



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

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Jerusalem Post – Israel

IAEA: Iran Designing Parts for Nuclear Weapons

UN's atomic watchdog issues most critical report to date; information from Israeli agencies played key role in compiling document.

By Yaakov Katz and Reuters

November 08, 2011

In the most critical and damning report of Iran's nuclear program to date, the International Atomic Energy Agency said Tuesday that the Islamic Republic was working to develop a nuclear-weapon design and was conducting extensive research and tests that could only be relevant for such a weapon.

"The agency has serious concerns regarding possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear program," the IAEA said in the report, which included a 13-page annex with key technical descriptions of its research. "The information indicates that Iran has carried out activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device."

Israel played a key role in helping the IAEA compile the report, and over the years, its intelligence agencies provided critical information used in the document. Israel now hopes that the United States will use the report to push through a new regimen of sanctions against Tehran, including a focus on the Central Bank of Iran and the Iranian energy sector.

In the report, the IAEA reveals a list of Iranian research centers connected to the work on the nuclear weapons program.

The agency says that it frequently confronted Iran with information it had obtained from various IAEA member states – including documents seized from computers belonging to members of a black-market nuclear arms network that supplied technology to Tehran. The reference is likely to the Pakistani ring led by Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan.

The report focuses on three main technical areas – the "green salt project," a name for a covert Iranian program to enrich military-grade uranium; the development and testing of high explosives; and the re-engineering of the payload chamber of ballistic missiles to be able to accommodate a nuclear warhead.

In the report, for example, the IAEA reveals that Iran was working on "exploding bridgewire detonators," which are fast-acting detonators required to create a nuclear explosion.

"Given their possible application in a nuclear explosive device, and the fact that there are limited civilian and conventional military applications for such technology, Iran's development of such detonators and equipment is a matter of concern," the report said.

One member state provided the agency with information about a "large-scale" test Iran conducted in 2003 to initiate a high explosive charge in the form of a hemispherical shell, the dimensions of which are consistent with the dimensions of a potential nuclear payload that can be installed on a Shahab-3 ballistic missile.

Work on this project was assisted, according to the IAEA, by a foreign expert, apparently a reference to a Russian scientist who worked with Iran from 1996 to 2002.

The scientist has been named in various media reports as Vyacheslav Danilenko.

Additional information in the report reveals that Iran has manufactured simulated nuclear explosive components using high-density materials such as tungsten to determine if its theoretical design of an implosion device is correct.

These high-explosive tests – referred to as "hydrodynamic experiments" – are conducted when fissile and nuclear components are replaced by surrogate materials.

The explosives chamber, the IAEA said, was constructed in a facility called Parchin in 2000.

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The agency said it had obtained commercial satellite images of the facility showing the chamber built around a large cylindrical object. The chamber was designed to contain the detonation of up to 70 kilograms of high explosives, which would be suitable for carrying out nuclear weapons experiments.

The IAEA also said it had obtained evidence from a member state that Iran was working to manufacture small capsules called “neutron initiators,” which are placed in the center of the nuclear core and produce a burst of neutrons needed to create a fission chain reaction.

The area where the experiments were conducted was said to have been cleansed of contamination after the experiments had taken place. The IAEA said Iran allegedly worked on validating this process through 2010.

The agency said Iran appeared to have taken preparatory steps to conduct an underground nuclear weapons test. It said it had obtained a document in Farsi that related directly to the logistics and safety arrangements that would be necessary for conducting a nuclear test.

According to the report, Iran has started moving nuclear material to an underground facility for the pursuit of sensitive atomic activities, a development likely to add to Western suspicions Tehran is trying to build a weapon.

The document also said Iran had continued to stockpile low-enriched uranium (LEU) and one prominent US think-tank said it had enough of the material for four nuclear weapons if it refines it further.

The information that Iran last month moved a “large cylinder” with LEU to the Fordow subterranean site was included in the UN body’s most comprehensive report yet pointing to military aspects of Tehran’s nuclear program.

Russia, Iran reject IAEA report

Iran rejected the report later Tuesday as “politically motivated.”

“The report of the International Atomic Energy Agency is unbalanced, unprofessional and politically motivated,” Ali Asghar Soltanieh, the country’s envoy to the agency, was quoted as saying.

The US and its allies are expected to seize on the report to press for more punitive sanctions on the major oil producer over its record of hiding sensitive nuclear activity, and lack of full cooperation with UN inspectors.

Soltanieh said the IAEA report “did not contain any new issue.”

“Despite Iran’s readiness for negotiations, the IAEA published the report... which will harm its reputation,” Soltanieh said.

Russia also criticized the report, saying it would dim hopes for dialogue with Tehran and could be meant to scuttle chances for a diplomatic solution.

In a sharply worded statement, the Russian Foreign Ministry said the report had turned into a “source of a new increase in tension” over the program even before its release.

Russia said time was needed to study the report and emphasized it would not yet comment on the content.

Sanctions on oil, gas sector unlikely

The United States and its allies are expected to use the report to bolster their case for more punitive sanctions on Iran. But the tone of the Russian statement suggested its release could hurt that cause rather than help it.

“Today, as never before, it is important to keep public steps in line with the interests of progress toward a political and diplomatic resolution,” the ministry said.

A US official said his country might impose more sanctions on Iran, possibly on commercial banks or front companies, but was unlikely to go after its oil and gas sector or its central bank for now.



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"I think you will see bilateral sanctions increasing," the official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Reuters.

"From our side, we are really looking to close loopholes wherever they may exist," he added, noting that US sanctions were so comprehensive that "there is not a whole lot out there other than the oil and gas market, and you know how sensitive that is."

"I don't think we are there yet," he added, referring to the possibility of the United States seeking, via sanctions, to make it harder for Iran to export oil and gas, the mainstay of the Islamic Republic's economy.

The official also played down the chances of sanctioning Iran's central bank, which is the clearinghouse for much of its petroleum trade with the rest of the world and which Washington recently suggested was a possibility.

"That is off the table [for now]," said the US official.

"That could change, depending on what other players [think]. I don't want to rule that out, but it is not really currently on the table."

<http://www.jpost.com/IranianThreat/News/Article.aspx?id=244833>

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Los Angeles Times

U.N. Agency Alleges Suspicious Activities in Iran Nuclear Program

A report based on a huge collection of evidence says Iran may be developing a nuclear weapon. It could boost U.S. and European efforts to toughen U.N. sanctions. Iran calls the findings 'ridiculous.'

By Ken Dilanian, *Los Angeles Times*

November 9, 2011

Reporting from Washington— Years of credible evidence indicates Iran may be secretly working to develop a nuclear weapon, the United Nations nuclear watchdog agency said Tuesday in a strongly worded report that renewed debate among Western powers over how to curb the Islamic Republic's nuclear ambitions.

The report by the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency cites a series of suspect activities that raises "serious concerns" about "possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear program."

Iran's leaders ordered a halt to an extensive nuclear program in 2003, the report says, but clandestine work on high-speed detonators and other weapons-related research "may still be ongoing." The report was based on more than 1,000 pages of documents, satellite photos and other intelligence supplied by 10 member nations.

It does not assert that Iran has resumed a full-scale push to build a nuclear warhead for the Shahab-3 ballistic missile, which the IAEA says appeared to be Tehran's goal until 2003.

But public disclosure of the evidence may boost U.S. and European efforts to toughen U.N. sanctions despite resistance from China, Russia and several other nations. It also may prompt calls in the U.S. and Israel for harsher measures, including sabotage, covert action and military strikes.

Obama administration officials said the report echoes their assessment of Iran's capabilities. They said the White House remains committed to pushing diplomacy over military action.

"It is incumbent upon Iran to answer the very serious questions raised by this report," a senior administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told reporters in a telephone briefing. If not, "we will be looking to impose additional pressure on the Iranian government," including new sanctions.

Another senior administration official speaking at the same briefing emphasized that the report "certainly doesn't assert that Iran has mastered all the necessary technologies, and we agree with that assessment."

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The official added that Iran's weapons activity since 2003 "appears to be relatively uncoordinated and sporadic. I would think the advancement hasn't been that dramatic."

Sen. Mark Kirk (R-Ill), a leading proponent of confronting Iran, described the advances as more alarming.

"The United Nations, not known for speaking clearly on many topics, is now telling us one clear thing: that the Islamic Republic of Iran is designing and moving towards building nuclear weapons," he said. "This is something that we can't allow to happen."

Kirk called for sanctions against Iran's powerful central bank. The Obama administration has declined to do so, contending that it would disrupt international oil markets and further damage the reeling U.S. and European economies.

David Albright, a former U.N. nuclear inspector who heads the nonprofit Institute for Science and International Security in Washington, said the evidence suggests Iran would need only six months to enrich uranium to sufficient purity to fuel a nuclear device if it decided to build a bomb. The IAEA report does not provide a time line.

Iran insists its nuclear program is entirely for civilian purposes, and has said that the documents IAEA cites are forgeries.

"There is no serious proof that Iran is going to create a nuclear warhead," Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi said Tuesday during a visit to Armenia, according to the Agence France-Presse news agency. "We have repeatedly stated that we are not going to create nuclear weapons."

Iranian state-run TV broadcast the release of the report and promptly condemned the findings as "ridiculous" and concocted by Western intelligence services.

The report, by IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano, a former Japanese diplomat, is a quarterly update on Iran's compliance with U.N. Security Council resolutions regarding its nuclear program. It has a 15-page annex that details "possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear program."

They include efforts, some successful, to procure nuclear-related and dual-use equipment from abroad, as well as efforts to secretly produce nuclear material to avoid detection by IAEA inspections, the annex says. Iran also has worked to develop an indigenous design of a nuclear weapon, including the testing of components, the report says.

Because Iran does not fully cooperate with the IAEA, "the agency is unable to provide credible assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and therefore to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran is in peaceful activities," the report says.

Times staff writer Patrick J. McDonnell in Beirut and special correspondents Julia Damianova in Washington and Ramin Mostaghim in Tehran contributed to this report.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-iran-nuclear-report-20111109,0,7720643.story>

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British Broadcasting Company (BBC) News – U.K.
9 November 2011

Russia Rules Out New Iran Sanctions over Nuclear Report

Russia has ruled out supporting fresh sanctions against Iran, despite a UN report that says Tehran may be trying to develop nuclear weapons.

France and the US both said they would pursue new sanctions against Iran in the wake of the IAEA report.

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Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu said the report showed the need for the world to stop Iran developing nuclear weapons.

The US and its allies suspect Iran of trying to develop a nuclear bomb, which it is feared could threaten Israel.

Iran insists that its nuclear programme is for peaceful means.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Gennady Gatilov told Interfax news agency that extra sanctions "will be seen in the international community as an instrument for regime change in Iran".

"That approach is unacceptable to us, and the Russian side does not intend to consider such proposals."

The focus moves to the diplomatic arena - the US and its allies eager to use the IAEA's report to prompt a new and tougher round of sanctions against Tehran.

French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe's position is typical - the issue should go to the UN Security Council, he says, adding that Paris is ready to adopt "unprecedented" sanctions against Iran.

But the Russians take an opposite view. Furious at the detailed material published by the IAEA which they believe will simply back Iran into a corner, the Russian deputy foreign minister made it clear that Moscow will not back additional economic sanctions.

China is fast becoming one of Iran's main trading partners. Its support will be crucial if pressure is to be ramped up on Iran but don't hold your breath. Beijing, with its huge thirst for energy, simply does not see this issue in the same way as Washington.

However, Mr Netanyahu accused Iran of endangering world peace.

"The significance of the report is that the international community must bring about the cessation of Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons which endanger the peace of the world and of the Middle East," he said in a statement.

"The IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] report corroborates the position of the international community, and of Israel that Iran is developing nuclear weapons," Mr Netanyahu added.

The IAEA said it had information indicating Iran had carried out tests "relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device".

The report - published on the Institute for Science and International Security website - says the research includes computer models that could only be used to develop a nuclear bomb trigger.

It documents alleged Iranian work on the kind of implosion device that would be needed to detonate a nuclear weapon.

On Wednesday, a defiant Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said his country would not budge "one iota" from its nuclear programme.

He said the report was based on "empty claims" provided by the US.

"Why do you damage the [UN] agency's dignity because of America's invalid claims?" he said in a televised speech.

Addressing the US he added: "We will not build two bombs in the face of your 20,000. We will develop something that you cannot respond to, which is ethics, humanity, solidarity and justice.

"You should know that no enemy of the Iranian people has ever tasted victory."

'Additional pressure'

French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said the seriousness of the report warranted a meeting of the UN Security Council.

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"If Iran refuses to conform to the demands of the international community and refuses any serious co-operation, we stand ready to adopt, with other willing countries, sanctions on an unprecedented scale," he told French radio.

Mr Juppe said tough sanctions were needed to "prevent Iran from continuing to obtain resources that allow it to pursue its activities in violation of all international rules".

A senior US official said Washington would consult with partners on "additional" pressure and sanctions on Tehran.

"We don't take anything off the table when we look at sanctions. We believe there is a broad spectrum of action we could take," the official said, quoted by AFP news agency.

The EU said the report "seriously aggravates" existing concerns.

"Overall these findings strongly indicate the existence of a fully-fledged nuclear weapons development programme in Iran," said a spokeswoman for EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton.

Baroness Ashton represents six world powers - the UK, China, France, Germany, Russia and the US - in stalled negotiations with Iran over its uranium enrichment programme.

The BBC's Kim Ghattas in Washington says China is also unlikely to support further sanctions against Iran.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15659311>

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The Star – Malaysia

Wednesday, November 9, 2011

Iran Moved Nuclear Material to Bunker - U.N. Watchdog

By Fredrik Dahl

VIENNA (Reuters) - Iran has started moving nuclear material to an underground facility for the pursuit of sensitive atomic activities, a U.N. nuclear agency report showed, a development likely to add to Western suspicions Tehran is trying to build a weapon.

The International Atomic Energy Agency document also said Iran had continued to stockpile low-enriched uranium (LEU) and one prominent U.S. think-tank said it had enough of the material for four nuclear weapons if it refines it further.

The information that Iran last month moved a "large cylinder" with LEU to the Fordow subterranean site was included in the U.N. body's most comprehensive report yet pointing to military aspects of Tehran's nuclear programme.

