverage for action on the agreements, said Kingston Reif, nuclear nonproliferation head for the Center for Arms Control and Nonproliferation.

“The question is if the U.S. doesn’t get this done after the summit, and there’s not necessarily pressure to do it until the next summit or if there’s not really a time line at all, I don’t know how that’s going to ... encourage Congress to act on this,” Reif said. “The time is now.”

“Congress has oversight responsibility on this and they should do their due diligence ... but this has been going on for months and months and months now, and the time has since passed to move this process forward,” he said.

<http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/legislative-quagmire-grips-nuclear-security-pacts-us/>

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

Korea Times – South Korea  
March 13, 2012

## Seoul Summit Eyes Cuts in Stockpiles of Enriched Uranium

World leaders will converge on Seoul later this month for a nuclear security summit with more than 10 nations poised to agree to eliminate tens of tons of weapons-grade enriched uranium, enough for thousands of atomic bombs, a senior Seoul official with information on the summit said Tuesday.

Top leaders from 53 nations as well as four international organizations, including U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, will attend the March 26-27 Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, which aims to bolster international safeguards and prevent nuclear terrorism.

Since the first summit initiated by U.S. President Barack Obama in 2010 in Washington, progress has been piled up on efforts to secure vulnerable nuclear materials worldwide.

Over the past two years, more than 10 nations, including Australia and Argentina, got rid of some 400 kilograms of highly enriched uranium, which are enough nuclear material to make approximately 16 nuclear weapons.

The U.S. and Russia, the world's two largest nuclear superpowers, also eliminated seven tons and 48 tons of highly enriched uranium each, according to the summit's organizing committee.

The Seoul summit will serve as a "stepping stone" to translate the political will generated at the Washington summit into action, while laying a cornerstone for attaining key nuclear security goals in the mid- and long-term, the official said.

Negotiators, or "sherpas" from the 53 nations will hold their final meeting in Seoul on March 23 and fix agenda for the Seoul summit and the text of a so-called "Seoul Communique" that will be announced at the end of the summit.

"Sherpas have already agreed on the Seoul Communique that will pledge to minimize the civilian use of highly-enriched uranium and plutonium," said the official said on the condition of anonymity, adding the text will include "practical visions and concrete actions" on ways to promote global cooperation and enhance measures for nuclear materials and facilities from being exploited by terrorists.

"Also, at least 10 more nations will separately pledge to eliminate their stocks of highly-enriched uranium and plutonium," the official said.

"In the wake of the Seoul summit, achievements are expected to get rid of nuclear materials to make thousands of nuclear weapons," he said.

According to experts, the most basic nuclear weapon can be produced with a mere 25kg of highly enriched uranium or 8kg of plutonium. Although it is very difficult to build a sophisticated nuclear weapon, it is not too difficult to produce a basic weapon using nuclear materials, they said.

Seoul officials said one of the key topics at the Seoul summit would be how to ensure the safety of nuclear power plants.

Since the Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan last March, which followed a giant earthquake and tsunami that shut down the nuclear plant's cooling systems, atomic safety has been in sharp focus.

The crisis that engulfed the Fukushima plant, the world's worst nuclear disaster in 25 years, prompted countries with nuclear power plants to review the safety of atomic energy and the extent of potential damage in the event of a terrorist attack.

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The upcoming summit is not aimed at dealing with nuclear weapons programs by North Korea and Iran, but Seoul officials have said that the North Korean nuclear issue can be discussed bilaterally on the sidelines of the summit.

Foreign Minister Kim Sung-hwan said, "North Korea's nuclear issue is not on the agenda of the Seoul summit, but the issue can be discussed bilaterally outside the summit because all member countries of the six-party talks except North Korea will be attending.

"The Nuclear Security Summit pursues the minimum use of nuclear materials such as highly enriched uranium and plutonium. So, it can deliver a message to North Korea that it should give up such materials," Kim said.

Except North Korea, leaders of all member countries involved in the six-party talks on ending the North's nuclear drive will attend the Seoul summit. The multilateral talks, involving the two Koreas, the U.S., China, Japan and Russia, have been stalled since late 2008.

Seoul officials said that the Netherlands has agreed to host the third Nuclear Security Summit in 2014. At the Seoul summit, South Korea will likely formally name the Netherlands as the host for the next summit. (Yonhap)

[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/03/120\\_106808.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/03/120_106808.html)

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Al Resalah – Palestine

OPINION/Op-Ed

## **Iran Has Perfect Right to Possess Nuclear Weapon**

March 10, 2012

By Khalid Amayreh

People may legitimately differ in their views on the Iranian regime, its ideology, policies and behaviors. However, when it comes to right and wrong, especially from the ethical view point, I believe that Iran , or any other country, has an absolute right to develop nuclear weapons in order to deter predator countries, such as Israel, from attacking the nation of Iran .

I personally don't feel comfortable with some Iranian behavior, especially at the regional level. And I believe the Iranians have come to realize that their behaviors with regard to the Syrian and Bahraini crises are boomeranging and seriously harming Iran's image throughout the majority-Sunni Arab world.