The main finding in the IAEA report, which was leaked on Tuesday, was that Iran appeared to have worked on designing a nuclear warhead and that secret weapons-relevant research may continue.

It may pave the way for further Western sanctions on the major oil producer. France warned on Wednesday that Tehran faced unprecedented punitive measures if it refused to cooperate with the IAEA over its nuclear programme.

"No unbiased observer can cling to the pretension that Iran's nuclear programme is purely for peaceful purposes," Mark Fitzpatrick, a director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies think tank, said.

But he said Iran was not yet actually building atomic bombs and it was still more than a year away from being able to do so, should its leaders decide to.

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The IAEA report also contained updated information about Iran's uranium enrichment -- the part of Iran's nuclear work that has most worried the West as refined uranium can be used for arms if processed further.

Iran's decision in early 2010 to raise the level of some enrichment from the 3.5 percent purity needed for normal power plant fuel to 20 percent worried Western states that saw this as bringing it closer to the 90 percent needed for a bomb.

Iran's main enrichment plant is located near the central town of Natanz. But the country announced in June it would move its higher-grade activity to Fordow, offering better protection against any military attacks.

This week's IAEA document showed that Iran had now installed two sets of 174 machines each for refining uranium to a fissile purity of 20 percent at Fordow near the holy city of Qom. The centrifuge machines were not yet operational.

NUCLEAR EXPANSION

In its previous report on Iran's nuclear programme, in early September, the IAEA said Iran had installed one of two planned cascades, or interlinked networks of centrifuges. Such machines spin at supersonic speeds to increase the fissile isotope ratio.

On Oct. 17, the latest report said, Iran "transferred ... one large cylinder containing LEU in the form of UF₆ (uranium hexafluoride gas) and one small cylinder containing depleted uranium in the form of UF₆."

The uranium gas is fed into centrifuge machines to refine uranium for use either to fuel nuclear plants, Iran's stated aim, or provide material for the core of a nuclear bomb, which the West fears is Iran's ultimate goal.

"According to Iran, the LEU will be used for feeding and the DU will be used for line passivation," the IAEA report said, referring to technical preparations for starting enrichment.

Iran only disclosed the existence of Fordow -- tucked deep inside a mountain on a former military base -- to the IAEA in September 2009 after learning that Western intelligence agencies had detected it.

Tehran says it will use 20 percent-enriched uranium to convert into fuel for a research reactor making isotopes to treat cancer patients, but Western officials say they doubt that the country has the technical capability to do that.

Western experts say tightening sanctions, technical hurdles and possible cyber sabotage have slowed Iran's atomic advances.

But it is still amassing LEU: the IAEA report said it had produced a total of more than 4.9 tonnes since the work started in February 2007, some of which has been converted into 20 percent material.

"This amount of low enriched uranium if further enriched to weapon grade is enough to make four nuclear weapons," said the Institute for Science and International Security, a Washington-based think tank.

Additional reporting by Sylvia Westall; Editing by Peter Graff

http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2011/11/9/worldupdates/2011-11-09T160623Z_01_NOOTR_RTRMDNC_0_-604142-1&sec=Worldupdates

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Daily Mail – U.K.

Iran 'Months from Building Atomic Bomb', Claims Atomic Agency Report

By Daily Mail Reporter
9 November 2011



Iran could start building a nuclear bomb in a matter of months, the UN atomic watchdog warned yesterday.

The regime of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is already thought to have built a top-secret explosives test facility at a site in Parchin, just outside the capital Tehran, where it is conducting experiments to develop a weapon.

A hard-hitting report by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which was leaked last night, said scientists are building hi-tech precision detonators which would be essential for a nuclear device, and developing a uranium core for a nuclear warhead.

The report also lays bare that Iranian scientists are trying to mount a nuclear payload into their Shahab 3 missiles – which can reach Israel, Iran's arch foe.

The report compiled by Yukiya Amano is the strongest sign yet that Iran seeks to build a nuclear arsenal, despite claims to the contrary.

The document claims that while some of the suspected secret nuclear work by Iran can have peaceful purposes, 'others are specific to nuclear weapons.'

A 13-page attachment to the agency's Iran report details intelligence and IAEA research that shows Tehran working on all aspects of research toward making a nuclear weapon, including fitting a warhead onto a missile.

The U.S. State Department said it needed time to study a new report by the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency on Iran's nuclear activities and declined to make any immediate comment on its contents.

'This was released to member states about an hour ago so we're going to take some time to look at it before commenting.'

State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland told a news briefing, referring to the latest Iran report by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

'We are not prepared to talk about any next steps at this point.'

But with Israel threatening a military response, the report opens the way for a new confrontation between the West and Iran.

In its latest report on Iran, the International Atomic Energy Agency outlines the sum of its knowledge on the Islamic Republic's alleged secret nuclear weapons work, including:

- Clandestine procurement of equipment and design information needed to make such arms;
- High explosives testing and detonator development to set off a nuclear charge;
- Computer modeling of a core of a nuclear warhead;
- Preparatory work for a nuclear weapons test, and
- Developing and mounting a nuclear payload onto its Shahab 3 intermediate range missile - a weapon that can reach Israel, Iran's arch foe.

Ahead of the report's release, Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak warned of a possible Israeli military strike against Iran's nuclear program.

He told Israel Radio that he did not expect any new U.N. sanctions on Tehran to persuade it to stop its nuclear defiance, adding:

'We continue to recommend to our friends in the world and to ourselves, not to take any option off the table.'

The 'all options on the table' phrase is often used by Israeli politicians to mean a military assault, and Israeli government members have engaged in increased saber rattling recently suggesting that an attack was likely a more effective way to stop Iran's nuclear program than continued diplomacy..



While some of the suspected secret nuclear work outlined in the annex could also be used for peaceful purposes, 'others are specific to nuclear weapons,' said the confidential report obtained by The Associated Press.

Some of the information contained in the annex was new - including evidence of a large metal chamber at a military site for nuclear-related explosives testing.

The bulk, however, was a compilation and expansion of alleged work already partially revealed by the agency.

But a senior diplomat familiar with the report said its significance lay in its comprehensiveness, thereby reflecting that Iran apparently had engaged in all aspects of testing that were needed to develop such a weapon.

Also significant was the agency's decision to share most of what it knows or suspect about Iran's secret work the 35-nation IAEA board and the U.N. Security Council after being stonewalled by Tehran in its attempts to probe such allegations.

Copies of the report went to board members and the council, which has imposed four sets of U.N. sanction on Tehran for refusing to stop activities that could be used to make a nuclear weapon and refusing to cooperate with IAEA attempts to fully understand its nuclear program.

The agency said the annex was based on more than 1,000 pages of intelligence and other information forwarded by more than 10 nations and material gathered by the IAEA itself.

Earlier, Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad Tuesday criticized the head of the U.N.'s nuclear agency as an American pawn in the run-up to its expected release of a document said to document Tehran's nuclear weapons program.

IN DEPTH: THE FOREIGN EXPERT HELP

Former Soviet weapons scientist Vyacheslav Danilenko allegedly taught Iranians how to build high-precision detonators that could trigger a chain reaction, according to UN evidence.

Danilenko was believed to have been contracted by Iran's Physics Research Centre, linked to the country's nuclear programme, in the mid 1990s.

He allegedly gave lectures and shared research on developing and testing bombs that Iran then incorporated into their warhead design, according to Washington Post sources with access to IAEA's files.

However, while Danilenko acknowledged his role he also said he believe his work was limited to assisting civilian engineering projects, the sources added.

There is also no evidence that Russia knew of Danilenko's Iranian activities.

Weapons experts added that Iran relied on foreign scientists for mathematical formulas and codes, some of which may have come from North Korea.

The design for a neutron initiator by father of Pakistan's nuclear programme, Abdul Qadeer Khan, was also discovered in Iran, sources said. The latest intelligence provided to UN nuclear officials, due for publication on Wednesday and obtained by the Washington Post, suggests former Soviet weapons scientist Vyacheslav Danilenko allegedly taught Iranians how to build high-precision detonators that could trigger a chain reaction during the mid 1990s. 'But it makes clear the Iranians want to be able to build such weapons quickly if need be.

Ahmadinejad said Iran will not stop its nuclear development, adopting a defiant position in advance of the report which could spur efforts for new sanctions against his country.

'If you think you can change the situation of the world through putting pressures on Iran, you are deadly wrong. The Iranian nation will not withdraw an iota,' Ahmadinejad said.

Iran insists its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, not weapons production.



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The report, expected to be issued Wednesday, suggests that Iran made computer models of a nuclear warhead and includes satellite imagery of a large steel container the IAEA believes is used for nuclear arms-related high explosives tests, diplomats told The Associated Press.

In remarks broadcast on state television, Ahmadinejad said that International Atomic Energy Agency chief Yukiya Amano was simply repeating U.S. allegations. 'He delivers the papers that American officials hand on him,' Ahmadinejad said.

'I am sorry that a person is heading the agency who has no power by himself and violates the agency's regulations, too,' the Iranian president said.

He repeated Iran's stance that it is not involved in making a nuclear weapon. 'They should know that if we want to remove the hand of the U.S. from the world, we do not need bombs and hardware. We work based on thoughts, culture and logic,' he said.

Russia criticised on Tuesday the release of information in a U.N. nuclear agency report on Iran's nuclear programme, saying it would reduce hopes for dialogue with Tehran and suggesting it was aimed to scuttle the chances for a diplomatic solution.

'We have serious doubts about the justification for steps to reveal contents of the report to a broad public, primarily because it is precisely now that certain chances for the renewal of dialogue between the 'sextet' of international mediators and Tehran have begun to appear,' the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

It said time was needed to study the report and determine whether it contained new evidence of a military element in Iran's nuclear programme or was nothing but 'the intentional - and counterproductive - whipping up of emotions.'

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2059147/Iran-nuclear-weapons-row-Months-building-atomic-bomb.html?ito=feeds-newsxml#>

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San Francisco Chronicle

Iran Continued Nuclear Weapons Work Seeking Warhead Design

Jonathan Tirone and Margaret Talev, Bloomberg News

Wednesday, November 9, 2011

Nov. 9 (Bloomberg) -- Iran continued working on nuclear weapons at least until last year, including efforts to shrink a Pakistani warhead design to fit atop its ballistic missiles, a report from United Nations inspectors said.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, drawing on evidence collected over eight years, reported yesterday that Iran carried out "work on the development of an indigenous design of a nuclear weapon including the testing of components."

The document shows that Iran worked to redesign and miniaturize a Pakistani nuclear-weapon design by using a web of front companies and overseas experts, according to the report and an international official familiar with the IAEA's probe. Such a warhead could be mounted on Iran's Shahab-3 missile, which has the range to reach Israel, according to the IAEA.

The report adds to international pressure on Iran to answer questions about its program. It was released amid reports in Israeli media that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is pressing his Cabinet to support possible military action to halt Iran's nuclear program.

The U.S. and European nations may pursue additional sanctions against Iran following the report's release and are waiting to see how Iran responds, according to two U.S. officials who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity.

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Iran already is under UN sanctions and the U.S. has imposed sanctions on Iranian government agencies, financial institutions and government officials.

'Political Dishonesty'

France and its allies are ready to impose "unprecedented sanctions" on Iran if it doesn't fully cooperate with the IAEA, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said in a statement today.

China and Russia, two veto-wielding UN Security Council members, questioned the timing and outcome of the IAEA report. Russia suspects the authors of some comments in document of "political dishonesty," according to a statement by Moscow's Foreign Ministry. The report should trigger "dialogue and cooperation" without triggering "new instability," China's Foreign Ministry said.

The administration officials said the IAEA's conclusions don't conflict with U.S. intelligence estimates that Tehran's government scaled back nuclear-weapons development in 2003 while maintaining the capability to resume. The officials said Iran's nuclear weapons efforts have proceeded sporadically since 2003 and that the U.S. believes advancement since then hasn't been dramatic.

Ongoing Work

In its report, the Vienna-based IAEA said, "some activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device continued after 2003" and "some may still be ongoing."

Until now, atomic inspectors had only voiced concerns publicly about the "possible existence" of weapons work in Iran.

State-run PressTV said Iran "has rejected" the IAEA report as "unbalanced and politically motivated." Iran has told IAEA inspectors that evidence used against the Persian Gulf country was forged.

The agency's report brought calls in the U.S. for tougher action against Iran.

It's "further proof that the U.S. and other responsible nations must take decisive action to stop the regime from acquiring a nuclear capability," said U.S. Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Florida Republican who is chairwoman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Risk Premium

The IAEA report also "could increase the risk of a military attack on Iran's nuclear facilities" and therefore "justified a certain risk premium on the price of oil," Commerzbank wrote yesterday in a research note. Crude oil for December delivery rose \$1.28 to \$96.80 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, the highest settlement since July 28. Futures are up 5.9 percent this year.

Iran worked on high-explosives design and the development of a neutron generator, the part of an atomic bomb that starts a nuclear chain reaction, according to the senior international official.

"Iran embarked on a four-year program, from around 2006 onward, on the further validation of the design of this neutron source," the IAEA said in the report, citing one member state that shared information with inspectors.

Experiments

The agency revealed details of "large-scale high-explosives" experiments conducted near Marivan in 2003. The experiments would have helped Iran calibrate the explosive impact of a bomb's uranium core, according to the report.

"The information comes from a wide variety of independent sources, including from a number of member states, from the agency's own efforts and from information provided by Iran itself," the IAEA said in the document.



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It is the first time that the IAEA has published a comprehensive analysis of Iran's nuclear-weapons work. Data before 2003 are more complete than information seen afterward, according to the senior official. The agency shared a copy of the information with Iranian authorities before the report was published, the official said.

Iran increased its supply of 20 percent-enriched uranium to 73.7 kilograms (162.5 pounds) from 70.8 kilograms reported in September at a pilot nuclear facility in Natanz about 300 kilometers (186 miles) south of Tehran, the IAEA said. Iran has produced 4,922 kilograms of uranium enriched to less than 5 percent compared with 4,543 kilograms in the last IAEA report.

About 630 kilograms of low-enriched uranium, if further purified, could yield the 15 kilograms to 22 kilograms of weapons-grade uranium needed by an expert bomb maker to craft a weapon, according to the London-based Verification Research, Training and Information Center, a non-governmental observer to the IAEA that is funded by European governments.

*With assistance from Kate Andersen Brower in Washington, William Bi in Beijing and Helene Fouquet in Paris.
Editors: Joe Sobczyk, Jennifer M. Freedman*

http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/g/a/2011/11/09/bloomberg_articlesLUE0PC6JTSEC.DTL&ao=all

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Bloomberg News

Russian Scientist Denies Iranian Nuclear Role, Kommersant Says

By Henry Meyer

November 10, 2011

A Russian scientist denied helping Iran to develop a nuclear bomb following a U.S. media report about his suspected role, the Kommersant newspaper reported, citing an interview with the expert.

"I'm not a nuclear physicist and I'm not the founder of the Iranian nuclear program," Vyacheslav Danilenko said, according to Kommersant, declining further comment. The Russian newspaper said Danilenko, 76, had worked from the 1950s at a Soviet nuclear-weapons research center until his retirement.

The United Nations' nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, said in a report published two days ago that a foreign scientist, which it didn't name, had assisted Iran in conducting experiments to raise the yield of atomic warheads. The IAEA said the expert was in Iran from 1996 to 2002, "ostensibly to assist Iran in the development of a facility and techniques for making ultra-dispersed diamonds, where he also lectured on explosion physics and its application."

The Washington Post on Nov. 7 named the expert as Vyacheslav Danilenko, a former Soviet nuclear scientist, saying he was hired in the mid-1990s by Iran's Physics Research Center, an institute linked to the Iranian nuclear program.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-11-10/russian-scientist-denies-iranian-nuclear-role-kommersant-says.html>

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Asian Age - India

N Korea Might Conduct 3rd Nuclear Test: Ex-US Envoy

November 10, 2011

Press Trust of India (PTI)

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Washington - A former top US envoy on North Korean policy does not rule out the possibility that North Korea may take further provocative steps, including conducting a third nuclear test, and says the US aims to prevent such moves by continuing dialogue with Pyongyang.

Stephen Bosworth, who resigned after the US-North Korean dialogue in Geneva last month, told Kyodo News in a recent interview that "it's possible" there will a third nuclear test. "I hope not, but it's possible," he said.

He also noted it is 'very difficult' to predict what action North Korea will take and indicated that test-firing a long-range ballistic missile cannot be ruled out.

North Korea conducted nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009, drawing harsh criticism and sanctions from the international community.

The United States and North Korea held high-level dialogue in New York in late July for the first time in about 19 months.

The two countries held similar talks again in Geneva last month, which apparently produced no tangible progress.

Asked if these bilateral talks reward North Korea, which had called for direct negotiations with Washington over its nuclear weapon programmes, Bosworth said, "I don't think it's a reward to talk to people. We have not made any new concessions to them."

He also stressed that continuing talks is in Washington's interest as well as in Pyongyang's. "I think North Korea is much more, potentially much more, dangerous when no one is talking to them than when they are having connections with the outside world," Bosworth said.

<http://www.asianage.com/international/n-korea-might-conduct-3rd-nuclear-test-ex-us-envoy-435>

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AsiaOne News – Singapore

North Korea Says New Reactor to Start Soon

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

10 November 2011

SEOUL - North Korea will soon start operating a new home-built nuclear reactor, its official news agency said Thursday in a commentary one year after Pyongyang publicly disclosed the plant.

"The day is near at hand when a light-water reactor entirely based on domestic resources and technology will come into operation in the DPRK (North Korea)," the agency said.

It made the remark in an article deriding US and South Korean suggestions that the North's economy is near breakdown, but gave no details or date.

Pyongyang disclosed the light-water reactor and an apparently functioning uranium enrichment plant to US scientists who visited its Yongbyon nuclear complex on November 12, 2010.

One of them, Siegfried Hecker, said he and colleagues were shown a 25-30 megawatt experimental light-water reactor (LWR) in the early stages of construction.

Hecker said in a report the target date for operation was said to be 2012, "which appears much too optimistic".

He was also shown a uranium enrichment plant (UEP) with 2,000 centrifuges whose purpose was said to be to produce low-enriched fuel for the new reactor.

Hecker said both facilities appeared designed mainly for civilian nuclear power, but the UEP could readily be converted to produce highly-enriched uranium for bombs and the LWR could be run to produce plutonium.

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The United States and its allies are demanding that Pyongyang shut down the uranium enrichment plant before six-nation talks on the North's nuclear disarmament can resume.

The North insists that the talks restart without preconditions.

The country's existing plutonium stockpile - estimated to be enough for six to eight atomic bombs - came from a decades-old gas graphite reactor at Yongbyon that was shut down in 2007 under a six-party accord.

Hecker said in his 2010 report he saw no evidence of continued plutonium production at Yongbyon.

<http://news.asiaone.com/News/Latest%2BNews/Asia/Story/A1Story20111110-309942.html>

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International Business Times – U.S. Edition

Pakistan Hiding Nuclear Arms from U.S.: Report

By Amrutha Gayathri

November 9, 2011

Pakistan is on a clandestine mission to hide its nuclear arsenal from the Pentagon and is transporting weapons of mass destruction in low-security vans on roads used by civilians, The Atlantic and National Journal report, quoting unnamed U.S. officials.

Following the U.S. raid in Abbottabad May 2 that killed Osama bin Laden, tension between Islamabad and Washington has mounted, with Pakistan warning the U.S. against a new raid to seize its atomic weapons, a forced "denuclearization."

The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad acknowledged the existence of "potential threats" to Pakistan's nuclear warheads from local extremists and said the Pakistani government could do more to enhance its ability to defend its arsenal, the Press Trust of India reported.

However, it has been alleged that Pakistan's Strategic Plans Division's primary task is to hide the nukes from the U.S. spy agencies rather than from Islamic extremists.

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Khalid Kidwai, a former general who heads the SPD, has allegedly been strategizing to disperse the nuclear explosive components to secret locations.

Instead of transporting the nuclear parts in heavily secured convoys, atomic bombs "capable of destroying entire cities are transported in delivery vans on congested and dangerous roads," in civilian vehicles, said The Atlantic report.

In the report "The Ally From Hell," Jeffrey Goldberg and Marc Ambinder argued that Pakistan was an "obvious place" for jihadists to procure nuclear weapons: "Pakistan would be an obvious place for a jihadist organization to seek a nuclear weapon or fissile material: it is the only Muslim-majority state, out of the 50 or so in the world, to have successfully developed nuclear weapons; its central government is of limited competence and has serious trouble projecting its authority into many corners of its territory (on occasion, it has difficulty maintaining order even in the country's largest city, Karachi); Pakistan's military and security services are infiltrated by an unknown number of jihadist sympathizers; and many jihadist organizations are headquartered there already."

But Pakistan swears that the Pentagon need not worry about its nukes landing in wrong hands. An unnamed official of the Inter-Services Intelligence was quoted in the report as saying: "Of all things in the world to worry about, the issue you should worry about the least is the safety of our nuclear program."

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Though the Pentagon declined to officially comment on the report of the U.S. plans to secure Pakistani nukes, a U.S. military official told reporters in Washington that the U.S. was confident about the weapons' safety.

"I believe the Pakistan military arsenal is safe at this time, well guarded, well defended," said the military official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Meanwhile, Pakistan has denied the report of U.S. plans to take its nukes, calling it "pure fiction."

The statement, issued by Foreign Office spokesperson Tehmina Janjua, said no one should "underestimate" Pakistan's ability to ensure national security.

"The surfacing of such campaigns is not something new. It is orchestrated by quarters that are inimical to Pakistan," the statement said.

Despite the U.S. efforts to ensure Pakistan's allegiance in the war in Afghanistan, Islamabad has had long-standing fears that the Pentagon is planning a raid to secure nuclear weapons.

<http://www.ibtimes.com/articles/245916/20111109/pakistan-carts-nukes-delivery-vans-hiding-u.htm>

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Economic Times – India

10 November, 2011

Indo-Asian News Service (IANS)

US 'Confident' Pakistani Nukes Safe

WASHINGTON: Rebutting a US media report that Pakistan's atomic arsenal was vulnerable to theft, the United States has expressed confidence in Islamabad's ability to keep its nuclear weapons safe.

"We have confidence that the government of Pakistan is well aware of the range of potential threats to its nuclear arsenal and is accordingly giving very high priority to securing its nuclear weapons and materials effectively," State Department spokesman Mark Toner told reporters Wednesday.

"We continue to believe - we continue to have confidence in the Government of Pakistan that they both understand the varied threats to the nuclear arsenal, and that they're taking appropriate steps to safeguard them," he said in response to a question.

Two US publications, The Atlantic and the National Journal, citing unnamed sources, last week said Pakistan had transported nuclear weapons in low-security vans on congested roads to hide them from US spy agencies.

Asked if the US had spoken to Pakistan about these reports, Toner said: "We're always talking to the Pakistanis, and one of the things we talk to them about is ways to improve safety around their nuclear arsenal. But again, we're confident that there are safety measures in place."

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics/nation/us-confident-pakistani-nukes-safe/articleshow/10676886.cms>

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Barents Observer – Norway

Dozens of Major Flaws on Newest Submarine

Simultaneously as Prime Minister Vladimir Putin visits Sevmash yard attending the contracts signing for new submarines, a source in the Russian Navy says the crew is afraid to sail with "Aleksandr Nevsky" - the newest submarine that carries 16 intercontinental nuclear missiles.

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Vladimir Putin arrived in Arkhangelsk Wednesday morning and drove to Severodvinsk to attend the contract signing for more submarines of the Yasen and Borey classes. The contracts were signed by Russia's Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov and the United Shipbuilding Corporation, reports the portal of the Prime Minister.

The contract signing comes after a long-lasting conflict on the price-tags between the submarine builders and the Defense Ministry. In total, contracts for three new Yasen-class and one more Borey-class, and several other surface naval vessels were signed.

Both the Yasen-class and Borey-class are Russia's fourth generation submarines and will be the core of the Russian navy's modernized fleet. The first Yasen-class, the "*Severodvinsk*," sailed out in the White Sea earlier this autumn on her maiden voyage. The two Borey-class submarines, the "*Yury Dolgoruky*" and the "*Aleksandr Nevsky*" have also been test-sailing the White Sea this autumn.

In Severodvinsk, Vladimir Putin inspected the "*Aleksandr Nevsky*" reports the portal of the Prime Minister. The price tag of the submarine is estimated to be 23 billion rubles (€552 million).

The Borey-class is the first strategic nuclear powered submarines to be commissioned to the Russian Navy since the early 90-ties. They are the first with a digital operation control system. A source in the headquarters of the Navy says to Izvestia that the crew is afraid to operate the "*Aleksandr Nevsky*" submarine. During the first sea trail, from which the submarine just has ended, the crew and designers identified dozens of major flaws and several thousand smaller ones.

Representatives of Sevmash, the naval yard that has built the submarine, assure to Izvestia that all problems are now solved. The Navy source, however, claims that the digital systems onboard might not work properly.

During the first sea trail this October, the crew discovered a lot of design flaws that had to be fixed as the vessel was sailing.

Also, just before the submarine was to sail out in the White Sea, it was discovered that there were no windows near the steering-cockpit in the tower, a lack that prevented the navigator to see where he was sailing. A window was then made.

The Borey-class submarines carries the new Bulava intercontinental nuclear missiles. Last test launch to place on October 28.

The missile launched from "*Yury Dolgoruky*" in the White Sea was visible in the horizon from northern-Norway.

<http://www.barentsobserver.com/dozens-of-major-flaws-on-newest-submarine.4982531-116320.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Moscow Still Wants Missile Defense Guarantees, Despite New Offer

9 November 2011

MOSCOW, November 9 (RIA Novosti) - Russia still wants legal guarantees it is not targeted by a U.S.-led missile shield, despite an invitation to observe interceptor test launches in Europe, the Russian Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday.

"The hypothetical presence at test launches may be regarded only as a measure of transparency and trust," the ministry said.

"Such measures are undoubtedly useful but they do not eliminate the need to receive clear, legally binding guarantees that the European segment of the U.S. global missile defense is not directed against Russia's strategic potential," it said.

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Russia and NATO agreed to cooperate on the so-called European missile defense system at the Lisbon Summit in November 2010. NATO insists there should be two independent systems that exchange information, while Russia favors a joint system with full-scale interoperability.

Washington has invited Russia to use its own radars to measure the test-flight of one or more U.S. interceptor missiles.

Russia has agreed to cooperate on the new system, but warned it may strengthen its own defenses if it is not made a full partner in the U.S.-led shield.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20111109/168560729.html>

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Global Security Newswire

U.S. Blueprint for New Nuclear Arms Cuts Expected By Year's End

Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2011

By Elaine M. Grossman, *Global Security Newswire*

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Defense Department expects by the end of the year to update its plans for the nation's nuclear weapons posture, potentially setting the stage for further reductions in the arsenal, a senior defense official said last week (see *GSN*, Nov. 7).

The so-called "NPR Implementation Study" will build on last year's Nuclear Posture Review, a major Pentagon-led assessment of forces, strategy and readiness, James Miller, the principal deputy Defense undersecretary for policy, said at a House hearing on Wednesday.

Most notably, the new analysis -- conducted largely in secret -- could influence the extent of additional atomic weapons cuts following the U.S.-Russian New START agreement, which entered into force earlier this year.

Before new reductions can be made, though, some revisions would likely be required in President Obama's nuclear weapons policies.

"This NPR Implementation Study will be followed by new presidential guidance and then, in succession, the secretary of Defense and chairman of the Joint Chiefs will then issue more detailed planning guidance to the military," Miller told the House Armed Services Strategic Forces Subcommittee.

At that point, the Omaha, Neb.-based U.S. Strategic Command -- which has combat responsibility for nuclear weapons -- will "revise its military plans" for targeting, alert status and other features of the arsenal to reflect the updated presidential directive, he said.

"When complete, our analysis of deterrence requirements will also help inform future arms control proposals ... as the military did and Department of Defense did as part of the Nuclear Posture Review to inform New START treaty negotiations," Miller testified.