A few years ago Iran stood out as an ostensible force for freedom and justice, drawing the wrath of the forces of arrogance and oppression, including the evil pair, Israel and its guardian ally, the United States.

Now, however, the Iranian republic is widely seen as following brazenly sectarian policies at the expense of a more ethical modus operandi that should be consistent with declared Iranian principles of siding with the oppressed against the oppressor.

None the less, things ought to be put in proportion, and any criticism of Iran should never push true Muslims to join the Israeli-American front against Iran.

The reason for that is two-fold: First Israel and the United States represent the aggressor party and their goals have more to do with maintaining and perpetuating Israel's strategic supremacy in the region than with any other ethical goals.

America was the first and last country on earth to use nuclear weapons, and as such is utterly unfit to lecture the world about the evils of nuclear weapons. In fact, America and Israel continue to use nuclear weapons in different forms, e.g. depleted uranium, against Muslims in places like Iraq , Afghanistan and Palestine , with horrible consequences. These nefarious weapons will continue to kill people and cause all kinds of illnesses and deformities for hundreds of years to come.

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And second, Israel, the country America wants to preserve and shield from any potential Iranian danger is armed to the teeth with all sorts of conventional and nuclear weapons.

This shows that the U.S. is effectively telling Muslims that Israel, with unrestricted American backing, will continue indefinitely to hold hundreds of millions of people who don't belong to the "holy tribe" hostage to Talmudic whims and vagaries.

This situation, whereby a tiny criminal state, which happens to control the government of the United States, is allowed to intimidate, terrorize, and humiliate hundreds of millions of Muslims from Istanbul to Tehran and from Casablanca to Bahrain, is simply unacceptable.

People and nations have a natural right to live in peace and pursue their legitimate goals. Needless to say, Israel's policy which is based on regional hegemony and military superiority can't be allowed to continue indefinitely.

Many people had hoped that the big powers would rid the world of these evil weapons of mass destruction. However, instead of doing this, the U.S. continued to pursue a global policy based on domination, hegemony and subjugation of those who dare say "No."

In brief, the US policy gave the Muslims of the Middle East, and I am talking about a vast sea of humanity extending from India to the Atlantic ocean, the choice between languishing under Israeli strategic supremacy for ever or trying to develop a strategic deterrent that would convince the apartheid regime to think twice before applying its Talmudic genocidalism against the "goyem."

Some Zionist and American pundits would argue that the Iranian leadership is irrational and should therefore be prevented from acquiring nuclear weapons. Well, this is nonsense because Iran has consistently shown a meticulous adherence to the rule of international law. For example, Iran has never waged aggression against any other nation in recent history. In fact, the opposite is quite true as Iran itself was attacked by foreign aggressors, which necessitated that the nation of 70 million possesses the means to defend itself.

Besides, what are the standards and criteria of true rationality in this case? Does rationality mean that Iran should, for example, show weakness by inducing Israel to attack her, anytime the apartheid state feels like it, on the ground that Israel feels threatened?

Israel has the means to defend herself, so why is it that others, including Iran, have no right to defend themselves? Is the "Chosen people concept" acceptable in international relations and international law?

Another point. Zionist and pro-Zionist propagandists claim that Israel has a responsible nuclear policy and that it is unlikely that the Jewish state will attack other countries using its nuclear arsenal.

But this is a propaganda presumption at the very best. Israel is now a bellicose theocracy that is drifting rather steadily to Talmudic fascism. The real political power in Israel is changing hands as genocidal rabbis, not secular politicians, are calling the shots.

Just imagine the fanatics of Kahana and Gush Emunim taking control over Israel's vast stockpile of weapons of mass destructions. We are talking about Nazi-minded Talmudic fanatics who believe that non-Jewish lives have no worth and no sanctity. In 1994, a rabbi and government minister reacted to the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre in downtown Hebron by saying that "A thousand Gentile lives are not worth a Jewish fingernail."

Unfortunately, one doesn't have even to imagine such nightmarish scenarios because such rabbis are already in control of the Israeli government. Just wait! One more Knesset election and they will be in total and absolute control of the Israeli army and military-political establishment.

Then no American politician would dare speak about nuclear rationality and responsibility because Israel after all is "a democracy" and Jews, of all people, have the right to defend themselves!!

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Such would be the result of the political prostitution now prevailing in Washington, which allows presidential hopefuls to declare their unrestricted and unreserved support of Israel, regardless of what it does.

There is no doubt that the inherent pornographic duplicity in the American and Western policy toward Israel and the Muslim world could lead to unforeseen ramifications. This includes, inter alia, a collective feeling of desperation which would lead to groups like al-Qaeda "taking the matter into their hands" and developing or acquiring a "dirty bomb" or any other weapons of mass destruction which could be used against Israeli or western targets.

Western powers ought to realize that even if governments and nation-states submit to the inherently-unjust international order, certain sectors within the masses just won't submit. It is in the context of this logic that many violent groups are bound to act against western interests.