"The review is probably Obama's most important and perhaps last chance to change the role that nuclear weapons have traditionally played in the U.S. national security strategy," nuclear experts Hans Kristensen and Robert Norris said in an article published this month in *Arms Control Today*.

"The result of the review will be a broad rewriting of directives and analyses that are used to guide military planners in preparing the country's forces and strategic nuclear war plan," said the pair, both affiliated with the Federation of American Scientists.

Fresh reductions in the nuclear force could also help the nation meet its deficit-reduction targets, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said in a Friday interview with the *New York Times*.

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The White House has directed Panetta to slash the Pentagon budget by more than \$450 billion over the next 10 years. Among other cost-cutting measures on the table, the Defense secretary is weighing whether nuclear deterrence can be maintained with less than the 1,550 deployed warheads and 700 fielded delivery systems allowed under New START, the paper reported on Sunday.

Thomas Donilon, the president's national security adviser, signaled earlier this year that the review was under way.

"As we implement New START, we're making preparations for the next round of nuclear reductions," he said in a March speech at a Carnegie Endowment conference.

"Under the President's direction, the Department of Defense will review our strategic requirements and develop options for further reductions in our current nuclear stockpile, which stands at approximately 5,000 warheads, including both deployed and reserve warheads," the White House adviser said at the time.

More recently, a senior military official said in an interview that new reductions could include cuts to reserve "hedge forces," as the nuclear complex introduces more efficient ways of maintaining and updating warheads (see *GSN*, Aug. 18).

The Pentagon holds roughly 2,290 strategic nuclear warheads in reserve as a hedge against the possibility of a resurgent global nuclear threat or the discovery of a technical flaw that affects a significant portion of the arsenal.

Hedge force weapons currently constitute more than one fully assembled backup warhead for each of the 1,790 strategic warheads deployed at bomber aircraft bases, on ICBMs or on submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

The Defense secretary's office is working with the military-led Joint Staff and Strategic Command to conduct the assessment, Miller said. The Pentagon is also coordinating its effort with the White House national security staff and senior officials at the State and Energy departments.

The NPR Implementation Study will not be released after completion, according to Defense Department spokesman Tara Rigler.

"Nuclear plans and analysis are highly classified and are not made public," she said.

In an interview, Kristensen described the first part of the nearly complete NPR Implementation Study as a document that will list detailed steps on how the Obama administration plans to achieve the policy prescriptions laid out in last year's Nuclear Posture Review.

The Bush administration undertook a similar effort over an 18-month period following its 2001 Nuclear Posture Review, he said. Obama administration officials indicated as the April 2010 posture review was released that their implementation plan would take a similar time frame to complete (see *GSN*, April 8, 2010).

The name that Miller used for the analysis, the NPR Implementation Study, masks the more interesting -- and controversial -- second aspect of the nearly complete assessment, which deals with preparing for future force posture changes and reductions, said Kristensen, who heads the FAS Nuclear Information Project.

Instead of lumping both study facets under the rubric of "implementation," some administration officials are calling the piece that concerns potentially deeper cuts in the nuclear arsenal the "Post-NPR Analysis," said the nuclear analyst.

A number of Republican lawmakers and conservative pundits have been warning against taking further reductions in U.S. nuclear weapons. They are particularly concerned about Russia's ongoing program to modernize its strategic weapons delivery systems and its estimated 10-to-1 numerical advantage in tactical nuclear arms deployed in Europe.

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Setting the stage for additional reductions "is premature at best," because future force levels needed for unknown threats "years into the future" may not be knowable for quite some time, said David Trachtenberg, who served in the Bush administration's defense policy office at the Pentagon.

"I would hope for an implementation assessment of the impact of New START reductions over time on our long-term deterrent posture before we establish even lower thresholds for reducing further," he told *Global Security Newswire* on Tuesday.

Representative Michael Turner (R-Ohio), who chairs the House panel's strategic forces subcommittee, last week warned the administration against coming to hasty conclusions in its NPR Implementation Study.

"While I'm aware that many previous administrations have put their imprint on these matters, I am not aware of any previous administration that has stated the answer to its review before conducting or completing it," the lawmaker said. "In this case the predetermined answer appears to be that further reductions are being considered and may be made."

The subcommittee's ranking member, Representative Loretta Sanchez (D-Calif.), took a different tack, urging administration leaders and fellow lawmakers to put aside Cold War assumptions as they grapple with today's fiscal realities and prepare for the future.

"We must also take a hard look at what we need to meet our national and our allies' deterrence requirements in light of the current and new threats out there," she said in an opening statement at last week's hearing. "We also have the responsibility to bear in mind the ramifications of the current economic crisis. And we must carefully consider what is urgent, what can be delayed and what is no longer necessary."

Despite its modernization efforts, Russia will not be able to maintain nuclear force levels at the New START ceilings due to massive weapons platform retirements in the next 10 to 15 years -- "with or without [new] arms control" pacts, Kristensen said. By the mid-2020s, the entire Russian triad is expected to number roughly 400 delivery systems, about half of its current size, he said.

If the administration is serious about "resetting" Washington's relationship with Moscow, "we need to signal to them that we are prepared to go with them down to those force levels," Kristensen said. "We really have to make some decisions about cutting the force significantly over the next decade."

Beyond laying the groundwork for future arms control reductions, the new assessment could introduce other changes in nuclear weapon readiness or possible contingencies for their use, Donilon said earlier this year.

"To develop ... options for further reductions, we need to consider several factors, such as potential changes in targeting requirements and alert postures that are required for effective deterrence," he told the conference.

A targeting change might be based on a new declaration that the only utility of nuclear weapons is to deter nuclear attack, which Kristensen and Norris say could eliminate half of the threat nations or entities believed to be identified in the nation's secret atomic warfighting plan.

Last year's posture review opened the door to this possibility, stating, "The United States is ... not prepared at the present time to adopt a universal policy that deterring nuclear attack is the sole purpose of nuclear weapons, but will work to establish conditions under which such a policy could be safely adopted."

Meanwhile, altering the readiness level of U.S. nuclear weapons could resuscitate a campaign pledge that largely disappeared over the past three years.

Leading up to the 2008 presidential elections, then-candidate Barack Obama promised to "work with Russia to take U.S. and Russian ballistic missiles off hair-trigger alert." Shortly after entering the White House, though, a key general publicly challenged this pledge and references to it were removed from administration websites (see *GSN*, Feb. 27, 2009).



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Gary Samore, who heads arms control and counterterrorism issues on the National Security Council staff, said other significant aspects of the U.S. nuclear posture also would be under debate during the assessment.

"Reductions below the level that we have now are going to require some more fundamental questions about force structure," he told *Arms Control Today* for a May article. "We've reached the level in our forces where further reductions will raise questions about whether we retain the triad or whether we go to a system that only is a dyad."

Air Force Gen. Robert Kehler, who heads Strategic Command, said last month that he could imagine moving to a two-pronged nuclear stance sometime in the future, following decades in which the nation has fielded atomic warheads aboard bomber aircraft, ICBMs and submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

"As you look into the strategic future, the answer about whether or not we're going to need a triad, I think, is 'it depends,'" he told reporters at a question-and-answer session. "It depends on the strategic situation we find ourselves in."

Any decision to abandon the triad would also "depend on whether or not we have future arms control, whether or not we have structured our force in such a way that we still don't get the same benefit of those attributes -- or we still don't need the same benefit of those attributes," Kehler said.

The four-star general -- a career ICBM officer -- also emphasized "a budgetary dimension to this."

"As we look to modernize, in particular, can we in fact spend the resources to modernize the entire triad?" Kehler asked. One of his predecessors in the job, now-retired Gen. James Cartwright, said earlier this year that the answer almost certainly was "no."

"The challenge here is that we have to recapitalize all three legs [of the triad], and we don't have the money to do it," Cartwright, then vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters in July, shortly before leaving military service.

The White House has promised to spend \$85 billion over the next 10 years on updating warheads and modernizing the nuclear weapons complex. Projects include extending the service lives of Air Force and Navy nuclear weapons, including those carried by the B-61 gravity bomb and the Trident submarine-launched ballistic missile, as well as building new facilities to research and process warhead uranium and plutonium.

Washington is also expected to spend hundreds of billions of dollars more on nuclear delivery platforms, including the submarines, missiles and bomber aircraft.

Despite hoping otherwise, Trachtenberg said he anticipates that the administration will "provide a preemptive rationalization for reduced nuclear force levels regardless of the outcome of the NPR implementation review.

"We are currently driving to lower levels," he added. "Doing so may not only place maintenance of the triad in jeopardy but may further weaken the U.S. extended deterrent. Both of these goals were supported in the NPR and both may now be at risk as a result of the push to cut nuclear force levels further, perhaps even unilaterally."

Kristensen and Norris also see possibly sweeping changes afoot, but are more amenable to the opportunities these changes could present.

They wrote that the review "has the potential to be significant because it occurs at a point in the nuclear arms reduction process where changes begin to go beyond simply trimming Cold War force levels to requiring more-fundamental decisions about the nuclear force structure and mission in order to carry out the president's ambitious agenda."

Obama laid out that agenda in an April 2009 speech in Prague, where he said his administration would "put an end to Cold War thinking" and "reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy."

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"Our analysis is also considering the critical question of what to do if deterrence fails," Miller stated in last week's written testimony. "In effect, we are asking: what are the guiding concepts for employing nuclear weapons to deter adversaries of the United States, and what are the guiding concepts for ending a nuclear conflict on the best possible terms if one has started?"

Trachtenberg urged caution in the U.S. nuclear stance in response to emerging threats, such as Iran's possible development of atomic weapons.

"If Iran goes nuclear, will that have any bearing on New START implementation or the deterrence capability [that] New START's reductions are purportedly intended to strengthen?" Trachtenberg asked. "The [NPR] implementation review should assess a range of possible threats, the requirements for effective deterrence of each, and how New START implementation is affecting our ability to meet those deterrence requirements."
http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20111108_7134.php

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Stars and Stripes
"Stripes Central"

Pentagon Takes 'Preliminary' Look at Nuclear Cuts

By Chris Carroll, *Stars and Stripes*
November 08, 2011

WASHINGTON -- Maybe everything really is, as they say, on the table.

The Pentagon today confirmed Defense Secretary Leon Panetta is weighing a reduction of the U.S. nuclear arsenal to help cut DOD spending and balance budgets.

The New York Times first reported Panetta was considering the cuts, deliberations that are perhaps given extra resonance this week by an alarming new International Atomic Energy Agency report on Iran's ambitions to field nuclear weapons.

Pentagon press secretary George Little stressed that Panetta's mention of nuclear arms reductions represented only "preliminary thinking" on the part of DOD budget analysts, and no cuts are currently planned.

"Our top priority is maintaining a nuclear deterrent, but the arsenal may not need to be as large as it is," Little said.

Such an admission seems to fly in the face of recent rhetoric.

DOD officials including Air Force Secretary Michael Donley, who said at the Air Force Association Convention in September, "We must maintain the nuclear triad," have repeatedly emphasized the priority of nuclear weapons in America's arsenal. And in testimony before the House Armed Services Committee last month, Panetta appeared to take a dim view of any nuclear budget cuts.

"This is too important," he said. "We have always been at the cutting edge of this technology, and we have to stay there. There are too many other countries that are trying to reach out to develop this capability. And if we aren't staying ahead of it, well, we jeopardize the security of this country. So for that reason, I certainly would oppose any reductions with regards to the funding for weaponization."

<http://www.stripes.com/blogs/stripes-central/stripes-central-1.8040/pentagon-takes-preliminary-look-at-nuclear-cuts-1.160166>

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Russia Today (RT) – Russia

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USA Spending More on Nukes Now than During Cold War

10 November 2011

Though it has been decades since the Cold War came to a close, the United States government spends more money on nuclear warheads now than it did during its stand-off with the Soviet Union.

As the US vows to cut down its arsenal of nuclear weapons, the cost the country spends annually on maintaining its supply is much more than America invested each year during the Cold War. Estimates suggest that currently the US puts around \$55 billion annually into its nuclear weapons program, reports Mother Jones; by comparison, the cost of the nuke complex for the country during the Cold War ran at an average of only \$35 billion each year.

Only three months into his presidency, Barack Obama said in April 2009 that he envisioned an Earth in the future free of nuclear weapons. Just two years later, however, America's arsenal of those warheads amounts to roughly 2,500 nukes ready to be deployed.

It was only less than two weeks ago that the United States finally dismantled its largest atomic bomb, the B53, which was said to be 600 times more powerful than the nuke that was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan towards the finale of the Second World War. As that nuke was dismantled, Deputy Secretary of Energy Dan Poneman told NPR that the bomb was a "Cold War relic" and showed the direction of dismantling that the United States was heading towards.

Even if the country is cutting back on its nukes, the United States has a backup stash larger than the active bombs, allowing for the country to in total have 5,113 nuclear warheads in its position. The surplus of not-quite-ready nukes is at 2,600, and though they cannot be deployed at a drop of a hat like the others, they can be reanimated as full-fledged warheads.

Peter Fedewa of the pro-disarmament Ploughshares Fund says that those nukes "could be 'raised from the dead' and brought back into deployment with relative ease."

Under the START treaty that the US signed with Russia last year, both countries vow to soon enough limit their stash of active warheads to only 1,500. The document does not, however, say how many back-up nukes either country can have. In the interim, Mother Jones reports that the Pantex plant near Amarillo, Texas holds around 3,000 warheads that are on the schedule to be dismantled, something America used to do at a pace of around 1,300 per year. Last year, however, both Congress and the White House said that the country would cut back on the cost of dismantling the warheads and instead now invest the money on the upkeep of already dead nukes.

At the country's current rate, dismantling the thousands of atomic nukes would take longer than a decade Joe Cirincione, a longtime analyst of nuclear weapons policy, tells NPR. Currently, only around 250 warheads are dismantled at Pantex each year.

It doesn't help that the country is more interested in revamping the retired nukes than pulling the plug on them entirely, either.