Are these western powers likely to move to defuse the powder keg developing now, including forcing Israel to end her decades-old occupation of Palestine ? Well, unfortunately, the West has neither the will nor the inclination, not even the ability, to do so.

The US government is tightly controlled by Jewish political power and money, and Europe, which is fighting for its own economic survival, is nearly irrelevant.

This means that Israel will have a virtual carte blanche to pursue its expansionistic and hegemonistic goals. Which leads to the ineluctable conclusion, namely that if Muslims don't defend themselves, no one will.

*Khalid Amayreh is a Palestinian journalist based in Dura, near Hebron. In 1981, Khalid Amayreh earned a BA in Journalism at the University of Oklahoma. He earned an MA in Journalism from the University of Southern Illinois in 1983.*

<http://www.alresalah.ps/en/index.php?act=post&id=284>

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Korea Times – South Korea

OPINION/Commentary

March 11, 2012

## **New Breed of N. Koreans**

By Andrei Lankov

The present author has never made secret his views regarding the future of the North Korean regime: I believe that in the long run, it is doomed. There are many things which are likely to eventually bring the Kim family down, and one of them is the generational shift.

Generations change and this type of turnover has always been a significant factor in historical events. Nowadays in North Korea, one can see the rise of a new generation, whose ideas and values are very different from those of their father's and, for that matter, their grandfather's.

These are people who entered their teenage years after the death of Kim Il-sung in 1994, when North Korean began to be dramatically transformed. This can be described in a nutshell as "marketization from below." Now in their late 20s and early 30s this group has never really experienced the world which once determined the lives of their parents.

Nearly all North Koreans above the age of 35, became adults in a monolithic state-controlled society, which had been developed under the leadership of Kim Il-sung from the late 1950s. In this society, the state was ubiquitous. It provided virtually the entire population with highly subsidized (almost free) food rations. In return it was expected that every adult would work for the state. Money was not that important in the old North Korean world.

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Success and prosperity was determined not by one's ability to generate a large income but by one's ability to ingratiate oneself with the state.

The outside world remained largely unknown and was generally presumed to be inferior in all important regards to Kim Il -sung's realm.

North Koreans seemingly bought official state propaganda of their era wholesale, not least because there no other sources to compare it to.

This all changed in the 1990s. The once ubiquitous rationing system collapsed. Now rations are issued only to officials. To compensate and survive, people began to trade or look for private employment and they soon learnt that money talks.

Younger North Koreans grew up in a society centered on emerging market places. For their parents, earthly success was embodied in the form of a well fed party cadre, who would have been driven around in an old Soviet jeep or, in some exceptional cases, in an old Mercedes. For the younger generation though, success is exemplified by market traders who have flat screen TVs and air conditioners inside their homes and who wine and dine their mistresses in posh restaurants.

The majority of older North Koreans still see the state as the natural giver of things. But for the younger generation the state and its bureaucrats are more likely to be viewed as a swarm of parasites.

It is not incidental that membership to the Korean Workers Party is much less coveted nowadays. In the past membership was a necessary prerequisite to advance socially. Currently, the marketplace and involvement in the private economy offers North Koreans a more attractive alternative. It would be an exaggeration to say that younger North Koreans are less eager to become officials but for many of them, operating a shop in the market appears to be an easier and more rewarding option.

Young North Koreans are less afraid of the state as well. Contrary to what is often claimed in the media, the North Korean state has become significantly less repressive in recent years. The decline of terror has made people less fearful and on top of that, younger North Koreans know that money can be used to buy oneself out of even political trouble. Of course they must be careful but much less so than their parents had to be during the purges of the 1960s and 1970s (the shadow of these purges still linger for this older generation and they remain frightened as a result).

The younger generation also has a fuller, more complete understanding of the world outside North Korea. No one believes anymore that the nation is rich. A majority realize at least that South Korea is ahead of the North and China's economic success is widely known and much admired.

So we have a new generation. These people are much less respectful of the state, less afraid to speak their minds, and make a living outside the state-controlled economy. They are somewhat less afraid of police spooks and spend their spare time watching South Korean movies or listening to foreign music. They might be more capable of organizing independently of the state, even though they are markedly more individualistic. In short, they constitute a potential force for revolution.

However, one should not be excessively optimistic. It will take years, may be even decades, before this group becomes a majority of the population. And of course, the existence of a potentially discontented group is not always sufficient to spark insurgency.

*Professor Andrei Lankov was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, and now teaches at Kookmin University in Seoul.*

[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/03/304\\_106685.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/03/304_106685.html)

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New York Times

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OPINION/Editorial

March 12, 2012

## The Nuclear 'Implementation Study'

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President Obama and his advisers are in the middle of a once-in-a-decade study of the nuclear arsenal and nuclear war plans. For strategic and budgetary reasons, they need to further reduce the number of deployed weapons and the number kept in reserve. If this country can wean itself from its own dependence, it will be safer and will have more credibility in its efforts to contain the nuclear ambitions of Iran, North Korea and others.

Twenty years after the end of the cold war, the United States still has about 1,790 strategic nuclear weapons deployed and 2,800 more as backup. (Another 3,500 are retired and awaiting dismantlement.)

In his 2002 nuclear posture review, President George W. Bush declared that nuclear weapons had a “critical” role in defending the United States and its allies against nuclear-armed enemies and might be needed to deter and even punish foes wielding chemical, biological or conventional weapons. In his 2010 review, President Obama downgraded the importance of nuclear weapons, somewhat, to a “fundamental role.” He ruled out the use of nuclear weapons against nonnuclear countries, even if they attack the United States with unconventional weapons.

Now Mr. Obama has to make the practical choices to implement his strategy. He took a first step in 2010 when he signed the New Start treaty with Moscow to cut the number of deployed long-range nuclear weapons to 1,550 each, from 2,200, by February 2018.

But that agreement followed the same pattern as all of the cold-war and post-cold-war arms treaties. It said nothing about the estimated 11,000 nuclear weapons that the two sides keep as backups — the so-called hedge. Nor did it address America’s 500 short-range nuclear weapons, which are considered to be safely guarded, or Russia’s 3,000 or more, which may be vulnerable to theft.

Mr. Obama must lead the way to deeper cuts in all three categories. For deployed strategic weapons, the Pentagon and national security aides have prepared options for the next round of negotiations with the Russians: a new ceiling of 1,000 to 1,100 warheads; 700 to 800; or 300 to 400. Even the lowest number is more than any potential foe, except Russia, possesses.

China, the only major power expanding its arsenal, likely has 240 to 300 nuclear weapons in its arsenal, but experts say no more than 50 are capable of hitting the United States. Pakistan has perhaps 90, all aimed at India; North Korea has fewer than a dozen, none with the ability to hit the United States. Iran has no weapons, so far.

Just how many does the United States need? Many experts believe the United States can easily go down to 1,000 warheads in total — deployed and stored — without jeopardizing security. We agree.

Washington and Moscow have committed to undertaking a new round of negotiations, but domestic politics in both capitals are interfering. The two sides need to get things moving. Another treaty will take years to complete, so Mr. Obama should also look seriously at moving more quickly to the New Start levels and challenge the Russians to do the same. Both countries need to destroy all of their tactical nuclear weapons — no commander would ever use them on a battlefield — as quickly as possible.

The United States and Russia also have about 1,000 weapons each that are ready to fire at a moment’s notice. Mr. Obama should take as many as possible off of “hair trigger” alert and urge the Russians to do the same.

Many Republicans have reacted hysterically to the idea of further cuts. Senator James Inhofe has accused Mr. Obama of “catering to his liberal base,” which he says wants to “unilaterally disarm.” That is absurd. The stakes are too high for this to be treated as a partisan issue. Mr. Inhofe and others ignore the fact that both Presidents



Bush made deep cuts in the arsenal — through negotiations with the Russians and unilateral reductions in the hedge.

Right now, the United States is on track to spend billions of dollars over the next 20 years to modernize and replace its aging nuclear delivery systems — submarines, intercontinental ballistic missiles and bombers. Reducing the arsenal will make it easier to rein in that bloated budget and shift resources to more critical needs.

President Obama helped drive up those costs when he promised to spend \$88 billion over 10 years on the nuclear weapons labs to win Republican support for the last treaty. He began paring back last month when he delayed funding for a new plutonium facility and for a new class of nuclear submarines. More and deeper cuts are needed.

Senator Tom Coburn is one of the few Republicans who argue that the country does not need and cannot afford its huge arsenal. He has come up with a plan to save \$79 billion over the next 10 years, including reducing the number of deployed strategic warheads to 1,220; cutting the intercontinental ballistic missile force to 300 from 500; trimming the “hedge”; and eliminating three of 14 ballistic nuclear submarines. He also favors delaying the purchase of new bombers until the mid-2020s.

A nuclear “implementation review” may sound arcane, and arms control talks may sound like a cold-war anachronism. They are not. This is President Obama’s opportunity to reshape the post-cold-war world to make it fundamentally safer. He needs to seize it.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/12/opinion/the-nuclear-implementation-study.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/12/opinion/the-nuclear-implementation-study.html?_r=1)

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Los Angeles Times  
OPINION/Blog Analysis

## How Close Is Iran to Getting a Nuclear Weapon?

March 12, 2012

Debate is swirling about how to stop Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, should it take the decision to develop one.

In the United States, Republicans argue that President Obama is doing too little to confront Tehran, despite his pledge to use military means to deny Iran the bomb if diplomatic pressure fails. Obama, in turn, has criticized the Republicans for irresponsibly “beating the drums of war.”

The question is also a sticking point between Israel and the U.S., which disagree about what level of Iranian nuclear development should trigger military action. Meanwhile, Iran says its nuclear program is for peaceful uses only.

There is no certainty about how close Iran might be to being able to build a nuclear weapon. However, here is what is generally accepted about the state of its nuclear program.