In 2012, the country will spend \$4.1 billion on the "refurbishment" of retired nukes, while only a fraction of that — \$57 million — will be invested in dismantling them. That figure accounts for less than one percent of the country's total budget for the nuclear program. In all, America's nuclear program operates at a cost of around \$55 billion, which is spread across the Departments of Defense, Energy and Homeland Security. Despite Obama's instance on curbing the program, the tally of funding is believed to have gone up by around \$3 billion since only 2008, which at the time accounted for five times the budget of the Department of State — or 14 times what the Energy Department spends on everything else.

"The same facilities that dismantle U.S. nuclear warheads are also refurbishing US warheads," Cirincione adds to NPR. "And right now a decision has been made to prioritize refurbishment. So we're actually building more nuclear weapons than we're dismantling. That didn't use to be the case, but it is now."

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When weapons are dismantled and the current snail's pace, the risks in place are of immense danger as well. "There are very strict manuals on exactly what you have to do," Hans Kristensen, spokesman for the Federation of American Scientists, tells MSNBC. "How much pressure can you apply to each screw, what kind of glue holds the chemical high explosives together around the spear of highly enriched uranium."

Both Russia and America have agreed to have an arsenal of only 1,550 deployed nukes come 2018, only a fraction of the 22,000-plus on hand at the end of the Cold War. Obama told an audience in Prague in 2009 he aimed "To put an end to Cold War thinking," adding that America "will reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, and urge others to do the same." As the country is investing more money in rebuilding nukes than kicking them to the curb, however, will the president follow through with his plea or will it be added to the list of other promises gone unfulfilled?

<http://rt.com/usa/news/cold-war-nuclear-warheads-961/>

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Foreign Policy
OPINION/Argument

Trouble over Tehran

Five reasons that Israel and the United States might want to think long and hard about preemptively striking Iran's nuclear facilities.

BY AARON DAVID MILLER

November 8, 2011

This week's imminent publication of an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report on Iran's nuclear program -- details of which have been leaking out -- is expected to provide evidence that Tehran is hard at work building a nuclear weapon. Once again, the proverbial tick-tock in media and diplomatic circles has begun: Is a U.S.-backed Israeli strike against Iran in the offing?

Much of the saber rattling and the leaks from Israel may be designed to use the IAEA report to motivate the international community to do more about Iran's developing nuclear program and to lay down a warning of what the consequences might be if it doesn't. Already, China and Russia are urging evidence in the report be kept secret, so it's a good bet that they would block any proposals for kinetic action, and perhaps even further sanctions, in the United Nations. The Israelis might decide for any number of reasons that they must launch a military strike at some point; and it might be that a U.S. president cannot be in a position to dissuade them. Indeed, as a tiny nation living on the knife's edge with a dark history and a track record of successful pre-emption against military threats, the Israelis may well act at some point, though not necessarily now.

Before they do, here are the five top reasons they might want to consider keeping their jets and missiles on the ground:

1. There's no good end state. Striking Iranian nuclear sites is like mowing the grass. Unless a strike succeeded in permanently crippling the Iranian capacity to produce and weaponize fissile material, the grass would only grow back again. And no strike -- or even series of strikes -- can accomplish this. Iran's hardened sites, redundancy of facilities, and secret locations present significant obstacles to a successful attack. Even in the best-case scenario -- an incomplete strike that, say, set back the Iranian nuclear program by two to three years -- the Iranians would reseed it with the kind of legitimacy and urgency that can only come from having been attacked by an outside power. Self-defense would then become the organizing principle of Iran's nuclear program; it would resonate tremendously throughout the Middle East and even in the international community.

The counterargument of course is that the Israelis would cut the grass periodically, striking Iran every 18 months or so. But this situation is probably untenable; it would put Iran and Israel in a permanent state of confrontation and keep the region burning for years to come.

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2. No one can prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. Except Iran. The fact is that India, Pakistan, North Korea, and even Israel -- nations with both a profound sense of insecurity and entitlement -- have all developed nuclear weapons secretly. Iraq and Syria were on their way, too. Iran, under the Shah, was also committed to a nuclear program and might, over time, have tried to weaponize.

But denying Iran a weapon means more than taking away the toys; it means changing the national calculation and motivation of a power that historically has imagined itself as a great nation. Even in the unlikely event Iran became a democracy, its own regional image and ambitions might still impel it to develop a nuclear capacity. At a minimum, denying Iran nuclear weapons means fundamentally changing the mullahcracy in Tehran; a military strike by the Israelis might do just the opposite -- further legitimizing it, particularly if there were civilian casualties. There's no better way to mobilize a divided polity or bring out its nationalist and unified character than to demonize a foreign enemy. And the Israelis would be the target of a massive Iranian propaganda effort across the Arab world, an effort that would likely win a great deal of sympathy.

3. There are severe costs to the United States. When countries undertake actions that carry great uncertainty and risk, two questions need to be asked. First, can it be done? Second, what will it cost? The fact that Israel faces an existential threat may understandably lead it to downplay the costs to others, particularly to the United States. After all, it's easy enough for Americans to assume, living thousands of miles away, that Iran is a rational actor and would never use a nuclear weapon against Israel because of the expectation of its own obliteration at the hands of the Israelis or the United States. Israelis, of course, maintain that the threat of retaliation is not an acceptable deterrent and will look to their own interests first.

But let's look at what an Israeli strike might do to U.S. interests and an economy still in recession. Even if the Iranians could only temporarily block shipping in the Strait of Hormuz (through which 40 percent of all oil sails), the price of oil would spike exponentially, further undermining and sabotaging world markets -- and doing tremendous damage to the fragile economic recovery in the United States. These economic and financial uncertainties could be truly global and catastrophic. At the same time, the Iranians would certainly try to turn up the heat against U.S. forces in Afghanistan and those remaining in Iraq, further compounding an already tenuous security situation in both countries. Together with a resurgent al Qaeda in Iraq (a Sunni threat), U.S. forces would be faced with a Shiite one as well. At the precise moment U.S. forces are committed to leaving Iraq, they could get sucked back into staying. Iran might well lash out at foes and perceived foes across the region, including in the Persian Gulf, particularly in a place like Bahrain. The Iranian capacity to strike the continental United State may be limited, but the capacity to wage a clandestine war against U.S. and Israeli interests across the Middle East is far more formidable.

4. It will legitimize and popularize Iran in the Middle East. George H.W. Bush's administration went to great lengths to prevent Israel from responding to Iraqi Scud attacks during the 1991 Gulf War. The logic was pretty compelling: Iraq was in defiance of the international community and U.N. Security Council resolutions, and a 34-country international coalition had formed to enforce the global good. The last thing needed was for Saddam Hussein to turn his invasion of Kuwait into an Arab-Israeli confrontation. The same applies here, to some extent.

Sanctions may never prevent the Iranians from acquiring a weapon, but they do have some impact; and Iran has become greatly isolated. An Israeli attack could undermine all that good work, particularly in the wake of this year's Arab revolutions. An Israeli attack might be quietly welcomed by the rulers of some Persian Gulf states, but it would be viewed on the Arab street as another example of Israeli aggression and U.S. double standards. The Arabs would love to see the Iranians taken down a notch or two; but Israel's involvement is going to complicate the post-strike environment and almost certainly undermine any U.S. effort to clean up the mess that will be left behind.

5. If the Israelis strike, the United States is necessarily involved. There's no way that an Israeli strike comes off without major complications and a military response against U.S. interests. Clearly, the assumption in Tehran will be that the Israeli attack was coordinated with the United States. Likely responses include attempts to close off



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shipping in the Strait of Hormuz and proxy attacks against U.S. military installations and embassies. Even if the United States is actively not involved in the strike, it will likely be called upon to aid or support Israel against attacks from Hezbollah and Hamas using high-trajectory weapons. Washington's credibility, at an all-time low internationally, will be further undermined. The United States is now involved in the two longest wars in its history and still has thousands of forces on the ground in two Muslim countries. And let's be clear: The United States is not winning those wars. The last thing it needs is another war against a Muslim country whose staying power and effectiveness in striking back at America (albeit in asymmetrical ways) should never be underestimated.

All these concerns are offered up knowing full well that Iran's acquisition of a nuclear weapon is a major problem for the United States, Israel, and the international community. It might even be a game-changer. The IAEA report seems likely to conclude that Iran is determined to acquire such a weapon, and it will reinforce -- with clarity -- that neither sanctions nor diplomacy have proved effective in stopping Tehran. No one should trivialize the consequences of an Iranian bomb. We can't stick our head in the sand, but we shouldn't lose our heads either.

If there was a reasonable chance or expectation that an Israeli strike would eliminate Iran's nuclear capacity, then a more compelling argument might be made in defense of it. But there isn't. And that leaves us in a very tough spot, poised somewhere for the moment between two equally unpalatable choices: risky and potentially catastrophic military action, or learning to live with an Iranian bomb that could dramatically reshape the power balance in the Middle East.

Aaron David Miller is a public policy scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and a former U.S. Middle East negotiator. His new book, Can America Have Another Great President?, will be published 2012.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/11/07/trouble_over_tehran?page=full

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CRIENGLISH.com – China
OPINION/Commentary

Commentary: Threats of Force Unhelpful to Solving Iran Nuclear Issue

November 9, 2011

Xinhua

By Zhu Junqing

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said in a report released Tuesday that "credible" evidence shows that Iran has engaged in efforts relevant to the development of atomic weapons, expressing serious concerns that Iran's nuclear program might have military purposes.

This was the clearest statement the IAEA has made so far about whether Iran was conducting nuclear programs for military purposes.

Tehran set its face against the allegation, accusing the United States of using the IAEA as a tool to pressure Iran over its "peaceful" nuclear program. Iran warned that "military adventurism" or any act of aggression against the Islamic republic would be met with a swift and crushing response.

Iran's strong stand was not only a response to the IAEA, but to Israel, whose President Shimon Peres said ahead of the report that a military option to stop Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons was nearer.

At this tumultuous moment, threats of force will not help achieve peace and stability in the volatile Middle East, and instead may sharpen confrontations.

Any military action could be a disaster for the region. Military intervention has been repeatedly proven to be the worst way to solve disputes between different countries, and the best way to destroy peaceful efforts.

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As Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said, any military strike against Iran would be a serious mistake fraught with unpredictable consequences.

The only way to solve the issue is to resume talks between Iran and the six world powers, including the United States, Britain, France, Russia, China and Germany.

Just as some analysts have warned, if Iran is targeted militarily, the already jumbled Middle East situation would become even harder to tackle, akin to pouring oil on the flames.

On the other hand, another costly war also won't benefit the United States and its allies, especially when the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan has not been as satisfying as the Americans had hoped.

Even the United States and Israel themselves can't reach a consensus supported by their own peoples on a military move. Some American conservative military experts warned that the consequences of an attack would be serious and could lead to unpredictable circumstances.

As a member of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Iran should fulfil its relevant international obligations and be more flexible and sincere when cooperating with the IAEA.

A peaceful settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue serves the common interests of the Middle East and the international community at large. It is important to avoid fresh turmoils in the Middle East.

Relevant parties and the world community should make joint efforts for that purpose.

<http://english.cri.cn/6966/2011/11/09/2021s666483.htm>

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Deutsche Welle – German Federation

OPINION/Interview

9 November 2011

'Israel Will Make a Cost-Benefit Analysis of an Attack on Iran's Nuclear Facilities'

The International Atomic Energy Agency says Iran has worked on developing nuclear weapon designs and on testing components. It comes amid rumors that Israel is preparing to attack Iran's nuclear facilities.

Mark Hibbs is a Senior Associate with the Nuclear Policy Program of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Deutsche Welle: Will this report change Western perceptions from suspicion to certainty that Iran's nuclear program has military dimensions?

Hibbs: I think it would be fair to say that the report certainly will intensify greatly the suspicion in the western camp that Iran is developing nuclear weapons. I would hesitate to use the word certainty because the report, significantly, does not assign political responsibility for any of the activities described in the report. There is nothing in the report pointing to a mastermind in Iran who has ordered these activities to be carried out.

The report says "worked on designing an atomic bomb" - does the IAEA still lack concrete evidence that Iran is building an atomic bomb?

When you talk about building an atomic bomb that means you have a series of short-term focussed events resulting in a device that has nuclear material and can be exploded and detonated and the report does not present any information suggesting that is a near term outcome. What it talks about is a gamut of activities, procurement, research, physics which have been carried out over a period beginning at the end of the 1980's.

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Iran, until 2008, had told the agency that some of these activities that it was willing to discuss were predicated on interest by Iran in civilian nuclear applications. The significance of the agencies report is that for the first time it shows an entire spectrum of activities spanning 20 years. Where it may be the case that individual activities could be justified by civilian applications, the overwhelming impression that you get over 20 years is that all of these activities are highly consistent with activities in other countries that were working on nuclear weapons over the last several decades.

Interestingly it talks about a "structured program" until 2003, which is when the US said Iran stopped weaponization research, but that activities continued after this. Does this mean the US was wrong in that 2007 intelligence assessment?

I don't know enough about what the parameters of the intelligence assessment were in the US. That document is classified. There is a report which has been declassified and there are other aspects of the intelligence assessment which are under wraps. But it would be fair to say that one of the significant aspects of the report from the agency is that it attests, or testifies to, activities which have continued in Iran after 2003 and it suggests that if there is a military industrial complex that's involved in the nuclear program in Iran then that relationship has continued after 2003 and that some activities that would be deemed useful for developing a nuclear weapon had continued up until the present.

The IAEA says Iran has built a large explosives vessel at the Parchin military complex southeast of Tehran - what's the significance of this?

All of the nuclear weapons programs, the clandestine programs, that we've known about since the 1970s have included a lot of activities related to testing of high explosives for a nuclear device. This is an activity that in other programs has been carried out in parallel with the acquisition, development and production and procurement necessary for other parts of the nuclear program and the production of nuclear material.

So if there is a nuclear weapons program in Iran it would be highly consistent with that expectation that there would be work in high explosives testing and it's possible that high explosives testing could be motivated by interest in nuclear weapons.

Russia and China are unhappy with the wording of this report. Could it have been tougher without their reservations?

The agency has been under pressure from both Western governments, particularly US, and the government's of China and Russia, as you mentioned, to cast the report to include or to exclude certain information. It appears to me that the report goes very far in describing an entire range of activities which Iran has been engaged in for a long period of time. I think that in Russia and China there was concern that too detailed a description of activities might prove embarrassing and would be counter-productive to the diplomatic process.