### How do you make a nuclear weapon?

The hardest part is getting “fissile material,” such as highly enriched uranium or plutonium, which can be split by neutrons to set off a chain reaction that releases massive amounts of energy.

Raw uranium contains less than 1% of a crucial isotope called U-235. It takes uranium that is roughly 3.5% U-235 to fuel a reactor to generate electricity and about 90% U-235 to make a nuclear weapon.

To increase the amount of U-235, uranium must be enriched. There are a few ways to do so, but the main method to enrich enough uranium for a nuclear arsenal requires thousands of sophisticated gas centrifuge machines that spin at extremely high speeds, concentrating the U-235 isotope.



Once the uranium is highly enriched, it still needs to be put into a form that can be detonated. The gas has to be converted into metal. And to set off the explosive reaction, the fissile material has to be compressed so that neutrons bump into other atoms and make them split one after another.

That can be done by firing a slug of highly enriched uranium into a small space or by imploding a hollow sphere of highly enriched uranium using chemical explosives, which requires advanced electronics and precisely engineered metal.

Then there's testing. Although a crude nuclear weapon does not require an explosive test, countries typically do a test blast to make sure their weapons would work the way they were designed. Finally, a nuclear power needs a missile or some other means of delivering the bomb.

There's a different process for making nuclear weapons using plutonium, which can be extracted from spent fuel that has been irradiated in a nuclear reactor. But highly enriched uranium is seen as the main path to nuclear weapons for Iran, if its leaders decide to go that route.

### **Is Iran trying to create a weapon?**

U.S. intelligence agencies don't think that Iran is actively trying to build an atomic bomb. Intelligence reports say it stopped trying to create a nuclear warhead in 2003.

Iranian leaders have said that producing, possessing or using nuclear weapons is "a great sin." They say their nuclear program is solely aimed at producing electricity and other peaceful purposes.

But Iran hasn't fully cooperated with the United Nations nuclear watchdog group, the International Atomic Energy Agency, creating doubt in the minds of many analysts about what it is up to. A November report by the IAEA found evidence that Iran might still be doing clandestine research on how to create a weapon, undercutting its claims that it has purely peaceful aims.

Iran is also enriching uranium to higher levels than experts believe necessary for most peaceful uses. Iran says it is enriching uranium to roughly 20% to fuel a research reactor, well above the minimum needed to generate electricity but still far below what would be needed for a weapon.

With those conflicting signals, most outside experts believe Iran is trying to master the technology needed to build a nuclear weapon, if it later decides to actually take that step.

### **Would that trigger other countries to step in?**

The U.S. says it will prevent Iran from actually getting a nuclear weapon. Israel has pushed for a firmer line: Stopping Iran from becoming capable of making a nuclear weapon or moving enough of its uranium enrichment program underground to insulate it from military attack.

### **What would stand between Iran and a nuclear weapon?**

There are signs that if Iran does want to build a nuclear weapon, some technical and logistical hurdles remain. First and foremost, Iran would need to enrich its uranium to higher levels.

Some experts believe that Iran could keep enriching uranium to higher and higher levels by putting it through the same centrifuges without rearranging them.

Others say that to efficiently make highly enriched uranium at its existing Natanz facility, Iran would probably need to reconfigure the plant. That would probably involve rearranging its centrifuges and changing the piping between them, which would take at least a few months, said Paul K. Kerr, a Congressional Research Service analyst.

Whether it would need to take the same steps at one of its other facilities is unclear. Either way, it would be very difficult to avoid being detected by IAEA inspectors, who regularly visit Iranian nuclear facilities. Detection could spur other countries to try to stop them or simply attack.



So if Iran wanted to pursue a bomb without being detected, it would probably have to kick out the inspectors or use secret facilities. Kicking out inspectors would raise alarm bells, and so far Iran hasn't been able to keep its nuclear work under wraps, said Mark Fitzpatrick, non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament program director at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London.

There are a few other obstacles. Iran has had problems with operating its existing centrifuges, which use older, less efficient technology. Making more centrifuges would probably be difficult: Iran is believed to depend on foreign supplies to manufacture centrifuges, so strict controls on trade and a careful eye on the international black market could slow it down.

It's also unclear how prepared Iran is to make highly enriched uranium into a weapon. White House officials have argued that Iran still hasn't mastered all the necessary technologies. Experts disagree on how difficult it would be; Fitzpatrick estimates it would take six months.

"It's not something you can do in short order," said Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association. "It's very hard to say how far along they are."

And before Iran could create a workable weapon that could be delivered at a longer range, it would probably need to test it. Other countries have carried out tests underground, on the side of a mountain, in the desert or from a tower. Any blast would probably be detected by remote monitoring.

Even if Iran could muster enough highly enriched uranium to make one weapon, it would probably want to wait and amass enough for a small arsenal, since a single weapon would not be as useful. That drags out the timeline for making and testing a nuclear weapon.

#### **Could Iran get around those obstacles?**

Nuclear experts say Iran could probably get the enriched uranium, skills and equipment to build nuclear weapons, if it decided to do it, but it would probably still take years to build anything more than a crude weapon.

Political calculations may be more important than technical ones. The U.S. national intelligence director told Congress that "Iran has the scientific, technical, and industrial capacity to eventually produce nuclear weapons, making the central issue its political will to do so."

*By Emily Alpert in Los Angeles*

[http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world\\_now/2012/03/how-close-is-iran-to-getting-a-nuclear-weapon-.html](http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world_now/2012/03/how-close-is-iran-to-getting-a-nuclear-weapon-.html)

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Foreign Policy Journal  
OPINION/Commentary

## **If Iran Gets a Bomb, Then...?**

by Donn M. Kurtz II  
March 12, 2012

The overreaction of Israel, the United States, and others to the possibility of Iran's developing a nuclear weapons capability stems from the two scenarios they foresee. The first envisions Iran transferring a nuclear weapon to a terrorist group which would then use it against Israel. The second suggests that Iran itself would attack Israel. If Iran were to become a nuclear power, neither of these two possibilities is realistic.

If Iran were to transfer a weapon to a terrorist organization, that would be to give some other group a blank check, the cashing of which would imperil Iran's own future. The American, Israeli, and broader international reaction to nuclear terrorism is an outcome the Iranians do not care to contemplate. No government wants its



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existence controlled by another party. Fear of probable consequences applies to an Iranian nuclear action against Israel, resulting in an international response even greater than a terrorist attack. Iranian leaders are not suicidal.

The catastrophic outcomes of the two scenarios are not the primary reason for neither occurring. Rather, any conceivable nuclear action against Israel would cause the deaths of relatively as many Arab/Muslims as Jewish Israelis. Arabs constitute about 20% of the Israeli population and are dispersed throughout the country. In addition, the Palestinian population of Gaza and the West Bank could not be excluded from the probable casualties. The tiny geographical size of Israel and the occupied territories renders a discriminate attack, targeting Jews only, an impossibility.

If Iran were to decide to join the nuclear club, that decision would be based on the perception of achieving several advantages: enhancing its regional and international stature and ensuring the respect of its interests. Equally important, possessing a nuclear capacity can be a matter of national prestige. Acquiring a nuclear capacity could demonstrate Iran's technological and scientific proficiency and its immunity from international pressure. Actually using those devices serves none of these objectives.

*Donn M. Kurtz II received his Ph. D. from Tulane University and taught political science at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette from 1969 until his retirement in 2007.*

<http://www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/2012/03/12/if-iran-gets-a-bomb-then/>

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Washington Post  
OPINION/Editorial

## **The U.S. Falls Again for North Korea's Tricks**

By Editorial Board  
March 12, 2012

FOR THREE years the Obama administration's policy toward North Korea could be summed up in the pithy phrase uttered by its first defense secretary, Robert M. Gates: "I don't want to buy the same horse twice." The point was the administration would not succumb to Pyongyang's perpetual tactic of offering concessions on its nuclear and missile programs in exchange for bribes of fuel oil, food and other economic goodies — before cheating on its promises and finally withdrawing the concessions.

So why did the administration decide to repurchase the horse? On Feb. 29, the administration announced that North Korea had agreed to freeze missile tests and uranium enrichment and allow international inspectors to return to the Yongbyon complex, where its plutonium production has been based. Meanwhile, the United States pledged to ship 240,000 metric tons of food to the perpetually hungry country. U.S. officials weakly insisted this was not a quid pro quo, while acknowledging that the regime sees it as precisely that.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton was careful not to oversell the agreement, calling it "a modest first step in the right direction." Officials said it would allow inspectors to get a first look at the uranium enrichment facility constructed at Yongbyon while letting the United States test whether the new regime of Kim Jong Eun is serious about a more far-reaching accord to give up nuclear weapons.

It's difficult to find any students of North Korea who expect such seriousness. Instead they point to the big short-term gains the twenty-something Mr. Kim will reap. The first will come on the "Day of the Sun," April 15, when the regime will celebrate the 100th birthday of its founder, Kim Il Sung. The youngest Kim will be able to point to the tribute being paid by the U.S. imperialists and also deliver a little on a promise that this year will bring greater prosperity.

As part of the bargain, the Obama administration effectively ratified the next generation of one of the world's worst tyrannies, declaring that it has "no hostile intention" toward North Korea. There will be no inspection or

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accounting of North Korea's existing arsenal of weapons, and its uranium enrichment will likely continue at undeclared sites beyond Yongbyon. The deal could weaken the pro-American South Korean government of Lee Myung-bak, which has taken a tough line on aid to the North, ahead of crucial parliamentary and presidential elections this year.

Oh, and the trigger for Pyongyang to renege is already built in. The regime said it would maintain the limited moratorium "while productive dialogue continues," and spelled out what it expects: "the lifting of sanctions . . . and provision of light water reactors." If that's not delivered — or if the United States insists on intrusive monitoring of the food aid — the nuclear inspectors will be booted back out.