It's important in this regard to keep in mind that long before this report was completed, as early as the first week of October, the Chinese and Russian governments were signalling to their counterparts in the Western states on the board that they would not be in favour of moving toward a resolution in the board room that would cite Iran for non-compliance based on these activities cited in the report.

And there were many reasons for that; the primary reason given by Russia and China is that in their view a detailed expose of these activities given by the agency would in fact derail the diplomatic process. That is not the view of the western group. The Western group takes the view that the agency, over a period of several years now, has accumulated a dossier which suggests very strongly that Iran is engaged in activities which are contrary to its peaceful use pledge under the non-proliferation treaty of which Iran is a member.

What are the options for the US and its allies now?

There has been speculation in Israel that the Israeli government would - as a result of what is discussed in the report - strike nuclear facilities in Iran. I think that if the Israelis are seriously considering an attack on nuclear

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installations in Iran it will not be on the basis of what's in the report. Israel will be making a cost-benefit analysis of what an attack on nuclear facilities in Iran would imply.

But it's important to make clear that this report while it details a host of activities that Iran has carried out since the late 1980s, the report says nothing about the prospects for Iran's success. It illuminates a number of activities that we have seen in other nuclear weapons programs that are all consistent with the drive for nuclear weapons capabilities.

But on the basis of what's in the IAEA report we don't know anything, really, about how successful the Iranians have been in these endeavours that have been enumerated by the agency. At the end of the report we are not any closer to being able to make a judgement about how close Iran is to possessing nuclear arms.

Interview: Kerry Skyring, Vienna

Editor: Rob Mudge

<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,15519307,00.html>

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New York Times
OPINION/Editorial
November 9, 2011

The Truth About Iran

Tehran was in full dudgeon on Wednesday, denouncing the International Atomic Energy Agency — calling its top inspector a Washington stooge — after it reported that Iran's scientists had pursued secret activities “relevant to the development of a nuclear device.” The agency did not back down, and neither should anyone else.

The report is chillingly comprehensive. It says that Iran created computer models of nuclear explosions, conducted experiments on nuclear triggers and did advanced research on a warhead that could be delivered by a medium-range missile.

What gives the report particular credibility is its meticulous sourcing. The agency's director, Yukiya Amano, built a case on more than a thousand pages of documents, the assistance of more than 10 agency member states and interviews with “a number of individuals who were involved in relevant activities in Iran.”

The United Nations Security Council — particularly Russia and China, which have been shielding Iran — has no more excuses. It needs to quickly impose a new round of even tougher sanctions on Iran, which is also enriching uranium five years after the Council ordered it to stop. Russia, which is still doing a lot of business with Iran, ruled out more sanctions, saying they would be seen as an “instrument for regime change.” China said it would study the report. The enrichment program is having technical problems, and sanctions are making it harder to import materials. But not hard enough.

We're not sure any mix of sanctions and inducements can wean Tehran of its nuclear ambitions. We are sure that a military attack would be a disaster — and the current saber-rattling from Israel should make everyone nervous. A military strike would not set back Iran's program for very long. It would rally Iranians around their illegitimate government. And it would produce a huge anti-Israeli and anti-American backlash around the world — whether or not Washington had tried to stop it.

The last round of sanctions was approved 17 months ago. Since then, Russia and China have balked at further penalties while stalling on implementing those already approved. So long as that enabling continues, Iran will keep pushing its nuclear program forward.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/10/opinion/the-truth-about-iran.html? r=1>

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Washington Post
OPINION/Editorial

Running Out of Time to Stop Iran's Nuclear Program

November 9, 2011

THE INTERNATIONAL Atomic Energy Agency has now spelled out in detail what governments around the world have known for a long time: Iran's nuclear program has an explicit military dimension, aimed at producing a warhead that can be fitted onto one of the country's medium-range missiles. In a 14-page annex to its latest report, the agency summarizes the evidence behind its conclusion that "Iran has carried out activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device." It also says that these programs "may still be ongoing" — a contradiction of the U.S. intelligence community's controversial conclusion that they were suspended in 2003.

The IAEA's evidence, which includes 1,000 pages of documents, interviews with renegade scientists who helped Iran and material from 10 governments, ought to end serious debate about whether Tehran's program is for peaceful purposes. That's why Russia and China tried to block the report. Those governments would like to avoid the discussion that must now begin: what must be done to stop the program.

One option is military action, which Israel's government appears to be debating. We continue to regard that as a last resort, and one that is not now justified. Military strikes would only slow — not eliminate — Iran's work on a bomb, while risking a conflagration in the Middle East. Though experts are divided over how much time Iran still needs to gain all the elements for a weapon, it is likely at least a year or more away from completing one — and international inspectors might detect a final push.

So there is time, but the Obama administration and other Western governments must recognize that the sanctions they have so far put in place, and covert operations aimed at sabotaging Iranian centrifuges and killing scientists, have not succeeded in changing the regime's intentions or stopping its work. The IAEA reports that uranium enrichment continues at a steady pace — 4.9 tons of low-enriched material have been produced, enough for four bombs with further processing. Just as disturbing: Iran continues to install centrifuges in a new underground facility and says it will step up production of higher-enriched uranium, which could be quickly converted to bomb-grade material.

The Obama administration has been saying since last month, when it revealed an Iranian plot to murder the Saudi ambassador to the United States, that it intended to press for tougher sanctions. But in briefing reporters this week, officials appeared to back away from measures that would have real impact — such as a Treasury ban on transactions with Iran's central bank. Though that step has strong support in Congress, the administration is wary that, by effectively shutting down Iran's oil exports, it would provoke a spike in energy prices that would damage the fragile global economy.

That is a legitimate concern. But President Obama has said repeatedly that Iran's acquisition of a nuclear weapon is unacceptable — and the IAEA report makes clear the danger is growing, not diminishing. If Iran is to be stopped without the use of military force, the president, and the country, should be willing to bear some economic pain. The alternative — allowing Tehran to go forward — would be far more costly.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/running-out-of-time-to-stop-irans-nuclear-program/2011/11/09/gIQAiFDQ6M_story.html

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National Journal
OPINION/Analysis

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Nuclear Negligence

By hiding its nuclear weapons from Washington, Pakistan has made them much more vulnerable to jihadists. In response, the Pentagon has devised secret plans to secure the Pakistani arsenal—by force if necessary.

By Jeffrey Goldberg and Marc Ambinder

November 9, 2011

Shortly after Navy SEALs raided the Pakistani city of Abbottabad in May and killed Osama bin Laden, Gen. Ashfaq Kayani, the Pakistani chief of army staff, spoke with Khalid Kidwai, the retired lieutenant general in charge of securing Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. Kidwai, who commands a security apparatus called the Strategic Plans Division, had been expecting Kayani's call.

Kayani, the most powerful man in a country that has only a simulacrum of civilian leadership, had been busy in the tense days that followed the bin Laden raid: He had to assure his American funders (U.S. taxpayers provide more than \$2 billion in annual subsidies to the Pakistani military) that the army had no prior knowledge of bin Laden's hideout, located less than a mile from Pakistan's preeminent military academy; and at the same time he had to subdue the uproar within his ranks over what was seen as a flagrant violation of Pakistan's sovereignty by an arrogant Barack Obama. But he was also anxious about the safety of Pakistan's nuclear weapons, and he found time to express this worry to Kidwai.

Much of the world, of course, is anxious about the security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons, and for good reason: Pakistan is an unstable country located at the epicenter of global jihadism, and it has been the foremost supplier of nuclear technology to such rogue states as Iran and North Korea. "The single biggest threat to U.S. security, both short term, medium term, and long term, would be the possibility of a terrorist organization obtaining a nuclear weapon," President Obama said last year at an international nuclear-security meeting in Washington. Al-Qaida, Obama said, is "trying to secure a nuclear weapon—a weapon of mass destruction that they have no compunction at using."

Pakistan would be an obvious place for a jihadist organization to seek a nuclear weapon or fissile material: It is the only Muslim-majority state, out of the 50 or so in the world, to have successfully developed nuclear weapons. Its central government has serious trouble controlling the many corners of its territory. Its security services are infiltrated by an unknown number of jihadist sympathizers; a number of jihadist organizations are headquartered there and have relations with the government. And the weapons are stored on bases and in facilities spread across the country—possibly including one within several miles of Abbottabad, a city that, in addition to having hosted bin Laden, is home to many partisans of the jihadist group Harakat-ul-Mujahideen.

"There are three threats," says Graham Allison, an expert on nuclear weapons who directs the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard. The first is "a terrorist theft of a nuclear weapon, which they take to Mumbai or New York for a nuclear 9/11. The second is a transfer of a nuclear weapon to a state like Iran. The third is a takeover of nuclear weapons by a militant group during a period of instability or splintering of the state."

Pakistani officials adamantly defend the safety of their nuclear program. In times of relative quiet between Pakistan and India (the country that would be the target of a Pakistani nuclear attack), they say that their weapons are "de-mated"—meaning that the warheads are kept separate from their fissile cores and their delivery systems. This makes stealing, or launching, a complete nuclear weapon far more difficult. In an interview this summer in Islamabad, a senior official of the Inter-Services Intelligence directorate, the Pakistani military's spy agency, told *National Journal* that U.S. fears about the safety of Pakistan's nuclear weapons were entirely unfounded. "Of all the things in the world to worry about, the issue you should worry about the least is the safety of our nuclear program," the official said. "It is completely secure." He went on to say, "It is in our interest to keep our bases safe as well. You must trust us that we have maximum and impenetrable security. No one with ill intent can get near our strategic assets."

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Like many statements made by Pakistan's leaders, this one contained large elements of deceit. Militants have already targeted at least six facilities widely believed to be associated with Pakistan's nuclear program. To hide weapons from the prying satellite eyes of the United States, Pakistan moves warheads around in unmarked vans with low security profiles down busy roads. In fact, Pakistanis see jihadists as less threatening than Washington, which they believe wants to seize their nuclear weapons. After the Abbottabad mission, Kayani wanted to know what additional steps Kidwai was taking to prevent an American raid on their nuclear arsenal. Kidwai promised to redouble efforts to keep his country's weapons far from the long arms of the Americans.

What that means, in essence, is this: In a country that is home to Muslim fundamentalist groups—al-Qaida, the Haqqani network, and Lashkar-e-Taiba (which conducted the Mumbai raid that killed nearly 200 civilians in 2008)—nuclear bombs capable of destroying entire cities are transported in delivery vans on congested and dangerous roads. And Pakistani and U.S. sources say that since the raid on Abbottabad, the Pakistanis have increased the pace of these movements. In other words, the Pakistani government is willing to make its nuclear weapons more vulnerable to theft by jihadists simply to hide them from the United States, the country that funds much of its military budget. In response, the Pentagon has devised secret plans to secure Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, amplifying Pakistani fears.

LOOSE NUKES

It is true that the Strategic Plans Division is considered to be a highly professional organization, at least by Pakistani-government standards of professionalism. Kidwai, its leader, is well regarded by Western nuclear-security experts, and the soldiers and civilians he leads are said by Pakistani spokesmen to be screened rigorously for their probity and competence, and for signs of political or religious immoderation. The SPD, Pakistani officials say, keeps careful watch over behavioral changes in its personnel; employees are investigated thoroughly for ties to extremists or radical mosques, and for changes in their lifestyle and income. The SPD is also believed to maintain "dummy" storage sites to divert attention from active ones.

Pakistani spokesmen say that the SPD is vigilant in its monitoring of the civilian scientists working in the country's nuclear complexes. There are as many as 9,000 of them, including at least 2,000 who possess "critical knowledge" of weapons manufacture and maintenance, according to two sources in Pakistan. The watchfulness was deemed necessary after disclosures that two retired Pakistani nuclear scientists with pronounced jihadist sympathies had met with bin Laden in the summer of 2001. "I think it's overstated that the weapons can get into bad hands," Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's former president, who created the SPD, told *NJ*.

But some U.S. intelligence experts aren't so sure. First, there is the simple matter of competence. When Navy SEALs penetrated Pakistani air defenses, landed in helicopters streets away from a prestigious military academy, killed the most-wanted fugitive in modern history, and then departed, the Pakistani military was oblivious for the duration. Pervasive derision followed. A popular text message in the days after the raid read, "If you honk your horn, do so lightly, because the Pakistani army is asleep."

Americans also question Pakistan's nuclear vigilance. Thomas Fingar, a former chairman of the National Intelligence Council under President George W. Bush, said it is logical that any nuclear-weapons state would budget the resources necessary to protect its arsenal—but that "we do not know that this is the case in Pakistan." The key concern, Fingar says, is that "we do not know if what the military has done is adequate to protect the weapons from insider threats, or if key military units have been penetrated by extremists. We hope the weapons are safe, but we may be whistling past the graveyard."

Some near misses have already occurred. In November 2007, a suicide bomber attacked a bus carrying workers to the Sargodha air base, which is believed to house nuclear weapons. The following month, a school bus was attacked outside Kamra air base, which may also serve as a nuclear storage site. In August 2008, Pakistani Taliban suicide bombers attacked what experts believe is the country's main nuclear-weapons assembly depot in Wah cantonment. Recently, militants invaded a major Pakistani naval base near Karachi, blowing up two P-3C Orion surveillance planes and killing at least 10 people. Pakistani security forces required 15 hours to regain control of

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the base. In a series of interviews, several Pakistani officials told *NJ* that investigators suspect the militants had help inside the complex. Experts believe that nuclear-weapon components were stored nearby.

Pakistani leaders say their military and security organizations are immune to radical influence. "I have seen no significant radicalization of any of our men in uniform," said the Inter-Services Intelligence senior official *NJ* interviewed in Islamabad. "This is simply a lie." But the evidence suggests otherwise. Sympathy for jihadist-oriented groups among at least some Pakistani military men has been acknowledged for years, even inside Pakistan; recently a brigadier, Ali Khan, was arrested on charges of maintaining contact with a banned extremist organization. A retired Pakistani general with intelligence experience says, "Different aspects of the military and security services have different levels of sympathy for the extremists. The navy is high in sympathy."

If jihadists are looking to raid a nuclear facility, they have a wide selection of targets: Although Pakistan is very secretive about the locations of its nuclear facilities, satellite imagery and other sources suggest that jihadists could find warheads or other nuclear materials at a minimum of 15 sites.

Yet neither the Pakistani army nor the SPD seems to consider jihadism the most immediate threat to the security of its nuclear weapons. Instead, Kayani's worry, as expressed to Kidwai, was focused on the United States. According to sources in Pakistan, Kayani believes that the U.S. has the technical means to stage simultaneous raids on Pakistan's nuclear facilities. Kidwai promised that the counterintelligence branch of the SPD remained focused on rooting out American and Indian spies from the Pakistani nuclear-weapons complex, and on foiling other American espionage methods. Pakistan's air force trains its pilots to intercept U.S. spy planes; its military assumes (correctly) that the U.S. devotes many resources to aerial and satellite surveillance of its nuclear sites.

In his post-Abbottabad talk with Kayani, Kidwai also said that Pakistan's program was sufficiently hardened, and dispersed, so that the U.S. would have to mount a sizable invasion of the country to neutralize its weapons; a raid on the scale of Abbottabad simply would not suffice. But to keep American and Indian intelligence agencies guessing, according to multiple sources in Pakistan, Kidwai ordered an increase in the tempo of the dispersal of nuclear-weapons components and other sensitive materials. One method the SPD uses to ensure their safety is to shuffle the materials among the 15 or more facilities that handle them. Nuclear weapons must go to the shop for occasional maintenance, and so they have to be moved to suitably equipped facilities.

Nuclear components are sometimes flown by helicopter or driven over roads. But instead of moving nuclear material in armored, well-defended convoys, the SPD prefers to use civilian-style vans, without noticeable defenses, in the regular flow of traffic. And, according to a senior U.S. intelligence official, the Pakistanis have begun using this low-security method to transfer not merely the "de-mated" component nuclear parts, but also "mated" nuclear weapons. Western nuclear experts have feared that Pakistan is building small, tactical nuclear weapons for quick deployment on the battlefield. In fact, not only is Islamabad building these devices, it is also now driving them around the streets of Pakistan.

Experts further worry about the accidental launch of a nuclear warhead during a period of high tension between Pakistan and India, or the possibility that rogue elements inside the Pakistani military might take it upon themselves to launch a nuclear attack. On paper, Pakistan's nuclear command-and-control body, the National Command Authority, is overseen by the civilian prime minister, working in conjunction with the country's military leaders. But in reality, the military controls the system of enabling and authenticating codes that would be transmitted to strategic forces in the event of a nuclear alert. Pakistan's nuclear posture is opaque, however, and the U.S. has many questions about how the authority to use the weapons is delegated.

In 2006, Kidwai told an audience at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif., that Pakistan maintained for its nuclear arsenal the functional equivalent of two-person control and permissive action links, or PALs—coded locks meant to prevent unauthorized arming of a weapon. Asked about Pakistan's PAL protocols, one former U.S. defense official replied, "It has never been clear to me what Pakistani PALs really entail. The doctrine is 'two people'—but is it two people to unlock the box around the warhead, or is it two people to launch the thing once



you've mated the warhead to the missile?" (India, in contrast, has been more transparent about its nuclear posture; unlike Pakistan, it has pledged not to use nuclear weapons first—only in response.)

Still, what really frightens American strategic thinkers is not so much the launch protocols as the long-term stability and coherence of Pakistan itself. Stephen P. Cohen, a scholar at the Brookings Institution, says that if Pakistan were not in possession of nuclear weapons, the problem would be like "Nigeria without oil"—a much lower foreign-policy priority. But Pakistan is in dire shape. "Its economy has failed, its politics have failed, and its army either fails or looks the other way," says Cohen. "There are no good options." For that reason, Washington must keep a tight bond with a nuclear Pakistan.

Few experts believe that Pakistan is in imminent danger of collapse—but the trends, as Cohen notes, are negative. The government is widely considered to be among the world's most corrupt (President Asif Ali Zardari is informally known as "Mr. 10 Percent"). Last year, Pakistan's inflation rate hit 15 percent, and the real unemployment rate was 34 percent. Some 60 percent of Pakistanis survive on less than \$2 a day. Nearly a quarter of the government budget goes to the military.

PAKISTANI PARANOIA

In a country that has made only modest gains in the areas of innovation, science, and education (especially in comparison with its rival, India), the Pakistani nuclear program has played an outsized role in the building of national self-esteem. And so critiques like those are deeply wounding. They produce feelings of distrust.

In 2000, one of the authors of this article met A.Q. Khan, the nuclear scientist known as the "father" of Pakistan's nuclear-bomb program, at a ceremony in Islamabad marking the second anniversary of the detonation of the country's first atomic bomb. (Khan was also the principal exporter of Pakistani nuclear technology to such countries as Iran, North Korea, and Libya.) The celebration—complete with a vanilla sheet cake on which the words *Youm-e-Takbeer*, or "Day of God's Greatness," were written in lemon frosting—was held in the presence of many of the country's leading nuclear scientists, and of Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who had recently taken power in a coup.

After the ceremony, Khan told a small circle of admirers, as well as the visiting American reporter, that Westerners resented Pakistan's admission into the nuclear club. "The West has been leading a crusade against the Muslims for a thousand years," he said. He went on to assert that the U.S. would do anything in its power to neutralize Pakistan's nuclear assets. One of the scientists in the circle agreed, and said, "Why do the Americans want to destroy Islam?" In a recent interview with *NJ*, Musharraf echoed the point: "No one ever speaks of the dangers of a Hindu bomb."

An American visitor to Pakistan can easily see that a particular narrative has been embedded in the country's collective psyche: The U.S. favors India, punishes Pakistan unjustifiably, and periodically abandons Pakistan when policymakers in Washington feel the country is not useful. "America is a disgrace because it turns on its friends when it has no use for them," says Gen. Aslam Beg, a retired chief of staff of the Pakistani army, in an efficient summation of the dominant Pakistani narrative.

This sort of paranoia has spread through the Pakistani security elite—and it went viral after the Abbottabad raid. Fear of pernicious American designs on Pakistan's nuclear arsenal has combined with people's anger over their military's apparent impotence, creating a feeling of almost toxic insecurity across the country. The raid shook the confidence of the army, and its admirers, like no other event since Pakistan's most recent defeat by the Indian army in 1999. (India and Pakistan have fought multiple wars, all of them won by India.) A Pew poll taken after the Abbottabad raid found that 69 percent of Pakistanis view the U.S. as "more of an enemy"; only 6 percent see the U.S. as "more of a partner."

A retired Pakistani general, who expressed disgust at the military's performance ("There should have been a try to shoot down the American helicopters"), says that the raid amplified the traditional paranoia. "You can think of this in terms of drones. The Americans are in the skies, where they are invisible, and yet they can kill anyone they



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want,” he said. “America is a superpower of technology. It would be easy to make a quick snatch of Pakistani strategic assets.”

Pakistanis tend to believe that the United States seeks to seize their country’s nuclear weapons preemptively, simply because the U.S. doesn’t like their country, or because of an ideological commitment to keep Muslim countries nuclear-free. This paranoia is not completely irrational, of course; it’s wise for the U.S. to try to design a plan for seizing Pakistan’s nuclear weapons in a low-risk manner. “The U.S. tried to prevent Pakistan from becoming a nuclear-weapons state,” said Harvard’s Graham Allison. “It is not delusional for Pakistan to fear that America is interested in de-nuking them. It is prudent paranoia.”

U.S. WAR PLANS

Though the United States has punished Pakistan in the past for its nuclear program (with sanctions that not only failed to stop the program but also helped to aggravate anti-American feeling among Pakistanis), there is no evidence to suggest that the Obama administration is actively considering “de-nuking” Pakistan in its current state. Officials at the White House and elsewhere argue that the Pakistani military and the SPD are the best tools available to keep Pakistan’s weapons secure. In the recent past, Washington has spent as much as \$100 million to help the SPD build better facilities and security systems. (However, according to David Sanger’s book *The Inheritance*, Pakistan has not allowed Americans to conduct an audit to see how the \$100 million was spent.) Although Adm. Mike Mullen, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, eventually became disillusioned by Pakistan’s double-dealing on terrorism, he always felt his relationship with Kayani had borne fruit on nuclear weapons. “When he would bring up a concern about nuclear weapons in a meeting, the Pakistanis would usually deal with it,” an associate of Mullen’s told us.

But Pakistanis are correct to believe that the U.S. government—because it does not trust Pakistan, because it knows that the civilian leadership is weak, and because it does not have a complete intelligence picture—is worried that the SPD could fail in its mission, and that fissile material or a nuclear weapon could go missing. Concerned that Pakistan’s ethnic rivalries, corruption, and terrorism could one day tear the country apart, the Pentagon has developed a set of highly detailed plans to grapple with nuclear insecurity in Pakistan. “It’s safe to assume that planning for the worst-case scenario regarding Pakistan nukes has already taken place inside the U.S. government,” Roger Cressey, a former deputy director of counterterrorism under Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, told NBC News in August. “This issue remains one of the highest priorities of the U.S. intelligence community ... and the White House.”

From time to time, U.S. officials have hinted publicly that concrete plans are in place in the event of a Pakistani nuclear emergency. For instance, during Senate hearings for her confirmation as secretary of State in 2005, then-National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice was asked by Sen. John Kerry what would happen to Pakistan’s nukes in the event of an Islamic coup in Islamabad. “We have noted this problem, and we are prepared to try to deal with it,” Rice said.

Those preparations have been extensive. According to military and intelligence sources, any answer to a Pakistani nuclear crisis would involve something along the following lines: If a single weapon or a small amount of nuclear material were to go missing, the response would be contained—Abbottabad redux, although with a higher potential for U.S. casualties. The United States Joint Special Operations Command maintains rotating deployments of specially trained units in the region, most of them Navy SEALs and Army explosive-ordnance-disposal specialists, who are trained to deal with nuclear weapons that have fallen into the wrong hands. Their area of operation includes the former Soviet states, where there is a large amount of loose fissile material, and, of course, Pakistan. JSOC “has units and aircraft and parachutes on alert in the region for nuclear issues, and regularly inserts units and equipment for prep,” says a military official who was involved in supporting these technicians.

Seizing or remotely disabling a weapon of mass destruction is what’s known in military jargon as a “render-safe mission”—and JSOC has evidently pulled off such missions before. In his memoir, Hugh Shelton, who chaired the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 1997 to 2001, recalls an incident from the 1990s in which the CIA told the Special

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Operations Command that a ship had left North Korea with what Shelton describes as “an illegal weapon” on board. Where it was headed, the U.S. didn’t know. He wrote: “It was a very time-sensitive mission in which a specific SEAL Team Six component was called into action. While I cannot get into the tactical elements or operational details of this mission, what I can say is that our guys were able to ‘immobilize’ the weapon system in a special way without leaving any trace.”

Much more challenging than capturing and disabling a loose nuke or two, however, would be seizing control of—or at least disabling—the entire Pakistani nuclear arsenal in the event of a jihadist coup, civil war, or other catastrophic event. This “disablement campaign,” as one former senior Special Operations planner calls it, would be the most taxing and most dangerous of any special mission that JSOC could find itself tasked with—orders of magnitude more difficult and expansive than Abbottabad. The scale of such an operation would be too large for U.S. Special Operations components alone, so an across-the-board disablement campaign would be led by U.S. Central Command—the area command that is responsible for the Middle East and Central Asia, and runs operations in Afghanistan and Iraq—and U.S. Pacific Command.

JSOC would take the lead, however, accompanied by civilian experts. It has been preparing for such an operation for years. JSOC forces are trained to breach the inner perimeters of nuclear installations and then to find, secure, evacuate—or, if that’s not possible, to “render safe”—any live weapons. At the Nevada National Security Site, northwest of Las Vegas, Delta Force and SEAL Team Six squadrons practice “Deep Underground Shelter” penetrations, using extremely sensitive radiological detection devices that can pick up trace amounts of nuclear material and help Special Operations locate the precise spot where the fissile material is stored. JSOC has also built mock Pashtun villages, complete with hidden mock nuclear-storage depots, at a training facility on the East Coast, so SEALs and Delta Force operatives can practice there.

At the same time, U.S. military and intelligence forces have been quietly pre-positioning the necessary equipment in the region. In the event of a coup, U.S. forces would rush into the country, crossing borders, rappelling down from helicopters, and parachuting out of airplanes, so they can secure known or suspected nuclear-storage sites. According to the former senior Special Operations planner, JSOC units’ first tasks might be to disable tactical nuclear weapons—because those are more easily mated, and easier to move around, than long-range missiles.

In a larger disablement campaign, the U.S. would likely mobilize the Army’s 20th Support Command, whose Nuclear Disablement Teams would accompany Special Operations detachments or Marine companies into the country. These teams are trained to engage in what the military delicately calls “sensitive site exploitation operations on nuclear sites”—meaning that they can destroy a nuclear weapon without setting it off. Generally, a mated nuclear warhead can be deactivated when its trigger mechanism is disabled. So both the Army teams and JSOC units train extensively on the types of trigger mechanisms that Pakistani weapons are thought to use. According to some scenarios developed by American war planners, after as many weapons as possible were disabled and as much fissile material as possible was secured, U.S. troops would evacuate quickly—because the final stage of the plan involves precision missile strikes on nuclear bunkers, using special “hard and deeply buried target” munitions.

But nuclear experts issue a cautionary note: It is not clear that U.S. intelligence agencies can identify the locations of all of Pakistan’s nuclear weapons, particularly after the Abbottabad raid. “Anyone who tells you that they know where all of Pakistan’s nukes are is lying to you,” Gen. James Jones, President Obama’s first national-security adviser, has said, according to a source who heard him say it. (When asked by the authors of this article about his statement, Jones issued a “no comment.”) Another former official with nuclear expertise says, “We don’t even know, on any given day, exactly how many weapons they have. We can get within plus or minus 10, but that’s about it.”