So once again: Why buy this horse? The argument can be made that something, even a limited moratorium, is better than nothing. Maybe talks with North Korea will deter the new leader from misbehavior, such as more nuclear tests or military provocations of South Korea, if only for a while. But "stability" has been purchased not just at the price of 240,000 tons of food, but by sanctioning the continued oppression of 24 million people.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-us-is-bribed-by-north-korea--again/2012/03/12/gIQAs1HD8R\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-us-is-bribed-by-north-korea--again/2012/03/12/gIQAs1HD8R_story.html)

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Wall Street Journal  
OPINION/Opinion Asia  
March 12, 2012

## Is North Korea Ready for a U-Turn?

*Kim Jong Eun's biggest obstacles to reform aren't Washington and Seoul, but his own party apparatchiks.*

By CHUNG MIN LEE

At the first track-two dialogue between U.S. and North Korean officials since Kim Jong Eun's rise to power, Pyongyang hinted that a breakthrough in relations might be possible. Meeting in New York City last week, both sides discussed building trust in order to rethink geopolitics on the Korean Peninsula in the post-Kim Jong II era.

A senior North Korean official stated that "unlike the previous generation, the new leadership [of North Korea] wants peace and will not fight with the United States." Another North Korean official stated that "the recent agreement in Beijing with regard to plutonium cessation is irreversible" and that "we will take consistent steps to ensure its success. He added that the North's plutonium program "97% has been disabled and if we reverse this, it would be a game changer. As long as both parties abide by the agreement, one can be assured that [plutonium] production is irreversible."

In a political system like North Korea's, such statements cannot be made without explicit approval from the very top. A break from the "previous generation" obviously refers to Kim Jong II and by inference, Kim Jong Eun's willingness to adopt his own version of a reset with Washington.

Of course, it wasn't all sweetness and light. The North Koreans also stated that Washington must adopt a "new mindset" to move the dialogue to the next level and that bilateral talks shouldn't be mired in sequential negotiations.

Nevertheless, a senior U.S. official welcomed such statements and responded by providing an overview of the conditions under which normalization could occur between Washington and Pyongyang. This official emphasized that if North Korea truly wants a fundamental resetting of the relationship, the new leadership in Pyongyang must take bold measures, including denuclearization and forward movement on related security issues.

If that were to happen, this official said, the U.S. together with China would be ready to provide additional security guarantees. He also conveyed to Pyongyang that "the United States has no permanent enemies" and a new relationship is possible based on key parallel steps.

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The North Koreans asserted that it was high time for the U.S. to end its hostile and discriminatory policy toward the North. If Washington signed a peace treaty with the North and dropped current sanctions, then North Korea stood ready to move forward on the nuclear issue. As in the past, the North's officials insisted that were it not for U.S. "hostility," they would have no reason to hold on to their "nuclear deterrent." Importantly, however, the U.S. official replied that there was no chance that the U.S. Senate would ever pass a peace treaty with North Korea without denuclearization.

North Korea under Kim Jong Eun faces daunting economic and political challenges. Most importantly, Kim Jong Eun has to make a fundamental strategic decision that exchanges nuclear dismantlement for normalized relations with the rest of the world, enacting meaningful structural economic reforms, and enabling his impoverished people to emulate what China and Vietnam have accomplished since they enacted their own "open door" policies.

While U.S. officials and experts were sympathetic to Pyongyang's "new voice," they also emphasized that any normalization with the North can't come at the expense of the U.S.-R.O.K. alliance. Indeed, while the South Korean press continues to warn against Washington-Pyongyang ties at Seoul's expense, this is a red herring.

With a \$1.2 trillion economy—Asia's fourth and the world's 14th largest—and a more globalized foreign policy than ever before, Seoul's policies are no longer driven primarily by its contest with Pyongyang. In all facets of the relationship, Seoul has won hands down. And although the alliance continues to be focused on deterrence and defense, it has expanded into a robust partnership that transcends peninsular issues.

So is the recent message from Pyongyang genuine? Perhaps, but as former U.S. President Ronald Reagan reminded the world as he sought to end hostilities with the Soviet Union, trust is always based on reciprocal and verifiable actions. And engaging with leaders who are willing to make history, such as Mikhail Gorbachev and Deng Xiaoping.

If Kim Jong Eun really wants to emulate Gorbachev or Deng, the main obstacle isn't Washington or Seoul. His real challenge lies in convincing his die-hard generals and party apparatchiks in Pyongyang that under his stewardship, North Korea can embark on a "third way" that would retain its core political system but also reap the rewards of liberalization.

The price for normalization is the army's and the regime's sacred nuclear weapons program. If Kim Jong Eun can convince his core inner circle including his generals to bargain it away, that would represent the most significant volte face in North Korean history, and the beginning of the end of the Cold War on the Korean Peninsula. If Kim goes down this path, it would be a radical departure from his father and his grandfather. That's the deeper message that needs to be verified.