BACK BURNER

Pakistan’s military chiefs are aware that the U.S. military has developed plans for an emergency nuclear-disablement operation in their country, and they have periodically threatened to ally themselves with China as a



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way to undercut U.S. power in South Asia. In a recent statement obviously meant for American ears, Pakistan's prime minister, Yousuf Raza Gilani, described the Pakistani-Chinese relationship as "higher than the mountains, deeper than the oceans, stronger than steel, and sweeter than honey." But China, too, is worried about Pakistan's stability, and it has recently alleged that Pakistan has harbored Uighur separatists operating in western China. According to U.S. sources, Beijing has reached an understanding in secret talks with Washington that, should America decide to send forces into Pakistan to secure its nuclear weapons, China would raise no objections. (An Obama administration spokesman had no comment.)

The United States takes great pains to stress to the Pakistanis that any disablement or render-safe plans would be put into effect only in the event that everything else fails—and furthermore, that these plans have the primary goal of helping to maintain Pakistan's secure possession of the weapons over the long term. In fact, some Pakistani officials accept these American plans—they welcome American technical and military assistance in keeping nuclear material out of the wrong hands. Still, the subject comes up at almost every high-level meeting between U.S. and Pakistani officials.

In the end, though, the policy goals of the Obama administration are focused not on Pakistan's nuclear weapons but rather on the terrorist groups based there. "Our core goal is to disrupt, dismantle, and eventually defeat al-Qaida," one senior administration official says. "This is a very clarifying way to think about what we are doing and why cooperation with Pakistan is important." In the short term, this issue flummoxes policymakers in Washington even more than nuclear security. Frustration with their dissembling Pakistani counterparts has drawn the countries further apart than at any time since just after Sept. 11.

The United States must, for its own security, keep watch over Pakistan's nuclear program—and that's more easily done if it remains engaged with the Pakistani government. The U.S. must also be able to receive information from the ISI about al-Qaida, even if such information is provided sporadically. And Washington will simply not find a way out of Afghanistan if Pakistan becomes an open enemy. Pakistan, for its part, can afford to lose neither America's direct financial support nor the help that America provides with international lending agencies. Neither can Pakistan's military lose its access to U.S. weapons systems, and to the trainers attached to them. Economically, Pakistan cannot afford to be isolated by the U.S. in the way the U.S. isolates countries it considers sponsors of terrorism. Its neighbor Iran is an object lesson in this regard. For all these reasons, Pakistan and the United States remain locked in a hostile embrace. There is no escaping this vexed relationship and little evidence to suggest that it will soon improve.

Jeffrey Goldberg is a national correspondent for The Atlantic. Marc Ambinder is the White House correspondent for National Journal. A fuller accounting of the strained U.S.-Pakistan alliance ran in The Atlantic.

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<http://nationaljournal.com/magazine/the-pentagon-s-secret-plans-to-secure-pakistan-s-nuclear-arsenal-20111104>

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Pakistan Today – Pakistan

OPINION

Thursday, 10 November 2011

The (Shallow) Atlantic!

By Ejaz Haider

In all the silly controversy over The Atlantic-National Journal article, one underlying United States unease has gone unnoticed, a deeply satisfying fact for me as a student of strategy: the US, despite all the scenario-building over several years and consistent attempts through technical and other means to pick up intelligence on Pakistan's nuclear arsenal – directly and through allied efforts – remains clueless about critical aspects of Pakistan's

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programme. The Strategic Plans Division, an otherwise open organisation that serves as the Secretariat of the National Command Authority, deserves credit for this.

The second aspect deals with our reaction. The Foreign Office spokesperson should have responded to the question about it with a one-line, does-not-merit-comment response. The next step which Pakistan took, getting the State Department to debunk it, was a much smarter move.

Now to the article.

First, concerned officials at the Inter-Services Public Relations, the Strategic Plans Division and the Inter-Services Intelligence deny anyone authorised to speak with the media on this subject ever met with or spoke to these reporters. "No request was ever filed, no one ever spoke to them, no one had heard their names before the publishing of this article," I was told.

Second, going by what they have written, both reporters are singularly ignorant of the technicalities of the subject they undertook.

The first problem relates to conflating the concepts of safety and security. Are the nuclear weapons safe is a different question from are they secure. In theory, a safe nuclear weapon may not be secure or a secure one may not be safe. In practice, an arsenal requires the weapons to be both safe and secure. In very broad terms, eschewing complex details and procedures – some of which may be known while others kept secret – safety deals with the safe working mechanism of various parts of a nuclear weapon and its storage (incidents/accidents etc) and their authorised use only. Security relates to the physical security, transportation and storage of a site, its weapons and their components. The secrecy of many of these procedures is in line with the IAEA security protocol.

All such write-ups about Pakistani loose nukes get this wrong.

So, is there no threat to the Pakistani arsenal? Of course there is; in fact, there are multiple threats. Is the Pakistani arsenal absolutely safe and secure? It is safe, as safe as technologies and procedures can make something safe. But nothing can be absolutely secure. As someone said about foolproof measures, for every proof there is always a fool. The reporters of this article would do well to study nuclear-related incidents and accidents in the US and perhaps also cast a glance at Charles Perrow's remarkable 'normal accidents' theory. It is one of the many dilemmas of possessing nuclear weapons: how to safe-keep and secure the arsenal that is supposed to secure a state and give it a strategic advantage.

Nuclear arsenals are kept safe and secure in all nuclear-weapon states precisely to avoid incidents, accidents, unauthorised use, theft etc. Procedures are checked, monitored and improved where improvement is required. A case in point is the 2007 incident at the Minot AFB in the US where six cruise missiles armed with nuclear warheads were loaded on a B52H bomber and were without required security for 36 hours. The incident, after the cover-up, resulted in two high-level separate inquiries which also brought into light many other lapses. Based on the findings, many procedures were revisited and improved. Many heads also rolled.

Ditto for security and safety of reactors, weapons labs, and other nuclear-related material, including best practices for accounting of radioactive materials which have multiple civilian uses apart from safe and secure storage and use of reactor- and weapons-grade uranium and plutonium. This also includes export of such materials. Again, in 2006, a US cargo to Taiwan mistakenly contained four electrical fuses for the Minuteman ICBM nose cone. So, yes, nothing is foolproof.

The safety and security of Pakistani arsenal and other measures for accounting of stocks etc take into account the threat spectrum which has some features common to all NWSs and has some that are peculiar to Pakistan. This means that the threats identified in the article are factored into the security and safety regimes.

Similarly, the article's assertion that Pakistan is using civilian vehicles to move weapons, both 'de-mated' and 'mated', on 'dangerous and congested roads' is not only fantastic, the reporters again reveal their lack of

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knowledge of the concept of 'security'. Low profile security does not mean less security or, worse, lack of security. It simply means securing something or someone in a way that does not attract attention. This is like people often saying "Oh, these intel guys; they can't even hide themselves while tailing me". Right! Except that one can see them because they want to be seen! Overt surveillance for most subjects is a more cost-effective way than covert surveillance.

Expectedly, the writers do not define the term 'mated' weapons. Are they referring to the transportation of a full weapon as opposed to its dissembled components? Mating normally refers to a weapon 'mated' to its delivery vehicle. It is highly unlikely that Pakistan is transporting 30-meter-long nuclear-tipped missiles in civilian vehicles! But why should facts stand in the way of magical realism?

How many contradictions can one highlight? Here's one. On the one hand the reporters quote very senior officials as stating that the US doesn't know much about the Pakistani programme and on the other unnamed US intelligence sources confirm to the reporters how exactly Pakistan is moving its arsenal on 'dangerous and congested' roads. Then, while the US is terribly concerned about possible loose nukes and is constantly scheming to secure them, it does nothing when it sees Pakistan moving its arsenal around so dangerously.

The US also doesn't know the exact location of Pakistan's silos and storage facilities but buses attacked outside Sargodha and Kamra AFBs are supposed to be near-misses to grab Pakistani nukes because those are possible storage sites. One, even the US intelligence at the highest level has only guesstimates and conjectures; two, attacking buses on thoroughfares is no way of trying to grab a nuke, thank you. And since it is a known fact that Pakistan operates multiple decoy sites, how do the reporters know which is which?

Of course, here we are not even getting into the technical details of how difficult it is to steal (grabbing makes much less sense because even if a group managed to do that, it would be impossible for them to extricate with the weapon) a weapon, how difficult it is, even if one could be stolen, to transport it, how difficult to trigger it, how difficult to (theoretically) dissemble and reassemble it with different nuclear codes if original PAL (permissive action links) codes are unknown etcetera. This is a whole different debate and the reporters would do well to read the findings of a 2004 paper commissioned by the WMD Commission.

There are multiple steps to keep weapons safe and secure and most of the scenarios experts keep conjuring up are built into these regimes. As David Sanger of The New York Times said in his article published on January 11, 2009 – I responded to that in a Daily Times article on Jan 13 – "every few months someone in Washington...runs a simulation of how the United States should respond if a terrorist group infiltrates the Pakistani nuclear programme or manages to take over one or two of its weapons". The problem is, as he wrote, "In these exercise, everyone plays to type".

So there, then, we have yet another article. The problem is, this one is much inferior even as playing-to-type articles go.

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<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2011/11/the-shallow-atlantic/>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

OPINION/Analysis

Iran's Atom: IAEA Accuses Iran and Retreats

10 November 2011

By RIA Novosti military commentator Konstantin Bogdanov

Iran is being accused of implementing military nuclear programs. Such is the interpretation of the IAEA report on the Iranian nuclear industry, which has gained traction in the last few days. However, this accusation is based on



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an ambiguous rendering of the document, which has not yet been given the status of an officially published IAEA report.

Why now?

The report, that was announced long ago and that came with different reservations about its status, began leaking into the press only two days ago. In early October the press began to write about the fact that this report was being prepared, and that it was expected to be tough and uncompromising.

Numerous leaks regarding preparations for a military strike against Iran appeared at the same time - beginning with large-scale exercises of U.S. military transport aviation in the Middle East (supposedly covering up the movement of forces) and ending with almost panicked reports that Iran was about to hide all of its nuclear centrifuges in the mountains where they could not be destroyed.

It is difficult to understand this escalation of tensions, considering that the IAEA report does not reflect any serious foundation for these apprehensions.

The reaction of IAEA officials is especially interesting. It appears that the report, which has already been disseminated on the Internet and has evoked numerous comments from the press and even from officials, will not be officially published at all.

IAEA Press and Public Information Officer Giovanni Verlini told The Moscow News that over the next few days, the report will be disseminated only among the delegations of the member-countries and that it will be up to the diplomats to decide whether to pass on its details to the press or not. IAEA experts are not authorized to do this themselves, he explained.

In other words, IAEA experts will simply distribute the report among the official delegations as a confidential document and demonstratively limit their involvement in the process to that. This is a peculiar decision on the future of the document that may potentially influence the issues of war and peace in the Middle East.

No conclusive evidence has been revealed

The report is an expert working document that appears to be unfinished. This is all the more strange because the interested parties had started shaping their attitude towards it almost a month before its publication.

As food for thought and a guide to action - in particular further verifications and inquiries - this may be useful. But it can hardly be considered to be evidence of "Iran's guilt," or an excuse for switching to sanctions (not to mention military operations).

On the one hand, the report enumerates all sins and suspicions concerning Iran going back almost to the 1990s. This fact has already prompted Tehran to call the report a compilation of stale accusations that are politically loaded under U.S. pressure and not supported by new facts.

On the other hand, the report cites new results of inspections of nuclear facilities (conducted in the last two years), which point to a considerable increase in the production of 20%-enriched uranium (which Iran has declared to be fuel for reactors involved in its domestic nuclear program).

However, this evidence is indirect - nobody has caught Tehran red-handed in the act of producing weapons-grade uranium. This follows from the report's clearly-worded conclusions, which point out that the operation of these plants does not contradict the information that Iran has officially provided to IAEA upon its request.

The report has supplemented this eclecticism through a lengthy discourse about Iran's interest in creating sophisticated systems that can ensure synchronous detonation of a nuclear charge.

In this context The Washington Post mentions Vyacheslav Danilenko, an expert on the physics of explosion from the former Soviet Union.

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The IAEA report does not mention Danilenko by name, but an appendix to the report contains numerous hints about a certain person involved in the explosive production of microdiamonds. There are references to "a foreign expert" who worked "in the nuclear weapons program of the country of his origin" and ostensibly consulted Tehran on the slippery issues of its nuclear project from 1996 to 2002.

According to The Guardian, Danilenko indeed worked for the Czech Nanogroup that was involved in the explosive production of microdiamonds.

Citing IAEA intelligence information, The Washington Post maintains that the report is referring to Danilenko. No other meaningful information on this episode is mentioned either in official documents or media inquiries.

Tehran's alleged involvement in military nuclear work during this period needs to be thoroughly investigated if there are well-justified suspicions. But does IAEA have any other documented evidence that is not rooted in antiquity?

And just what are you doing here?

It is possible to relate to those who are ready to accuse Iran right off the bat of carrying out a secret military program. The transparency of Iran's "peaceful atom" that is part of its projects and equipment paint a highly ambiguous picture.

On the one hand, Tehran is constantly repeating the fatwa of the late Ayatollah Khomeini whereby he imposed a religious ban on nuclear weapons. On the other hand, Iran is displaying tremendous interest in the nuclear power industry and peaceful nuclear research. Russian specialists have built a nuclear power plant in Bushehr and Iranians are building several experimental reactors.

Having announced its ambitious plans to build 20 GW nuclear energy units (which is nearly impossible to take seriously), Iran is trying to justify the open expansion of its uranium-enrichment capabilities. Ostensibly, the reason is simple - Iran wants to produce fuel itself for its reactors by developing the high-tech industry.

However, there are a number of questions about its many nuclear facilities. The enrichment centers in Natanz and Qom invariably draw the attention of IAEA experts. They contain dual-purpose equipment which, after minor changes, can produce highly-enriched weapons-grade uranium. Tehran's declarations about conducting strictly peaceful research at these centers cannot allay concerns over their military designation.

The same is true of the IR-40 research reactor in Arak. A powerful heavy-water reactor of this type can be used to produce weapons-grade plutonium relatively easily. Its construction makes it possible to change fuel cassettes on the fly, without ceasing operation. Potentially, this makes it easier to manufacture weapons-grade fissionable materials covertly.

These ambiguities abound in Iran's "peaceful atom."

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

<http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20111110/168572904.html>

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