*Mr. Lee is dean of the Graduate School of International Studies at Yonsei University in Seoul.*

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304537904577277272695057882.html>

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Pakistan Today – Pakistan

OPINION/Columnist

Tuesday, 13 March 2012

## **India's Nuclear Submarine**

By Tariq Majeed

It may seem somewhat strange for India to lease a Russian nuclear submarine, and at a heavy cost, when an earlier similar venture didn't turn out to be smooth and when it is itself building nuclear submarines. The 10-year lease is costing India a billion dollars. In real terms the cost will be much more. Is it India's need? India, no doubt, gains by inducting it in its navy. But this time, it is equally, may be more, the need of the supplier. And it also meets the strategic interests of another backer.

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The leased submarine, the 8,140-tonne SSN Nerpa, was commissioned in the Russian Navy in December 2000 and belongs to the Soviet-era nuclear-powered submarines of (Nato-named) Akula II Class. The Akula Class submarine was deployed for the first time in 1986 by the Soviet Navy. The project to lease two Akula-II nuclear submarines was initiated by India in 2002. The deal for the first submarine was signed in New Delhi in January 2004 and for the second in December 2007.

The Nerpa was to be delivered to India in August 2007. However, the programme was struck with several delays and at least one mishap. A fatal gas leak killing 20 crew members occurred during the submarine's sea trials in November 2008. Transfer was then set to take place in 2009 but didn't materialise. A fresh date in October 2010 was also not met.

While equipment installation and technical reasons were cited for the delays, Russian policymakers had their own plans and ploys in setting the timing for the submarine's delivery to India. An operational nuclear submarine with a regional navy is a game-changer in strategic terms. Finally, the K-152 Nerpa was handed over to India on January 24, 2012, in a ceremony at Bolshoi Kamen ship-building facility in Russia's eastern region of Primorye. It was renamed by India as INS Chakra II and will operate from the Visakhapatnam base in the Bay of Bengal.

The Akula II submarine, with strengthened and modernised hull, machinery and equipment, is capable of maximum submerged speed of 33 knots and diving depth of 600m. Its array of weapons and sensors includes anti-submarine and anti-ship torpedoes, ten torpedo launch tubes, four 650mm and six 533mm tubes, which can be used to launch mines and to fire Granit submarine-launched cruise missiles, of which it can carry up to twelve. Granit, named SS-N-21 Sampson by Nato, has a range of about 3,000km and delivers a 200kt warhead. The submarine carries two types of anti-ship missiles: the Novator SS-N-15 Starfish having a target range of 45km and the Novator SS-N-16 Stallion with a range of 100km. Air defence capability is provided by a Strela SA-N-5/8 portable missile launcher with 18 missiles.

The Akula has a surface search radar of Snoop Pair type. Its MGK 540 sonar system provides automatic target detection and classification in broad and narrow-band modes. The sonar system can also be used in a passive, listening mode to detect hostile sonars. A reserve propulsion system, powered by two motors, provides a speed of 3 to 4 knots.

It is difficult to detect a nuclear submarine at sea by conventional means. However, satellite sensors that can locate what lies below the earth's surface can also look below the sea surface. The best way to neutralise the submarine is when it is in harbour, and there are half a dozen methods to achieve this.

Indian Navy's programme to construct a nuclear submarine, designated as advanced technology vessel (ATV) project, that took shape in the 1990s is slowly progressing, though facing many obstacles. The lead unit, Arihant, meaning "slayer of enemies", that is also the class name, was first floated from its dry dock at a symbolic launch ceremony on 26 July 2009. It was to undergo its harbour acceptance trials in February 2012. The project was expanded to undertake production of four nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines, with an overly ambitious time frame of their commissioning by 2015. The Arihant submarines are powered by an 83 MW pressurised water reactor (PWR) with highly enriched uranium fuel. The miniaturised naval-version of the reactor was designed and built by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre in Kalpakkam.

Pakistan has to come up with an adequate response, and, in this respect, it is for the naval high command to alert and advise the decision makers on defence, including the Parliamentary Committee on National Security and the Senate's Standing Committee on Defence. They ought to realise that in conditions of serious hostilities that India can create on any pretext, employment of naval power whether in a role of deterrence and suasion or armed engagement will be a key factor in facing the overall threat.

Pakistan Navy acquired a submarine in 1964 taking a four year lead over the Indian Navy which received its first submarine, INS Kalvari, from the Soviet Union in July 1968. A former chief of naval staff, himself a submariner, once said that Pakistan Navy could have gone into submarine construction in 1969/70. It is also said that in the



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latter years of Ziaul Haq's reign plans for getting a nuclear submarine from a friendly country were afoot, but after Zia's elimination in the August 1988 C-130 crash, the Benazir regime terminated the plans. Why can't these be revived? Our nuclear experts also have the capability to develop the required power plant.

*The writer is a retired Commodore, Pakistan Navy.*

<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2012/03/13/comment/columns/india%E2%80%99s-nuclear-submarine/>

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